

June 2015

Sterling



A Sterling Holidays Magazine

WORLD

It's a wonderful world!



Cuisine

Lend a cool twist
to your holiday

Destination

Soak in the tranquillity of
the mountains in Gangtok

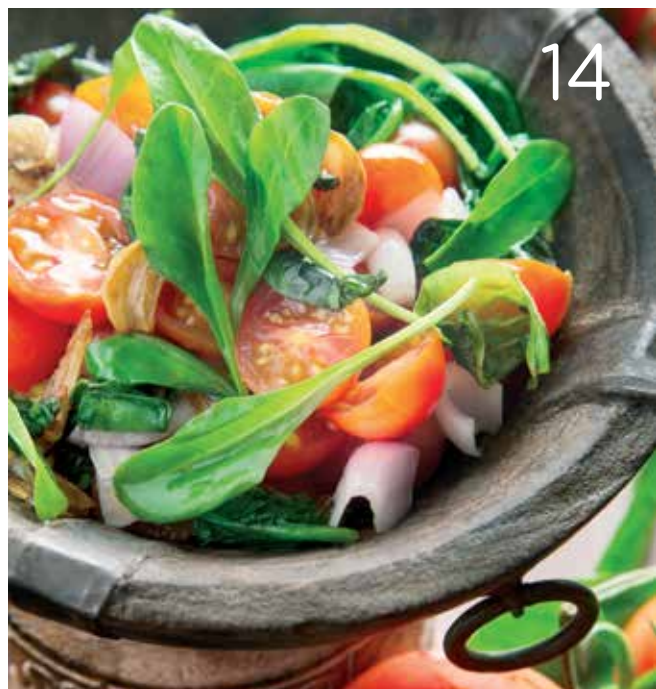
The purple haze of the setting sun captured with the swimming pool and bar in the foreground at our newest resort, Dindi - By The Godavari

Unfolding
holiday dreams

Vacation at
4 new resorts

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Get ready, go shoot!



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MD's Note



Namaste!

It gives me immense joy and pleasure to share with you that we have added four new resorts to the Sterling Holidays network this summer, and renewed and upgraded six resorts. We now have a bouquet of 24 resorts across the country.

The four new destinations—Corbett, Daman, Dindi and Shirdi—represent a large part of our endeavour to give you, our customers, more options to experience a Sterling holiday. Enjoy splendid views of the Ramganga river from your room when you stay at Corbett - Treetop Riverview, experience the rich culture of the Portuguese at Daman - Casa Tesoro, watch a golden sunset at Dindi - By The Godavari, and go on a pilgrimage to the abode of Sai Baba at Shirdi - Sai Wada. You can also visit our renewed and upgraded resorts, Darjeeling - Khush Alaya, Kodai - By The Valley, Ooty - Elk Hill, Manali - White Mist, Mussoorie - Dancing Leaves, and Yercaud - Rock Perch. I would like to welcome you to join us at any one of our resorts and treat yourself to a unique holiday experience, one that will create memories you will cherish forever.

I am also glad to announce that our resort Ooty - Fern Hill has been awarded the Traveller's Choice Award 2015 for Best Hotel in the destination by TripAdvisor. You can now also indulge in many newly introduced adventure activities such as zorbing, paintball, rappelling, and mountain biking during your stay at Fern Hill.

The next time you are on a holiday with us, our resorts will showcase a splendid display of talent by All Stars, our specialized team, who will ensure that your vacation is packed with fun and entertainment.

Our *Swachh Bharat* movement continues to promote cleanliness. Another eco-initiative that you can read about in this issue is the Save The Sparrow campaign that we recently launched. This encourages young guests at our resorts to build bird houses and take them back to their city homes.

I wish you all a great and amazing season ahead, filled with ecstatic moments, joyful days, and unforgettable memories.

Happy Holidays!

Ramesh Ramanathan

**“You don't need magic to disappear.
All you need is a destination.”**

– Anonymous

A tale of *four new* resorts

This season, Sterling members and guests have many reasons to smile and celebrate. Adding to our already existing wide range of holiday options, we have come up with a bouquet of four new offerings—at Corbett, Daman, Dindi, and Shirdi. Spot the tiger in the wilderness of Corbett, peep into the remnants of Portuguese culture at Daman, capture Godavari's splendour at Dindi, or go on a spiritual trail in Shirdi.

Over an hour's drive from the town of Ramnagar and nestled in the Himalayan foothills is Treetop Riverview, Sterling Holidays' paean to Nature's benevolence.

Dotted with water bodies and winding through a dense forest inhabited by wild animals, the path that leads up to the resort is in itself a slice of the larger picture—the fabulous jungle experience that awaits you at the Jim Corbett National Park.

