



The Lifestyle Magazine of
DLF Gardencity



OASIS

FEBRUARY '21- MARCH '21

THE POETS OF
SPRING
SPRING FASHION
TRENDS
SKINCARE TRENDS
OF SPRING
REFRESHING WEEK
IN MANALI

THE SPRING BLOOMS



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Holi With A Twist



House Talk



Recipe

Dear Reader,

With the new year, we all found a new rhythm and realigned ourselves as the old routines upended. The year welcomes sweet promise of new opportunities, new hopes of possibilities, but also the intrinsic delight that comes from... just simple newness. We are wired in a structure to find pleasure in novelty, whether it is a new relationship or a commitment, a new job, a new house, a new city to explore. With the fragrance of fresh blossoms in the air and myriad colours coming back to life, we are all set to present you the February- March edition of OASIS.

The year 2020, taught each one of us, the true meaning of life, most importantly, being mindful and at the same time having quality time with our loved ones. We have handpicked insightful trends to follow this season like how fashion is becoming seasonless and how festivals are finding newer definitions. Without painting the city in red, love still is in our hearts and redefining its meaning. Additionally, we have also listed our recommendations from the clubhouses for your hassle-free good times.

As much as we enjoyed finding out how a resident decided overnight to make The Ultima his home through the HouseTalk, we would like your thoughts too and would urge you to share such stories with us. We are delighted to see Oasis growing in your heart, making us equally geared up to come with such beautiful stories with you.

With start of a new season, we would encourage you to discover something new every day and imbibe the freshness of Spring. We hope you enjoy this issue, and as always, we look forward to receiving your submissions.



Karan Kumar
Chief Marketing Officer
DLF Ltd.

IN CONVERSATION WITH - KHURANAS



On a warm and sunny afternoon, we were welcomed by The Khuranas at DLF Ultima whose hospitality made us feel as one of their old acquaintances. Their welcome was so warm that for once we did not notice the lavish German fireplace in the living room which kept the room intimate. We sat on the exquisite custom-made sofas facing each other and waited for the lady of the house who slipped into the kitchen to secretly arrange some munches and make us feel at home.

Captain Sandeep Darshan Khurana, Delhi Police Officer and a former pilot, from Rohtak, Haryana lives with his parents, his wife Mrs Rajni Khurana, their children Samrita and Sahaj, and their pug, Dell. His conversations speak about his love for his hometown, the reason he agreed to choose a place with nature, peace and pollution free air as his home. He told us that the reason for a change was to give exposure to their children. They wanted to settle either in Delhi or Gurugram, however, they constantly juggled to find a place away from the chaos of metropolitan cities. That is why they made New Gurugram their new home.

When Mrs. Khurana returned to the living room, the gathering felt more enriching. Our conversations were livelier than before, when both started adding parts to each other's stories.

The reasons behind choosing DLF Ultima were several. They decided to visit this place firstly because they trusted the brand. The place is equally close to their hometown as well as the city. But their decision was not finalised until they saw the property. They recalled, on the Karwa Chauth eve of the previous year, when Mr Khurana booked this property as a gift for his wife which was something very typical of him, Mrs Khurana added.



A home, for Sandeep is not luxurious unless it has a character. It must speak to its owners and adapt according to their needs. A geek himself, Mr Khurana has a keen eye to have his home technology sound. Being able to modulate temperature, security systems, or just lighting at the speed of a click not only satiates their desire of being exceptional, but also saves time and need for extra manpower. Additionally, Sandeep also believes to have a house full of peace which one could identify the lifelike statues of Lord Buddha as fixtures as well as miniatures.

Their moving to The Ultima was rather an exciting story to share. In December

2020, they decided to shift from their previous residence, however, their priest suggested to execute the plan at the earliest since there were no good dates for such activities for the next few months. Hence, the 10th of December turned out to be a surprise for the rest of Khuranas when the couple picked up the children from their schools and moved in without anything to their new abode.

The lives of Mr. & Mrs. Khurana are full of interesting stories which kept us equally captivated. Interestingly, before the couple got married in 2005, Rajni used to teach Sandeep. The family likes to live in the moment, making the most of out and even challenging life as

it comes. No other way, except their home can be a figure of expression for such happy go lucky people.

For Khuranas, 2021 is extra special to their family, as they welcomed 2021 in their new home. Simplicity has great value in their lives which is very evident through the vibes inside their house.

It had been a wonderful afternoon at Khuranas. While we checked our clocks to call it a day, Dell, the pug, came dancing around the living room, putting an end to the order in the room.

THE SPRING BLOOMS

Explore the sprawling greens and colours of the season captured through our lens. In the next couple of pages, we dedicated our feature to our landscaping specialists at The GardenCity.





SPRING FASHION TRENDS 2021

This year we have seen how fashion is inching towards making bolder steps by going completely seasonless and at the same time bolder stylish designs. With 80s-inspired oversized boyfriend blazer to bra tops coming back in fashion, Crayola-coloured dresses to '70s-inspired denims and decadent leathers, the spring/summer 2021 collections brought us a vivid assortment of covetable trends. A season where runways were live-streamed without an audience, there was a definite sense of reaffirming the joy of fashion. This season is on the lines to celebrate the art of dressing up for those rarest occasions when we do go out as well as feel ourselves liberated just like the saying goes 'dressing your best to feel your best'. Comfort was the key, with slippers and knits taking centre stage for new-season wardrobes, ideal for this increased time spent indoors. Keep an eye on our SS 21 Fashion Trends cheat sheet to wear this season and beyond.



COLOURS AND PATTERNS

We noticed that the stand-out colour was pink, as we saw an explosion of watermelons, fuchsias, and hot pinks. Expect to see the most sought-after dresses this summer in this punchy shade.

PRINT-ON-PRINT

looks can be a lot of fun if done right. Pair floral prints with stripes and gingham to stand out. Avoid over-styling because it might kill the overall look.

Worrying about what to wear? Well, monochrome always works! Anything black or white is gold investment and you will always wear it. It's also great for showing off all the hardware we are seeing everywhere and works very well with statement jewellery. One of the coolest interpretations we saw was at Prada where the white trousers and logo tank top were punctuated with a pair of black loafers.



EXAGGERATED SHOULDERS

Bold shoulders are pretty much wardrobe staples and have been there for a while. However, nothing looks cooler than an accentuated shoulder blades to make your waist more defined

BRA TOPS

This trend will become a must-have as the day gets warmer, where the cute bralettes become shirt in itself. Pair it with a matching oversized blazer if you're into coordination.

OVERSIZED DENIM

Baggy jeans have made a comeback keeping the comfort in mind, giving a fair competition to the skinny jeans. With most of the time spent indoors, designers experimented with the yesteryears fashion and made it chicer for everyday wear.



STATEMENT COLLARS

Statement collars have become the conversation starters, in case you didn't already know. Wear these detachable collars with shirts, sweaters or even a jacket.

NAUTICAL

More of a micro-trend, nautical notes were seen at several shows, including the anchor-covered intarsia-knit sweaters at Gucci, exaggerated Breton-style tops at Dolce & Gabbana (where they were teamed with tailored separates in holiday-ready hues) and sailor sweaters at the generally sun-soaked Casablanca show.

MULTIPURPOSE SCARVES

Scarves are women's best friends and never go out of fashion. Play with it as a mask or wrap it around your head like a bandana.

