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#ARTS & CRAFTS

From Faridpur to Dhaka: Bamboo artisans holding on to heritage

When Sunita Rani Biswas arrived in Dhaka from Boalmari, Faridpur, she was not carrying luxury goods or designer fabrics. She carried something simpler: mats and bamboo baskets. For her, bamboo weaving is more than a skill; it's an inheritance. Her introduction to this craft did not come through formal training or curated workshops.

She shared, "My mother used to do this work. I would sit beside her and watch her hands move. That's how I learned."

Years later, that childhood fascination turned into a lifelong pursuit.

"After getting married, I took the initiative to do the work myself. Now, I cut, weave, and shape everything on my own," she added.

Biswas specialises in handwoven bamboo items, utility-based and decorative, each crafted with patience and care. However, like many artisans, her work is seasonal.

Malobika Dipanwita Roy Founder and CEO of Gunoboti

Sunita Biswas was one of the featured artisans at Celebrating Bangladeshiness, a three-day event organised by Gunoboti, a creative platform working with traditional artisan communities, craft enthusiast individuals, and trained designers. Held at the Alliance Française de Dhaka, the exhibition brought rural artisans face-to-face with urban audiences through workshops, panel discussions, and open markets.

Faridpur artisans Asim Biswas and Sunita Rani teaching bamboo weaving

Malobika Dipanwita Roy, Community Architect and Founder of Gunoboti, shared that Celebrating Bangladeshiness stemmed from both personal memory and a broader urgency.

"This knowledge is fading," she warned. "If we don't act now, we risk losing entire systems of traditional wisdom.

"Gunoboti is not about freezing traditions in time but creating spaces where they can evolve. Preservation cannot mean rigidity. Crafts must be allowed to grow with the times."

The story of Celebrating Bangladeshiness was not told in speeches or shared on social media posts. It was narrated with the sound of a blade slicing bamboo. In the way artisans carried their tools like they carried their names — worn, but never broken. It was told by people like Asim Biswas, also from Boalmari, who has spent decades bending bamboo into shape and survival.

"I was eight when I started. We didn't have much, but we had bamboo. So, we made things –fans, stools, baskets. And we kept making them."

Like many artisans, Asim Biswas doesn't see himself as an artist. He sees himself as a provider, a keeper of a fading practice. "There's always bamboo near our home. But the market? That comes and goes. People buy during festivals, and then forget us the rest of the year."

At the heart of the event was a panel discussion titled "Handicraft Industry Product Diversification," where urban professionals, educators, and sustainability advocates tried to articulate what Sunita and Asim already knew: that the distance between the village and the capital is not just measured in kilometres. It's measured in visibility.

The panel's experts spoke with urgency about reviving Bangladesh's fading craft heritage. Bishwajit Goswami stressed the loss of artistic identity to mass production, while Emerald Upoma highlighted bamboo as a sustainable alternative to plastic in children's toys. M A Maruf emphasised promoting artisans over products, and Syed Muntasir Ridwan called for integrating handcrafted traditions into a future-facing, sustainable Bangladesh.

Sanlap Biswas, volunteer and lead investigator of the research, explained, "We didn't organise this just to showcase crafts. We wanted to build a shared space where artisans and urban learners could connect, where traditional knowledge meets contemporary relevance."

Despite their skill and dedication, artisans like Sunita and Asim face an uphill battle. Many rely on occasional events or seasonal fairs for income. Others are considering abandoning the trade altogether due to a lack of consistent buyers.

"This industry is disappearing, but I believe it can survive if we all work together," Sunita Biswas said, adding, "It feels good to be in Dhaka. Here, people saw our work and asked us questions. That rarely happens where we're from."

For Asim Biswas, the experience was just as affirming. "To be part of something central like this — where the city sees and values our craft — gives me hope. I want this to happen more often, in more places."

While the event offered a rare moment of recognition for artisans like Sunita and Asim, one exhibition alone is not enough. For traditional crafts to survive, more regular and inclusive platforms are essential. Initiatives like this must be scaled up to provide visibility, market access, and design innovation. If supported consistently, these crafts can not only endure but thrive.

By Ayman Anika
Photo: Courtesy

#PERSPECTIVE

Bangladesh Cricket Team celebrates with trophy at Uttara Sector 04

Meet the Bangladesh Wheelchair Cricket Team

In the heart of Bangladesh, where cricket pulses through every lane and schoolyard, there is another league of players who redefine what it means to wear the national colours. Their bats may not swing with the same media frenzy, and their matches rarely see full stadiums. But their stories? They are the kind that rearrange your notions of strength. These are the warriors of the Bangladesh Wheelchair Cricket Team. And they play for dignity!

