

THE RISING STAR

- Misty Monsoon Getaways
- The Kingdom of the Tiger
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Dear Passengers

It gives me immense pleasure to share a significant milestone in our journey which is the launch of Diu as Star Air's 25th destination. With this, we proudly connect yet another hidden gem of India to our growing network, bringing serene beaches and rich heritage within easy reach of travellers across the country.

This expansion is more than just a new route but also reflects our deep commitment to improving regional connectivity and fulfilling the objectives of the UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) scheme. We believe destinations like Diu deserve seamless access to the rest of India, and we are honoured to be a part of that transformation.

Additionally, we are delighted to announce a significant enhancement of our Kolhapur network, now connecting the city to Nagpur and Bengaluru. These routes open up greater economic and cultural exchange, especially for business travellers, families, and students who now have faster, more efficient options to travel between these growing hubs.

As we mark these developments, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to every member of the Star Air family from our teams on the ground and in the air, and to our loyal passengers who continue to place their trust in us. Your support fuels our ambition to keep expanding responsibly and sustainably.

We look forward to welcoming you aboard soon to explore new places, reconnect with loved ones, or simply to fly the skies with comfort and convenience.

SANJAY D. GHODAWAT
Chairman

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INDIA, FIRST & FOREMOST

As we fly across this vast and vibrant nation, Star Air proudly joins the people of India in celebrating the adoption of the

Constitution on January 26, 1950—a day that shaped our democracy.

This moment enshrined justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity as the core of our Republic. These values guide our mission to Connect Real India, ensuring every citizen enjoys access, opportunity, and connection.

As you travel with us today, we invite you to reflect on the strength of our democracy and the unity that binds us all.

Jai Hind!
Team Star Air

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Fly into Festivity

Experience the soul of India through these vibrant upcoming festivals...

Text: **NICHOLA PAIS**

TEEJ: DEVOTION, DANCE, DOWNPOUR

Where: Jaipur

When: 27 July 2025 (Hariyali Teeji)
12 August 2025 (Kajari Teej)

The Pink City of Jaipur, with its majestic forts, royal palaces, and lively bazaars, is a delight year-round—but during the monsoon, it transforms into something magical. Draped in greenery and festivity, the city truly comes alive during Teej, one of Rajasthan's most spirited and colourful festivals. Celebrated at the start of the monsoon, Teej marks the reunion of Goddess Parvati and Lord Shiva, symbolising love, devotion, and renewal. It holds

special significance for married women, who pray for their husbands' well-being, while unmarried girls seek blessings for a good life partner. But beyond its spiritual meaning, Teej is a cultural spectacle, and Jaipur offers the most elaborate celebrations.

There are three Teej festivals: Hariyali, Kajari, and Hartalika Teej. In 2025, Hariyali Teej falls on 27 July, and Kajari Teej on 12 August. The main highlight in Jaipur is the grand Teej Mata procession, a two-day event in the walled city. A beautifully dressed idol of the goddess is carried in a royal palanquin, accompanied by folk performers, musicians, and chanting devotees. The

streets burst into colour, with women in vibrant green saris—symbolising fertility and the freshness of the rains.

All over the city, marigold-decked swings are hung in gardens and courtyards, where women sing traditional songs and celebrate with dance. Homes are adorned with flowers and *rangoli* designs, and the festive spirit fills every lane—from Johari Bazaar to heritage *havelis*.

Teej offers visitors an unforgettable immersion into Rajasthani culture. Time your visit to coincide with the festival and witness Jaipur in its most joyous form.



BONALU: TRADITION OF GRATITUDE

Where: Hyderabad and Secunderabad

When: 29 June 2025 – 20 July 2025

Dedicated to Goddess Mahakali, Bonalu involves colourful rituals, dance, and offerings of 'bonam' (a meal) as a token of gratitude. Women, often believed to be possessed by the goddess, carry decorated pots to temples in a vibrant procession led by Pothuraju, the fierce guardian figure.

The festival began in 1813, following a deadly plague. Locals promised to honour the goddess if she saved them. Major celebrations take place at Golconda Fort, Balkampet Yellamma Temple, and Katta Maisamma Temple, drawing thousands of devotees. It's a powerful blend of devotion, tradition, and Telangana's vibrant cultural spirit.



KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI 2025: DIVINE CELEBRATION

Where: Mathura & Vrindavan

When: 16 August 2025

Krishna Janmashtami in Mathura and Vrindavan is more than a festival—it's a profound spiritual journey. These twin towns, where Lord Krishna was born and spent his early years respectively, become vibrant hubs of devotion, music, and joy.

Temples such as Krishna Janmabhoomi, ISKCON, Banke Bihari, Prem Mandir, and Dwarkadhish host grand celebrations including midnight *aartis*, Krishna *abhisheks*, and soulful *kirtans*. Streets come alive with *jhankis* (tableaus), Raslila performances, and the lively Dahi Handi tradition. The air echoes with chants of "Jai Shri Krishna" as devotees, spiritual seekers, and cultural travellers from across India and around the world gather in celebration.

Witnessing the midnight birth of Krishna at his Janmabhoomi is a once-in-a-lifetime moment, steeped in divine energy. Visit during this time to join in Govardhan Parikrama, sing *bhajans*, and immerse yourself in the spirit of Krishna Bhakti. ★



GHEVAR: GOLDEN DISC OF DELIGHT

A traditional Rajasthani sweet, Ghevar is especially popular during the Teej festival. This disc-shaped dessert, once considered a royal indulgence, is known for its honeycomb-like texture. Made from refined flour, deep-fried, soaked in sugar syrup, and topped with malai, nuts, or dry fruits, it is a festive staple across Rajasthan. Interestingly, the humid monsoon weather during Teej is said to help create its perfect airy, spongy texture.

(While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, festival dates and schedules may vary. Please check with official sources before making travel plans.)

A pause in time, Diu is where lighthouses, baobabs, and abandoned chapels tell the stories of distant shores and faded empires

Text: PROF. FLEUR D'SOUZA

Diu

A Love Letter to the Island

That lonely sentinel, the Portuguese-built fortress of Diu, remains one of the best-preserved monuments of the early colonial era on the west coast of India. Perched as it is, on the easternmost tip of the island of Diu, a lighthouse crowns the summit. And guns at strategic vantage points transport the intrepid visitor to warfare of the 16th century.

On the far side of the island of Diu, the massive pot-bellied baobab tree stands tall. Fat arms reaching out to the sky, it casts a shadow that brings welcome relief on a hot day. Wander around the now abandoned *dakhma* /*dokhma* or the Parsi Towers of Silence, and you can hear the echoes of the past. Listen. The streets, temples, caves and gateways of Diu hold tales of merchants, mariners, missionaries and more.



Star Air operates flights to Diu from Ahmedabad and Goa, five days a week

The tiny island of Diu—covering an area of just 40 square kilometres, with a maximum length of around 12 km and breadth of just 3 km—attached to the state of Gujarat by a slender bridge, beckons the visitor to explore its man-made and natural wonders. After you deplane at Diu, taxis will transport you to your hotel, homestay or guest house.

Diu holds a strategic place in the maritime networks of the past. Guarding the Gulf of Khambhat (Cambay of the past), the rich agricultural produce and manufactured goods of Gujarat could be loaded onto cargo vessels for ports in the Persian Gulf, Red Sea and even further afield along the African coast and to Europe. With its natural defences, it served as the site for many a battle on the seas with the Turkish fleet being temporarily overcome in 1509. After a series of hard-fought engagements and even the siege that lifted in 1546, Diu remained under Portuguese control for four centuries, the early colonial stamp evident in the design of the fortifications, the urban core and its houses of religious worship.

The Castelo do Mar or Castle of the Sea lives up to

its name with imposing walls, moat and magnificent vistas of the waterways it safeguarded.

The white-washed Jesuit Church of the former colégio de St Paulo or Our Lady of Conception, Diu, begun in 1601, stands tall in the brilliant sunlight against the azure sky. The exquisitely carved wooden altars stand testimony to the woodwork and ornate sculptural art and artisans of Gujarat. The parish church of St Thomas is now the Museum of Diu. The Church of St Francis, once functioned as a hospital. On the western side of the island at Fudam is the Church of Our Lady of Remedies and at Vanakbara, the church of St. Andrew.