SKINCARE TRENDS OF SPRING 2021

2020 gave us a lot of time for self-speculation and we channelised ourselves to make the most out of the time spent with ourselves. This reflected on adopting healthier lifestyle and skincare regime as well. As the new season begins, we need to feel well. The most liberated way of feeling right has always been self-care. But to get the full benefits of skin-care, there are some things that you should keep in mind. If you feel like you need some improvement or changes in your routine, stay tuned to read about many tips we have prepared for you.



"NATURAL" MAKEUP

Keep your skin protected, nourished and hydrated with a broad-spectrum sun-screen. If you're not opting for bright and bold colours, a muted skin tone might be a sizable option. Avoid skin treatments that are too glowing or too matte. Try for a lip balm and relaxed eyeliner for an understated, close to nude look.

BOLD AND DARK EYELINER

This trend is maybe a result of covering our faces for months or could be a desire to return to the earlier and simpler days of 2001. Dark, heavy lined eyes are back! While you could choose a simple bold line, smudged dark eyeliner gives you an updated rockstar look borrowed from Fenty, Chanel, and other top brands.

NATURAL BEACHY WAVES:

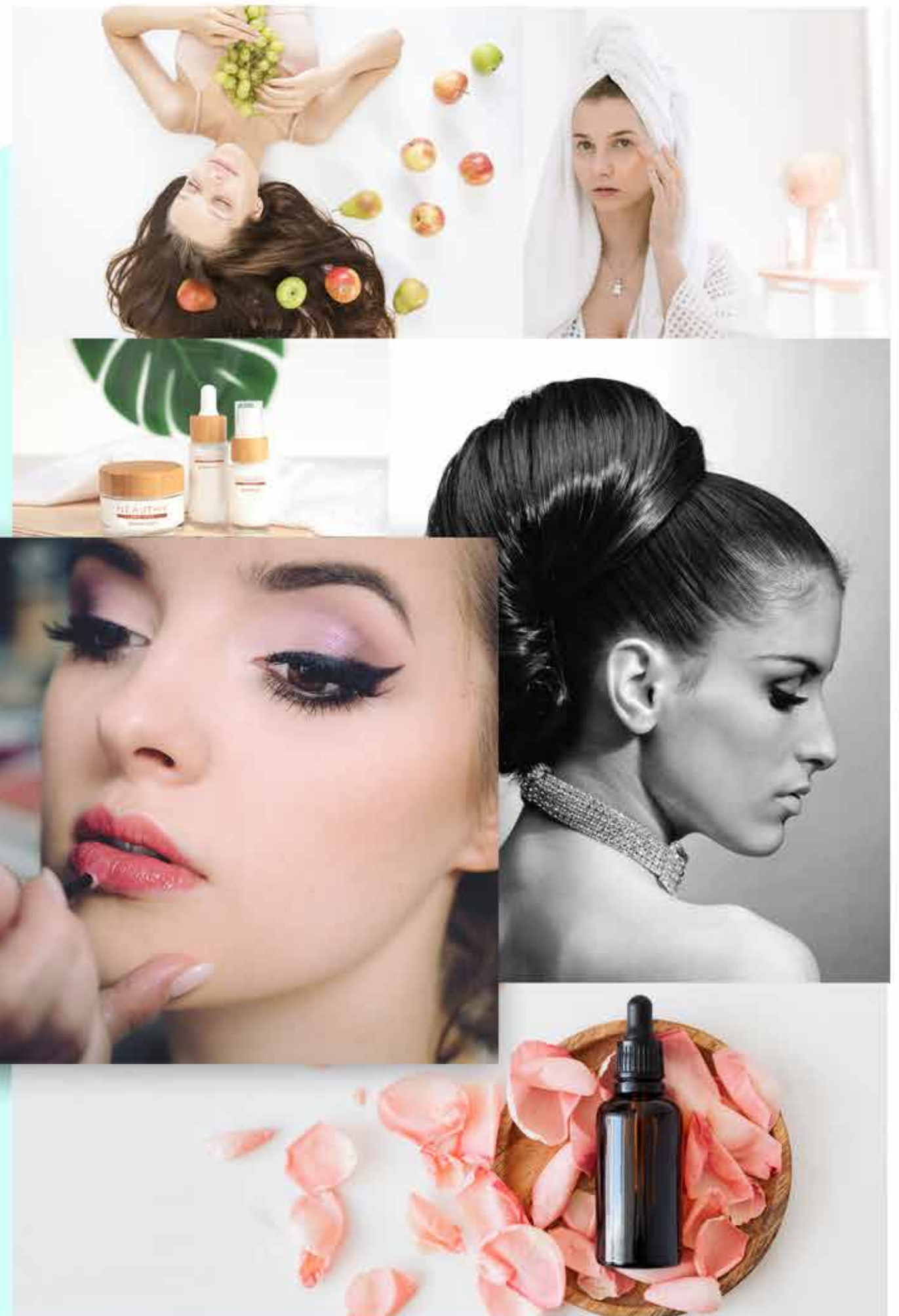
Go for more natural, breezy look with volumizing mousse for beautiful waves that look totally natural at any length if slicked look feels too constructed for you. Try for a messy, casual bun up top, for, "great hair, don't care" vibe.

ANTIOXIDANTS:

Antioxidants are one of the best ways to keep your skin looking young, fresh, and healthy. Skincare products that include antioxidants help prevent premature aging and sun damage.

USE A LIGHT MOISTURIZER:

Your skin retains more water during the warmer months. This means that a lighter moisturizer is in order. Water-based ones work wonderfully and prevent over saturating your skin and/or clogging pores.





ENJOY YOUR EXAMS

Exams have been the centre of life for all of us in a certain phase of life. They let us undergo an intense process of channelizing our energy and focussing our efforts. They teach us how pushing our limits within the framework of discipline results in our evolution. Every year, a new set of youngsters appear in exams and deal with the anticipation and anxiety all their former generations have dealt with.



It is well known that students cover most of their syllabus in the heat of days before exams. The stress before exams is common and can have tremendous negative effects on one's health and performance but it is for the best that we have no dearth of wisdom to cope with it. Below are some tricks that can help you focus and push yourself in innovative ways.

THE MASTER TRICK

Time holds a vital place in the core structure of exams. As they draw nearer, the first thing we find ourselves wishing for is some more time. Even the hours you get for writing your answers in an examination are fixed. Thus, it is important to understand that teaching us to manage our time is the basic thing that exams are intended for.

- Draw your own deadlines- Exams come with the submission of assignments and other year-end tasks necessary to be taken care of. Further, there are many subjects to be focussed equally upon. Make it a habit to finish your tasks within a pseudo deadline that falls before the deadline you are allowed.
- The art of saying no- One should always have enough conviction to say no to the things that are not on the priority. Do not let the distractions steal away your precious time. You can start by putting your mobile phone away from your study area.
- Early to bed and early to rise – The hours of day determine the state of our minds to a great extent. Going to bed early gives you a fully capable body and mind in the next morning and rising early rewards you with a long day and enough time to plan your day and look forward to it.



GONGBANG

There has been a rising trend on the internet originated from the Korea called Gongbang where students film and stream themselves while studying in isolation. Due to this, a large number of people from around the world have joined this trend and promoted the habit of studying. While it seems abstract at the first glance, this trend can be of a great use while studying for exams if you look closely into it.