The captain who dreamed

When Mohammad Mohasin was just six months old, polio robbed him of the ability to walk, but it could never take away his love for sports.

"In the late '90s, after Bangladesh's win in the ICC Trophy, cricket fever swept the nation. I'd crawl onto fields near my home, trying to join the boys. Sometimes, I was mocked, left behind. It hurt. I used to wonder — what if people like me had our own team?" he recalls.

That dream turned into action in 2010, after Mohasin posted a photo of himself playing cricket in a wheelchair. Mohasin was asked if Bangladesh had a team for physically challenged cricketers. "We don't," Mohasin replied. "But we will."

He began emailing, calling, and campaigning. Then came a bold move: a wheelchair journey from Teknaf to Tetulia, to raise awareness about mobility rights. It made headlines. And slowly, people started to listen.

"We're proving that disability is not a limitation – society's mindset is," says Mohasin. "Disability is not our barrier. Society is."

The road remains steep. Mohasin shares stories of being mistaken for a beggar, of strangers pressing coins into his hand. "People ask if my wife is also like me. Or if my children are normal. There's so little awareness."

Cricketers at ULAB cricket ground

While the Disability Rights Act of 2007 exists, Mohasin says implementation is weak. "Even new buildings ignore basic accessibility. It's not about ramps. It's about mindset."

The all-rounder who fought for a field

Md Rajon Hossain's voice is calm, but his words strike deep. "People think we need to be pushed. They don't know we play cricket in wheelchairs."

Polio altered Hossain's life at age two, leaving him with limited sensation from the waist down, but it didn't take away his will. After joining the wheelchair cricket team, he found not just a sport but a brotherhood.

"In Dhaka, we used to train at a concrete court inside Dhaka University. Now, it's inaccessible. We've heard for years that we'll get a dedicated field – like the one near Parliament – but nothing has happened," he states.

Even practising is a logistical nightmare. Most of the team members cannot afford transport, and public buses are hostile. CNG drivers charge extra when they spot a wheelchair. And sponsors are scarce.

Hossain informs, "In India or Nepal, grounds are prepared with trimmed grass for wheelchair games. We practise on fields with weeds and potholes. It slows us down, literally and figuratively."

Wheelchair Cricket in Nepal

Hossain runs a small computer business and still makes time for the sport. "We fight on. Not just to play, but to live with dignity."

The vice-captain who rose from the edge

Md Ripon Uddin was 15 when he fell from a rooftop, severing his spinal cord. A fall that could have ended everything, but it did not.

From a wheelchair, Ripon completed his SSC and HSC, scoring a GPA of 5 in HSC — the first in his college's history. "Later, I got a scholarship at a university in Dhaka and completed both BBA and MBA in Finance."

Cricket came into his life in 2015 through Mohasin. "Growing up, there was no space for people like us in sports. Families often treat disabled children as burdens. Disability is seen as a curse."

In 2017, Bangladesh hosted an international wheelchair cricket tournament in Dhaka. Teams from India, Nepal, and Pakistan joined. Bangladesh won.

That win gave birth to the International Wheelchair Cricket Council (IWCC), with Mohasin as Secretary General. Since then, divisional tournaments have sparked new hope across the country.

"Some players used crutches or handmade boards to play. They didn't even have wheelchairs," Ripon says. "Now, they represent divisions and carry the flag."

Still, exploitation looms. "Some sponsors treat us like content — good for publicity, bad for investment. Managers eat up funds. Some mimic our initiatives to build their own brands."

But Ripon remains steadfast: "We don't need pity. We need opportunity."

Beyond the field: A fight for visibility

The Bangladesh Wheelchair Cricket Team's struggles mirror those of nearly one crore disabled people in the country. From inaccessible transport to hostile workplaces, the barriers are systemic.

"The Bangladesh Cricket Board has a huge budget. Yet, we have seldom received considerable support," says Mohasin. "If we truly want inclusion, every company, every institution should hire at least one disabled person. That's how you learn what real accessibility looks like."

Despite limited resources, the team has worked with organisations like the US Embassy and UNDP. They have organised matches, awareness campaigns, and community outreach – all driven by the players themselves.