A palpable sense of the Corbett ecosystem permeates the air as you relax in the cottages lined up in the valley surrounded by forested hills. The resort also overlooks the Ramganga river, an angler's delight. In a sense, Treetop Riverview is an extension



CORBETT
TREETOP
RIVERVIEW



4



of the national park expanse spread across 521 sq km of sal forests and rolling grasslands, with the Ramganga meandering through. One can never forget one is so close to India's largest national park. Listen to the sounds of the jungle—a distinct alarm call of a bird warning its co-species of a nearby predator is something to listen to.

The cottages have a sitout area, where





ready to shoot. Elephants, spotted deer, barking deer, sloth bear, chitals, and peacocks too could come your way.

The less adventurous could opt for the Corbett Museum at Dhangarhi; a visit to Kaladhungi is also an option if you want to know more about Jim Corbett. The naturalist's house has been converted into a museum showcasing his belongings and his relentless campaign for tiger conservation that culminated in the setting up of the national park in 1936. The Garjia Devi temple built over a huge rock in the Kosi river, and Dhikala, located on the edge of the Patli Dun Valley, offer unparalleled scenic snapshots of the beautiful landscape around.

you can stretch your legs and enjoy the sound of the gurgling Ramganga river. The nights here are the best, when the stars put up a scintillating show in the placid darkness.

The highlight of the holiday is the thrilling jeep or elephant safari that will take you into the Jim Corbett National Park. Home to about 50 mammal and over 550 bird species, the reserve's main attraction is the majestic Bengal tiger. The excitement is unmatched—following a tiger's trail with the help of an official guide, listening to monkey alarm systems, and holding your breath in anticipation of a sighting. Grab your camera, be

Once you have had your fill of adventure, you can treat yourself to the lavish spread at our restaurant. Don't forget to ask for Kumaoni specials.

Have an incredible jungle adventure that will let you explore the many sights and sounds of Nature's wonderful creations.

A three-hour drive from the crowded metropolis of Mumbai takes you to Daman—the quiet, quaint town that stands steeped in antiquity. And the Sterling Holidays' resort here has been named to match its cultural richness—Casa Tesoro, which means 'treasure house' in Portuguese.

There is an interesting facet of history that makes Daman a big draw—Diogo de Melo, the 9th Captain-major of Portuguese Ceylon, arrived here in the early 16th century when heading towards Ormuz. Caught in a violent storm, his boat was pushed towards the coast of Daman. It was soon established as a Portuguese colony and remained so for over 400 years. It is now a union territory, which is divided into Moti Daman and Naani Daman by the Damanganga river.

The resort is situated in Naani Daman, and with its 52 well-furnished rooms, is the perfect place to take a break from your busy routine. Its two huge banquet halls make it ideal for corporate events and social gatherings; there is also a poolside lawn with a gazebo and stage. Casa Tesoro also boasts two well-stocked bars where you can unwind with family





and friends. You can treat yourself at the luxurious spa; engage in holiday activities; and relish the multi-cuisine fare at the restaurant.

From the resort, you can take off on walking tours or short rides that unravel vignettes of Daman's historical past. Daman abounds in churches, the most famous among them being the Cathedral of Bom Jesus. Consecrated in 1603, this former parish church is a tribute to Portuguese craftsmanship. Its intricately carved main south door and high ceiling are characteristic of Roman church architecture. The gilt wooden altar reredos and pulpit and statues of six saints are among the unique features of this church. You could also visit the Fort of Moti Daman built

in the 16th century; spread across 30,000 sq m, it has ten bastions and two gateways.

There are many avenues for fun and frolic in and around Casa Tesoro—just two km away is the Devka Beach, perhaps the best among the innumerable beaches that adorn Daman's 12.5-km coastline. Build sandcastles, bathe in the waters, pick up shells, or engage in a round of beach volley. At the Jampore Beach, the serene coastline abounds in casuarina trees, offering the perfect setting for long strolls and enjoying the bliss of solitude.

Beaches, history, and culture make Daman an exciting mix. And Casa Tesoro is the perfect base to seize its unique charm.

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As you drive down the 80-km stretch from Rajahmundry to Dindi, you will come across fascinating sights of rustic placidness—quaint villages, vignettes of Telugu culture, and expansive coconut groves. These are the precursors to the incredible setting that awaits you at Dindi - By The Godavari.

The resort has a pristine aura about it, overlooking the mystical Godavari, India's second longest river. The ambience here is very much an extension of the natural landscape at Dindi, which is dotted with backwaters and coconut groves.

A man-made lily pond forms the centrepiece of this expansive resort;



it's a spectacular sight to watch indigenous lilies of various hues blooming at different hours of the day. In addition, there is the *Victoria amazonica*, the leaf of which can grow up to six feet in diameter.

There's more—during sunset and sunrise, the entire resort and the surrounding waters stand bathed in luminous glory. The twilight hour is perhaps the best to unwind at the two bars—the Sunken Bar and the Sunset Bar by the swimming pool. The Sunken Bar is uniquely designed so that it gives you an eye-level view of the lilies in the pond.



