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JAAVED JAAFERI

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My life and career have changed in subtle but meaningful ways.

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We Suffer From A Lack Of History, Sanskar

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O Romeo Triptii Dimri's graceful charm

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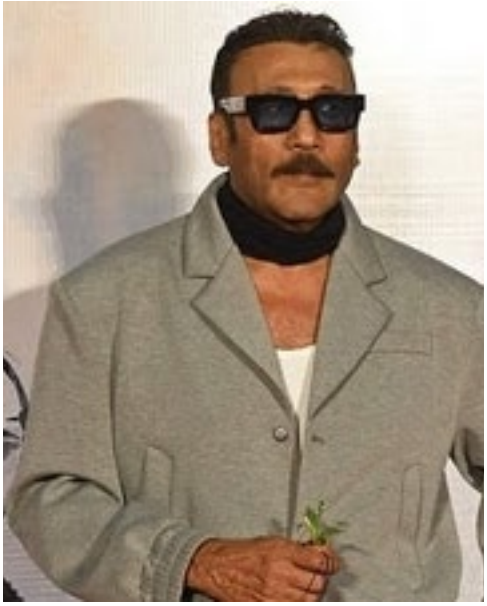

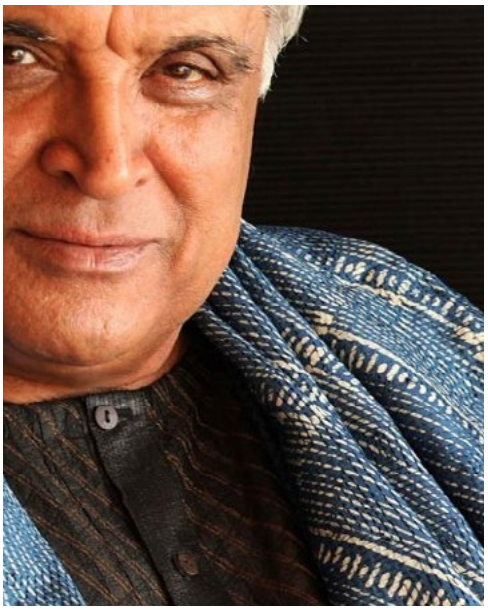

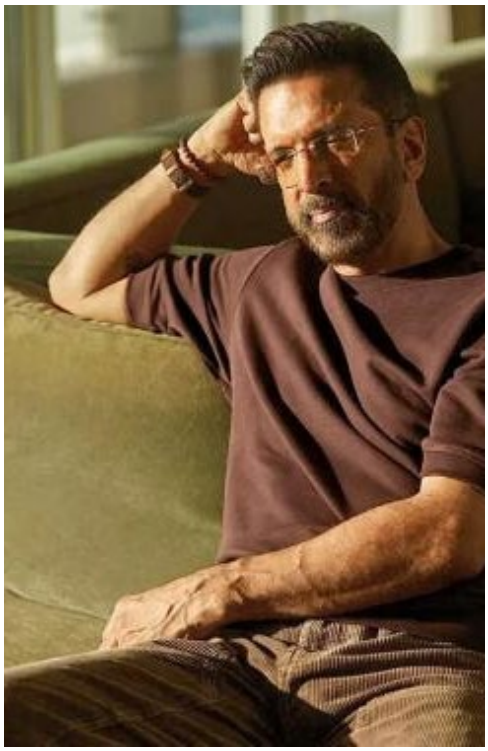

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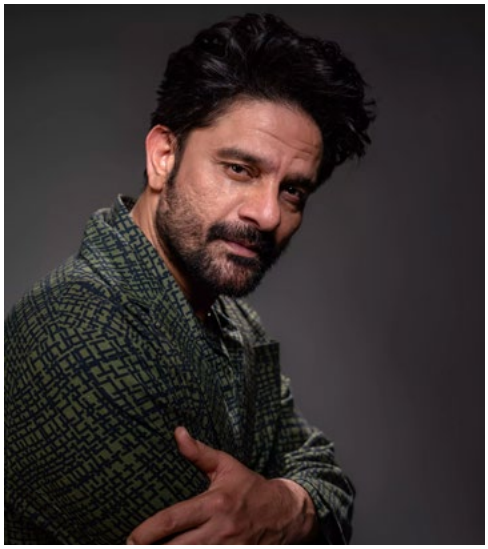