Wheelchair cricket in Bangladesh is more than a sport. It's a defiance of limits imposed by society. It is the collective voice of those who have long been pushed to the margins, rising from the silence with the sound of a bat striking a ball. What they deserve is not just the spotlight but a seat at the table and a field that belongs to them just as much as it does to anyone else. Let them roll forward, not as an afterthought but as a force.

By Ayman Anika
Photos: Courtesy

#FASHION & BEAUTY

SAREES AND PINON HADI

Summer's fashion duo

In Bengal, summers are wondrously charming: hot and humid, yet lively and colourful. It definitely has an interesting vibe, and we Bengalis revel in its beauty. The best aspect of the season is that we get to let loose and be fancy-free, make the most out of the cruel summer by living and dressing light!

By drawing inspiration from nature, where an abundance of flowers bloom in the prettiest shades, designers come up with fabulous collections, which perfectly evoke summery vibes.

Crimson Krishnachura is a national favourite; its boughs laden with bright orangey red blooms dazzle with their beauty, and his paramour Radhachura is somewhat mellow but equally charming; the vibrant yellow flowers bring happiness to our weary minds. And when lively rain washes all the leaves clean, the verdant leaves bring the coolness of the heavens to our eyes.

Tenzing Chakma, revered designer, is a lover of nature, and his latest offering is inspired by the shades of summer. Bright, happy and sweet, the stunning collection has emerged from his creative mind, and it is just the thing to wear and flaunt this summer.

Indigenous textiles are known for their handloom designs and patterns. They are unique and distinctive from other regions, making them pieces one wants to have and to hold for years to come. Nowadays, fabrics woven by hand are extra special owing to their sustainable nature and high quality.

Tenzing Chakma is a gifted designer whose repertoire includes ethnic as well as Western styles. He has always striven to bring indigenous style and culture to the forefront of Bangladeshi fashion. From dresses, sarees, to skirts, one is spoilt for options.

A lovely leaf-green saree with delicate white patterns is fresh and vibrant, making it perfect for summer. One can wear it for work, classes, or leisurely pursuits like meeting friends for lunch. This design has many renditions like a woman's many different moods, and each and every colour is equally different and unique.

Pinon hadi — a traditional two-piece outfit comprising a blouse and a straight skirt — proudly worn by Chakma women, is highlighted among all others. A delicate attire that's perfect for sweltering days of summer and city life, choose a pinon hadi as your outfit of choice for your next ladies' tea!

The mango yellow pinon hadi is ripe for the taking, sweet and lovely. Its happy bedfellow is the orange one, lovely and citrusy; especially beautiful is the pomegranate coloured one that is truly one of a kind. The soft lilac one, reminiscent of ravishing blooms, is feminine and gorgeous.

A rare shade that is neither pink nor red has been rendered in the most elegant colour that will make its wearer look simply stunning on summer days. Best part? Most of Tenzing Chakma's designs are available as sarees along with pinon hadi. So, whether you choose a saree or a hadi, you will look fabulous wearing any of these stunning designs.

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan
Photo: Hill Valley Production

Special Thanks: Mayaleen Floating Villa at Kaptai
Wardrobe: Sozpodor by Tenzing Chakma
Mua: New Look Beauty Parlour
Models: Kreesti Dewan, Shreejani Chakma, Joye Dewan, Riddhi Tanchangya, Rosa Chakma, Sumedha Chakma, Ryhem Chakma, Indu priya Chakma, Trijita khisha, Bristi Chakma

AHMED TUHIN REZA
Giving the panjabi a makeover — and a passport

In the world of Bangladeshi fashion, Ahmed Tuhin Reza stands out as a visionary designer in men's traditional attire, particularly in the realm of panjabis. With an eye for both heritage and innovation, he has reshaped how men approach festive and everyday traditional wear.

"First thing for men is panjabi; there is no celebration of a traditional occasion in Bangladesh without the quintessential attire," Reza asserts.

Interestingly, Ahmed Tuhin Reza, the Managing Director and Creative Director of House of Ahmed, notes that the panjabi has undergone substantial transformation over the years.

"Even 20 years back, fashion had not been incorporated into panjabis as it is now," he says.

The designer observes that today's generation is increasingly fashion-conscious and adventurous, exploring diverse designs to enhance their style.