- Therapy- Watching someone study can be a very soothing experience and can help you fill your mind with positivity and motivation to study more.
- Helpful Invigilators- Live streaming your study sessions lets you stay focussed as your mind knows you are in the watch of many people who are appreciative of your efforts.
- Group study- Studying in group helps your mind adapt to an atmosphere of learning. If you love your solitude, or sitting with your friends is advisable during the pandemic you can switch to a live stream and accompany them in their studies.
- A deal with distractions – This way, you can make a good use of your electronic devices.

KEEP YOUR BLOOD FLOWING

Human mind is wonderful but just a small part of our bodies. It is more capable than handling the pressure of exams but only if supported by a healthy body. The brain feeds on oxygen which is carried to it by our blood. We can make its task lot easier by keeping ourselves fit and rich with oxygen supply.

- Take regular breaks –Sitting on your desk for a long time causes the blood to pool in the lower half of your body due to the gravity. It is important to take regular breaks so that we do not fall asleep.
- Breathing exercises- Breathing exercises help you compose your breath and strengthen your determination. They can be as refreshing as a quick nap.
- Physical activities- Physical activities help you break the monotony and start afresh. They help you detox your body and open the blocked veins of your body. The effect of it can be felt immediately

GROW CLOSE TO NATURE

All we study and all we intend to find out is from and within the book of nature. Adapting a nature based lifestyle is important for student life. You have reached the core of a concept only when you start noticing its manifestation in the simple ways of nature. Nature not only heals your stressed mind but also provides you with a number of talk points and insights to base your answers upon which can surely impress your examiners.

- Enjoy the morning breeze- Never fail to breath in the morning air. It oxygenates your body and activates your thought process for the rest of the day.
- Remove the curtains- Natural light is the best for human eyes. The warmth of natural light makes you feel welcome in your study room.



- Enjoy the spring- It is good that exams fall around the spring season. It provides both our mind and body with an ideal climate to function in. You can sit in the sunlight in a garden, or in your balcony during afternoons to have a therapeutic study session.



HOLI

WITH A TWIST

Holi brings the warmth of spreading happiness through colours which, like the other festivals of India has been redefined by avoiding large gatherings keeping the pandemic in mind. However, you don't have to worry about missing the festive vibe, because we have listed our set of curated recommendations for you to keep the spirits high!



CREATIVE GALORE

Surprise your friends and family with handmade cards and colourful assortments to remind them of you. You may take this conversation by celebrating the festival over a video call by doing some passing on the colour challenge!



DRESS TO IMPRESS...ONLY FOR YOU!

Pick out your most lively outfits in the shades of yellows, pinks, and rainbow in the spirit of Holi for your virtual party. Don't forget to accessorise well and apply pop colour makeup.



COLORFUL DECOR

Decorate your favourite corners with the shades of pastels and pops to keep up the Holi vibes. You may even go an extra mile by decorating or rearranging your house with fresh flowers to make your house look vibrant.



PLAY YOUR TUNE

Bollywood has captured various moods and shades of Holi through vivid songs. Play your beat while having your virtual party or listen throughout the day, because do us a favour, let's play Holi!

DELICACIES

No Indian festival is complete without food. Bond with your loved ones by making delectable desserts and cuisines specific only to Holi.



A REFRESHING WEEK IN MANALI AFTER THE LOCK-DOWN!

By Pavani Dixit



Covid – 19 has certainly changed our world and has lasted longer than we could imagine. As things have begun to get around the new normal, travel is something one needs to be extra careful about. After much contemplation and planning for about a week, we, with a group of friends decided to travel and spend a week in Manali.

Manali is far from Gurugram; it takes around 14 hours to drive. We stocked up on sanitizers, masks, tissues, and disposable handkerchiefs. We also carried food, snacks, and ample drinking water. Our car had become an isolated chamber with no connection with the outer world.

To avoid driving continuously from Delhi to Manali, we broke our journey at Baddi, a small town near Chandigarh. After spending a comfortable night at a hotel there, we left for Manali the next day.

It took us 8 hours to reach Manali. The magnificent view of the River Bias captured our attention on the way when we were a few miles away from Kullu, a small town near Manali. The river was breathtakingly beautiful.

We had our booking at a beautiful hilltop cottage. It was a luxurious cottage with 3 rooms, a kitchen, common area and two huge balconies. The view from the balcony was amazing. We explored some cafes at Old Manali road and enjoyed delicious local food.

The most interesting part of our trip was visiting LAHOL SPITHI by crossing ATAL TUNNEL. We all were stunned by the scenic beauty of the place. It was no less than Europe. There were a lot of snow and snow covered mountains. Amidst the mountains stretched a beautiful river. We crossed the bridge, clicked some beautiful pictures and played with snow.



We could not stay for long as temperature was below -15°C. So, we went back to our cottage. Being the most skilled photographer in the group, most of the pictures were clicked by me.

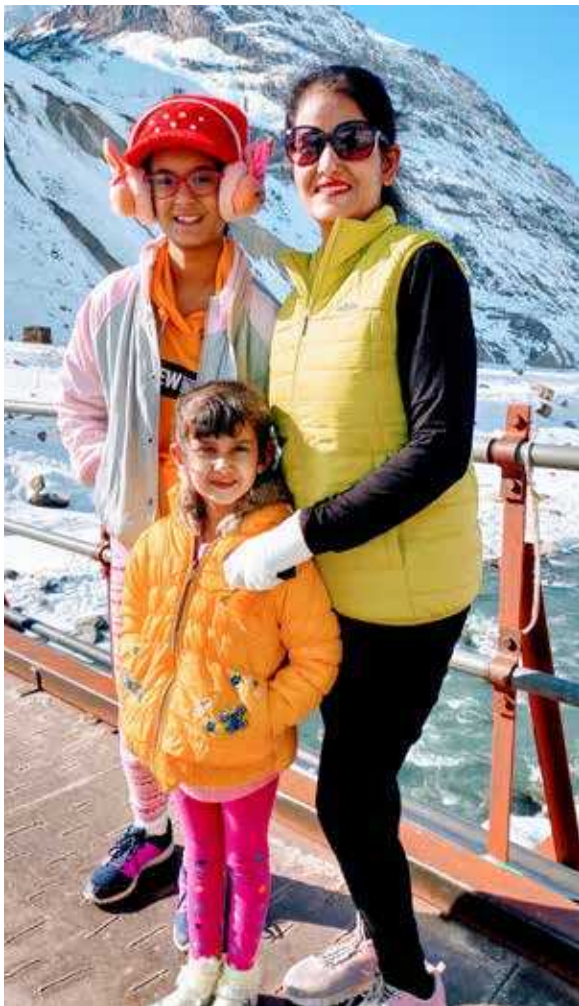
“It was nearly Christmas and we all got our Christmas gifts for real. We were surprised by the Santa who gave us Christmas cake and gifts...”

On Christmas eve we got gifts from Santa and a surprise Christmas cake.

We were eager to see snowfall but it did not happen till then, so we decided to extend our trip for 2 more days. We booked another hotel and reached there the next day. On the way, we stopped at Johnson’s café for some hot coffee and delicious snacks. We spent the day relaxing at the hotel.