Another fascinating place to visit is the Gangeshwar temple.

For 19 years, the Parsis camped out at Diu when they disembarked after their journey from Hormuz in the 10th century. In time, as more waves of refugees arrived, they settled down in other coastal towns in Gujarat. In a far corner of the island, the *dakhmas/dokhmas*, those stone wells for the disposal of the dead among the Zoroastrians, are a reminder that a



considerable number of Parsis, must have made Diu, then a thriving port, their home for many years.

The baobabs, trees native to Africa may be found at most ports on our west coast...Vasai, Andheri, Bandra, Thane, Mumbai, but the gargantuan gentle giant, also called the Rukhda, at Diu is awe-inspiring and very much a witness to the trade and traders that made Diu their home in the past. Arabs, Ethiopians, Turks, Persians, Portuguese -- a multi-lingual, multi-cultural centre for trade and business, Diu, is still definitely worth a visit.

As your little aircraft lifts off, you see the silvery sands of Nagoa beach and the very colourful flat-topped modern houses of those who now call Diu their home. Diu doesn't say goodbye — it leaves the door open, salt in your hair, and a promise that you'll be back. ★

(Professor Fleur D'Souza, PhD in History from the University of Bombay, taught at St Xavier's College, Mumbai, for 32 years and led the department from 1996 to 2016.)

Life's Beach

A glance at the hidden beaches of the coastal retreat of Diu, offering sea, sand and serenity – the perfect monsoon break

Text: NICHOLA PAIS

With its mild weather year-round, the serene coastal town of Diu remains an inviting destination in every season. The months from October to March offer particularly pleasant conditions – perfect for sightseeing and enjoying the island's many outdoor experiences. However, Diu also transforms into the perfect monsoon retreat, with its windswept beaches, dramatic skies, and solitary charm. Its tranquil beaches provide an escape from the bustling tourist spots, while catering to various preferences, from adventure seekers to those in search of solitude.



Nagoa Beach

Located approximately 8 km from Diu town, Nagoa Beach is the most popular among tourists. Its horseshoe shape, gentle waves, and palm-lined shores make it ideal for swimming and sunbathing. Visitors can indulge in water sports like jet skiing and parasailing, or simply relax under the shade of Hoka trees.

Ghoghla Beach

Situated at the entrance of Ghoghla village, this expansive beach is known for its golden sands and clear waters. It's less crowded, offering a peaceful environment for swimming and leisurely walks. The beach is equipped with facilities like bio-toilets, change rooms, and lifeguards, ensuring a safe and comfortable experience.

Gomtimata Beach

On the western edge of Diu, near Vanakbara village, lies Gomtimata Beach. This secluded spot is perfect for those seeking solitude amidst nature. While swimming is not recommended due to high tides, the beach's serene environment and scenic vistas make it ideal for relaxation and introspection.



Chakratirth Beach

Adjacent to Diu town, Chakratirth Beach is renowned for its breathtaking sunrise and sunset views. The beach's rocky terrain adds to its scenic beauty, making it a favourite spot for photography and quiet reflection.

Jallandhar Beach

Located about 1 km from Diu town, Jallandhar Beach is steeped in mythology. It features a shrine dedicated to the demon Jalandhar, who, according to legend, was slain by Lord Krishna. The beach's rocky landscape and the presence of the Goddess Chandrika temple add to its historical and spiritual significance.

Did You Know...?

Asia's Longest Beach Festival

Typically starting in December and running until mid-February, Festa de Diu is known as Asia's longest beach festival. This vibrant festival invites visitors to explore its scenic landscapes and beaches, as well as participate in a range of engaging activities, including music, dance, adventure sports, and cultural performances. The events are distributed across four dynamic zones – Beach, Cave, Diu Fort, and Amphitheatre.

Tantalising Melting Pot

Diu's culinary landscape reflects its layered past, shaped in part by nearly two centuries of Portuguese rule, from 1765 to 1961. This influence endures in both flavour and flair, blending seamlessly with local and North Indian traditions. Across the island, eateries serve up a tempting mix of Portuguese, North Indian, and Continental fare. For a true taste of Diu's food heritage, try a traditional thali – a curated spread of dishes that brings the island's diverse culinary story to your plate. ★

(Information courtesy: Incredible India)



TIGERS in the WILD

Anirudh Chaoji, former ecologist at Melghat and chief naturalist at Tadoba, separates fact from fiction about India's most iconic predator



Invisible guardians of our forests

People who love the forest and have gone on safaris in many different reserves, often wonder: what is the true role of the forest department in managing these wild landscapes? It's heartening to see more people visiting forests and observing wildlife in its natural habitat. These experiences often ignite a lifelong love for the "beautiful people" of the forest. However, many safari-goers tend to focus on the



so-called glamorous species—tigers, leopards, bears—and rate their trip based on sightings alone.

For those managing the forest—typically the field directors and their team—their mandate goes far beyond tourist satisfaction. Their core responsibility is ensuring a balanced and healthy ecosystem, where wildlife not only survives but thrives. This requires scientifically managing habitats, especially for maintaining a robust prey base, which is essential to sustaining predator populations.

Myth of the 'man-eater'

One day, someone asked me: "How

many man-eaters do you have in your forest?" I was taken aback. I asked them to repeat the question, hoping I had misunderstood. I hadn't. For someone who has worked in tiger reserves and within the forest department, such questions are not just surprising—they're disturbing. The term "man-eater" refers specifically to an animal that repeatedly kills humans—like T1 (Avni), or the legendary big cats described in Jim Corbett's books. These cases are rare exceptions, not the rule.

Understanding the numbers

"But how do you explain 50 human



“Tigers are naturally shy animals. They go out of their way to avoid human presence. However, trouble begins when humans unintentionally mimic prey.”

deaths in Chandrapur in a year?”

Chandrapur district is, in fact, India's true “Tiger District”—home to an estimated 250 tigers, including those in the Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve. This density isn't by chance; it is the outcome of decades of successful habitat improvement and rigorous wildlife protection. Ironically, several tiger reserves in India still have very few tigers, despite being designated for their conservation.

Tigers are naturally shy animals. They go out of their way to avoid human presence. However, trouble begins when humans unintentionally mimic prey. People crouching to defecate, lying in fields, or collecting forest produce can be mistaken for prey by tigers or leopards. Such confusion can tragically lead to attacks—particularly in a district with so many large carnivores.

Not all encounters are conflicts

It's time we stop labelling every human-wildlife interaction as a “conflict”.

Tadoba's buffer zone comprises 79 villages with more than 1.2 lakh people. These communities coexist with over 95 tigers, around 250 leopards, and numerous sloth bears—often collectively feared

as “wild beasts”. In this landscape, people and wildlife routinely cross paths, and yet, true conflicts are surprisingly rare.

In areas like Shindewahi to Nagbhid and Bramhapuri, however, conflicts are more frequent. One reason could be the vast agricultural land here, increasing the chances of accidental encounters.

What the forest department is doing

To address these challenges, the forest department conducts awareness meetings with villagers and cattle grazers. These sessions are crucial for educating communities on safety precautions and early warning signs.

Despite all efforts, accidents still occur. When they do, the affected families receive compensation. If an individual animal is identified as a repeat threat, it is darted, captured, and moved to a rescue centre.

But real, long-term solutions must go deeper. We need comprehensive, non-intrusive livelihood strategies outside forest areas as in Tadoba—programmes that reduce communities' dependence on forests for survival. Only then can we minimise encounters and truly ensure peaceful coexistence. ★

Where Tigers Roam...

India is home to the world's largest population of wild tigers, estimated at around 3,681 individuals. A glance at the country's top tiger reserves, where silence, patience, and respect for the wild often yield unforgettable moments...

1. Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra

Often called the “Jewel of Vidarbha”, Tadoba is known for its high tiger density and relatively easy sightings. Its mix of bamboo thickets, dry deciduous forest and open meadows make for excellent photography.

Best time to visit: March to May

2. Bandhavgarh National Park, Madhya Pradesh

With one of the highest tiger densities in India, Bandhavgarh offers thrilling chances of close encounters. The park is also known for its ancient fort ruins and rich birdlife.

Best time to visit: February to April

3. Ranthambhore National Park, Rajasthan

Ranthambhore's tigers are famously bold and often seen during the day. Set against the dramatic backdrop of a 10th-century fort and rocky terrain, it offers a uniquely regal safari experience.