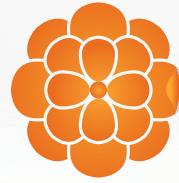
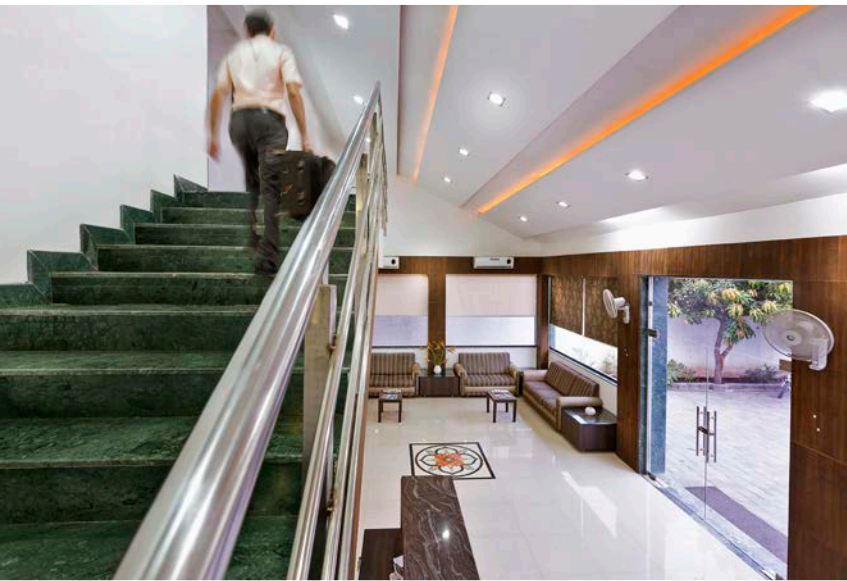
Apart from these visual treats, chefs at our all-day dining restaurant can dish out exciting fare for your taste buds. And if you are looking for a change, the barbecue area adjoining the pool offers the perfect setting for a family gathering. If you are a food adventurer, we could arrange for local chefs to give you a tip or two on preparing delicacies such as *pootharekulu*, a wafer-like rice flour sweet, native to Atreyapuram of East Godavari district. Bask in the tranquility of Nature's paradise—pamper your senses at our spa; go on a houseboat cruise, or indulge in some fun-filled water sports.

Though a quiet hamlet, Dindi has many attractions. Around 25 km away from the resort is the Antarvedi temple dedicated to Lord Lakshmi Narasimha believed to have been built between the 15th and 16th centuries.

If you are game for a boat expedition, a two-hour drive will take you to Papikondalu, famous for its scenic hills. You can also go fishing in the Godavari.

Nature's bounty complemented by Sterling's hospitality makes Dindi - By The Godavari the perfect location for a riverside holiday.





SHIRDI
SAI WADA



Around four hours' drive from Mumbai is the holy town of Shirdi, the abode of India's most revered saint Sai Baba. Devotees cutting across religious barriers flock here to pay obeisance to the *satguru* who preached and spread the message of universal brotherhood.

'Wada' means a large home in Marathi. True to its name, Sai Wada has 29 well-furnished rooms with best-in-class facilities. It is situated just two km away from the Shri Saibaba Sansthan Temple and forms an ideal base to embark on a spiritual quest. In keeping with the spirit of the temple town, its logo represents an abstract marigold flower, which is offered at the temple as a symbol of purity.

The popularity of the temple attracts long queues of devotees round the year, and Thursdays are considered the most auspicious to have *darshan*. We can help you choose the best time to visit the temple and guide you on the various facets of worship there.

Inside the sprawling temple complex is the Dwarkamai Masjid, where the *dhuni* lit by Sai Baba still burns. The *fakir* is believed to have stayed here for a span of 60 years, and the *shila* (stone) on which he used to sit is seen near the mosque.



Close to the mosque is the Chavadi, where Sai Baba used to sleep at times. You can join the *palki* processions taken out to the Chavadi every alternate day, and visit Gurusthan, considered the place where Sai Baba first appeared in the world as a 16-year-old boy.

And when you return after a tiring but fulfilling temple visit, you can relax in the calm of our resort. Even as you enjoy a bountiful vegetarian feast, the chants of the musical *aarati* will resonate in Sai Wada's refined ambience.

Short detours from Shirdi could take you to the Sakori Ashram, Changdev Maharaj Samadhi, and a host of temples—Shani Mandir, Narsimha Mandir, and Kandoba Temple.

For more information on our new resorts or to plan your next holiday please call us on **+91 (STD code) 3399 7777** or visit **www.sterlingholidays.com**



In keeping with its tryst with Mother Nature, Sterling Holidays has taken up the cause of the dwindling sparrow population.