The next morning came with a shiver of joy. To our surprise, as predicted by Google, the heaven rained snow. It was for the first time for many of us, so we all jumped and danced in joy. The next day we all enjoyed in the heavy snow and clicked some beautiful photographs. The kids were engrossed in making a snowman which ended with a snowball fight. We went to the countryside and trekked up a hilltop to enjoy a beautiful view of the snow covered town.

The return journey was full of the stories of our experiences. We returned with fond memories and lots of smiles.





BON APPETIT!

As the weather turns pleasant and the outdoors become accessible, The Restaurant at Club Ultima are operational for walk-ins with specially curated menus by our chefs. The restaurant was quite a buzz through the lockdown because of its takeaway facilities and the residents could enjoy delicacies when other food delivery partners were facing the challenge.

With a gazebo setting located midst the greens, it's a perfect view your get-togethers like brunches, lunches, or dinners with specially curated menus by the chefs.

Offering a phenomenal gastronomic experience with an eye-pleasing ambience, the restaurant can host around 60-70 guests inclusive of indoor and outdoor seating capacity. If you are someone who chooses outdoors over indoors, then the setting can be arranged to serve over 30 guests. The open terrace Gardenia is an ideal location for all your intimate gatherings like high teas or wine and cheese.

We welcome you with our fresh Menus over food and beverages.



MEET THE CHEF

Name: Chef Azad Hussain

Club: The Club Ultima

Age: 38

With over two decades of experience in the culinary world, Chef Azad Hussain is the Sous-Chef at The Ultima Clubhouse. He has spent most of his growing up years around Indian Mughlai Cuisine and has continued to carry ahead his passion translated into fulltime choice of career.

Chef Azad is a Culinary Diploma holder from the Food Craft Institute. He has been associated with many pioneering restaurants as the Sous Chef before joining The Club Ultima. One can only expect culinary master finds produced from his kitchen with utmost precision and spellbinding creativity.

- **What do you like to cook apart from Indian Mughlai?**
I love cooking Awadhi and experimenting with Indian Fusion cuisines
- **What do you enjoy the most about cooking? What took you the longest to master?**
I enjoy creating new dishes. I love seeing my customers enjoy eating what I make. Mutton Rogan Josh needs a lot of attention to achieve the authenticity and it did take me a lot to muster the art of perfection of the cuisine.
- **One cooking tip/ secret that you would like to share with us?**
I always enjoy working and having a lot of fun at kitchen with my team.
- **What is your recommendation from the Club Ultima?**
While there are a lot of cuisines as a must try, here are a few of my recommendations- Homemade Ravioli with Butter Thyme Sauce, Dal Makhni, Eggplant Parmesan and Mutton Bhuna Gosht
- **Apart from the art of cooking, are you proficient in any other form of art or are you keen to master any other form of art?**
Sometimes I enjoy mixing at the Bar. I am keen to take it ahead by taking up some special course in Beverage.







FRESH ASPARAGUS SOUP

INGREDIENTS:-

- 1/4 pound fresh asparagus
- 3 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1/4 cup and 1 tablespoon vegetable broth
- 3/4 teaspoon butter
- 1-1/2 teaspoons all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup soy milk
- 2 tablespoons yogurt
- 1/4 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:-

- Place asparagus and onion in a saucepan with 1/2 cup vegetable broth.
- Bring the broth to a boil, reduce heat and let simmer until the vegetables are tender.
- Reserve a few asparagus tips for garnish.
- Place remaining vegetable mixture in an electric blender and puree until smooth.
- Melt butter in the pan that was used for simmering the asparagus and onions.
- Stir while sprinkling flour, salt, and pepper into the butter. Do not let the flour brown.
- Allow the mixture to cook only 2 minutes.
- Stir in remaining 1 1/4 cups vegetable broth and increase the heat. Continue stirring until the mixture comes to a boil.
- Stir the vegetable puree and milk into the saucepan.
- Whisk yogurt into the mixture, followed by lemon juice.
- Stir until heated through, then ladle into bowls.
- Garnish with reserved asparagus tips. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese if desired.



CAESAR SALAD

INGREDIENTS:-

- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1-1/2 anchovy fillets
- 1/4 lemon, juiced
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1-1/2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1/2 egg yolk
- 1/2 dash Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 pinch salt and ground black pepper to taste
- 1/4 head romaine lettuce, chopped
- 1 tablespoon and 1-3/4 teaspoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon croutons

METHOD:-

- Mash garlic with anchovies in a large salad bowl.
- Whisk lemon juice, red wine vinegar, Dijon mustard, egg yolk, and Worcestershire sauce into the anchovy mixture until mixture is smooth and creamy.
- Gradually whisk olive oil into the dressing, pouring the oil into the dressing in a thin stream while stirring constantly.
- Season with salt and black pepper.
- Gently mix romaine lettuce and Parmesan cheese into the dressing until thoroughly coated; serve salad topped with croutons.



MATAR MUSHROOM

INGREDIENTS:-

- Green peas 1 1/2 cups
- Mushrooms 200 grams
- Oil 2 tablespoons
- Green cardamoms 4
- Cinnamon 1 inch stick
- Onions finely chopped 2 large
- Ginger paste 1 tablespoon
- Garlic paste 1 tablespoon
- Tomato puree 1/2 cup
- Red chilli powder 1 tablespoon
- Coriander powder 1 tablespoon
- Turmeric powder 1 teaspoon
- Garam masala powder 1 teaspoon
- Salt to taste
- Cashewnut paste 1/2 cup

METHOD:-

- Heat oil in a Kadai.
- Add green cardamom, cinnamon stick and onions and sauté until light golden brown.
- Add ginger paste and garlic paste and sauté for half a minute.
- Add tomato puree, red chilli powder, coriander powder, turmeric powder, garam masala powder and salt and sauté till oil leaves the masala.
- Add cashewnut paste dissolved in one cup of water, stir well.
- Add a cup of water, bring the mixture to a boil and then add green peas and mushrooms.
- Cook on high heat for seven to eight minutes or till the green peas are fully cooked. Cook on low heat for five minutes. Serve hot.



AMLA AND BEETROOT KI TIKKI

INGREDIENTS:-

- Indian gooseberry grated 5-6 medium
- Beetroot boiled and mashed 1 cup
- Potatoes boiled and mashed 3 medium
- Oil 1 tablespoon
- Onion chopped 1 medium
- Sea salt to taste
- Red chilli powder 1/2 tablespoon
- Salt to taste
- Lemon juice 1 tablespoon

METHOD:-

- Heat one tablespoon oil in a pan.
- Add onion and sauté till lightly browned.
- Add beetroot and sea salt and continue to sauté till all the moisture evaporates.
- Add red chilli powder and mix.
- Add salt and lemon juice and mix.
- Add the beetroot mixture to potatoes and mix.
- Add Amla and mix.
- Cool and chill in the refrigerator for half an hour.