Best time to visit: October to April

4. Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand

India's oldest national park, Corbett is a haven of riverine forests, grasslands and dense sal woods. Though sightings can be trickier due to the thick forest, the reserve is rewarding for serious wildlife enthusiasts.

Best time to visit: November to June

5. Kanha Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh

The inspiration behind Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, Kanha boasts lush meadows and sal forests. It's also home to the rare barasingha.

Best time to visit: March to June

Real Escapes for Rainy Days

Lush landscapes, the rhythm of falling water, and the cosy comfort of discovering new places... Read on for monsoon getaways recommended by seasoned travellers

From misty hill towns to heritage hideaways, these rainy-day escapes are perfect for slowing down, soaking it all in, and letting the clouds set the pace.

1 Tamhini Ghat: A fecund, emerald paradise

"If you're looking for an unusual monsoon getaway in India, I wholeheartedly recommend Tamhini Ghat in Maharashtra. Tucked between the Western Ghats and Mulshi Dam, this place transforms into a fecund, emerald paradise once the rains arrive. I stumbled upon it during a spontaneous trip last July, and it ended up being one of the most magical experiences I've ever had.

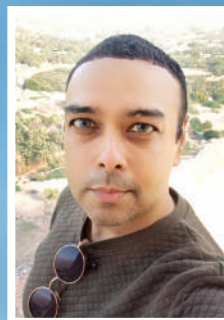
As the monsoon clouds roll in, the entire stretch of Tamhini Ghat bursts to life with cascading waterfalls, mist-covered valleys, and vibrant green hills that look almost surreal. It's not overtly touristy like Lonavala or Mahabaleshwar, which makes it perfect if you're craving solitude or a quiet connection with nature. The winding roads are a dream to drive on, and every turn brings a new breathtaking view.

I especially loved the natural hot springs near the village of Unhere Kund and the roadside chai stalls where you can sip a hot cuppa while watching clouds drift over the Sahyadris. It's ideal for short hikes, photography, or simply soaking in the monsoon magic without a crowd. Atmantan and Dharana Shillim in the vicinity, are both great places to stay.

If you're willing to go a bit off the beaten path this rainy season, trust me, Tamhini Ghat will leave you speechless, soaked, and wonderfully satisfied."

— Raul Dias

(Over the last two decades, food and travel writer Raul Dias has eaten and travelled his way through 65 countries. Find him @ rauldias123 on Instagram)



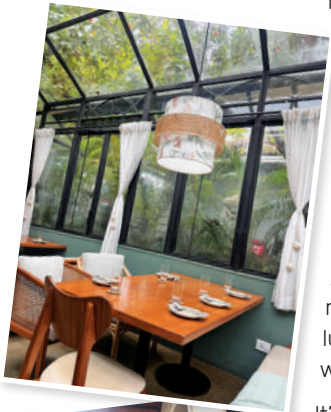


2 Goa: The best-kept secret

Most people wait for December to visit Goa for the sun, the parties, the shacks. But me? I wait for the rains. Every year, around my birthday, I pack my bags and escape to a version of Goa most people don't talk about: lush, raw, romantic, and wildly alive. It's become a little ritual. While everyone chases the beachy buzz of peak season, I chase the calm. The smell of wet earth, the sound of waves crashing harder, and the joy of the rain dance on the tiled rooftops of Goa in the monsoon feels like a secret only a few of us know about.

Here's why I love Goa during the rains

It's green, like really green. The rains transform Goa into a tropical paradise, misty forests, overflowing rivers, paddy fields, and waterfalls that come to life.



Zero crowds, all peace. No long restaurant queues, no traffic at Anjuna circle, no scrambling for a good sunset seat. It's you, Goa, and the rain.

Affordable luxury. Off-season means dreamy boutique stays and luxe villas at half the price. Your wallet will thank you.

It's extremely romantic. Long drives in the rain, coffee by the sea, and candlelit dinners under stormy skies – Goa is for lovers during monsoon. I remember the joy of watching a rainbow while riding my rented scooter!

You see the real Goa. Without the seasonal noise, you experience Goa through the locals' lens. Monsoon festivals, slow living, and secret spots you'd never find on a travel blog.

The food hits different. Hot *poe* and *bhaji*, crispy onion *pakor*as, and Goan *thalis* that warm your soul, every meal feels like a hug.

Things to do in Goa during the monsoon

Drive to hidden waterfalls like Tambdi Surla or visit the lush trails of Chorla Ghats. Carry a raincoat and a spirit of adventure.



Take long walks on empty beaches such as Ashwem, Betalbatim, and Galgibaga. It's just you and the ocean.

Cafe-hop in Assagao & Fontainhas. Think rainy windows, good coffee, books, and soulful playlists. (You'll find me doing this often)

Stay in a cozy villa or heritage homestay and enjoy slow mornings with filter coffee and rain sounds. Some recommendations: Fort Tiracol Heritage Hotel; Siolim House – Siolim, North Goa; Passaros by The Orchid – Benaulim, South Goa; Nilaya Hermitage – Arpora, North Goa; Villa Eterna – South Goa.

Attend Sao Joao Festival (late June): Some places celebrate with concerts, dance & some celebrate jumping into wells and water games with wild joy. Visit spice plantations and explore the raw, earthy side of Goa. Try a monsoon trek: Netravali or Surla waterfalls are worth every muddy step.



– **Vritti Khawani**
(Food and travel content creator Vritti Khawani is driven by the joy of exploration and the thrill of sharing these experiences with a growing community. Find her at @vritikhawani on Instagram)



3 Sikkim: Bliss that beckons

"As a nature enthusiast, sublime ecological places are my go-to destinations. Being with myself, enveloped in the embrace of sweeping mountains, verdant valleys, gushing rivers and azure skies, sets my soul soaring.

My annual getaway as the heavens open up, is undeniably the scenic and *susegad* Goa cloaked in nature's emerald blanket. The drive from the airport to the The Blue Kite - Vianaar Homes presents landscapes of the raging Mandovi, lush paddy fields, quiet villages skirted with towering coconut trees, and the enthralling anticipation of a laidback Goan vacay. The sparse crowd, leisurely pace, and unhurried daybreaks amping up to the rhythmic pattering of raindrops on Mangalore tiled roofs of an Indo-Portuguese style villa by with a private pool, an open courtyard, and luxe amenities are some of my treasured and unsurpassed ingredients for a perfect monsoon getaway recipe. Goan beaches, especially when overcast skies stare down on you while a rough sea lashes your feet, feel ecstatic!

The refreshing, cool climate after the first flush of celestial showers, and sprawling coffee plantations punctuated with gently cascading waterfalls is what makes Coorg captivating. My stay at Ayatana Coorg luxury resort, waking up to the chirping of winged friends, breathtaking views of a private waterfall, zip lining, ropes course in the rains and off-road safari, was immersive.



The stunning vistas of Sikkim where the winding turquoise Teesta River teasingly flows along with your road trip, particularly when the mighty and elusive Kangchenjunga peak cloaked in a misty haze deigns to give you a *darshan*, is the bliss I frequently yearn for!"