Reza's take on panjabis in a local context

Reza sees no harm in being influenced by foreign fashion. Rather, he believes that instead of altering the tastes of the Bangladeshi market, designers should adapt and incorporate global influences into their creations.

"If Bangladeshi people are inclined towards Bollywood or other influences, we should work on adopting fashion and making it our own!" he says.

As cultural perspectives shift around festivals, Reza observes an increasing demand for unique designs.

"Previously, festivals were not so creatively celebrated in the fashion space," he recalls. "However, occasions like Pahela Baishakh have now redefined cultural expression, 'demanding rickshaw art and fun factors,' as well as more sophisticated designs for Eid and other celebrations."

On the topic of design influences, Reza expresses a fondness for the timeless appeal of white.

"White inspires me. It's a timeless colour; whether in normal cotton or full zardozi, white never goes wrong," he says.

Taking Bangladeshi panjabis global

"It completely depends on us," he asserts.

By focusing on traditional fabrics like Jamdani, Muslin, and silk, Reza aims to create a luxury brand that showcases the richness of Bangladeshi craftsmanship.

"We have to give artisans good pay and quality of life to create a second line of

craftsmen," he continues. He believes that elevating the artisans' quality of life will lead to a sustainable model, ultimately allowing Bangladeshi fashion to compete on a global scale.

"We work with foreign models as well, so we are trying to expand our reach," Ahmed Tuhin Reza adds, reflecting his commitment to not only improving local production but also showcasing Bangladeshi talent internationally.

Reza's ambition extends beyond mere aesthetics; he envisions a future where Bangladeshi sensibilities in fashion can command a place on international runways.

"We promise the Bangladeshi people that we will make a Bangladeshi brand global," he states with palpable conviction. This goal is not solely about marketing but also about cultural representation, ensuring that the rich heritage of the Bangladesh textile industry is celebrated worldwide.

Reza's journey with House of Ahmed, along with his wife Tanzila Elma, co-founder of HOA, illustrates the delicate balance between honouring tradition and pushing boundaries within the fashion industry.

From the meticulous craftsmanship of muslin panjabis to the incorporation of modern aesthetics, Ahmed Tuhin Reza is tirelessly working to redefine what menswear can embody in Bangladesh. As he reflects on the current and future trends, it is clear to him that the world is ready for Bangladeshi fashion.

By Munira Fidai
Photo: Courtesy

Pristine and pure, white is everyone's favourite. A woman clad in white is poetry in motion; fresh and fabulous, her aura radiates with grace. She is perceived as serene and resplendent with a timeless sense of style. And when blue, the colour of the heavens and Earth, accompanies white, perfection is achieved!

BLUE HUES AND WHITE VIEWS

Summer's PALETTE

Summer is here in all her glory. And true to her nature, she is bestowing her bounty of heat and humidity upon us. In this rising temperature, the only material that is suitable to wear is cotton. Even better are handloom fabrics that are in a league of their own. Woven by hand with utmost care and love, these fabrics are incredibly special as well as versatile.

Renowned fashion designer, Tenzing Chakma, is well-known for his revival of indigenous textiles and promoting them with utmost flair and style. Reviving age-old traditional handloom fabrics with his unique way this summer, Tenzing Chakma has juxtaposed white against blue, in the calmest, softest rendition, and the result is in one word, stunning!

The most sumptuous white sarees with soft blue borders are absolutely beautiful, with a contrasting blouse that is perfect for sweltering days of summer. Breezy and light, a turquoise saree with subtle white and golden embroidery is ideal for those leisurely lunches with one's closest ladies or a day at the theatre with friends in cultural pursuits!

Another gorgeous piece is a baby blue saree with thin white stripes cleverly placed with intricate details in parallel lines. Subtle golden threads are woven deftly alongside creamy white stripes, making the saree remarkably elegant. When worn with pearls and a lovely bun, it is sophistication and elegance personified. Perfect for those evenings your friends have been dying to go to or the delightful lunch with your cousins, this saree is a great choice for every lady of leisure!

In essence, Tenzing Chakma's white and blue collection is stunningly beautiful and is par excellence. He has outdone himself with his sartorial offerings this year and deserves to be in your summer style repertoire!