GAJAR KA HALWA

INGREDIENTS:-

- Carrots peeled and grated 5-6 large
- Ghee 1/4 cup
- Milk full fat 3/4 cup
- Sugar 1/3 cup
- Cashewnuts chopped + for garnish
- Almonds sliced + for garnish
- Green cardamom powder 1/2 teaspoon

METHOD:-

- Heat ghee in a deep non-stick pan.
- Add carrots, mix and sauté for 15-20 minutes or till most of the moisture dries up.
- Add milk, a little at a time and mix well. Cover and cook on medium heat for 10 minutes or till the carrots get cooked but still retain a slight crunch.
- Add sugar, mix well and cook on medium heat, stirring occasionally, for 5-7 minutes or till the moisture dries up.
- Add cashew nuts, almonds and cardamom powder, mix well and cook for 1-2 minutes.
- Transfer the Gajar Halwa into a serving bowl, garnish with cashew nuts and almonds and serve hot.



THE POETS OF SPRING

*From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in everything,
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight
Drawn after you, – you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.*

William Shakespeare

Synonymous to the ethereal dance of creation, spring is the most romanticized season in the world literature. A balance between warmth and chill, spring is what a human heart desires when faced by the extremes of summer and winter; this makes the season a metaphor for joy, peace, youth, life and the ideal world humanity has ever dreamt of. No other season flares up the imagination of poets like spring as the weather turns warmer, trees bear new leaves and blossom with flowers, and the earth comes alive in its true colours.

The great English romantic poet, William Wordsworth, in his poem 'Lines written in early spring' says –

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.
The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure...



India, being the land of seasons, has the most unique perspective towards spring. Termed as rituraj by the great Sanskrit poet Kalidasa, spring rules over all the other seasons. It is also known as madhumaas since the flowers are filled with nectar and honey bees make their visits to the gardens frequent.

kusumjanm tato navpallavaastadanu
shatpadkokilkujitam iti
yathakramamaavirbhunmadhur
drumvatiimavtiiry vanasthaleem



There was the bursting of flowers and the appearance of tender foliage followed by the humming and signing of honeybees and koels – thus did the spring manifest itself by descending on the thickly wooded woodlands

In Indian literary tradition, the season of spring is as much the season of sorrow as it is of happiness. The youthful climate of spring evokes the deepest desires of hearts which is considered to be the reason behind all the worldly sorrows. The smouldering fire of passion bursts into a flame and bestows madness in the heart of a lover. Poets have even explored the emotions in the hearts of birds that sit in their cage, devoid of their ability to fly.

Mir Taqi Mir, also considered as the father of Urdu Poetry, says-

Kehte hain bahaar aaii gul phuul nikalte hain
Hum kunj e qafas mein hain dil seenon mein jalte hain



They say, spring has arrived, roses have blossomed
We lie imprisoned in the corner of a cage, our hearts burn in our chests.



Spring is also a subject of philosophy in the eastern literary traditions. Being a symbol of life, beauty and the way nature works, poets have used this metaphor to give words to the most ambiguous of thoughts that sum up the characteristics of life like never before.

Mirza Ghalib, the greatest of Indian poets who wrote in Urdu and Persian says-

Lataafat be- kasaafat jalwa paida kar nahiin sakti
Chaman zangaar hai aainaa e baad e bahaari ka



Beauty cannot make its impression without its flaws. Such as, these gardens we consider beautiful are naught but an opaque layer of rust deposited behind the mirror of spring breeze, which enables us to see an image of the beauty of spring - an abstract invisible to our eyes.

Faiz Ahmad Faiz, a 20th century romantic cum revolutionary poet pens-

Na gul khile hain na un se mile na mai pee hai
Ajeeb rang mein ab ke bahaar guzri hai



No roses, no meeting with beloved, nor the taste of a drop of wine
This spring has passed away in a strange manner

Spring is the romance of nature. The way it embellishes the landscapes and pathways gives the lover a hope that if this should not be the month of their union with beloved, then what else. Certainly, this is the season to fall in love, make merry, get drunk and enjoy the gifts of nature.

ROMANTIC MOVIES TO BINGE-WATCH

As the month of romance continues to exude its leisurely vibes, we have put together a list of the best romantic movies to binge-watch—whether you are in for a good laugh, looking for a classic or just a feel-good movie.



ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND

While travelling on a train in Europe, Jesse, an American man, meets Celine, a French woman. On his last day in Europe before returning to the US, he decides to spend his remaining hours with her.

BEFORE SUNRISE

While travelling on a train in Europe, Jesse, an American man, meets Celine, a French woman. On his last day in Europe before returning to the US, he decides to spend his remaining hours with her.

ABOUT TIME

When Tim learns that the men in his family can travel in time and change their own lives, he decides to go back and win the woman of his dreams. Despite its sprinkle of science fiction, the film asks us to treasure moments because not every moment comes with a second chance.

ONE DAY

After a brief college romance, Emma and Dexter pursue separate dreams, but meet on the same day each year to compare their progress in life and love.

CAROL

Therese Belivet works at a department store in Manhattan where she encounters the beautiful Carol. Things take an unexpected turn when Therese develops strong feelings for Carol.

WHAT IF

Wallace has had several failed relationships, but when he meets Chantry, things change. With time, they realise that they are falling in love, but Chantry already has a boyfriend.

PRIDE & PREJUDICE

Before Bridgerton, there was Pride & Prejudice. One cannot think of romantic period dramas without Pride & Prejudice. In this Jane Austen's tale of 19th century England, Mrs. Bennet hopes to marry her daughters to prosperous gentlemen, including new arrival Mr. Darcy.