– Gita Hari

(Mumbai-based independent writer in the food, travel, lifestyle space, Gita Hari is also a wellness food curator for premium hotels across India. Find her @gita.hari on Instagram)

4 Lucknow & Khajuraho: Where the past comes alive

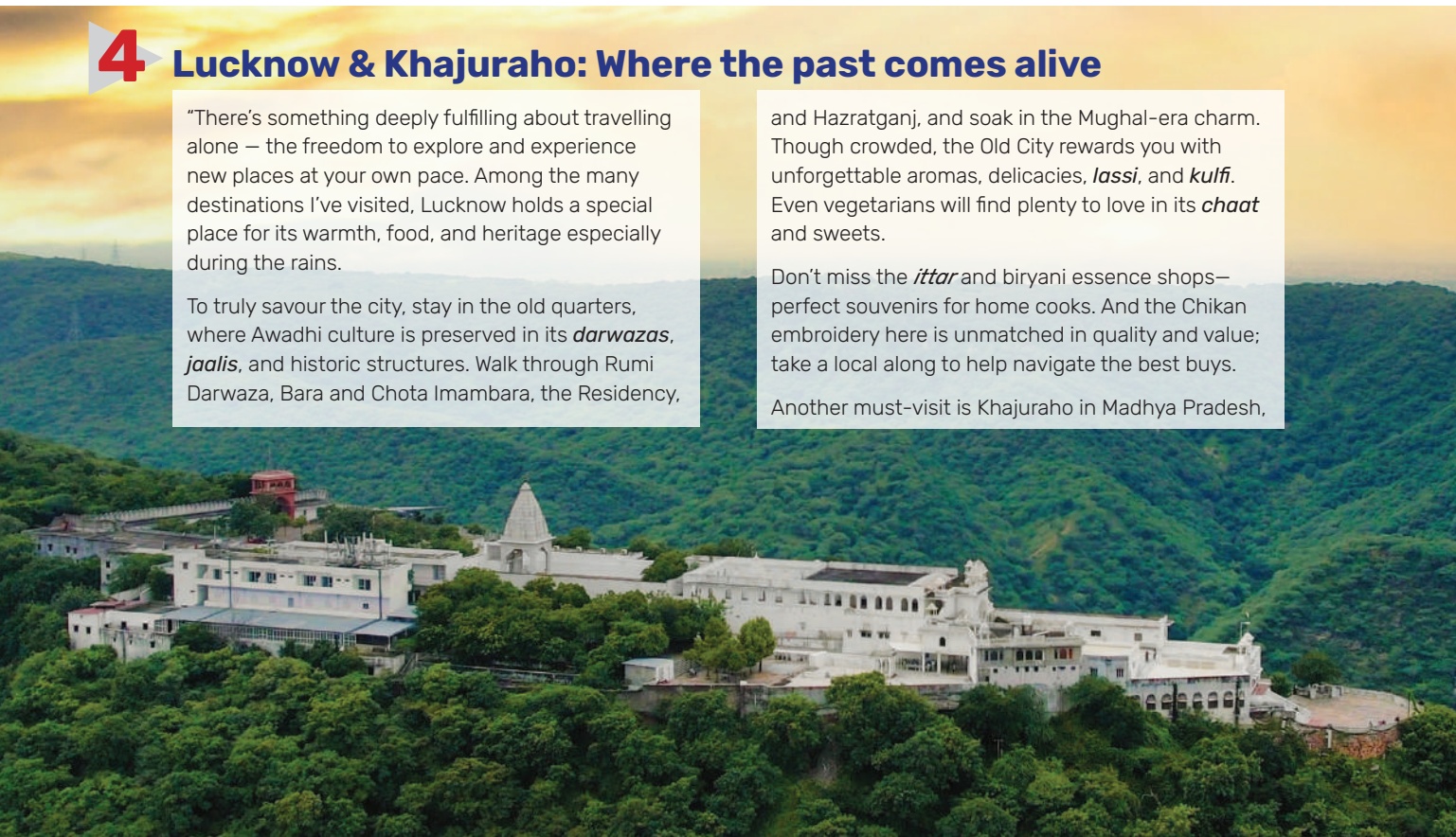
"There's something deeply fulfilling about travelling alone – the freedom to explore and experience new places at your own pace. Among the many destinations I've visited, Lucknow holds a special place for its warmth, food, and heritage especially during the rains.

To truly savour the city, stay in the old quarters, where Awadhi culture is preserved in its *darwazas*, *jaalis*, and historic structures. Walk through Rumi Darwaza, Bara and Chota Imambara, the Residency,

and Hazratganj, and soak in the Mughal-era charm. Though crowded, the Old City rewards you with unforgettable aromas, delicacies, *lassi*, and *kulfi*. Even vegetarians will find plenty to love in its *chaat* and sweets.

Don't miss the *ittar* and biryani essence shops—perfect souvenirs for home cooks. And the Chikan embroidery here is unmatched in quality and value; take a local along to help navigate the best buys.

Another must-visit is Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh,





a UNESCO World Heritage site. These 10th-century Hindu and Jain temples, built by the Chandela dynasty, are renowned for their intricate Nagara-style architecture and erotic carvings – often misread, yet deeply symbolic of a progressive past. The guides, with their insights and humour, bring history vividly to life. Set aside two days to explore the temple complexes.

Both Lucknow and Khajuraho offer a rich blend of culture,



cuisine, and heritage – perfect for travellers seeking depth and discovery.”

– **Neeta Kolhatkar**

(Published author and a journalist with over 35 years of experience, Neeta Kolhatkar has worked in broadcast, print and online media. Find her @neetakolhatkar on Instagram)



5 Karjat, Alibaug, Mulshi: Refreshing escapes

“The monsoon is our favourite time to take a break from the hustle and bustle of Mumbai. My wife Shilpa and I often head out on long drives to soak in the rain-washed beauty around the city. Our go-to spots are Karjat, Alibaug, Lonavala, and other nearby regions—close enough for a quick escape, yet far enough to feel refreshed.

The greenery during this season is magical, and the weather makes every moment serene. Whether it’s reading a book, sipping *chai* with a view, or simply enjoying the sound of rain, nothing compares to the monsoon vibe.

We particularly enjoy the Radisson resorts in Karjat and Alibaug—they offer great indoor activities for both kids and adults. Another gem is Mulshi, near Pune, known for boutique stays, peaceful lakeside views, and waterfalls.

Goa is often skipped during the rains, but we think it’s the best time to visit. The crowds thin out, the landscapes turn lush, and the state takes on a peaceful charm. We love

driving through South Goa, indulging in local cuisine, and unwinding by the sea.

Our favourite stay in Goa is the Caravela Beach Resort, with its green lawns, lovely pool, and timeless Goan architecture. In central Goa, we opt for Panjim Gymkhana, with its stunning view of the Mandovi River. Their Ritz Classic restaurant serves the freshest seafood, and we enjoy slow walks or drives along Campal Road, shaded by rain-drenched trees and cozy cafés.

Monsoon, to us, is more than a season—it’s a chance to pause, explore, and reconnect.”

– **Sudeep Awchat**

(Restaurateur in Mumbai & Dubai, Sudeep Awchat is Director, Goa Portuguesa Group of Restaurants. Find him @sudeepawchat on Instagram) ★





"EVERY FLIGHT IS A CHANCE TO GET BETTER"

Captain Raunaq Baig shares what drew him to the skies, the lessons flying has taught him, and why his journey with Star Air is one of purpose, pride, and passion

Can you take us back to the moment you knew you wanted to become a pilot?

Growing up, I travelled a lot and it was always the airports that fascinated me the most. Something about the energy,

the airplanes, the people in uniform- it left an imprint on me early on. That childhood fascination soon turned into curiosity: how does an aircraft really work? What goes into flying it? The passion never faded. If anything, it deepened with time.

I think deep down, I always knew I was going to be a pilot. It wasn't a moment, really, it was a calling that just grew louder with every passing year.

What does a typical day in the life of a captain look like—from briefing to landing?

One thing about this profession: there's no "typical" day. Our schedules are dynamic- we're flying different routes, working with different crew members, and constantly adjusting. That's part of what keeps it exciting. But regardless of the day or destination, the framework remains the same. We start with a detailed pre-flight briefing that covers everything from weather and alternate airports to fuel planning, aircraft technical status, and crew coordination. This is

also the time I check in with my crew, not just professionally, but personally too. I genuinely believe that when your team feels good, the flight feels good. So I always centre our briefings around clear communication, collaboration, and making

sure we're all aligned. From there, we proceed with checks, board the aircraft, and work in sync through taxi, takeoff, cruise, and landing. Every phase of flight has its rhythm, and every flight is a chance to get better at what we do.

What's your most memorable flight or destination so far?

Every pilot will tell you, their first flight in command is unforgettable. It's emotional, humbling, and incredibly empowering. But if I had to choose one that really stands out, it would be the first time I had my wife on board a flight I was on controls. It was a short flight, but emotionally, it meant everything. Everything aligned that day- the weather, the crew, the flight itself. I even made a short announcement just for her. Seeing her smile as she





“ I wanted a career that was dynamic, meaningful and allowed me to grow while making a positive impact on others’ journey.”

sat on that plane, knowing I was at the controls- it filled me with pride I can't quite put into words. That flight reminded me how far I'd come and how much the journey means when you get to share it with the people you love.

How do you stay focused and calm during challenging flying conditions or long-haul flights?

