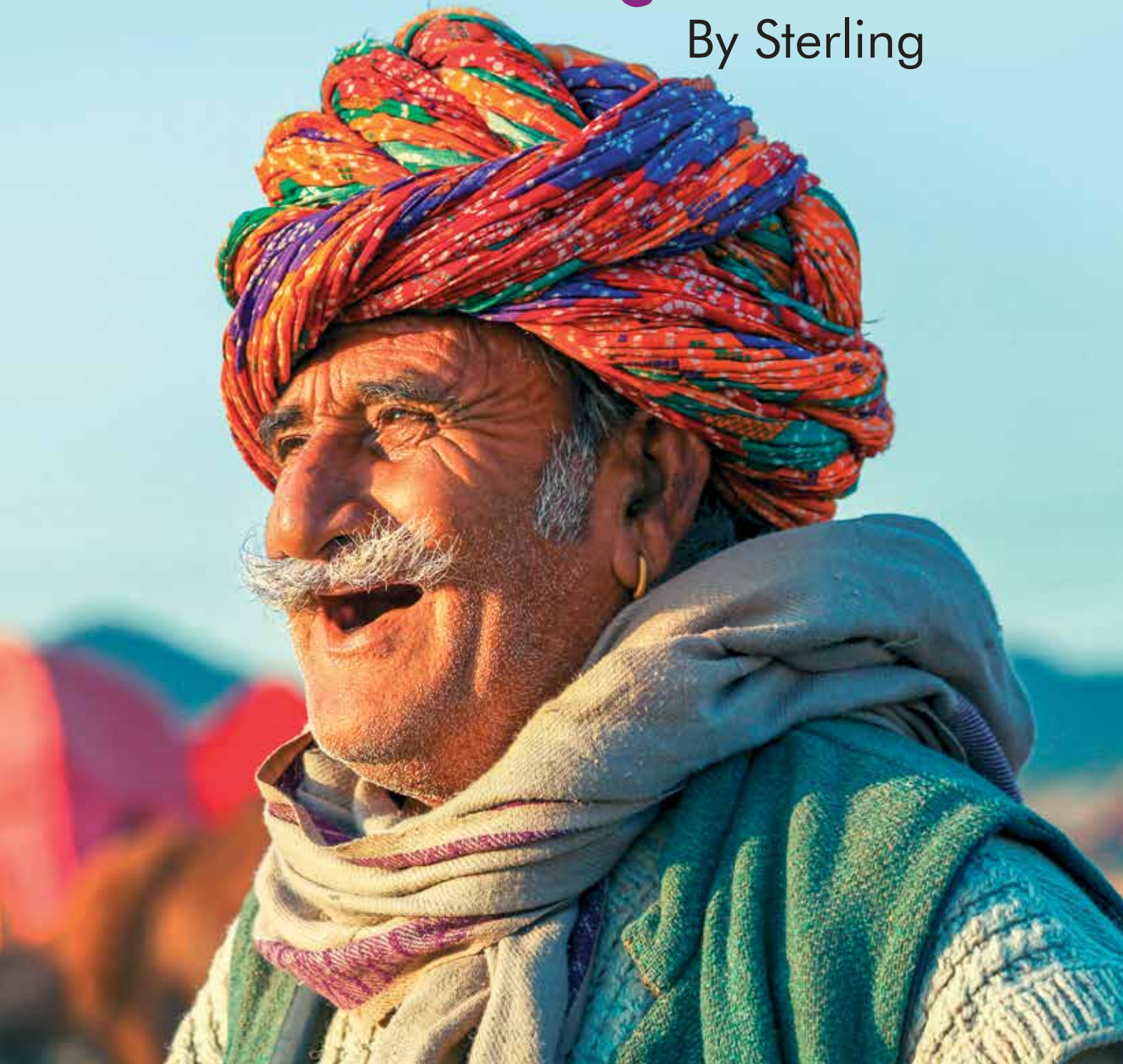


January 2019

Purple

HUES

By Sterling



TVS

INDEPENDENCE. IT'S A HOME THAT IS OURS IN EVERY WAY.

Launching Row Houses at TVS Emerald GreenAcres, Chennai.



Our space is very important to us. That's why we chose to be independent and make our first home, a real house. Not only is it a spacious duplex, we even own the land it's built on. Located near the proposed new CMBT, we are well-connected, yet enjoy our privacy. Our home offers us the benefits of a developed community while giving us space to live the way we want. Making us truly independent.

The TVS Promise: Thoughtfully designed homes
Timely delivery | Trusted TVS quality | 5 years maintenance

ROW HOUSES: ₹64 lakhs* onwards

APARTMENTS: ₹34 lakhs* onwards



Ownership of Land



Private Parking



Private Terrace Garden



Developed Community



Home Automation System

JUST 15 MINS. FROM TAMBARAM

VISIT SITE TO AVAIL SPECIAL BENEFITS

Exclusive offers for Sterling members

Call **88077 87878**. www.tvsemerald.com

Sales Office: Emerald Haven Realty Ltd. 119, Greenways Tower, St. Mary's Road, Abhiramapuram, Chennai - 600 018.

Visit us at TVS Emerald Enclave, Nedungundram, Perungalathur, Chennai - 600 063.

RERA Number: TN/01/Building/0276/2018 | www.tnrera.in

TVS Emerald
GreenAcres



From the MD's Desk

Dear Members,

Season's Greetings! A glorious New Year to all of you!

2019 is here, and how! The past year has been eventful for us and as we mark a year post the relaunch of the Sterling brand, we are proud to announce the opening of two Sterling resorts—Sterling Atharva - Jaipur and Sterling Mount Abu—in one of India's iconic tourist destinations, Rajasthan. We now have a variety of destinations within the state—from the cultural splendour of Jaipur to the serene hills of Mount Abu to the jungles of Sariska; I invite you to explore all these different facets with Sterling. Look out for

more announcements as we have many more exciting destinations coming up.

I am excited to let you know about our all-new website 'sterlingholidays.com' fashioned to suit our customers' changing preferences and bring alive online our brand promise 'Holiday Differently'. Not only can our members now complete their booking and all other transactions online, the website presents a whole host of curated experiences across all destinations, engaging videos, and a lot more that are sure to make for an enjoyable, user-friendly digital experience.

Another holiday season is round the corner and all our resorts await you, packed with unique experiences and new discoveries that are an integral part of holidays at Sterling. Dabble in sand art on the pristine beaches of Puri, immerse yourself in the culture of the Nilgiri tribes at Ooty, enjoy a tea trail at Darjeeling, or experience star gazing at Corbett—unwind the way you choose and usher in 2019 in style.

As the New Year dawns, I am hoping to see you all holiday at our resorts. May 2019 be the year of discoveries and experiences for you.

Holiday Differently!

Ramesh Ramanathan
Managing Director



6

Contents



14



18



22

FEATURES

- 4** **MOPLAH CUISINE**
Exotic flavours of Malabar leave you craving for more.
- 6** **MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE**
Jaipur and Mount Abu have added new shades to Sterling's palette.
- 10** **FOR THE PERFECT SHOT**
Smartphones have taken over bulky DSLRs.
- 14** **TRAVEL PLANNER**
Want to plan ahead for 2019? Here's a long list to choose from.
- 16** **POTPOURRI OF EXPERIENCES**
What's in store at Sterling Wayanad and Sterling Ooty - Fern Hill?
- 18** **MALDIVES: 1% LAND 100% FUN**
Immerse in the enchanting beauty of the Maldives coastline.
- 22** **WHERE THE SUN SHINES**
Nothing more invigorating than a cultural feast at the start of the year.
- 24** **AN EXOTIC INDULGENCE**
Sundowner by the beach, or dinner under the stars or by the riverside? Weigh your options.