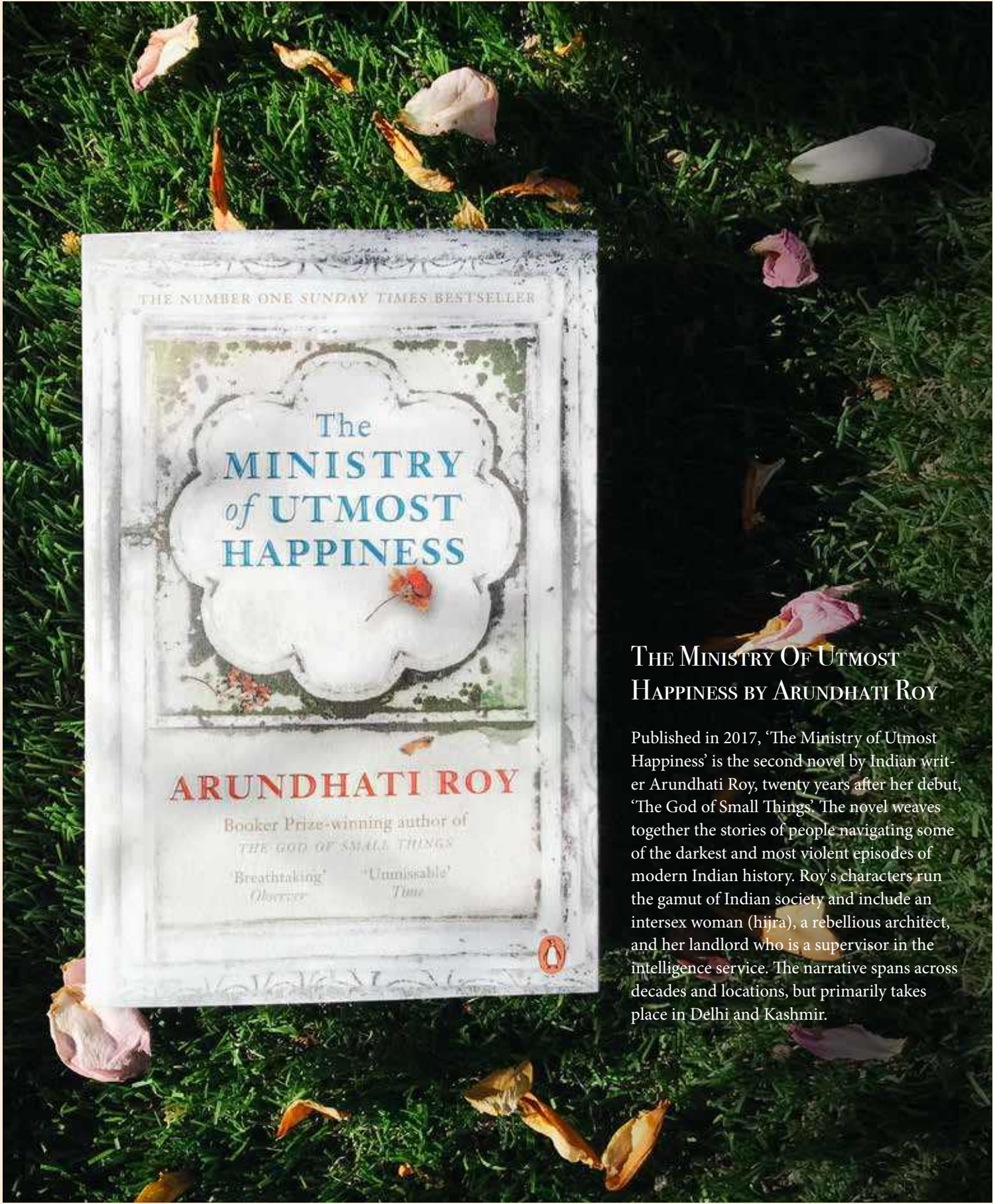
COLLECTIBLE OEUVRES

Books have been considered a go-to whenever you desire to have a space of your own. To celebrate the International Women's Day we have curated a list of seven must-have books authored by women authors from India and around the world, who benchmarked in World Literature.

AND THIS IS HOW IT IS
we go home
and we shut our doors
we don't sleep with them open
for fear the world sees in
really sees us
sees our mess
sees the things we can't brush into place
and we create we're too afraid to show the world
our doors wide
open hearts
on
laundry in a week. My girlfriend

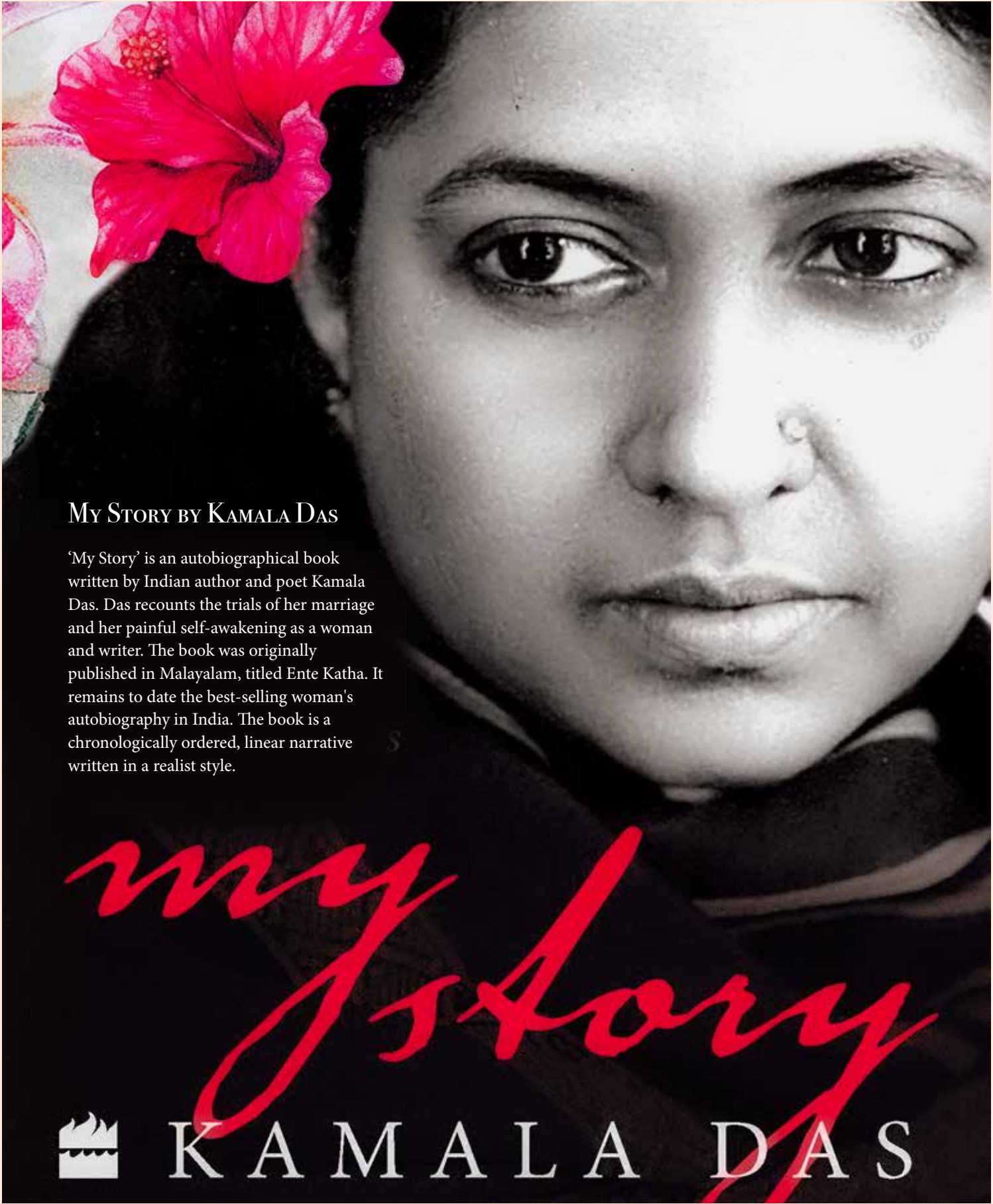
I don't buy much anymore
I used to walk in circles
Around department stores
And the curved edges of
Bar stools
Searching
But it's all seemed to dissolve
Into a more filling hunger
One that reaches
For the familiar black cotton dress
And the fool that's been sitting in the pantry
Because I've stopped preparing for someday
Stopped wondering endless circles
Trying to fill my empty spaces

But this is what happens when survival is a given
And status becomes our new obsession
We confuse our needs and wants
No wonder we are all so anxious
Imagine believing you need so much to get by