Discipline, it's a way of life in aviation. From the way we train to how we conduct ourselves on the flight deck, everything is built around being prepared for the unexpected. Through our training, many emergency procedures become muscle memory. That conditioning is what keeps us sharp when things get tough. But beyond systems and SOPs, it's the human factor that matters. I work hard to build strong relationships with my crew--because in high-stake situations, trust and clear communication are everything. A cohesive, supportive team can navigate anything. And yes, coffee helps too. Haha.

What's one thing most passengers don't know about flying or pilots—but should?

Delays. Most people understandably get frustrated when a flight doesn't take off on time. But here's the thing, if there's a delay, chances are, it's because someone prioritised your safety over a schedule. Whether it's weather-related, a technical inspection, or air traffic congestion, delays exist to prevent risk. So the next time your flight is delayed, take a deep breath and remind yourself, it's because someone, somewhere, wanted to get you home safe.

How has the aviation industry changed since you began your career, and what excites you about its future?

It's evolving fast, and constantly. The

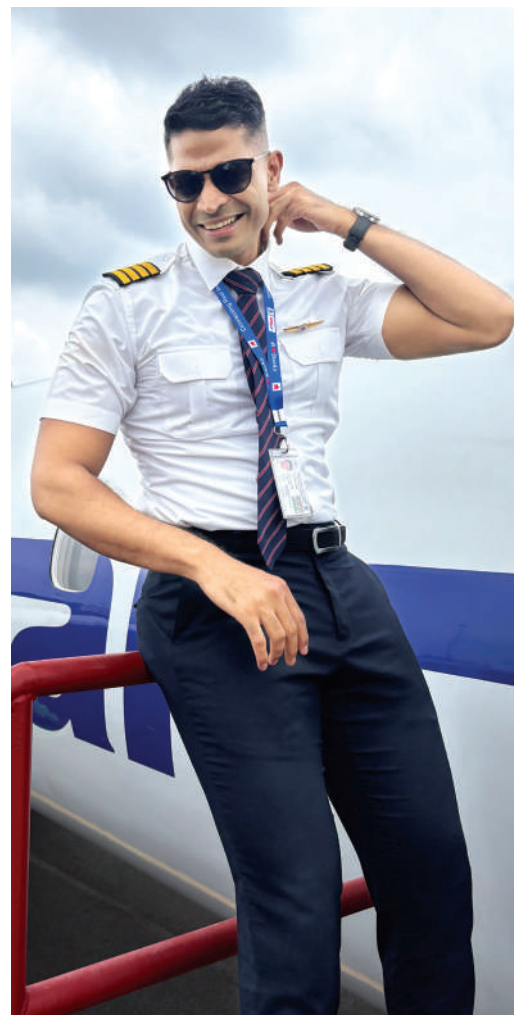
emphasis today is not just on efficiency, but on comfort, sustainability, and technology-driven operations. Systems are smarter, decision-making is faster, and the entire flying experience is just smoother- for both crew and passengers. Even in the back-end, digitisation has transformed how we train, plan, and operate. What excites me is how much more intelligent flying has become, with data-backed decisions, enhanced navigation systems, and a focus on reducing our carbon footprint. It's a great time to be in aviation, especially for young pilots stepping into this new world.

When you're not flying, what are some of your favourite ways to unwind?

When I'm not in the skies, I really value staying grounded, both physically and mentally. Fitness is a big part of my routine. I love a good gym session, and I enjoy trying out different workouts to keep things fresh and challenging. It helps me stay focused and feel sharp, both on and off duty. I also game- it's a great way to disconnect and relax after long flights. And when I'm in the mood to step out, I love exploring new restaurants and trying out different cuisines!

What advice would you give to aspiring pilots or those dreaming of a career in aviation?

Be patient. Be focused. Be relentlessly dedicated. The road to becoming a pilot isn't easy, it takes time, sacrifice, and a lot of resilience. But I promise you, there's nothing else like it in the world. You'll see sunrises from 35,000 feet, fly over cities you've only seen in books, and carry people to places that matter to them. That's a privilege. And if you love aviation, hold on to that love, especially during the tough days. It's all worth it.



What has your journey with Star Air been like?

I joined Star Air almost four years ago, during the pandemic. It was a time when the skies were quiet, the industry was unsure, and few airlines were hiring. But Star Air was different. They saw potential in people, invested in the future, and gave opportunities when others paused. For me, it was more than just a job, it was trust, growth, and community. The culture here is unlike anywhere else. We're a tight-knit team, more like a high-performance sports team than a traditional hierarchy. Everyone's approachable. Problems get solved with a phone call, not a chain of emails. I'm incredibly grateful to fly for an airline that not only believed in me when the chips were down but continues to support me as I grow. ★



Star Air Launches Diu Services

Expands Kolhapur Connectivity

We recently launched Diu as our 25th destination, with direct flights from Goa (Mopa) and Ahmedabad commencing on 16 May. Operated five times a week using the 50-seater Embraer ERJ-145 aircraft, these routes fall under the Government of India's UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) scheme, aimed at improving regional connectivity and boosting tourism along the Western coastline.

"With the launch of Diu as our 25th destination, we are pleased to deepen our network in Western India and open up new opportunities for travellers, entrepreneurs, and local communities," said Captain Simran Singh Tiwana, CEO, Star Air. "Our expansion is guided by a clear mission -- to connect underserved cities with air travel that is safe, efficient, and accessible."

We also expanded our Kolhapur network during this phase, launching new direct flights to Bengaluru and Nagpur on 15 May. In addition, Kolhapur to Ahmedabad, Tirupati and Mumbai routes were upgraded to the larger and





“With the launch of Diu as our 25th destination, we are pleased to deepen our network in Western India.”

more comfortable 76-seater Embraer ERJ-175 jets, marking the introduction of business class service in these sectors.

With this development, we now connect Kolhapur to six destinations. Daily services to Mumbai and Bengaluru from Kolhapur are operated on E175 aircraft, offering improved capacity and enhanced passenger comfort.

We are currently operating a fleet of ten Embraer aircraft and plan to grow this to 25 over the next three years, in line with our long-term vision to strengthen regional connectivity and serve emerging aviation markets across India. ★



Celebrating Our Star Performers

ALLAM NAGA SAI CHANDRA

Sr. Security Agent, Hyderabad Station

Since joining Star Air on 12 July 2023, Allam Naga Sai Chandra has shown exceptional enthusiasm and adaptability. His quick learning and keen interest in aviation security have stood out from the very beginning.

He has demonstrated a clear understanding of Aerodrome Entry Permit (AEP) procedures and has effectively applied this knowledge in day-to-day operations. His attention to detail in this critical area has been commendable.

Beyond his core duties, he has actively supported his team by taking the initiative in various operational tasks. His positive attitude and dependability make him a valuable team player.

He has played a key role in coordinating with agencies like BCAS to ensure smooth and timely processing of AEPs. His proactive communication and professionalism have significantly contributed to the station's operational efficiency.



VISHNU PRAKASH

Executive - Administration (Travel Desk)

Vishnu Prakash consistently delivers complete, accurate, and high-quality work, showcasing strong ownership and attention to detail.

He is trustworthy, respectful towards colleagues, and always willing to offer support, making him a dependable team player.

Contributing without hesitation, he regularly exceeds expectations through his meticulous approach.

He remains open to learning, continually enhancing his skills and confidence in the process. ★



Connecting Real India



* Map used for general illustration only, and does not represent the political boundaries of India.