- 13 GUEST SPEAK
- 21 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR/
DIGITAL HIGHLIGHTS
- 26 WELLNESS SPECIAL FEATURE
- 28 CROSSWORD

For Spenta Multimedia
Executive Publisher:
Maneck Davar

Printed by
Spenta Multimedia
Pvt.Ltd.

Editorial:
Ashutosh Gotad

Tel: 022-24811010.
Fax: 022-24811021

Design:
Brett Byron Collaco

For promotional and
editorial inputs and
queries please write in
to purplehues@
sterlingholidays.com

For Purple Hues
Managing Editor:
Peshwa Acharya
Co-ordinators
Kavitha Ganesan
Sneha Bose



GIVE YOUR SKIN NEW LIFE WITH
THE ULTIMATE DEEP CLEANSE.

DISCOVER THE EXPLOSIVE POWER OF

BRAZILIAN VOLCANIC GOLD CLAY

RICH IN RARE MINERALS FOUND
DEEP WITHIN THE EARTH'S CORE

- ✓ Ultra-Purifying
- ✓ Intensely Hydrating
- ✓ Antioxidant-Rich
- ✓ Luxurious Post-Wash Feel



ENJOY AN EXCLUSIVE 15% OFF
USE CODE **STERLING15**

Head to
www.rawnaturecompany.com
to redeem this special offer!

MOPLAH CUISINE: CULTURAL CONFLUENCE IN A POT

Reflecting age-old intermingling of Arab and local cultures, Moplah cuisine encodes trans-oceanic stories.

The Indian subcontinent, being rich in resources and having a large coastline, has played host to visitors and traders from other regions since ancient times.

For instance, as far back as the fourth century BCE, Arab traders were following the monsoon winds to India in search of goods to trade. These links between Arab traders and Kerala also fomented an exchange of culture, helping in the formation of Moplah communities that still thrive mainly, though not exclusively, in the modern state of Kerala.

Even today, Arab influences (among others) are said to reflect in Moplah customs, particularly their cuisine. For instance, *pathiri* is a kind of rice bread that blends local and Arab cultures. Moplah cuisine is predominantly non-vegetarian: *aleesa* (made of broken wheat and meat with ghee, onion, and coconut), *kozhi ada* (chicken pockets), *kallummakkaya* (mussels) curry, and *erachi* (meat) *puttu* are among the exotic delights.

Malabari parottas and ghee rice are a perfect accompaniment to the non-vegetarian curries.

Eggs and banana are used liberally in many snacks like *unnakkaya* (deep-fried, boiled ripe banana paste covering a mixture of cashew, raisins and sugar), *pazham nirachathu* (ripe banana filled with coconut grating, molasses or sugar), *muttamala* made of eggs, and *chattipathiri*, baked, layered flour bread with rich filling. Biryani (spelled as biriyani in Kerala) among Moplah communities is cooked in the 'dum' style, with heat applied both to the top and bottom of the cooking pot.

Moplah cuisine features lavish use of Thalassery pepper, cardamom, cloves, and coconut oil.

In the recently held culinary competition at Chennai by SICA (South Indian Chefs Association) where all major hotel brands had participated Sterling won 4 medals (1 Gold, 1 Silver, 2 Bronze). Here is the Moplah recipe, which won Sterling the first prize.



Malabari Fish Curry

Ingredients

Seer fish	100 gm
Grated coconut	50 gm
Ginger	1/4th inch
Pureed tamarind	1/2 cup
Salt	1 tsp
Powdered turmeric	1/4th tsp
Green chillies	2 small
Red chilli powder	1/2 tsp
Finely chopped shallots	2 tbsps

Method

1. Grind the coconut and turmeric powder with a little water to form a fine paste.
2. Combine the tamarind extract, red chilli powder, ginger, salt and green chillies in a pan. Add the ground coconut paste and mix well. Place the pan over a medium flame.
3. Simmer for two minutes. Add fish and salt. Cook for a few minutes till the mixture starts to harden.
4. Fry the tempering ingredients in coconut oil and add to the fish. Add the onions and stir gently. Remove after a minute. Serve hot with rice.

CHECK OUT OUR ALL NEW WEBSITE



sterlingholidays.com

UNIQUE DISCOVERIES & HOLIDAY EXPERIENCES
ONLINE HOLIDAY BOOKING
PERSONALIZED PROFILES & DASHBOARDS
AND A LOT MORE...

More than *meets* the eye

Centuries ago, when a king established his palace, the town grew around it and with every generation came an addition to the already present. Dominating structures shadowed the old corners but they all still exist as the unseen or unknown stories of the past.

Ami Bhat

With a rich heritage spanning hundreds of years, Rajasthan too has its unseen corners. One will be surprised at the marvellous tales that are waiting to be uncovered.

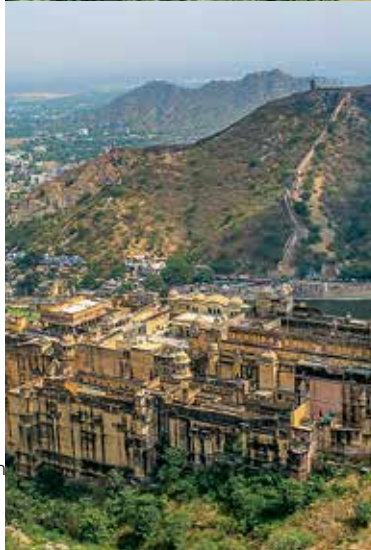
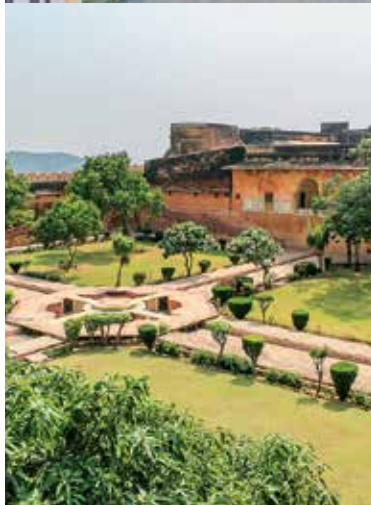
MEANDERING THROUGH THE PROTECTOR FORT – JAIGARH

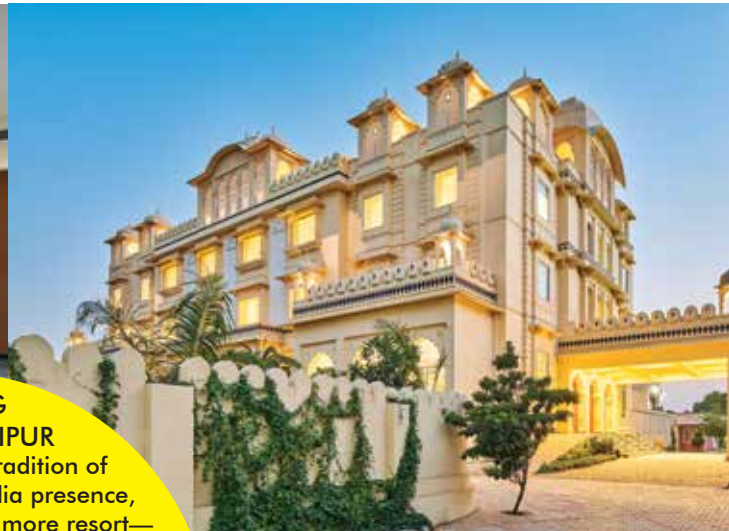
Stand anywhere in the famous Amer Fort of Jaipur and glance outside it. Trace the unending walls that run along the hills. They all culminate in another majestic structure that overlooks Amer Fort. This is its protector fort—Jaigarh—full of mysterious passages and intriguing secrets.