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan
Photo: Hill Valley Production
Special Thanks: Mayaleen Floating Villa at Kaptai
Wardrobe: Sozpodor by Tenzing Chakma
Mua: New Look Beauty Parlour
Model : Kreesti Dewan, Riddhi Tanchangya

#FOOD & RECIPES

FLAVOURS OF SUMMER
A feast of authentic Bengali dishes

Summer brings with it an array of flavours that are rich and diverse. Bengali cuisine, known for its bold spices, fresh ingredients, and intricate cooking techniques, is a true reflection of the region's culinary tradition. From tangy, smoky mangoes to the delicate sweetness of desserts, each dish listed below tells a story of love for food.

BEL-ER LASSI (WOOD APPLE YOGHURT DRINK)

Ingredients

2 cups bel pulp, without seeds and fibre
3 cups yoghurt
1 cup sugar
2 tbsp mixed nuts, grated
6 glasses of water
Crushed or cubed ice

Method

Blend the pulp, yoghurt, sugar and water in a food processor. Make a smooth and thick lassi. Now pour in the glasses and add ice. Garnish with the grated nuts and serve.

KASUNDI HILSA

Ingredients

1 kg hilsa fish
¼ cup mango kasundi
1 tbsp mustard paste
2 tsp red chilli powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
¼ cup mustard oil
Salt to taste

Method

Cut and wash the fish. Marinate with salt, turmeric and keep aside for 10 minutes. Heat oil in a pan, put all spices and pastes.

Cook for a few minutes. Add a little water to it. Add salt, jaggery, and mango-kasundi. Stir it for 5-6 minutes. Put hilsa and some water in it, if required. Cook with the lid on low heat. When the gravy is thick, remove the pan and serve.

BINDI POLAO

Ingredients

For bindi —
2 cups beef mince
2 tbsp corn flour
1 tbsp ginger paste
1 tsp garlic paste
1½ tsp garam masala powder
½ tsp black pepper powder
2 eggs
½ cup fried onion
Salt to taste
For polao —
4 cups aromatic rice
1 tbsp ginger paste
5 pieces cardamoms
4 pieces cinnamons
½ cup fried onion
3 bay leaves
1 tsp kewra water
1 tsp rose water
8 pieces green chillies
½ cup ghee
8 cups water
Salt to taste

Method

Rinse the aromatic rice and let the water drain. Mix all the bindi's ingredients except the oil. Now give them small, round bindi shapes with your hand. Heat oil in a pan and fry the bindi until brown. Keep aside.

Now, heat the ghee in a separate pan. Add cinnamon, cardamom, bay leaves, ginger paste and aromatic rice. Fry them for 5 minutes. Add water, green chilli, salt and cook until the water is reduced.

When water is completely reduced, add rose water and kewra water. Mix well, put the lid back and leave it on low heat for 10 minutes. When it is done, garnish with fried onions and serve on a platter.

BEGUN SHIRAJI

Ingredients

500g plump eggplant (diced into 2½ inch pieces)
1 kg fenugreek leaves, finely chopped
½ tbsp ginger paste
1 tbsp turmeric powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
1 tsp cumin powder
½ tsp coriander powder
2 tbsp tomato puree
100g peanuts (ground)
1 ½ tbsp mawa (grated)
4 tbsp oil
Salt to taste
Sugar to taste

Method

Heat oil in a pan. Add eggplant pieces and stir-fry over medium heat until half done. Add fenugreek leaves and mix well. Make a paste with ginger, turmeric, chilli, cumin, coriander and water. Add it to the pan with tomato puree. Mix well and stir-fry until spices are well blended.

Stir in peanut paste, salt, and sugar. Mix and continue to cook until the eggplant is soft and all the moisture has evaporated from the pan. Check seasoning, remove from oven and sprinkle with mawa before serving.

HILSA PATURI

Ingredients

One piece hilsa fish
3 tbsp mustard paste
2 tsp green chilli paste
1 tsp turmeric paste
¼ cup mustard oil
Salt to taste
1 banana leaf

Method

Cut the banana leaf into suitable pieces and soak them in lukewarm water to soften. Wash the fish and cut it into pieces. Mix all the ingredients and leave them for half an hour. Now take a piece of fish, fold it inside the banana leaf and tie with a piece of thread. Brush oil on a fry pan, put the paturis (wrapped fish) in it and cook on low heat for 10 minutes with the lid on. Cook the other side of the paturis for another 10 minutes, the same way. Remove the pan from the stove, untie the threads and prepare to serve.