STARair FLEET



Embraer E175

Seats : 76
Top Speed : Mach .82



Embraer E145

Seats : 50
Top Speed : Mach .78



Airbus H130

Seats : 1+6
Top Speed : 287 kmph

Airbus H135

Seats : 2+5
Top Speed : 287 kmph

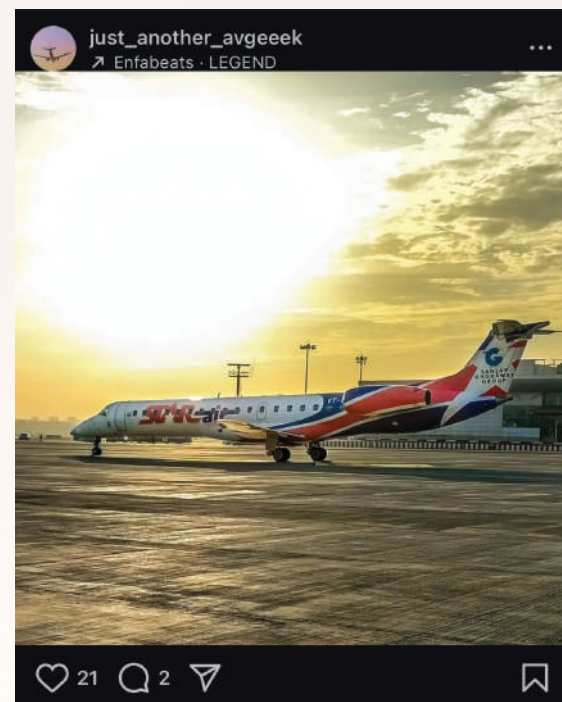
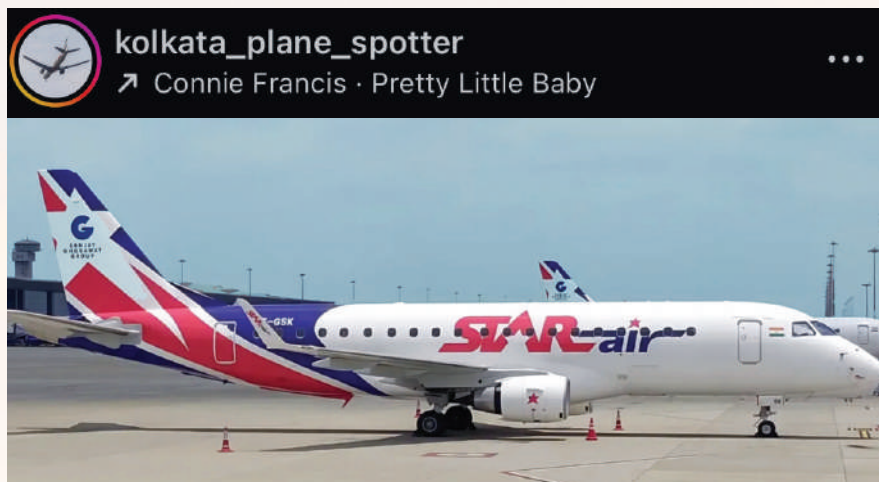
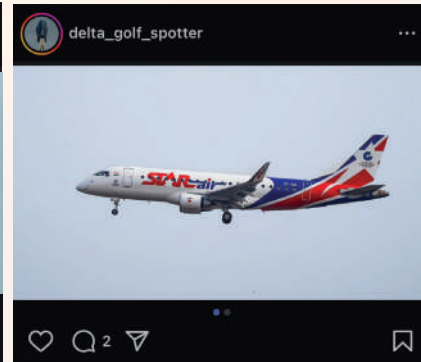
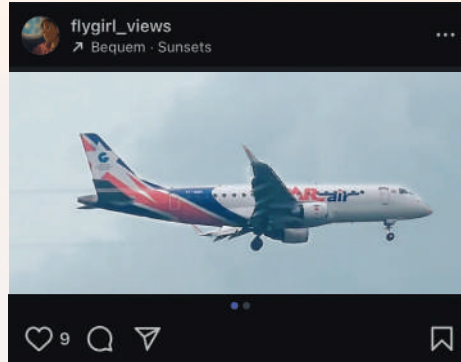
Airbus H120

Seats : 1+4
Top Speed : 280 kmph



Shooting for the Stars

Featuring some of the coolest photos of our constellation from social media





Own a piece of Star Air

1:100 Scale model of Embraer E175

₹6499



Reach out to your nearest cabin crew to buy!



PROFIT MEETS PURPOSE: Demystifying Impact Investment



Making money and making a difference don't have to be at odds. In fact, they might just go hand in hand.

In this episode of *Sustainable Tea with Shreya*, India's biggest sustainability podcast, we unpack the business of doing good, and doing well.

It is hosted by Shreya Ghodawat, a sustainability and climate activist, the India Ambassador for Project Dandelion and the Plant-Based Treaty, and Youth Board Member of ProVeg International 2025.

Shreya is joined by three experts in the investment space, Aakash Shah, Karan Mehta, and Vineet Rai, to break down how to spot smart investments,

what businesses are worth backing, and how to grow your capital without compromising your values.

They dive into how investors decide where to place their bets, what budding entrepreneurs should watch out for, and what success looks like when sustainability sits at the centre of strategy.

For anyone building a mission-driven business, trying to back one, or even those looking to invest, this is a crash course in making your money matter and grow.

Season 1 of *Sustainable Tea with Shreya* is now streaming on YouTube, Spotify, and Apple Podcasts. Watch now! ★

Monsoon *Magic on* Wheels

Hit the road this monsoon for an adrenaline-fuelled journey through India's wildest, wettest, and most breathtaking off-road trails

TEXT: PRANAV TAWDE

Driving through rain-soaked trails, navigating muddy paths, and feeling that rush of excitement while exploring India's most beautiful and rugged spots... If that sounds like your kind of adventure, here's how you can plan the ultimate monsoon road trip.

PLANNING YOUR MONSOON ADVENTURE

Pick your destination carefully

India is packed with spots where you can enjoy both the beauty of nature and the thrill of off-roading. Think about places like **Spiti Valley's** tough trails, the winding roads of **Coorg** and **Chikmagalur**, the lush **Western Ghats**, or the scenic yet challenging roads of **Rajmachi** near **Lonavala**. Each of these places offers something unique, whether it's scenic beauty, tough terrains, or that sense of being miles away from the crowds.

Get your vehicle ready

Before you even think about hitting the road, make sure your vehicle is up to the task. It's not just about checking the usual stuff like wipers, brakes, and lights — those are obvious. If you're planning on some serious

off-roading, you'll need a vehicle that can handle tough conditions. Vehicles like the Mahindra Thar, Force Gurkha, Jeep Compass Trailhawk, and Isuzu D-Max V-Cross are built for rough roads, with enough power and clearance to take on those muddy, slippery trails.

Pack smart

Monsoon trips demand a bit of extra thought when it comes to packing. You'll need waterproof gear, rain jackets, sturdy footwear, and all the

Image courtesy: Isuzu D-Max V-Cross



Image courtesy: Jeep Compass Trailhawk





Image courtesy: Force Gurkha

essential off-roading tools. Don't forget things like a first-aid kit, extra fuel, and safety tools like tow ropes and jacks — you never know when you might need them on those tricky roads.

Plan your route & check the weather

A little planning goes a long way, especially when the weather is unpredictable. Always keep an eye on the weather forecast before you head out and use apps to check real-time road conditions. That way, if there's a sudden downpour or road blockage, you can easily adjust your route and stay safe.

The thrill of off-roading

Off-roading in the monsoon is unlike anything else. The slippery mud, unpredictable trails, and constant challenge make it an exciting ride — but it also means you've got to be prepared and stay alert. Here's how to make the most of it:

Safety first

Yes, off-roading is fun, but it's also a bit risky, especially when it's raining. Make sure you're travelling with others, or at least inform someone of your whereabouts. Engage 4x4 when

Image courtesy: Toyota Fortuner



needed, and drive carefully. Don't push your vehicle or your limits too hard — the trails can be slippery, and safety should always come first.

Enjoy the journey

Don't just rush through the trip. Take time to soak in the views — the monsoon makes everything look magical, from misty hills to overflowing rivers. Stop and enjoy the beauty around you, snap some photos, and let the rain's rhythm become part of your travel soundtrack. This is what makes road trips so special — it's not just about the destination, but the journey itself.

With the right vehicle, proper preparation, and a love for the unpredictable, you can make your monsoon road trip a journey to remember. The open road awaits! ★

(By day, Pranav Tawde heads IT & Operations; by weekend, he's chasing horizons and off-road trails. Catch more of his adventures on Instagram: @pranavtawde)

BEST VEHICLES FOR OFF-ROADING AND ROAD TRIPS

Mahindra Thar

For off-road lovers, the Mahindra Thar is a no-brainer. It's tough, reliable, and built for challenging terrains, making it one of the best vehicles for monsoon road trips.

Toyota Fortuner

If you're looking for something that combines comfort and performance, the Fortuner is a great option. It's spacious, strong, and handles well even on tough roads, making it ideal for long trips in the rain.

Force Gurkha

The Force Gurkha is made for off-roading, no questions asked. It has the clearance, power, and durability you need to tackle rough, muddy trails without breaking a sweat.