The seemingly ordinary water tank that greets you when you enter Jaigarh holds its biggest unsolved mystery. Hidden within the three levels of this gigantic storage of 6 million gallons of water is a massive treasure. The spoils of a successful siege by Raja Man Singh are rumoured to be safely stored here. However, despite numerous searches, these have never been found.

Go a little beyond along its huge walls and you will find the 'world's largest cannon on wheels'. The Jaivana was made in the fort foundry and was used only once. It was fired only for a test, never used in a war.

Enter the palace area and follow the zig-zag routes within to discover its royal gardens with some of the best views of Amer town and the valleys around. The





**STERLING
ATHARVA-JAIPUR**
Staying true to its tradition of establishing a pan-India presence, Sterling has added one more resort—Sterling Atharva - Jaipur—to its network. Spread across a sprawling 6-acre plot, it offers world-class service, exquisite cuisine, and many recreational activities. Its palatial rooms and cottages, luscious green lawns, spa and swimming pool, and restaurants make sure guests have a comfortable stay, while enjoying authentic village and Nature walks, jeep safaris to Boraj Fort, polo matches, and much more.

summer palace of the king has a puppeteer ready to entertain you while the Zenana area is perfect to experience the scintillating play of light and shadow.

Below the confusing passages of the palace lie hidden underground tunnels leading to various parts of Amer and the town. In fact, one of them has been excavated and you can try reaching Jaigarh halfway through the passage from Amer Fort.

OPENING THE WINDOWS OF HAWA MAHAL

Whether you are in Jaipur for the first time or the umpteenth, the iconic landmark—Hawa Mahal is an unmissable stop. It is a giant screen that allowed women of the royal family to peek, unseen, through one of its 950 windows and enjoy the festivities that took place in the square outside.

The palace, shaped like Krishna’s crown, has rooms at 5 distinct levels. Level one—Sharad Mandir—will enthrall you with its open courtyard and fountains that add colour to Holi

celebrations. For those who liked to watch the celebrations, the second level, with its open pavilions, was a great vantage point. Behind the pavilions is Ratan Mahal, which has eclectic rooms with gorgeous, stained glass.

The narrow passages with an incline allow you to reach the next level, Vichitra Mahal (meaning unusual palace), known for its closed doors. These were opened only when the Maharaja came to offer prayers in front of the Lord Krishna idol kept inside. The fourth level will delight you with its light and views while the last level, Hawa Mandir, will blow you off with its cool breeze.

It is not only the dazzling display of architecture within the palace that will grip you but also the views of the pink city, the Nahargarh fort, and the City Palace.

CRAFTING BLUE POTTERY

A walk through any of the local markets of Jaipur will introduce you to the famous blue pottery. You might think that the designs are an anomaly for no two pieces are alike. However, this is not the captivating part of this art form. It is what goes behind the scenes that makes the traditional blue pottery an art to discover.

A Persian art, this form of pottery made its way into Jaipur through the Mughal courts. What makes it unusual is that it is not made on a potter’s wheel. It is in fact, created in a plaster of Paris cast. The raw materials used are fuller’s earth (Multani mitti) and quartz, which are mixed into a dough using *gond katira*, a kind of gum.

The dough is cast using pre-made moulds. Once dried, it is trimmed and shaped to

perfection before being put into an oven. The baked artifact is glazed in a slurry of quartz, refined flour (*maida*) and water. This is then hand-painted to create those typical Jaipur designs. Remember to check out the heritage pieces that are displayed in various Jaipur museums and palaces.





EXPLORING THE TEMPLES OF ACHALGARH FORT

Mount Abu, the land of the famous Dilwara temples, has plenty more for you to explore. Achalgarh Fort features among them. The 10th century ruins found on the outskirts of Mount Abu make a great place for rock climbing. It is quite an experience to hike through the Hanuman Pol gate and make your way to the inner palace bound by the second gate, Champa Pol.

No doubt the ruined palace makes for a great exploration, but it is actually the temples within the fort that have a mystic quality. The Achaleswar Mahadev temple dedicated to Lord Shiva has an unusual

Nandi. The holy bull is made of *panchaloha* (five metals)—copper, gold, silver, brass and zinc. The marble temple has stunning idols and has poetry etched on its walls. At the first glimpse, these look opaque; however, light a candle behind them and they turn translucent.

The Dashavatar temple is yet another fascinating place of worship. It awes visitors with stone carvings of deities, in various poses, on its walls and at the entrance. Before you turn around, remember to visit the stone buffaloes at the Mandakini lake. As the story goes, the lake was filled with ghee and three demons disguised as buffaloes made it impure by grazing in it. The then king slew them and saved the lake.



STERLING MOUNT ABU

An erstwhile summer resort for the royalty of Rajasthan, Mount Abu is the state's only hill station. The newly opened Sterling Mount Abu uses methods of natural landscaping to preserve the inimitable beauty of its surroundings. Its intricately designed guest rooms, fitness centre, state-of-the-art conference hall, poolside bar, multi-cuisine restaurant, and spa make for a cosy stay.

STUMBLING UPON A GHOST TOWN WHILE SEEKING TIGERS

A safari through Sariska Tiger Reserve is not just about looking for tigers and leopards. It can take you to towns riddled with mystery. Head over to the ghost town of Bhangarh. Considered to be one of the most haunted places in India, this empty town is bound to send shivers down your spine.

Despite that, the lure of the town lies in its abandoned palace. The crumbling walls whisper a story if you are willing to listen—that of a black magician who tried to woo a princess and was crushed by a stone. His dying words cursed the town, bringing its glorious times to an end.

Walk along the Johari bazaar that has caved in and you will be transported back to the days when it might have been buzzing. Climb up the palace and gaze down from the Queen's chamber. Discover the



beautiful Gopinath temple with its elegant roof, intricately carved ceilings, and still-intact idols. Along the way, you might discover the royal dancer's home. There are plenty of other secrets that are waiting to be unveiled in the heritage destinations of Rajasthan. All one needs to do is look at the obvious with a refined eye. One can then be sure to stumble upon the unseen.

Did you know?

From the Hawa Mahal to the City Palace and even the little homes and shops around, the rose pink colour of the buildings has given Jaipur the sobriquet of Pink City. It was never designed to be so until the year 1876. Prince Albert and Queen Victoria embarked on a tour of India. The then Maharaja of Jaipur, Sawai Ram Singh II, wanted to create an atmosphere of hospitality. He got the city painted in the colour of warmth—pink. His wife liked it so much that a rule was passed to ensure that only pink was to be used for the buildings. Ever since then, the city continues to welcome all with the same shade and still remains pink as ever.