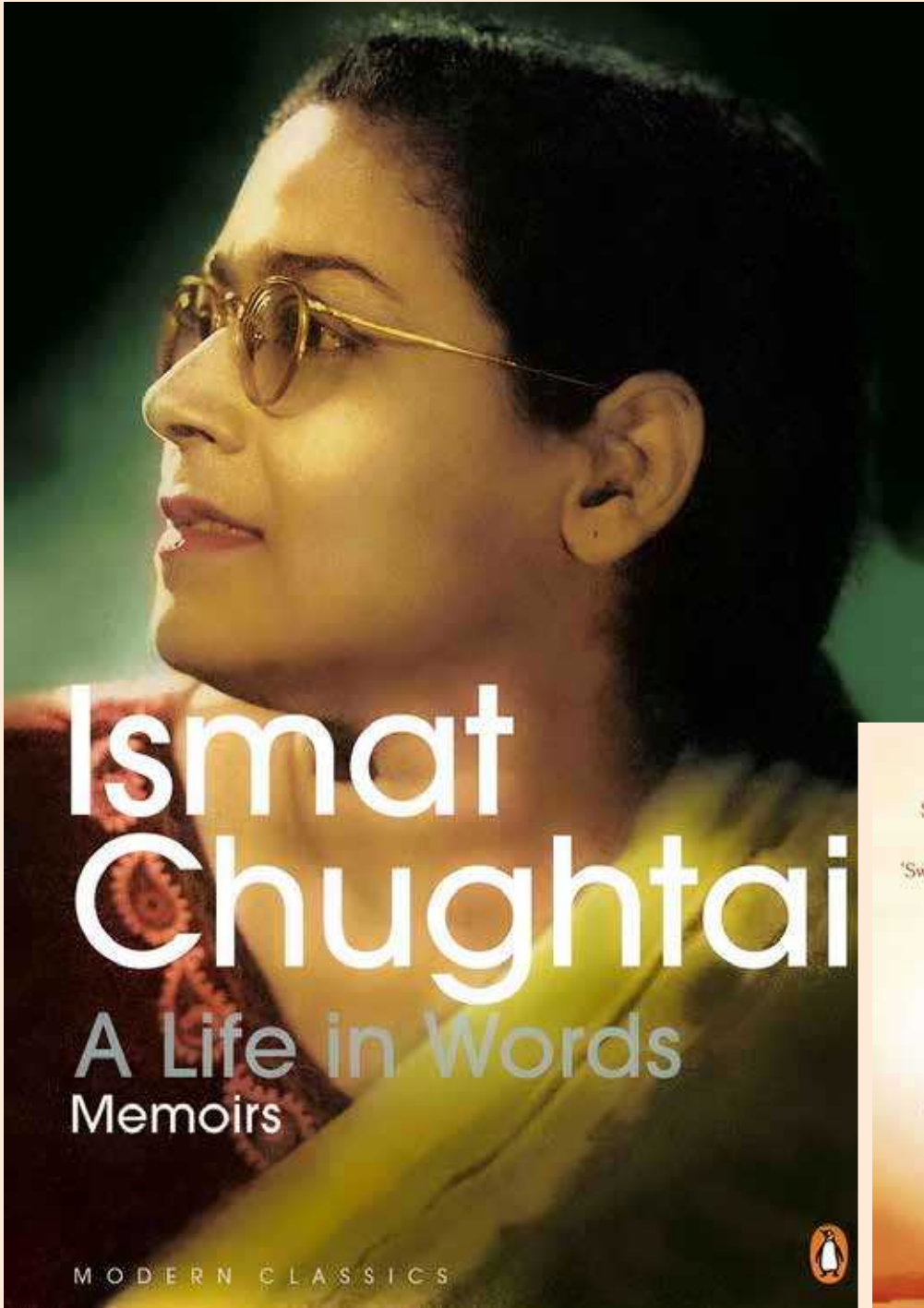
THE MINISTRY OF UTMOST
HAPPINESS BY ARUNDHATI ROY

Published in 2017, 'The Ministry of Utmost Happiness' is the second novel by Indian writer Arundhati Roy, twenty years after her debut, 'The God of Small Things'. The novel weaves together the stories of people navigating some of the darkest and most violent episodes of modern Indian history. Roy's characters run the gamut of Indian society and include an intersex woman (hijra), a rebellious architect, and her landlord who is a supervisor in the intelligence service. The narrative spans across decades and locations, but primarily takes place in Delhi and Kashmir.



MY STORY BY KAMALA DAS

'My Story' is an autobiographical book written by Indian author and poet Kamala Das. Das recounts the trials of her marriage and her painful self-awakening as a woman and writer. The book was originally published in Malayalam, titled Ente Katha. It remains to date the best-selling woman's autobiography in India. The book is a chronologically ordered, linear narrative written in a realist style.

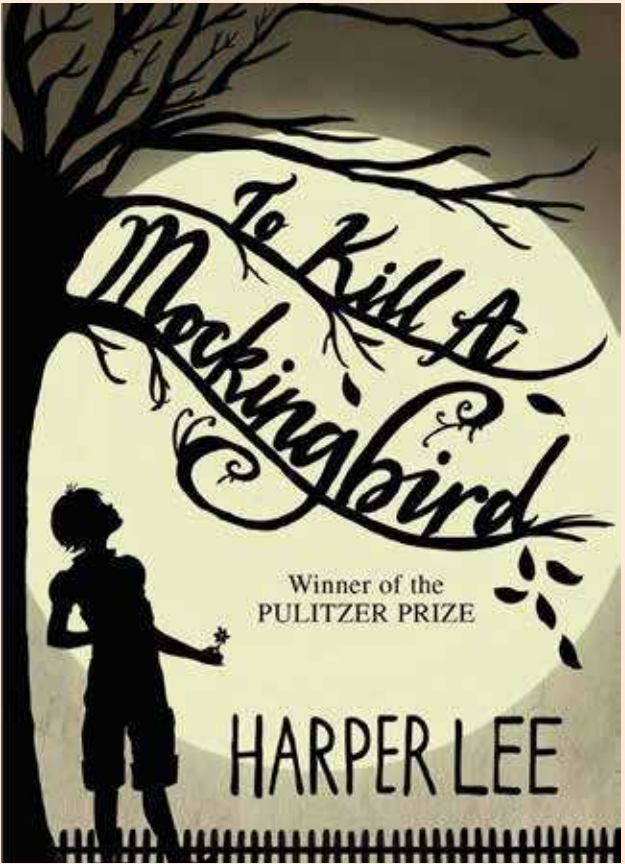
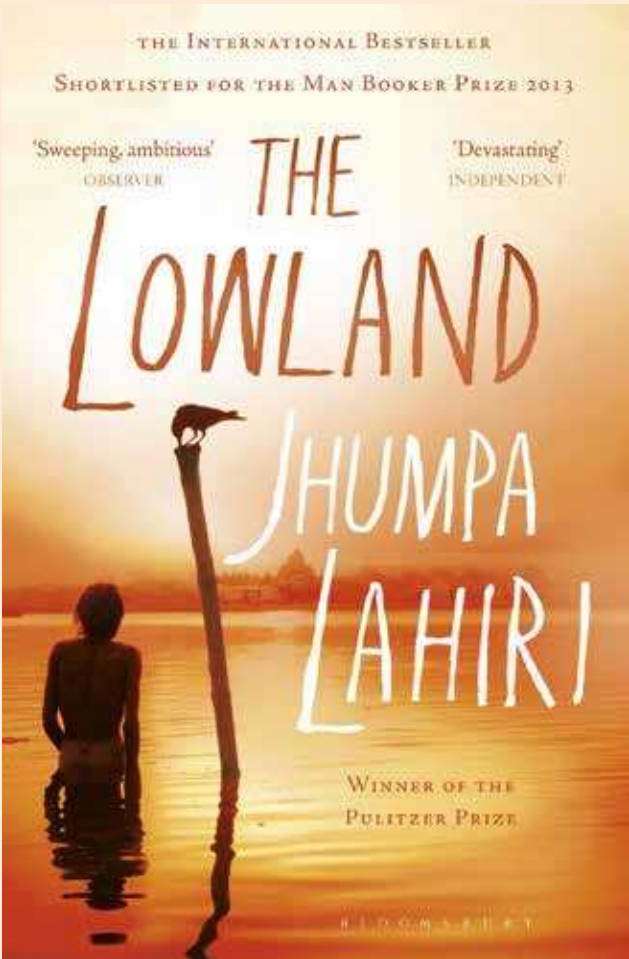


THE LOWLAND BY JHUMPA LAHIRI

‘The Lowland’ is the second novel by American author Jhumpa Lahiri. Epic in its canvas and intimate in its portrayal of lives undone and forged anew, ‘The Lowland’ is a deeply felt novel of family ties that entangle and fray in ways unforeseen and unrevealed, of ties that ineluctably define who we are. The book received praise from critics and was commercially successful. The book reached #5 of the New York Times Best-sellers list of combined print and ebooks.