Jeep Compass Trailhawk

The perfect balance of comfort and ruggedness, it's designed for off-roading, with features like a 4x4 system and high ground clearance. Whether it's rain or shine, the Jeep Compass Trailhawk is a reliable choice for tough terrains.

Isuzu D-Max V-Cross

A tough pick-up truck built to tackle any kind of terrain. With its high ground clearance, powerful engine, and 4x4 system, it's the perfect vehicle for off-roading adventures, especially when the roads get tricky.

Image courtesy: Mahindra Thar



Style on the Go



Expert advice on how to stay chic, comfortable, and camera-ready while travelling

Text: SHAGUN GANDHI



Comfort and style go hand in hand for me.

Some tips and tricks that I swear by:

- Mix and match: Don't be afraid to mix and match different pieces to create new outfits. Try pairing a neutral-coloured top with a bold, patterned bottom.
- Add a pop of colour: Use a statement piece, like a scarf or bag, to add colour to your outfit. This season's Pantone colour, Mocha Mousse, would be a great choice!
- Dress for the destination: Consider the climate and culture of your destination when choosing your outfits. For example, lightweight, breathable fabrics like cotton and linen are perfect for warm weather.
- Experiment with accessories: Have fun while accessorising - invest in key pieces like stack up bracelets, necklaces. Accessorise differently depending on the type of vacation. For example, a beach vacation might call for a fun, beachy hat, while a city trip might require a more stylish tote bag.
- Make it sustainable: When possible, opt for sustainable and eco-friendly options. You can even repurpose or upcycle old clothes to create new outfits.
- Know your body: Understand your body shape and dress accordingly. Accentuate your strengths and balance out your weaknesses with clever styling.
- Improvise with layers: Layering is key to stylish travel. Try layering a lightweight top over a tank or T-shirt for a versatile look.
- By embracing improvisation and creativity, you can create a travel style that's uniquely yours and makes you feel confident and stylish.





Airport style icons

Bollywood's leading lady Alia Bhatt is known for her chic travel style. She elevates basic pieces with effortless elegance. Her airport looks often feature stylish coats, comfortable pants, and statement accessories.

Also, if I may add, Mira Kapoor. Celebrated for her effortless blend of high-end fashion and casual chic, Mira has consistently impressed with her fashion prowess, showcasing a unique ability to balance laid-back comfort with sophisticated style.

Effortlessly stylish in transit

Dress for the destination and always carry a statement denim jacket or a light jacket.

Athleisure is perfect for comfort. A monochromatic outfit for a chic and comfortable look can never go wrong!

Footwear pointers

Travel in sneakers or comfortable flats and pack your fanciest stilettos for sun-downers and dinners.

Game-changing hacks

Dress according to your body type and you will never go wrong while



Smart fabric choices for travel wardrobes

Think wrinkle-free, breathable, or season-specific picks...

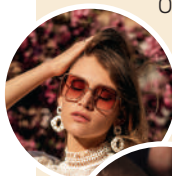
Summer: Breathable chambray, cotton, linen

Autumn/Fall: Cozy textures like wool, suede or faux fur

Winter: Rich fabrics like cashmere, wool, fleece and knit fabrics

Spring: Lightweight fabrics like organza, lace, rayon, silk

Space-saving accessories that instantly elevate a travel outfit

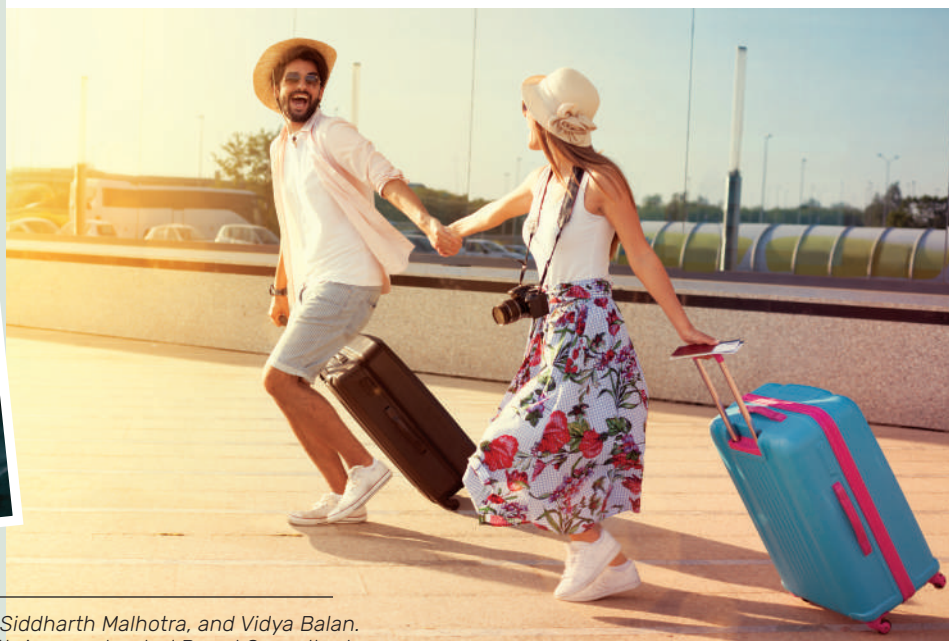


Over-sized sunglasses, dainty necklaces that can be layered together, a classic pair of studs and gold hoops, fun stackable rings, bold printed scarves that can be styled differently, depending on where you are travelling, a classic watch is always a win-win.



selecting the silhouettes that suit you. Layering is key. You can dress up or down by investing in the right kind of basics and essential wardrobe staples.

Accessories play a very important role in uplifting your overall personality. Confidence is key. Follow trends but don't go all out. ★



Shagun Gandhi has styled celebrities like Siddharth Malhotra, and Vidya Balan. She now helps fashion & lifestyle brands thrive as a trusted Brand Consultant

Raindrops & Roasts

Karreena Bulchandani, founder of MOKAI, reflects on the soulful joy of coffee during the rains—from the comfort of Mochi to India's shifting coffee culture



The sensory joy of coffee in the rains

There's something truly comforting about sipping a warm cup of coffee while it pours outside. It lifts your spirits in the simplest yet most profound way. The rain itself doesn't change, but coffee changes the way you experience it. Especially at Mochi, with its windows and cozy set-up, it becomes my absolute favourite spot during the monsoon. Watching the raindrops fall as you hold a hot cup just feels different—it's unlike anything you'd feel on a sunny afternoon or even a chilly December day.



Coffee - A monsoon favourite

Coffee just fits the monsoon perfectly—it's warm, full of beautiful flavours, and comforting. There's a variety out there that true coffee lovers really appreciate. Plus, with new hot brews on our menu constantly being introduced, there's always something exciting to try. And nothing quite compares to sipping on coffee while watching the monsoon greens unfold—it simply hits differently. No other drink brings that same kind of feeling.

India's evolving coffee scene

From what we've seen, especially with younger customers, there's a noticeable curiosity and awareness around coffee now. People understand the difference between instant coffee, whole beans, and filter coffee. With that knowledge, they're able to choose based on their personal preferences—many are now leaning towards espresso-based drinks. Our space at Mochi tends to attract Gen Z and millennials, and you can see that shift in choices play out.

Coexisting coffee cultures

It's important to consciously keep both traditional and modern techniques alive. Many places tend to use modern machines even for traditional coffees, like making South Indian filter coffee with an espresso machine. We try not to take that route. Instead, we brew it in the most authentic way we can, and our chef, being from Mangalore, brings in that deeper connection. We even do a Sri Lankan-style filter version with a bit of condensed milk as our twist. But for us, the key is in the brewing—it has to taste like what you grew up with. That's the experience we want to create.