FOR THE PERFECT SHOT

The advent of dual- and quad-camera smartphones with premium quality lens has been a game changer in the field of photography, as more and more enthusiasts have started preferring their highly capable smartphone cameras to bulky DSLRs and dwindling point-and-shoot ones.

Ashwin Rajagopalan



Capture spontaneous shots of multiple subjects at once, using a wide-angle lens.

Smartphone cameras have made great progress over the last couple of years, making the conventional point-and-shoot camera all but redundant. I have been snapping all my travel photos on my phone camera way before Android became mainstream and the iPhone was even launched. All it takes to produce stellar images is a smartphone camera that matches your requirement and some simple steps to optimise it for that perfect shot!

THE BASICS

Begin with keeping the lens clean, using a micro-fibre cloth or a cotton swab. Use the grid option on your camera—the horizontal and vertical lines which can be

accessed through the Settings menu—that divides the screen into nine squares. This allows you to apply one of the golden rules of photography, Rule of Thirds, where the most important subjects of the picture are to be placed along the gridlines and the intersections. Be mindful of shakes and moves. Even the slightest shake can make your images blurry. Look for devices that come with optical image stabilisation such as iPhone XR, XS, and XS Max.

XS and XS Max also come with Portrait mode with adjustable blur—it allows the user to adjust the amount of blur in the background to give the photo an amazing level of depth.

THE SELFIE

Like with any picture, a strong



source of light from behind you can kill the perfect selfie. Make sure light is falling on you from the front or the side. Use the Beauty mode to smoothen the minor imperfections, but do so judiciously!

A selfie is usually about you or your friends or family crammed into the frame. But what good is a selfie with Eiffel Tower in the backdrop where the magnificent landmark is barely visible. Google Pixel 3 and 3XL have a wide-angle front camera that makes room for you and whom you want to be with, in the picture.

LOW LIGHT

Do not reach for your flash in low light conditions. Sometimes you can shoot more dramatic images in the dark than in broad daylight. Use ambient sources of light to your advantage to create vivid silhouettes and shadows. Google Pixel 3 and OnePlus 6T have dedicated night modes.

Right: A flashless, low-light photo can drastically make the subject look better with a simple tweak of the settings.



MANUAL MODE

Look for the ISO setting that adjusts your camera's sensitivity to light. Typically, a lower ISO setting results in less noisy images but there are some scenarios when shooting with a higher ISO setting helps. You can also experiment with white balance. The only way to find out is to go out there and click some images in Pro or Manual mode.

EXTRAS

2018's premier smartphones address some of the key limitations that they had to grapple with in the past. Huawei Mate20 Pro features a triple-camera set-up engineered by Leica offering 3X and 5X 'lossless' zoom, whereas Samsung's Galaxy A7 offers a wide-angle lens that works really well for urban setting and landscapes.

So, on your next vacation, ditch the overrated DSLR, for now you know how to make optimum use of your phone's camera to take amazing photos, thereby creating memories for a lifetime.

Ashwin Rajagopalan is one of India's leading lifestyle writers. Smartphones and consumer tech are foremost among his areas of interest. He has been clicking images exclusively on smartphones since 2006; many of these have been published in leading travel and lifestyle publications.



Enchantment of the Forest

Ambika Gondane, Gurgaon

My sister and I went on a week-long trip to Sariska; we stayed at Sterling Sariska. I have travelled all over the world, but I would be hard-pressed to name a more fun holiday than the one I had there.

I was surprised that though we went in the full heat of the Rajasthan summer, we spotted many animals and birds during our jungle safari.

What I personally loved about Sariska is how steeped in history it is. From my bedroom, I could see the prison of Mughal prince Dara Shikoh. Bhangarh, touted to be the most haunted place in India, is just a few hours' drive.

Among the ruins of the temple and the quiet of the forest, I became a curious and imaginative teenager again, someone I thought I had lost.

I will always remember that memorable trip.

An Unforgettable Experience

Vinod Kumar T.S. & family



It has been an amazing three-and-a-half years relationship with Sterling. I have been thinking for a long time to pen my experience after visiting 11 of their resorts.

It is only because of Sterling that I could travel with two senior citizens and a kid to these places without any trouble, and guaranteed good, hygienic food.

I would like to share my experience at Sterling Darjeeling. The resort is close to Ghoom Monastery and Ghoom toy train junction.

As in all their resorts, right from the restaurant to the travel desk, all the staff were very friendly. The rooms were neat and clean. Sterling is the resort with the best views of the Kanchenjunga. Overall, our stay at the resort was an unforgettable experience.

JANUARY

14th - 16th



International Kite Flying Festival Jaipur, Rajasthan

This colourful festival is celebrated for 3 days, starting from Makar Sankranti that falls on January 14. It attracts several kite fliers from across the country who put their skills to test. Witness a vibrant display of kites in myriad shapes and sizes in the sky.

FEBRUARY

25th - 28th*

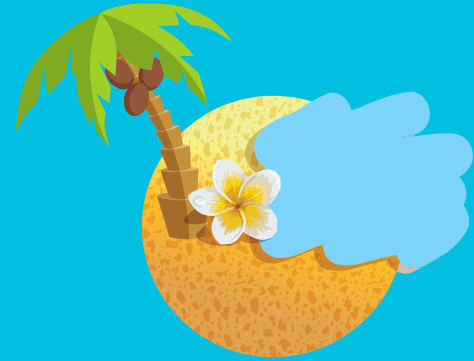


Lumina Lantern Festival Gachibowli Stadium, Hyderabad

Witness a spectacular view as thousands of lanterns replace the stars in the sky! Get a chance to release a lantern, along with many others, amidst live music performances and delectable food to satiate younger hunger pangs.

MARCH

2nd - 5th



Goa Carnival Goa

Observed with great gusto and zeal, this carnival celebrates Goan culture and cuisine. The 4-day fest includes vibrant parades flocked by dancers, bands of performers, and people in colourful costumes. Dancing troupes, live performers, competitions, and floats add to the vibrancy.

Sterling Calendar 2019



Sakewa Festival Sikkim

The entire state of Sikkim comes alive during this cultural festival celebrated by the Kirat Khambu Rai community to pay homage to Mother Earth. The 9-day-long festival includes traditional routines like Sili, a dance performance depicting the behaviour of birds and animals; Chasum Sili, which traces the entire cycle of sowing, reaping, cooking and eating rice; and more.

APRIL

22nd - 27th*



Doongri Forest Festival Manali, Himachal Pradesh

This is a 3-day festival organised by only women, during which they dance in traditional clothing to honour Goddess Hadimba. The forest festival attracts many tourists.