A song for the *sparrows*

One of our young guests, Pooja Mukherjee, has this to say about her stay at Kodai - By the Lake. "This was a vacation with a difference. We had seen a few sparrows now and then but never realised that their existence was so critical. Now we know that we can make a difference and help save the sparrow from extinction." Having attended Sterling Holidays' 'Save the Sparrow' workshop, Pooja is now aware of the need to protect the bird's habitat.

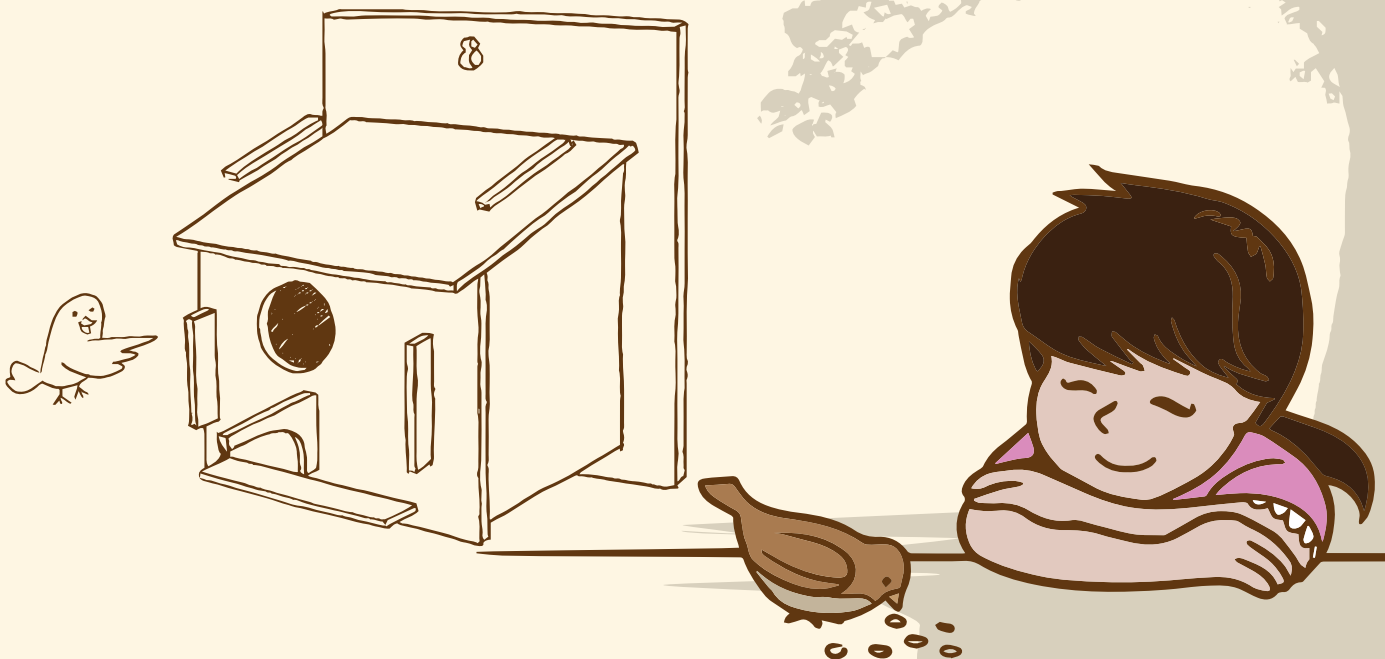
**Ever woken up to the real twitter?
It's about time we brought
back the little brown bird**

Taking cue from the importance attached to this social bird, the campaign was launched on World Sparrow Day, which is observed on March 20. Over the last few months, we have been conducting workshops at all our resorts to raise awareness about the need for sparrow conservation.

The participants learn how to make bird feeders and bird houses, and how to take care of these once they install it at home. They are allowed to practise on demo kits as well. DIY (do-it-yourself) kits, each comprising a bird house and a bird bath, are made available for sale.

The campaign has received an enthusiastic response so far. Children take back a practical lesson along with the determination to provide habitats to sparrows. Parents too welcome the initiative as it introduces their children to a meaningful cause.

For more information on how to save the little brown bird, please visit www.savethesparrow.com



Come, let's go on an *adventure*

Opt for a stay at MariGold Ridge in Yelagiri and engage in adventure games that are sure to give you an adrenaline rush.



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Yelagiri combines the best of both—a slice of Nature and the thrill of adventure. Nestled in the foothills of the Eastern Ghats, this picturesque hill station offers a bouquet of adventure sports.

Take wings and fly alongside the birds; paragliding here is an adventure enthusiast's delight. For diehard trekkers, trails abound—the shimmering Jalagamparai Falls or Swami Malai, the highest point in Yelagiri hills. No wonder this charming hill station was recently chosen the second best natural spot for sports in India.

Our resort in Yelagiri has tied up with the Indus School of Leadership (ISL), offering our guests at MariGold Ridge a chance to engage in an exciting range of activities on their campus, just 5km away.