Single-origin & manual brews

There's a clear shift toward appreciating quality, traceability, and control in brewing. Single-origin or even blends allow people to trace their coffee back to specific farms or regions and really explore the flavour profiles they offer. Compared to blends, single-origin beans often bring out more complexity and nuance, making the whole experience feel more personal and intentional. ★

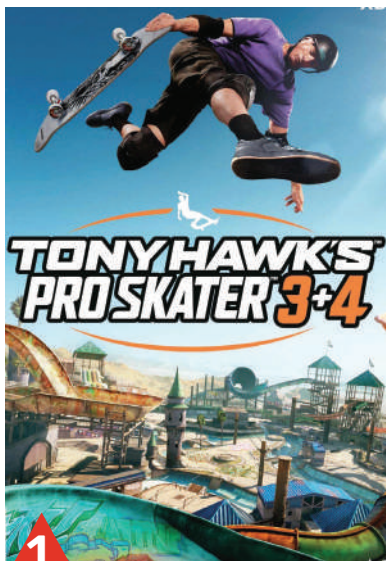




GAME ON

Dive into the bold new adventures, long-awaited sequels, and fresh takes in the gaming world

Text: MARK PAIS



1 TONY HAWK'S™ PRO SKATER™ 3 + 4

Tony Hawk's™ Pro Skater™ 3 + 4 returns, remastered for a new generation. This reimagined edition blends classic gameplay, iconic levels, and punk-rock energy with new skaters, enhanced visuals, revamped parks, and an upgraded trick system. From grinding rails in the Airport to soaring in Los Angeles, enjoy fast-paced, combo-driven action backed by a killer soundtrack. It's a fresh spin on the beloved series and a must-play for skateboarding and arcade-action fans.

Launching: 11 July



2 DONKEY KONG BANANZA

Donkey Kong returns in Donkey Kong Bananza, a brand-new 3D action-adventure coming to the Nintendo Switch 2. Dive deep into the mysterious Underground World with DK, smashing obstacles and uncovering strange new environments. Making his first 3D appearance since Donkey Kong 64, the tie-clad gorilla is back in full force. Joining him is a young Pauline, using her voice to assist your journey. With vibrant visuals and fresh gameplay, it's shaping up to be one of 2025's most anticipated Switch 2 titles.

Launching: 17 July

NINJA GAIDEN: RAGEBOUND

From the creators of Blasphemous comes Ninja Gaiden: Ragebound, a bold fusion of retro gameplay and modern flair. Set in a reimagined pixel-art world, the game follows Kenji Mozu, a young ninja who must harness forbidden powers and team up with the Black Spider Clan to stop a demonic invasion. Featuring fast-paced action, dual protagonists, and Ninja Fusion abilities, it honors the series' roots while introducing fresh depth. It's a thrilling new chapter in the NINJA GAIDEN legacy.

Launching: 31 July



4 MAFIA: THE OLD COUNTRY

Step into the brutal underworld of 1900s Sicily in Mafia: The Old Country, a gripping prequel to the original 2002 classic. Play as Enzo Favara, a young man fighting to earn his place in the Cosa Nostra. This third-person action-adventure dives deep into the roots of organized crime, blending gritty storytelling with intense gameplay as you rise through the ranks of the Family in the birthplace of the Mafia.

Launching: 8 August



5 MADDEN NFL 26

EA SPORTS™ Madden NFL 26 brings next-level realism with a new AI-driven system trained on years of real NFL data. Experience explosive gameplay with authentic player traits, playstyles, and adaptive strategies that reflect real quarterback and coach tendencies. From team traditions like Minnesota's Skol chant to Baltimore's light shows, new presentation elements and dynamic weather deepen immersion. Includes optional in-game purchases for virtual currency and randomized in-game items.

Launching: 14 August

Namaste at 35,000 Feet

From mat to seat, yoga's journey
is as expansive as the skies—
bringing balance wherever you
are, even mid-air

yoga promotes harmony between body, mind, and spirit. Its benefits are universal: improving flexibility, reducing stress, enhancing focus, and restoring balance qualities that feel especially important when we are on the move.

Yoga while you fly

Flying can leave us feeling stiff or fatigued, but yoga-inspired stretches can make a world of a difference, even at cruising altitude. Here are a few simple movements to try (right from your seat!)

• **Seated Spinal Twist:** Gently turn your torso to one side, holding the armrest or back of your seat. Repeat on the other side to refresh your spine.

• **Ankle Rolls & Toe Flexes:** Improve circulation and avoid stiffness with small circular movements of the ankles and gentle toe flexes.

• **Neck Rolls & Shoulder Rolls:** Release tension by slowly rolling your neck and shrugging your shoulders in circular motions.

Remember to breathe deeply, inhale for calm, exhale for clarity.

Global celebration, rooted in India

Recognised by the United Nations in 2014, International Yoga Day shines a light on India's cultural heritage and its enduring relevance. Cities across the globe host mass yoga sessions, workshops, and meditations on this day. Whether in Times Square, Trafalgar Square, or the banks of the Ganges, thousands gather in unison, guided by the rhythm of breath.

As you travel through the skies, remember that yoga is also a journey not just of movement, but of self-awareness and presence.

So sit back, relax, and maybe even try a few mindful moments mid-flight. Because peace, after all, is the best souvenir.

Happy International Yoga Day! ★

Each year on 21 June, the world unites in breath, balance, and stillness to celebrate International Yoga Day, which is a global tribute to India's ancient gift to humankind. From Himalayan ranges to tropical beaches, and even within the quiet hum of an aircraft cabin, yoga continues to connect people across continents and cultures.

But yoga is far more than a series of stretches; it's a philosophy. Rooted in over 5,000 years of tradition,

No Rules Just Cool



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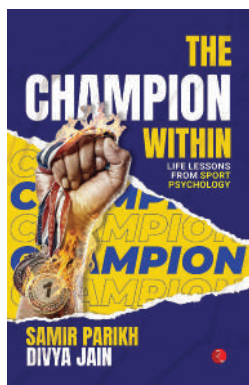
 SWIGGY

 zepto

 amazon

 |  coolberg

Reflect. Refocus. Rise



Samir Parikh and Divya Jain, authors of *The Champion Within: Life Lessons from Sport Psychology*, share sport psychology strategies to help you rise stronger from life's challenges

Bouncing back from challenges

A sport, just like life, is made of several moments. There's no one single make-or-break moment. The aim is not to be perfect each and every time. Recognise that mistakes are a part of the game, and it's how quickly you learn from them and bounce back that defines a champion. Don't let that error keep you stuck in the past with thoughts like "How could I do this?" or "How could this happen?" Accept that you made a mistake and be kind to yourself – being harsh and judgmental is only going to make recovery that much slower.

Hitting that reset button is important. Whether you do well or poorly, you've got to reset either way. Switch off to take a quick mental break, and then switch back on again so that your focus is only on the point that lies ahead of you.

Focus on your effort

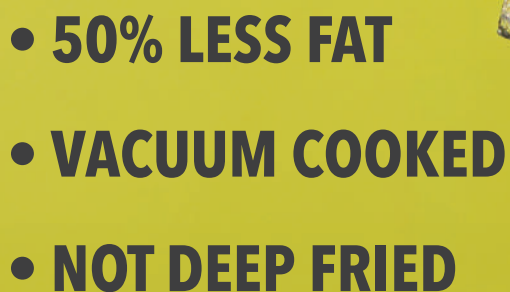
The kind of goals we set don't just give us direction and motivation, they're also the cornerstone of how we maintain our focus. Yet, in a well-meaning way, we often end up setting goals that can interfere with our own path to success. Focusing on results, like a promotion or a particular grade, distract us from the process of what it actually takes to succeed. Setting unachievably high targets can demotivate us. Telling ourselves to 'do our best' can be vague, providing no specific guidance on how to really move forward.

The goals you set need to be your own – not what everyone else around you is doing or expects you to do. Break them down into smaller, achievable goals. The more wins you can get, the more you're going to be motivated to pursue your larger vision. Most of all, remember that the scoreboard is actually a distraction. So don't get swayed by the numbers – think process, focus on your effort.

Reframe anxiety into excitement

When you're at the Olympics, with the expectations of a billion people, you can't expect yourself to be calm. And the same applies to anybody experiencing a high-stake situation – whether personally or professionally. The idea isn't to be calm – instead, it's about learning to perform under pressure. Don't run away from the stress. Instead, reframe the anxiety into excitement, and use it to channelise your energy to achieve the goals that you want to. Remember, you can't control the stress, but you can control your reactions to the stress. Don't give in to the urge to rush through the task. The aim isn't to do anything special, anything different because it's a big day. Instead, the aim is to do exactly the opposite. You've got to do what you've been practising every single day because that's what you know best. ★

(This article is for informational purposes only and not medical advice. Please consult a healthcare professional before making changes to your health routine.)



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