POSTO MURGI (CHICKEN WITH POPPY SEEDS CURRY)

Ingredients

1 kg chicken
2 tbsp chopped onion
1 tbsp ginger garlic paste
1 tsp red chilli paste
¼ tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp garam masala powder
1 tsp lime juice
2 bay leaves
2 tbsp poppy seeds
3 green chillies
¼ cup oil
Salt to taste
Chopped coriander leaves to garnish

Method

Marinate the chicken with garam masala powder, turmeric powder, salt and lime juice and keep aside for half an hour. Heat the oil and fry the bay leaves. Add chopped onions, ginger, garlic paste and sauté until the raw smell goes away. Now add the marinated chicken, and cook for a few minutes. Add red chilli powder, poppy seeds paste and green chilli to it. Cook for 3 minutes. Now add water and cook until the chicken is well-cooked and the gravy becomes thick. Serve hot with rice.

TADKA DAAL

Ingredients

1 cup chickpeas
5 cups water
½ tsp turmeric powder
2 tsp chopped ginger
1 heaped tbsp fried coconut pieces
2 tbsp mustard oil
1 tsp mustard seeds
2-3 red chillies
Salt to taste
Sugar to taste
Coriander leaves for garnish

Method

Clean and wash the daal, and cook with water, salt, turmeric powder and ginger until soft. Now add the sugar and coconut pieces to it. Cook for a few minutes. Heat oil in a separate pan, add red chilli and mustard seeds. Now, add the cooked daal and bring to a boil and then simmer for 3 minutes. Remove from oven. Garnish with coriander leaves and serve.

SPONGE ROSHOGOLLA

Ingredients

1 litre milk
2 cups sugar
2½ tbsp lemon juice

Method

Heat milk, stirring occasionally. Mix lemon juice with 2 tbsp of water. When the milk boils, switch off the flame. Wait for 30 seconds, add ½ tbsp of lemon juice and stir well. It should start curdling. Once the milk is curdled and greenish whey is out, pass it through the cheesecloth.

Wash the channa with some cold water. Gather the sides and lightly squeeze the channa. Do not apply much pressure. Squeeze lightly. After that, hang this for 30 minutes.

Now, take a pan which is wide and deep. Add 10-11 cups of water and 2 cups of sugar. Heat it. Take the channa (it should be dry but moist). Start kneading this until it gathers all together.

Make smooth round balls of about 1" diameter. When the syrup is boiling, add the balls into it and cover. Cook for 15 minutes. The water should be vigorously boiling. Keep the flame on the higher side. After 5 minutes, open the lid once and stir with care. Cover and do the same after 10 minutes.

As soon as the timer rings, transfer the roshogollas to a bowl with a good amount of syrup. After 5-6 hours, it will be soft, juicy, moist, and spongy and will hold its shape.

— LS DESK

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed

#TRAVEL

Travelling with children: Your ultimate guide to a stress-free family vacation

It can seem daunting, but once mastered, travelling with children can be quite rewarding. With thoughtful planning and strategic execution, potential stressors can turn into manageable tasks, ensuring a smooth family vacation filled with fun and unforgettable memories.Start early and embrace travel

Many parents worry that having children means the end of spontaneous travel, but it does not have to be. Exposing your children to new experiences as early as possible helps them adjust to travel easily. Being on the go from infancy can teach children adaptability, making them more comfortable in new environments.Choose family-friendly destinations

Selecting family-friendly locations is important. If your child is old enough, allow them a say in choosing your travel destination (within reason). This will give them an idea of what to expect during the journey. Involving them in planning gives them a sense of ownership and reduces anxiety.

Look for destinations that offer attractions suitable for children and accommodations with kid-centric amenities like pools, playgrounds, and spacious suites to keep them entertained. It may be beneficial to take children to places you have been to before, as it gives you an advantage of having navigated the place

and can cut your fear of missing out by quite a bit, too.Pack smart and light

One of the most important tips for travelling with kids is to pack smart, aiming for minimalism.

Create a packing list to prevent over-packing! When travelling with babies, consider purchasing diapers, baby food, and other necessities at your destination to lighten your load. Focus on essential items like a few favourite toys, extra clothing, and snacks, allowing you to enjoy local

shopping experiences.

Use bright-coloured luggage to quickly identify your bags at the airport, scoop them up and move on. Use carry-ons as much as possible, or strollers that can be gate-checked if your baby is under two. Soft leashes (frowned upon as they are) can save you a few scares, especially by adventurous toddlers over that age.In-flight entertainment

Long journeys can be tough, so keep a variety of entertainment options at hand, such as colouring books, puzzles, or a tablet with downloaded movies. Long-haul flights are not the time to be stringent with screen time — aim to use the screen as a distraction during flight times, substituting it for hands-on activities throughout the actual vacation.