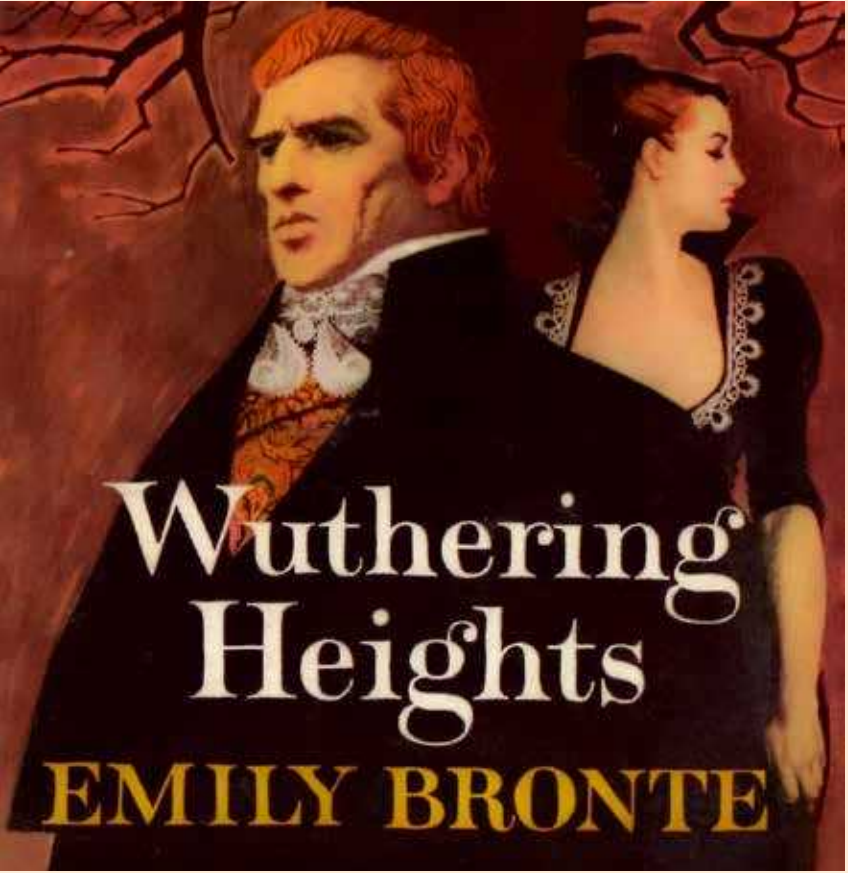
LIFTING THE VEIL BY ISMAT CHUGHTAI

At a time when writing by and about women was rare and tentative, Chughtai explored female sexuality with unparalleled frankness and examined the political and social mores of her time. She wrote about the world that she knew, bringing the idiom of the middle class to Urdu prose, and totally transformed the complexion of Urdu fiction. ‘Lifting the Veil’ brings together Ismat Chughtai’s fiction and non-fiction writing. The twenty-one pieces in this selection are Chughtai at her best, marked by her brilliant turn of phrase, scintillating dialogue and wry humor.



TO KILL A MOCKING BIRD BY HARPER LEE

Harper Lee’s 1961 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’ is about a child’s view of race and justice in the Depression-era South. Widely read in schools, the book sells one million copies per year, and Scout remains one of the most beloved characters in American fiction.

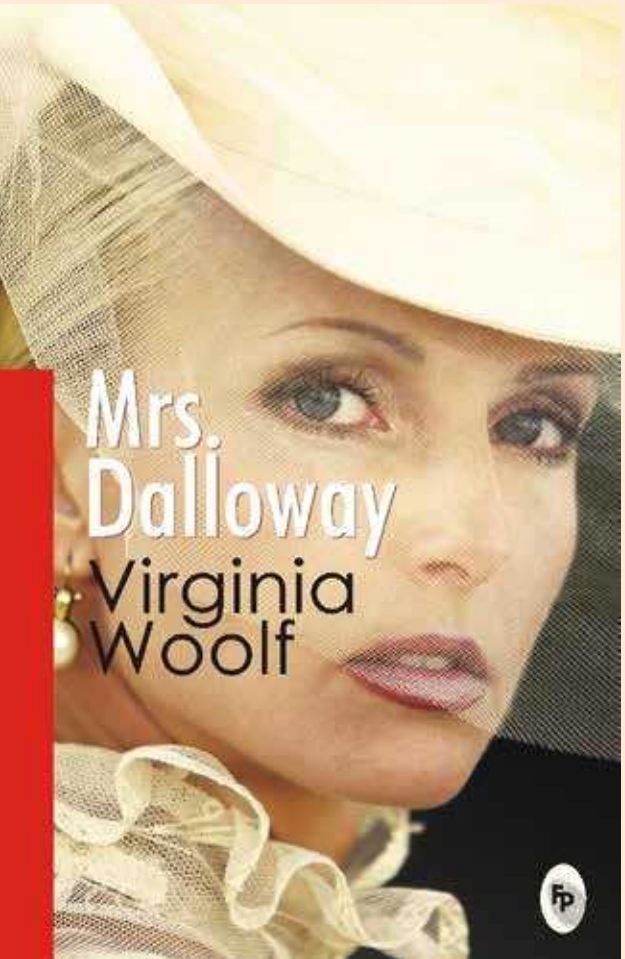


WUTHERING HEIGHTS BY EMILY BRONTË

Perhaps the most haunting and tormented love story ever written, ‘Wuthering Heights’ is the tale of the troubled orphan Heathcliff and his doomed love for Catherine Earnshaw. Published in 1847, the year before Emily Brontë’s death at the age of thirty, ‘Wuthering Heights’ has proved to be one of the nineteenth century’s most popular yet disturbing masterpieces.

MRS. DALLOWAY BY VIRGINIA WOOLF

Published in 1925, ‘Mrs Dalloway’ is a novel by Virginia Woolf that details a day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway, a fictional high-society woman in post-First World War England. It is one of Woolf’s best-known novels. It examines one day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway, an upper-class Londoner married to a member of Parliament. The novel addresses the nature of time in personal experience through multiple interwoven stories, particularly that of Clarissa as she prepares for and hosts a party, and a mentally damaged war veteran Septimus Warren Smith.



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