The activities at ISL teach you life skills needed to successfully lead in these challenging times. A three-hour multi-level obstacle course sets you



off on a journey of discovery. Conquer the wall... sign up for a rock-climbing session—a test of physical strength, determination, and perseverance. Aim, take a deep breath, and pull the trigger—pistol shooting and archery will help improve your sense of patience and power of concentration.

After a session at the range, you can go for a game of paintball along with family and friends. This fun-filled activity strengthens family bonds and imparts lessons in resource utilisation, strategy building, and creative thinking.

What is more, you can experience the thrill without any concern over safety—ISL's trainers are accredited by the Association for Challenge Course Technology.

It is a perfect blend that Sterling Holidays offers—an opportunity to de-stress in the lap of Nature, preparing you to lead better in an increasingly competitive world.

Spa splendour

We are pleased to announce the opening of a brand new Subuthi spa at Ooty - Fern Hill, managed by Tattva—a young and fast-growing Indian spa management company. The new Subuthi will be a full-service spa with rejuvenating therapies ranging from mini massages to extensive wellness rituals that will help guests reconnect their mind, body, and soul.

TATVA
SPA

Subuthi
spa



DUNCH it!

Create indelible holiday memories. DUNCH, our innovative concept of 'DJ, Dance and Dinner', has something in it for everyone in the family.

Huddle around the bonfire with your loved ones, dance to the tunes set by DJs, treat yourself to your favourite beverages, and relish lavish buffets. And as you have a gala time, your young ones too can have their fill of fun at our exclusive kids zone.

Get ready to show off your moves and script your own fun-filled family stories.

Now Trending

Here comes the sun! Embrace summer fashionably with the season's hottest style updates.

Are you a maximalist or do you live by the style philosophy that less is more? Are you a monochromes sort of person or do bold prints catch your fancy? No matter what your fashion taste demands, this season has an answer.

Text: Sohini Dey

Summers are filled with sunshine, warm and fresh colours, blossoms, and lest we forget, lots of ice-cream. Spring-summer fashion heralds a cheerful season and the trends across the world are no different. Offering a blooming assortment of cuts, colours, textures and fabrics for all ages, this is a season that truly celebrates fashion.

Summer Flair

While neon takes a back seat, summer is full of blooming bright shades. As designers at Peppermint Diva, an Indian and fusion fashion brand, put it, "From amber and canary to saffron and marigold, there is a shade of yellow for everyone. The trick is figuring out your skin's undertone, then finding the hue that best complements it." Other glowing summer shades include indigo blues, peach and orange, candyfloss pink, and the like. But if minimalist style is more your thing, this season also pays homage to understated cuts in shades of white, ivory, and beige. Balancing the two spectrum of colours, black and white, is both elegant and chic—combine it with accessories in colours like crimson or royal blue.

When it comes to ethnic wear, our sweltering summers make it necessary to switch to lighter fabrics. Traditional textiles, khadi, and linen are perfect for summer along with timeless cottons. Invest in *chanderis* and *kotas* and opt for light

embellishments in fabrics. "Draped and pre-stitched sarees with corset blouses and peplum jackets are a rage this season," say Peppermint Diva designers who also suggest pairing embellished jackets and coats with *anarkali* instead of *dupattas*.

Prints work for both Western and Indian clothing. Stripes, geometric patterns, and polka dots are trending along with timeless florals. Opt for loose bohemian dresses inspired by the seventies style, skirts and

cropped tops, and loose *salwar kurtas*. Pantsuits make a great statement for evenings and long gowns spell easy elegance.

Gentlemen's Club

For this season, Priyanka Chokhani, co-founder of 16stitches.com, has one mantra—going retro. "Prints and plaids are going to be the flavour of spring-summer 2015. Whether it means bright contrast fabrics (inside the collar, cuffs, and placket) or contrasting buttonholes on a basic



solid shirt, the old-school trend is back in vogue.” For evenings, summer suits make for a comfortable choice—try a *bandhgala* instead of the usual suit. Even better, stick to *kurta-pyjamas* in cotton or *mal* and top with a colourful sleeveless *bandhgala* and pocket square.

When it comes to colours, the season promises to be as multi-hued for men as it is for women. Men conventionally stick to shades of blue and lavender. Change it up to include turquoise, chartreuse, mint green, peach, and summery brights. Linen and poplins are the go-to fabrics for the season. Denims are one of summer’s hottest trends, but make sure you look for a light season-appropriate version of the fabric.

Fashion’s Little Royals

Fashion visuals and a bouquet of brands that specialise exclusively in children’s clothing now ensure that fashion is even on the minds of young ones.