Utilise on-board amenities

When travelling by air, make use of available amenities, like family check-in counters and on-board baby supplies like bassinets and hot water. Many airlines have services catered to families, helping you navigate the airport and board with ease. When possible, have one of the couple board first, stowing overhead luggage and making the space comfortable before the younger members arrive.Always have snacks on hand

Hunger can lead to hangry children, so keep a variety of snacks readily available during your travels. Many hotels can provide larger refrigerators, so call ahead to arrange this if possible, allowing you to stock up on essentials.Maintain routines while being flexible

While it is important to maintain your child's regular sleep schedule, you must also be flexible in your plans. Try to let your children nap around their usual times during vacations so that they feel more comfortable in new environments. But know that travel plans can change unexpectedly, so maintain a calm demeanour when things go awry. Your reactions can influence your children, so try to set a positive example. Build in cushion days, downtime and playtime

If travelling internationally, consider adding cushion days for acclimatisation. Gradually adjusting to a new time zone can significantly benefit young children, helping prevent jet lag and fostering a smoother transition. Similarly, if you are guilty of trying to cram too much into a trip, it may be wise to slow down.

Travelling with kids is decidedly different from travelling solo. Children need breaks, so incorporate playtime at parks or local attractions, or even just let them go to the hotel pool for a few hours to allow them to unwind. This creates balance in their travel experience, ensuring they don't feel overwhelmed.

Consider hiring help

For parents seeking some alone time, hiring a babysitter during your stay could allow for adult exploration. Look for trusted recommendations for babysitters through your hotel or friends. This opportunity can help you reconnect as a couple or enjoy a night out.

Keep the first few trips short

If you are travelling with your baby for the first time, make the trip a short one and to a nearby location. Proximity to home can be reassuring, especially if things don't go according to plan or when they get overwhelming. Know that this is an experiment for both of you, so give each other grace along the journey.

By Munira Fidai
Photo: Collected

#TRAVEL

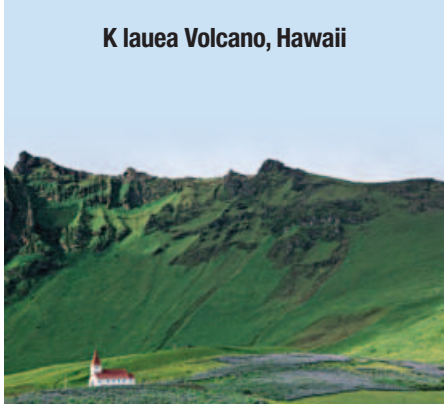
WHERE EARTH BREATHES FIRE

The world's most enchanting volcano adventures

Volcanoes are the liveliest geological formations on Earth that have astonished humans for ages. Starting from boiling magma, igneous rocks, and islands to glaciers and ice caps, the beauty of nature remains unparalleled. Follow through as we dive into exploring some of the most astonishing volcanoes worldwide.

Pecaya Volcano, Guatemala

K lauea Volcano, Hawaii



Thrihnukagigur, Iceland

Thrihnukagigur, Iceland
Near Reykjavik, which translates to "smoky bay", lies the dormant Thrihnukagigur volcano. Astonishingly, you can go all the way down to 213 metres to visit its magma chamber, which is the only magma chamber you can visit in the world. The plethora of colours inside the volcano will tantalise anyone.

Since its last explosion took place 4500 years ago, it can be considered a relatively safe place, but in this land of fire and ice, it is useful to carry safety gear with you.

Lastly, any Iceland trip is incomplete without meat soup and the northern lights!

Arenal Volcano, Costa Rica
Perched in the National Park of Costa Rica, this volcano is one of the safest volcanoes to visit. It has every geological formation — volcanoes, hot springs, waterfalls, rainforests — you name it! Since the lava from its last eruption in 2010 cooled down, Mother Nature has given lush greens to form.

The view of the volcano against the blue sky and white clouds looks as perfect as a postcard. Along your trail to the volcano, you will find mesmerising biodiversity with mysteries of nature unveiled upon every step in the woods.

If you have a sweet tooth, don't miss out on the Arenal Chocolate tour!