MAY

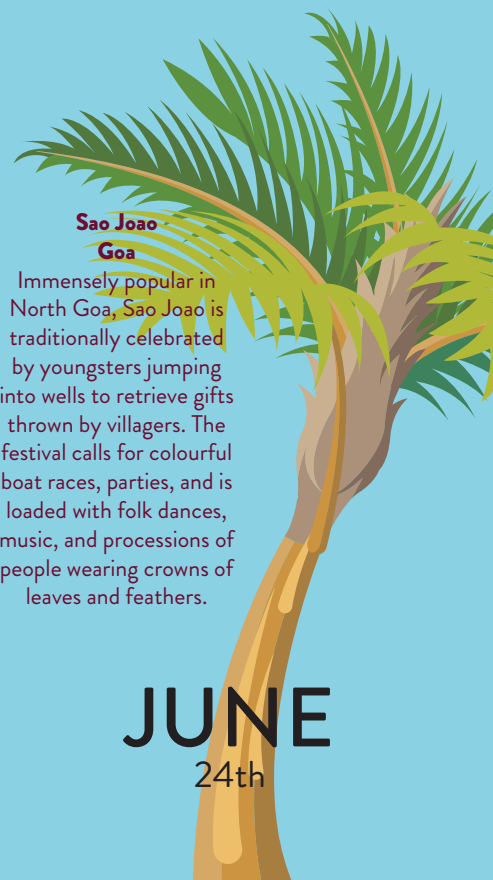
13th - 18th*

Sao Joao Goa

Immensely popular in North Goa, Sao Joao is traditionally celebrated by youngsters jumping into wells to retrieve gifts thrown by villagers. The festival calls for colourful boat races, parties, and is loaded with folk dances, music, and processions of people wearing crowns of leaves and feathers.

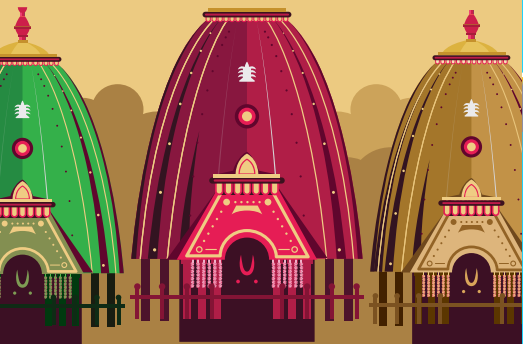
JUNE

24th



JULY

4th



Jagannath Puri Rath Yatra
Puri, Odisha

One of the largest and oldest festivals, the Rath Yatra at Jagannath Temple is an annual ritualistic journey that takes place between Puri's main temple and Gundicha Temple. The sheer size and energy of the procession is sure to amaze and astound onlookers.

AUGUST

17th*



Kailash Fair
Agra, Uttar Pradesh

Legend has it that Lord Shiva appeared in Kailash in the form of a *lingam*. To mark this sacred occasion, devotees gather here during the fair and offer their prayers. The brightly decorated streets and umpteen number of stalls selling food, sweets, toys, and jewellery are a big draw.

SEPTEMBER

11th



Onam
Kerala

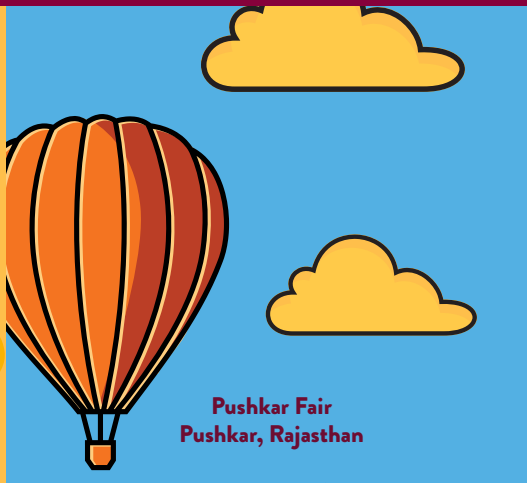
Welcoming the harvest season, Onam is celebrated in Kerala for 10 days. The festivities are a true reflection of the state's unique tradition and culture—marked by elaborate feasts, folk songs, *pookkalam* (flower beds), and traditional white-and-gold clothing.

Mark your 2019 calendar as we recommend exciting destinations you should visit each month of the year.



Nainital Autumn Festival (Sharad Utsav)
Nainital, Uttarakhand

Sharad Utsav welcomes a large number of visitors with its rich bouquet of cultural programmes and folk dances, which showcase the heritage of the state. It is also a chance to enjoy concerts by renowned Sufi singers.



Pushkar Fair
Pushkar, Rajasthan

The week-long exposition features camels and camel riders, both clad in traditional attire. One unforgettable way of experiencing it is from a hot-air balloon—looking down upon the hubbub of human activity surrounded by the sprawling desert. Rajasthani musicians and dancers add to the magic.



International Sand Art Festival
Konark, Odisha

Shaping sand to form sculptures, artists create complex and beautiful installations during this festival. The sands of Chandrabhaga Beach transform into intricate exhibits—of not just sand, but of bronze, wood, and stone too.

OCTOBER

14th - 26th*

NOVEMBER

4th - 12th

DECEMBER

1st - 5th

* Dates mentioned are tentative. Kindly check with an official source before making travel plans.



POTPOURRI OF EXPERIENCES



Holiday experiences with Sterling come in myriad hues, each telling a unique story. Our bloggers unravel the charm of Sterling Wayanad and Sterling Ooty - Fern Hill.

Fun at Sterling comes in many forms
- Varun Khokhar



“ A beautiful property with an amazing view; the nights are more alluring with the cold breeze. Succulent food that highlights Wayanad’s authentic flavours is a must-try. A plethora of exciting outdoor activities— zipline, paintball, swimming, night safari, archery, air pistol shooting—ups the fun quotient further.”

Sterling Wayanad offers a host of activities for adults and kids alike.



Creatures of the night
-Sagar Sakre

The night safari promises to be full of thrills and chills.

“ The night safari planned by the resort was exciting. It happened to be a no moon day, it was completely dark and we boarded the jeep. We soon spotted a big herd of deer who curiously looked at us while we were trying to click their photos with flash on... My eyes were eagerly waiting to spot a leopard as it had been often sighted here. We finally spotted an elephant standing just by the side of the road.”



‘Foodgasm’ on the menu
- Nameesh Rajamane

“ Executive chef Satish, along with his team, curates some amazing dishes for breakfast and dinner. For breakfast, there are plenty of options like *puttu* and *kadala curry*, *chole bature*, *dosas*, *idlis*, *appam*, *puri*, *paratha*, *sambar*, and *chutney*. For larger groups, distinctive experiences such as the traditional Kerala *sadya*, and special barbecue dinner are available. Another memorable experience is the high tea. Served in a special room, it includes delectable treats such as chocolates, pastries, puffs, cookies, cold coffee and chocolate milk, and hot tea and coffee.”

The resort boasts a magnificent spread of culinary delights.





Living among the Todas
- Reshma Narasing

“The tiny hamlets, culture, and the rich history of Todas—a unique experience for someone looking to go offbeat! We went through the wedding photographs of a Toda couple that showcased their traditional rituals. A shawl intricately hand-embroidered by Toda women in white, black, and red is an integral part of their customary attire. While men wrap it around, womenfolk drape it as a skirt. We tasted their special cuisine *ottidinash*, a sweet dish made of boiled rice, buttermilk, and butter from buffalo milk.”



Hand-embroidered Toda shawls speak volumes about the artistry that has gone into their making.



The traditional dance of the Toda and Bagada tribes is full of zest and zeal.