“Summers are meant for dressing up and young tots are not far behind when it comes to fashion these days,” says Meena Bindra, chairperson, Biba, which has a sub-brand dedicated to young girls. “Spring-summer brings with it a lot of bright shades of pinks, peaches, sage, and lime along with hints of neon in light and breathable fabrics like cotton.” Bindra recommends long, flowing gowns, *patialas*, dresses, jumpsuits, tunics, and skirts with delicate detailing for young girls this season.

Young boys’ wardrobes can be arranged taking a cue from men’s trends, and adapted to their smaller sizes in summery fabrics. For special occasions, add accessories such as a bow-tie and suspenders to a simple shirt-and-trousers combo for adding a fun element to the look. Shorts, chinos and light denims, and graphic or superhero-inspired T-shirts—in shades like red, yellow, or blue, along with basic colours—will see your little boys through the casual days of summer.

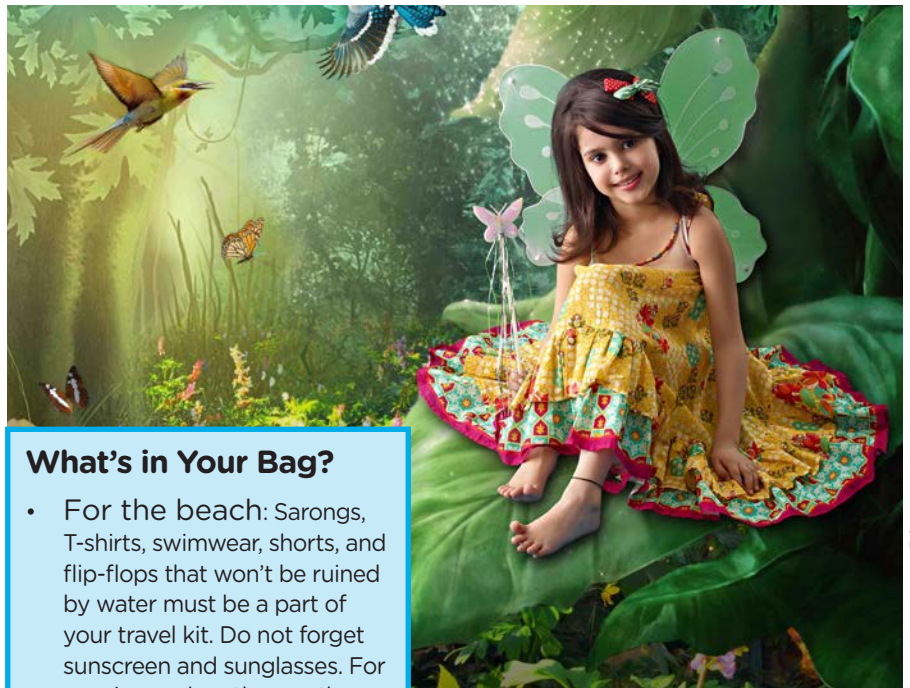


Image courtesy: Biba

What’s in Your Bag?

- **For the beach:** Sarongs, T-shirts, swimwear, shorts, and flip-flops that won’t be ruined by water must be a part of your travel kit. Do not forget sunscreen and sunglasses. For evenings, when the weather gets pleasant, opt for maxi dresses or *lehenga* skirts with crop tops. Men can opt for linen and dyed shirts in relaxed cuts with chinos.
- **To the hills:** The season’s big trend, denims would be useful here. Carry easy-to-match separates for the day and for evenings, jackets that are cosy without being too warm.
- **For the jungle:** Lightweight trousers coupled with long sleeved shirts/tees, a pair of sturdy walking shoes/boots, wide-brimmed hats, and sunglasses. Avoid bright colours and bold prints.
- **Summer outerwear:** Light jackets and stoles can be useful as cover-ups or to ward off any sudden chill in the air. The sunnier the holiday weather, the lighter the cover.
- **Skincare kit:** A mini travel-friendly skincare kit containing cleanser, moisturiser, body lotion, and lip balm.





14

A
cool
twist

Fun-filled holidays, days of unending play, mangoes and engaging conversations—summer is a time when most of us sit back and enjoy a much-needed break. India especially enjoys a long summer spell marked by high mercury levels. This necessitates a change in food habits, and salads and coolers start making an appearance on our daily menus. The muggy weather also means our body constantly craves for food that does not bring down our energy levels. Here are some vibrant salads, fruity desserts, and light meals that will help you enjoy summer to the hilt.

Text: Sridevi Padmanabhan
Photos: Sanjay Ramchandran

Salads are not boring

An apple, pear, and walnut salad with salad greens is a wonderful mix of flavours that is anything but ordinary. Served with a medley of sautéed veggies, this combination is sure to give your body the boost of energy



and nutrients it needs to beat the heat. No summer can go by without indulging in the mango. Get creative by serving wedges of mango with cajun spices and marinated feta. A dish that is guaranteed to leave you begging for more! This exotic salad finds a place on the summer picnic table too—hearts of palm served with fresh microgreens and garnished with nuts can be your classy take for a light summer meal.