Kīlauea Volcano, Hawaii
Situated at the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park is the active shield volcano Kīlauea. Whether you are walking along the crater rim trails or driving the Chain of Craters road, the views of the volcano will never fail to fascinate you.

Arenal Volcano, Costa Rica

One can travel through the Kilauea Caverns of Fire, where lava used to flow through once. This route covers an entire view of the rock formations, as if hidden inside a cave amidst the rainforest. Spend the night at the Volcano House in the park, as you certainly do not want to miss the charming night views of the red lava while gazing at the numerous stars shining in the endless sky.

Pecaya Volcano, Guatemala
Trust me, if you are fortunate, you will have an experience of everything, from lava flows and pyroclastic flows to an avalanche of debris. It is full of energy with steam popping out of steam pockets. You can even order a pizza baked straight over the red-hot rocks!

Whether it's sunrise over the fluffy peach clouds or overnight camping on the rocks, you will find yourself truly connected to nature.

Mayon Volcano, Philippines
With lotus setting the stage, sunshine setting the spotlight, and clouds opening up to unveil, the Mayon volcano is a sight to see. This active stratovolcano is particularly famous for being one of the only perfectly symmetrical conical volcanoes in the world. No wonder it has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

The Mayon Skyline View Desk is the perfect location to have a panoramic view of the volcano. Wear your helmet, press the gear on the ATV (All-terrain vehicle), and get ready to ride on the rocky black lava trails.

Volcanoes are an amazing geological formation to explore, from the rock types to lava flows and land formations. Whether it is active or dormant, it is never completely certain when a volcano shall erupt, even though geologists continue to monitor undergoing seismic activity. With proper precautions and safety measures, set sail to discover these fantastic volcanoes worldwide!

By Labiba Tasnim
Photo Collected

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#DECOR

UPGRADE YOUR BEDROOM

without breaking the bank

From beautiful additions to useful applications, today's modern bedroom furniture sets do well in every aspect. They smartly cater to the demands of your fast-paced life, juxtaposing function against flair and comfort against clean design. If you are looking to transform your bedroom with a touch of new and all things amazing in view, then explore the world of modern bedroom furniture sets to find the one that suits you best.

The serene set
Bedroom furniture sets that are light and airy impart a feel of space and serenity. A low-profile platform bed with simple wooden frames and a minimalist nightstand featuring smooth, understated drawers can resonate with the calmness in your bedroom space. You can also get a matching dresser, along with a wooden bench on the footboard for extra seating.

The lavish set
A luxurious bedroom set could revolve around a sleek wooden bed that serves as the centrepiece, offering style and comfort. Along with this, reflective surfaces can add elegance to your mirrored nightstands. In this set, the dresser typically comes with a high-gloss finish, sometimes with metallic handles as well for a little shine.

Add to that a tall-mirrored wardrobe or vanity table to round up the glam package of the room. This kind of set will be about your luxury, giving that polished, high-end feel and turning your room into a chic escape.

The urban set
The bold and contemporary bedroom set can centre on a bed constructed from dark wood, giving an edgy vibe from a single piece. To bring home an authentic urban feel, you can add nightstands made of reclaimed wood and accents.

Moreover, a wooden or leather bench at the foot of the bed can serve as seating and storage combined, while rugged industrial-style lamps or wall-mounted shelves can complete the look. With this set, your bedroom will have strong furniture that makes its presence felt.

The retro set
A walnut bed frame can be used with a simple geometric modern design for a touch of character that can really make any bedroom shine. In this set, a nightstand can include things like simple drawers with creative leg designs. These details could also appear in the dresser, offering a retro-style.

A wooden bench can be brought in to enhance the practicality of the set, while open shelving units could give room for display without clutter. The set will be a vintage design curated in a modern form, built into furniture that speaks of understated sophistication.

To get within one financial limitation
Purchasing an entire bedroom set can give your place a fresh feel, however, it could be a considerable expense all at once. This is where EMIs come in handy. With EMIs, you have the option to break the cost into affordable, smaller monthly payments, giving you the chance to invest in that quality furniture without stressing your finances. This gives you the instant joy of your new bedroom set while paying for it over time.

Remember, modern bedroom furniture is not merely a trend; it is a statement about how we live today. Every piece has a purpose, and they all work together to create an aura that is serene, bold, and effortlessly stylish. So, now you can go ahead and create the modern bedroom of your dreams!

By Samayla Mahjabin Koishy
Photo: Courtesy