Dancing our way into a starlit night
- Nandini Swaminathan

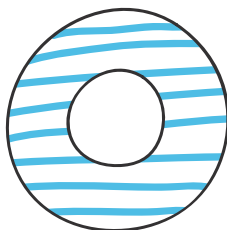
“It was evening, and the area surrounding the resort was silent and still. It was pitch-dark and the sky was dotted with millions of stars. Sterling Ooty - Fern Hill organises bonfire nights for guests and invites people from the Toda and Badaga tribes to showcase their traditional dances and spend time with us.”

“Sterling Ooty - Fern Hill was not just about exquisite food and stay but more about connecting with Nature, understanding the life and customs of the Toda tribes, visiting private tea plantations, and exploring chocolate factories. I wore the hat of a local for three days and holidayed differently!”

Holidaying differently
- Angela Carson



A visit to the chocolate factory is a must on your to-do list while visiting Ooty.





Maldives

1% land.
100% fun.

Maldives is a land with virtually no land. The land to water ratio of just 1:99 makes it the 'go to place' to experience island life at its best.

Maldives, a popular honeymoon destination, is now open for all: families, couples, and even backpackers. First-timers fall in love with this tropical holiday destination. Old-timers fall in love again and again. Maybe it is because, as author Adrian Neville puts it, "it's hard to have a bad holiday in the Maldives."

A PLACE TO CATCH UP WITH YOURSELF

Though you may travel to Maldives with a list of things to do, once you are here, chances are you will do none of them. Your room itself will prove to be an island of pure bliss. Observe fish through glass floors, jump into the sea from your private deck, or simply sit back and soak in the sunshine. You might never want to leave your room; but if curiosity gets the better of you to discover what lies beyond the white

sandy beaches and turquoise water, Maldives surely packs a punch.

NATIONAL MUSEUM

To get a glimpse into Maldives' history, pay a visit to National Museum. It holds a vast collection of valuable objects that showcase the country's rich cultural heritage. The museum is located in the former Sultan's palace and has ornate attires, coins, and jewellery of the royalty.

MALÉ

Malé, the capital city, is a hop, skip, and jump away from Hulhule airport—the main airport in Maldives. Quite a contrast to the serene resort island, Malé is always abuzz with activity; here, you can get a glimpse into the Maldivian daily life. Do not miss a visit to the local fish market—a Maldivian's major source of income. Pick some fresh catch and get it cooked at a restaurant for a scrumptious meal.

THE CUISINE

Food is the best way to connect with the local life in Maldives. Fish and coconut are two items abundantly available and feature heavily in the cuisine. The most popular breakfast is *mas huni*, a mix of shredded coconut, tuna, and onions eaten with *roshi*—a

type of roti that you find in India too.

SEA LIFE

Maldives is all calm and quiet; that is, until you experience its underwater. Get up close and personal with some beautiful creatures underwater. The crystal-clear water offers incredible visibility, giving you a great view of the thriving marine life. The one experience you ought not to miss is a swim with the majestic manta rays. These calm and peaceful sea creatures are great to behold. Hanifaru Bay is said to be the best place for manta spotting. Dolphin excursion in the Maldives is another thrilling experience. The resorts usually make arrangement for these. Maldives has one of the most active and playful dolphins you will ever see.

GET, SET, HOP

Island hopping is a great way to explore the different islands. Maldives has about 1190 islands, out of which, only 200 are inhabitable.

The beauty of Maldives that you see on screensavers and wallpapers is exactly the same. The turquoise water stretching beyond the reach of your eyes, the bright sun, blue lagoons, and Maldives' active water sports and marine life will make you want to come back year after year.

All said and done, whatever you choose to indulge in during your stay, one thing we urge you to do is have fun—or as a Maldivian would say, '*majaa kollah chey*'.

STAY



RCI affiliated resorts in Maldives include:

Filitheyo Island Resort *Faafu Atoll, Maldives 20-119*

Hondaafushi Island Resort *Haa Dhaalu Atoll, Maldives 20-060*

Medhufushi Island Resort *Meemu Atoll, Maldives 20-119*



Sterling Advantage

With Sterling Membership programmes, you can avail RCI affiliation, which entitles you to exchange holidays in over 100 countries including Morocco.

For more details, get in touch with us at
1800 3000 2727 | Monday to Saturday | 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM



RCI

Let's GO
Maldives
@just ₹18,999

Come experience RCI's newest resort in Maldives: **Hondaafushi**. Located in the pristine Northern Haa Dhaalu Atoll, here you can indulge in snorkeling, Manta Ray spotting or explore the dive spots nearby. But if you'd prefer to stay back and unwind, the island's 2-kilometre long beach is just perfect.

Now, with RCI, you can avail an attractive all-inclusive plan and a never-before Split week offer. All saying just one thing: it's time to hit the beach. To book, talk to our guide today!

Call: **1.800.208.2131** | Log on to **RCI.com**

 [rciindiavacations](#)  [company/rciindia](#)

Now you can also explore Sri Lanka, Dubai, Thailand
and many more destinations through RCI



Because your vacation means the world to us™

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



It was indeed a pleasure to receive the first issue of *Purple Hues*. The quality and the content of the magazine are excellent. I have been a member of Sterling for many years, but never visited their properties. However, *Purple Hues* has been an eye-opener for me and I will now make a zealous attempt to start visiting Sterling's resorts.

I wish you all the best in maintaining the good standards.

Regards,
Ramesh Chari

Write to us with your feedback at purplehues@sterlingholidays.com

WHAT'S NEW ON SOCIAL

Presenting on our social our very own Discovery Mascot Raja Rex who will take you on unique, fun-filled journeys and experiences. Here are some of our posts capturing his exploits that went viral on social media.

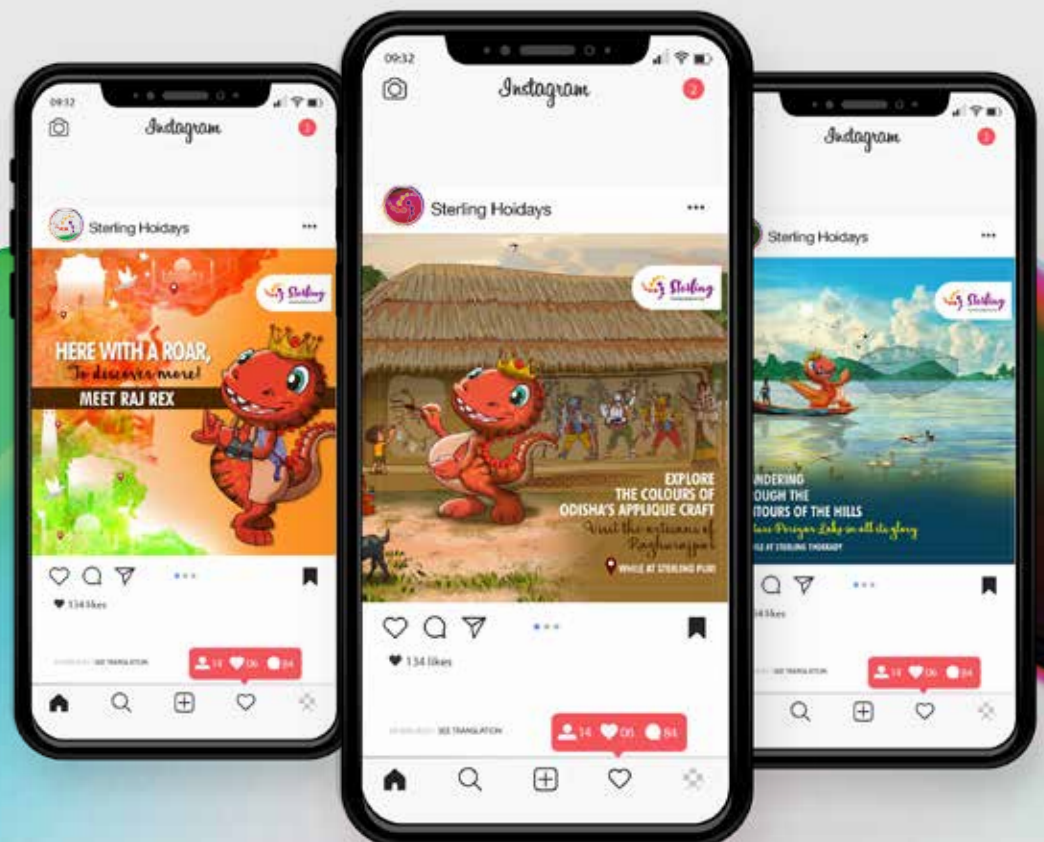
For more such great posts and a lot more, follow us on