The cool coolers

As for that parched throat, why not keep a jug of refreshing fruit punch or blended juices topped with a dash

of lime right by your side? Perfect for sipping through the day as you sit back and relax with some light summer reading.

And when it comes to planning those pool parties, adding frozen grapes to fizzy drinks is a nice, creative twist. Not just that—melons, mozzarella, cucumber, or tomato with citrusy dressings or tangy vinaigrette will make sure that your summer dining experience is worth writing home about. Cool beverages, fresh fruit, seasonal veggies, and deliciously light meals make it easy to whet your appetite this summer.

A Sterling summer treat!

Summer coolers score high as they are refreshing, energy-boosting, and healthy too. Here's a glimpse of the few treats you will get to enjoy at our various resorts.

Chaas: It is basically curd blended with water and Indian spices in an earthen pot into a frothy consistency. Known as buttermilk, it is a popular Indian coolant that doubles up as a thirst quencher and a digestive.



Lassi: Either sweet or salty, it is made out of fresh curd seasoned with spices that have cooling properties. It is a protein-rich drink, more thicker than buttermilk, which is popular in north India.

Nimbu Pani: A rich source of vitamins B and C, and minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, and proteins, this drink is an instant energy source.

Jaljeera: This tangy or spicy beverage is popular for its cooling properties, and is also served as an appetizer.

Thandai: Mostly served during Indian festivals, this drink is prepared by mixing milk, almonds, rose water, and cardamom powder along with saffron for added flavour.

Sherbets: Sherbets are the most traditional and popular Indian household drink, often prepared to welcome guests. Traditional Indian sherbets made from *khus*, *kokum*, and *amla* are also effective coolants.



Aam ka panna: This is a drink made with fresh, raw mangoes that are abundant in summers. It is a sweet and sour drink with an assortment of spices and a rich source of vitamin C that helps increase the body's resistance.

Bliss in the Hills!

Gangtok, Sikkim's capital, does not impress at first sight. It rather grows on you—teasing you with its ancient monasteries, magnificent waterfalls, misty trekking paths, and the promise of sighting the elusive Kanchenjunga.

Text: Arundhati Nath

As one enters Gangtok after a long drive through winding mountain roads flanked by giant coniferous trees, eclectic sights greet you—colourful Buddhist prayer flags, groups of maroon-robed monks going about their daily business, playgrounds filled with football enthusiasts, promenades packed to the hilt with shoppers looking for a good bargain, and tourists queuing up to eat piping hot *thukpa* and *momos*.

Sights and sounds

To experience Nature at her best, head to the glacial Tsongmo lake, around 40 km away from Gangtok; its name means 'source of lakes' in the Bhutia dialect. Soak

in the serenity of the place, click photographs, or ride a yak. From the Tashi viewpoint, a picnic spot, spectacular views of Mount Khangchendzonga (Kanchenjunga) can be enjoyed best.

Those interested in wildlife should not miss the Deer Park, which is close to the new Secretariat building. It is home to several animals native to the region. Deer, red panda, and the Himalayan bear can be spotted in the huge, open enclosure here.

If you are at Gangtok during the monsoon, the Seven Sisters Falls is worth the 32-km drive. It is a charming

sight—seven waterfalls gliding gracefully, and the gurgling, crystal-like waters creating their own symphony.

One of the best of its kind in India, the Temi Tea Estate is known for both its light, aromatic tea and spectacular views. Sipping a hot cuppa of this organic *chai* and enjoying the view of cherry blossoms can be a blissful experience.

If interested in day trips, then head for Yumthang or Pelling. Located 140 km away from Gangtok is the breathtaking expanse of the Yumthang valley, which stands bathed in the glory of rhododendrons, primulas, orchids, and various other flora. Pelling is approximately 117 km from Gangtok. Soul-soothing, gorgeous views of the mountains make it a relaxing retreat.

Pilgrim's progress

Gangtok is known for its Buddhist monasteries, the most famous being the 200-year-old Enchey monastery. The deities here are the Buddha, Loki Sharia, and Guru Padmasambhava. From here, you can catch a kaleidoscopic view of Mount Kanchenjunga as well. In West Sikkim is situated the Dubdi monastery that offers a peep into the rich legacy of Buddhist culture.

Another place worth visiting is Norbugang Park. This magnificent complex has a huge prayer wheel, a temple, and a throne that is believed to be the original coronation throne (*norbugang*) of the first *chogyal* or King of Sikkim.

The Namgyal Institute of Tibetology is a towering example of Tibetan architecture. The museum attached to it has a huge collection of Tibetan art, manuscripts, architecture, and books. It is visited by researchers on Buddhism from across the globe.

Bushwalker's backyard

Sikkim is as much a paradise for adventure-seekers and water sports enthusiasts as it is for Nature lovers. River rafting, trekking, mountain biking, hang gliding, and yak safari are the various adventure options. North Sikkim is often explored by mountain bikers, and the turbulent waters of the Teesta and Rangeet rivers offer a thrilling challenge to rafting enthusiasts. The banks of both the rivers are lined by thick forests, and small villages ideal for setting up camps.

With an altitude ranging between nearly 6000 ft. and 28,000 ft., the Kanchenjunga National Park is a trekking enthusiast's delight. Walking down the course of the Bhusuk river or up to the Tashi viewpoint too provide a refreshing break.

Native flavours

If you are a keen shopper, you could pick up knick-knacks from Mahatma Gandhi Marg, Kandoika, Lall Market, and New Market. You could pick up many a souvenir here—a



The serene Seven Sisters Falls located at the historic site of Kabi Lungchok in North Sikkim.



Enchey Monastery, literally meaning 'the solitary temple', is one of the oldest monasteries situated 3 km northeast of Gangtok.



White stupa at Yumthang, the 'valley of flowers,' which is located at a height of 11,800 ft above sea level.



River rafting down the white waters of the Teesta.

Summer Carnival

Since 1981, the Sikkim Department of Tourism has been organising a tourism festival in May every year. The White Hall in Gangtok will host festivities ranging from traditional Sikkimese dances and music programmes and films to exotic flower shows and art and craft exhibitions. An ethnic food festival, yak safari and river rafting, as well as various competitions make the event a mixed bouquet.

dragon set; *Thangka* paintings; Tibetan woollen carpets; small wooden, carved tables called *choktses*; jewellery or gems; tea from Temi Tea Estate; alpine cheese, a sweet and fruit-flavoured cheese made from pure cow's milk; fresh jams and juices; or Sikkim Fireball special brandy, a fruit-based alcoholic beverage uniquely packaged for you.

Food lovers will have a wide variety of specialities to choose from—*thukpa* or *gya thuk*, which is Tibetan-styled noodles in soup; *momos*; *kinema*, a fermented soya bean dish; and *sishnu* soup made from edible varieties of nettle.

So pack your bags for an exotic, fun-filled holiday at Gangtok. Glimpses of natural beauty and cultural richness are sure to make your trip memorable.

Enjoy a yak safari along the Tsongmo lake.



Get ready,
go shoot!

SELFIE!

Ashok,
Ooty - Elk Hill



Sangani R,
Kodai- By The Valley



Shankar,
Kodai - By The Valley



Sashi Shekhar Jha, Puri - Golden Sands



Amit Rawal,
Munnar - Terrace Greens



Vidishu,
Kodai - By The Lake



If there is a buzzword that has fascinated people across countries and cultures in recent years, it is the 'selfie.' Declared word of the year by Oxford English Dictionary in 2013, this medium of self-expression has broken many records—Ellen DeGeneres' 2014 Oscar selfie was re-tweeted over two million times.

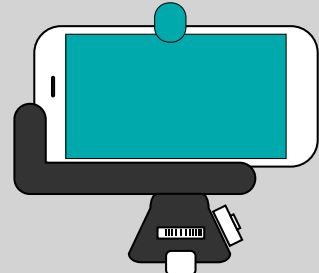
We too have seized this trend; 'selfie' is the theme of our Bagful of Memories campaign this time around. Participate in the 'Say it with a #HolidaySelfie' contest and share the much-loved selfies with family and friends during your stay with us. To enable you to click the perfect selfie, we have created 'selfie hotspots' at our resorts and surrounding areas.

You can upload your photos on bagfulofmemories.com. The site can also be viewed on smartphones, thus making it easy for you to upload your selfies.

The website has four sections—"inspire", an exciting mix of selfies; 'leaderboard', where friends and family of the participants can vote; 'view entries' gives you an overview of the photos uploaded by other participants; and the 'winners' section, updated on a weekly basis, showcases the best selfies. The contest was launched in the third week of December 2014. It has received more than 20,000 entries until now and its popularity is steadily growing on social media.

The Bagful of Memories campaign was launched during the holiday season of 2013. We launched the website as a platform for sharing memorable holiday moments, with an exciting photo contest in 2014. With over 10,000 entries, the site received an overwhelming response.

Click, upload, and share holiday selfies on your next holiday with us to win exciting prizes!



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WHILE YOU STAY
AT OOTY-FERN HILL

Zorbing



**Rope
Walking**



Paintballing



**Sumo
Wrestling**



ATV Rides



**Mountain
Bikes**



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Disclaimer: Monday - Saturday | 9:30 am to 5:30 pm | All days except Sundays. *Dial a local call: Ahmedabad | Bengaluru | Chandigarh | Delhi | Chennai | Coimbatore | Hyderabad | Kochi | Kolkata | Lucknow | Mumbai | Pune. If you are calling us from any other part of India, just add the STD code of the city nearest to you.