@sterlingholidays



@Sterling Holidays

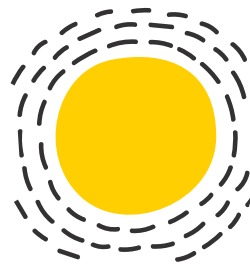




Where The Sun Shines

Planning a holiday mid-January is the new cool. What better way to begin the year than by celebrating a good harvest!

Nalini Ramachandran



There's a nip in the air. Winter has finally settled in, and the year has brought in an abundant yield. Harvest festivals are joyous, vibrant occasions. Not just green, but myriads of colours take over a traveller's senses. And whichever destination you choose, a unique experience welcomes you.

MAKAR SANKRANTI: MAHARASHTRA AND GUJARAT

After the winter solstice, the sun moves towards the Tropic of Capricorn from the Tropic of Cancer. Astrologically speaking, it makes a transition (Sankranti) from the zodiac sign Sagittarius to Capricorn (Makar). Hence, the festival is commonly known as Makar

Sankranti and is dedicated to the sun god. It is at this time that the journey to Kumbh Mela begins.

LOHRI: PUNJAB AND HARYANA

The winter season is when the sowing of rabi crops begins. The cool climate and respect for the god of fire have made a large bonfire the shining

In Gujarat, a mass kite-flying competition is the highlight of the festival. A trip through Ahmedabad's Patang Bazaar just before the fest allows a peek into amazing kite design innovations. For a surreal experience, watch glowing sky lanterns dot the black-velvet night sky.

symbol of Lohri. People feed popped corn, puffed rice, sesame, and jaggery to the bonfire as they twirl around it. The music and dance do not just echo their inner joy; it is also in remembrance of the legendary hero, Dulla Bhatti.

BIHU: ASSAM

Assam's harvest festival, Bihu, is celebrated thrice in a year—as Rongali Bihu (mid-April), Kongali Bihu (mid-October), and Bhogali Bihu (mid-January, when the granaries are full). During Bhogali Bihu, the artistically created clay and straw huts—*bhela ghar*—are a major tourist attraction. However, as part of the



tradition, these huts, along with conical heaps of hay and wood known as *mejis*, are set afire. Later, charred remains are tossed into the fields for good luck and a better yield the next year.

PONGAL: TAMIL NADU

The harvest festival of Tamil Nadu, Pongal, marks the beginning of the Thai month of the Tamil calendar. It spans four days: Bhogi Pongal, when people

During Lohri, children go around their neighbourhoods singing well-known Lohri songs. One of these narrates the story of Rai Abdullah Khan Bhatti or Dullah Bhatti. For having stolen from the rich and given to the poor, he became popular as the Robin Hood of Punjab. To keep the tradition of his generosity alive, people happily gift sweets and chocolates to children.

The most iconic part of these festivities is the Bihu dance performed by the locals in traditional red-and-white attire. The dance form is at least 300-plus years old—it is said that during Rongali Bihu celebrations in the late 17th century, then ruler of Ahom, Rudra Singha, had invited a troupe to perform the Bihu dance at the Ranghar fields.



There is an amusing tale about how the bull came to be the farm friend of humans. According to mythology, Shiva sent Basava, his bull, to Earth with a message: "Humans must have an oil bath every day and eat once a month." But Basava mixed it up and said, "Humans must eat every day and have an oil bath once a month." Shiva was furious when he realised what Basava had done. Foreseeing that humans will now have to produce much more food if they are to eat daily, Shiva banished Basava to Earth, making agricultural work alongside humans the bull's responsibility as well.

pray to the rain god, Indra; Surya Pongal, a day dedicated to sun god, Surya; Mattu Pongal, a day devoted to cattle worship, is when you can witness the Jallikattu races; and Kaanum Pongal, a day that stresses on familial bonds, especially between brothers and sisters.

Sterling destinations across the country act as the perfect foil for one to set up a base and experience the flavours of the season.

Nalini Ramachandran is an author, storyteller, and editor. She has written for and edited magazines on diverse subjects such as innovation, travel, lifestyle, and culture, and coffee-table books. As an author, her recent publications include the graphic-novel biography, *APJ Abdul Kalam: One Man, Many Missions*, and the non-fiction children's book, *Lore of the Land: Storytelling Traditions of India*.

AN EXOTIC INDULGENCE

For the discerning, an experience is not just about the moment; it is rather an affair of a lifetime. And Sterling has cherry-picked many such experiences across its resorts—wherein the natural setting, ambience, and delicious fare offer you a chance to spend quality time with your loved ones.

Sundowner by the beach at STERLING PURI

Leaving behind the franticness of city life for a more peaceful atmosphere, arrive at a place where serenity is ubiquitous. The view you would capture is not of a regular beachside, but of the Bhargavi river meandering its way into Bay of Bengal. The calm environment sets the perfect stage for a dinner with your loved ones under a star-studded evening sky. The undulating flames of a bonfire build an aura of romance in the air. As you dine under the gaze of the stars, our chefs can whip up a scrumptious barbecue. Or, you could give it a personal touch by preparing yourself delicacies of your liking.



Dinner under the stars at STERLING MUSSOORIE

Every evening, the Doon valley, situated in the hills of Mussoorie, is bathed in glorious starlight. As the stars of the night sky congregate to form a natural canopy, the atmosphere gets even more entrancing. A blissful dinner with your significant other in this scenic setting is the ideal way to celebrate a special occasion. Though this experience can be had all year around, the period from November to January makes it even more enticing as the winterline makes its miraculous appearance over the valley.



Dinner by the riverside at STERLING DINDI

The Godavari river lends the Dindi resort an enviable charm. Further, the placid backwaters and sprawling coconut groves weave a dreamy magic. Discover the joy of dining by the riverside. You can enjoy the choicest of seafood handpicked for you and prepared to your liking—grilled, barbecued, fried, or stirred. Taking this laidback experience a level further, you can plan a fishing trip, all the while exploring the bends and turns of the river, braving its currents and rapids, and coming back with your haul.





ON THE PATH TO REJUVENATION

India has a rich tradition of massage therapies, which combined with ayurvedic treatments, can do wonders for your body and soul.

Are you entirely drained by the chaotic lifestyle that you lead and looking for a retreat that would rejuvenate your senses? There is nothing more soothing than unique Indian spa therapies that come with an extensive menu of pampering sessions—they heal both the body and the mind. Here are some of the exotic therapies and treatments for spa aficionados.

It highlights the importance of head as the most superior part of the body. Lukewarm, medicated oil is used to completely massage the body of a person who is made to lie on a wooden plank called *droni*. A particular kind of massage oil is chosen based on the concerns of the individual. Special oils are combined with herbal essences for an incredible experience.



50 spas | 20 cities

www.tattvaspa.com

wecare@tattvaspa.com

Reservations: 9999835852

SHIRO ABHYANGA NASYA - TRADITIONAL AYURVEDIC TREATMENT

This treatment harmonises your relationship with your body and soul. *Shiro* is a Sanskrit word meaning head; *abhyanga* means massage. In ayurvedic texts, the human body is compared to a tree and the head is believed to be its root. This clearly

KHASI CURATIVE MESSAGES - THE NORTH-EAST

The unique feature of *khasi* curative massages is the *khasi* bath, which is a water massage that leaves you recharged and rejuvenated. The North-eastern states of India are a treasure trove of unique medicinal herbs. There are two kinds of massages—one for relaxation and

de-stressing, and the other for curative purposes. *Khem tynrai*—an elaborate procedure that seeks to disentangle and streamline the circulatory system of the body that is knotted due to stress or mild injuries—ushers in a great sense of bliss and promotes a feeling of overall well-being. This massage is followed by the *khasi* bath.

KALARI MASSAGE - SOUTH INDIA

Kalari massage is more like blending of the spirit, the mind, and the body. It boosts circulation of body fluids and also activates the lymphatic system. It opens up energy pathways in the body and improves vascular movement.

This holistic massage triggers the release of endorphins, thereby suppressing the feeling of pain and promotes a healing sensation.

HIMALAYAN SALT STONE SPA THERAPY

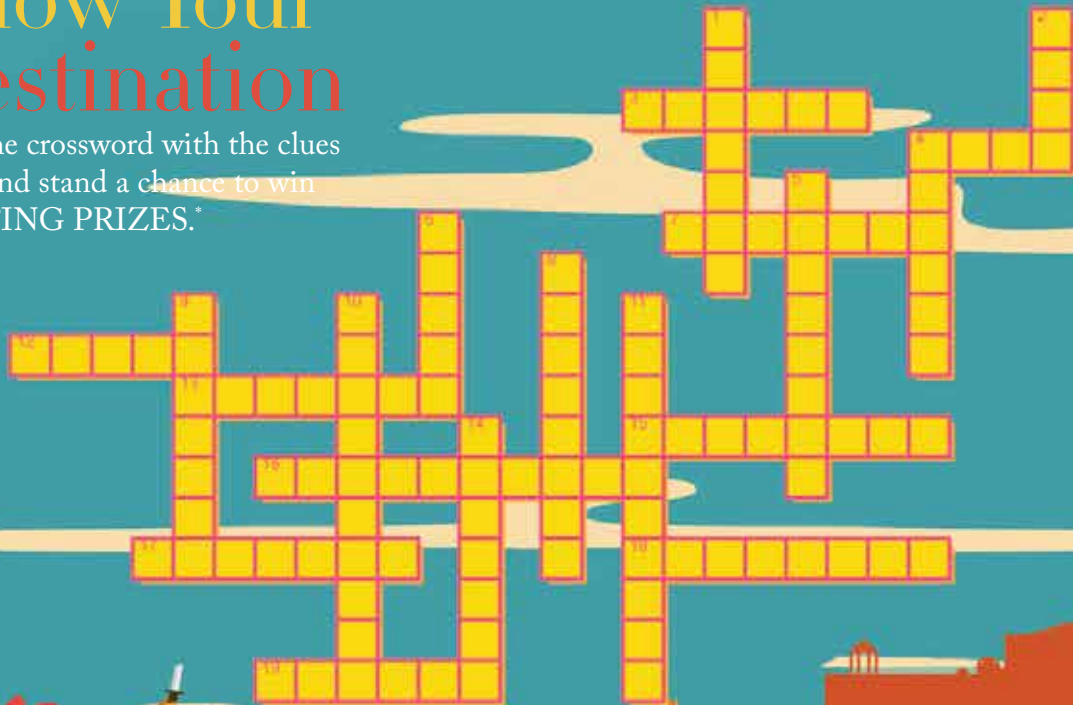
Natural salt is used for enhancing healing process, reducing stress, and improving the skin's condition in addition to addressing a wide range of other health issues. This massage reduces inflammation that results in illness and pain. The salt has antimicrobial properties and helps in detoxifying the body. The skin gets exfoliated during the session, and feels more refreshed.

This feature is sponsored by Tattva Spa.



Know Your Destination

Solve the crossword with the clues below and stand a chance to win EXCITING PRIZES.*



ACROSS

- 3 Viratnagar, near Jaipur, known for its strange, natural stone formations, is also called _____.
- 4 This bazaar in Jaipur is famous for embroidered garments.
- 7 Place famous for the eponymous white marble.
- 12 Mahatma Gandhi's ashes were immersed in this lake.
- 13 This is a famous spicy, non-vegetarian dish in Rajasthan.
- 15 _____ festival is held on Phalgun Poonima in Jaipur.
- 16 Jaipur was planned by _____ Bhattacharya.
- 17 Which is the largest saline lake near Jaipur?
- 18 _____ Tank is a manmade crocodile breeding park near Mt. Abu.
- 19 _____ is the hub of blue pottery in India.

DOWN

- 1 Amer Fort is connected to the _____ fort.
- 2 _____ Shikhar is the highest peak in Mt. Abu.
- 4 _____ Kumaris' headquarters of spiritual community is at Mt. Abu.
- 5 Mt. Abu is referred to as _____.
- 6 Mt. Abu is also known as an _____ in a desert.
- 8 Historically, Jaipur district was a part of this region.
- 9 Famous Vimal Vasahi and Lun Vasahi temples near Mt. Abu.
- 10 This is a famous stepwell near Jaipur.
- 11 World's largest free _____ festival is held in Jaipur.
- 14 Important festival related to spring, harvest, and marital fidelity.

To participate, just click a picture of the completed crossword and send it to purplehues@sterlingholidays.com
Your entries should reach us on or before 15th March 2019.

*Conditions apply

ALFAPARF
MILANO



A BOTTLE
OF **SHAMPOO**
A TUBE
OF **COLOR**



ON THE COVER: *A Vibrant World*

Rajasthan's original vibrancy and rustic charm have thrived through the changing times. See this come alive through the emotions and unalloyed joy on this elderly man's face. Experience the different facets of the state—famed palaces, sprawling deserts, pristine forests, and a lot more—with Sterling, through our resorts at Jaipur, Mount Abu, and Sariska.



sterlingholidays.com

Corporate Office: 4th floor, Purva Primus, No.
236 Okhiyampettai, Old Mahabalipuram Road,
Thoraipakkam, Chennai – 600097

Your feedback is valuable to us. Write to us at

purplehues@sterlingholidays.com

Bookings: reservations@sterlingholidays.com

Call us on 1860 419 2727

Mon to Sat | 9.30 am to 5.30 pm