Triptii Dimri's O' Romeo Role Said To Be Inspired By Real-Life 'Sapna Didi' Story In Gritty Vishal Bhardwaj Thriller

O' Romeo, starring Shahid Kapoor and Triptii Dimri and directed by Vishal Bhardwaj, is described as "inspired by true events," features an ensemble cast and is set to release on February 13, 2026, offering a blend of romance and underworld drama rooted in emotional vengeance and crime.The upcoming action thriller O' Romeo, directed by acclaimed filmmaker Vishal Bhardwaj and starring Shahid Kapoor and Triptii Dimri, has ignited fresh intrigue online as details emerge suggesting that Triptii's character may be inspired by the real-life figure known as "Sapna Didi." The film's first teaser and production notes identify the project as being "inspired by true events," leading fans and netizens to dig deeper into the narrative roots behind the fictional drama.

In the newly released promotional materials, Shahid Kapoor's intense and rugged character has been linked — in speculation and online discussions — to the notorious Hussain Ustara, a real-world adversary of underworld figure Dawood Ibrahim. According to industry chatter and social media commentary, Shahid's role could reflect Ustara's turbulent life and his support of a woman seeking vengeance after her husband was killed by Dawood's gang — a figure widely referred to as Sapna Didi in eyewitness accounts and oral histories recounted by crime writers.

Netizens on platforms like X and Reddit have suggested that Triptii Dimri's role embodies this Sapna Didi persona — a woman driven by loss and revenge whose story becomes intertwined with Shahid's vigilante character. Some speculate that the film's plot follows their partnership against the backdrop of underworld rivalries, adding emotional urgency to the action. These discussions have fueled anticipation for O' Romeo, especially after its gritty teaser debuted online to strong reactions.

O' Romeo boasts a high-profile ensemble cast including Nana Patekar, Vikrant Massey, Disha Patani, Avinash Tiwary, Tamannaah Bhatia and Farida Jalal, and is positioned as a dark, intense love story with action-packed stakes set against the murky world of crime and passion. The teaser has highlighted not only the visceral tone of the film but also glimpses of emotional conflict and drama centering on Shahid and Triptii's characters.

Tripti Dimri's No Makeup Look: Glass Skin Vacation Glow Decoded

From sheer bases to softly flushed cheeks, Tripti Dimri's vacation makeup approach highlights why intentional prep, light textures, and lifestyle-led beauty matter more than excess.

Vacations are meant for switching off, not standing in front of a mirror for hours trying to perfect a makeup look that melts by noon. While holiday beauty should deliver, the pressure to go full glam when you're supposed to be unwinding feels a little counterproductive.Cue Tripti Dimri, whose vacation selfies double as a masterclass in beauty. No heavy contour, no overthinking, just calm, confident, low-effort glow. If anyone truly understands the no-makeup makeup brief, it's her. Skin looks easy, features are softly defined, and the overall effect is refreshingly unfussy, it's the kind of beauty that doesn't demand attention, yet quietly holds it.

Tripti's approach reflects a growing shift toward beauty that prioritises comfort and intention over excess. From strategic skin prep to pared-back essentials, the focus isn't on covering or correcting, but on enhancing what's already there. It's relaxed, wearable, and refreshingly realistic, Tripti's vacation beauty routine proves that less really can do more, especially when the goal is to look radiant whilst still easing up.

Effortless Base Secrets

For a no-makeup makeup look to truly work, the base has to feel invisible. It's less about coverage and more about how the skin is prepared beforehand. Hydrated skin naturally creates a smoother canvas, making even the lightest products sit better and a quick moisturiser-and-sunscreen pairing is often all it takes to achieve that fresh, rested finish. When following Tripti's choice of base makeup, we find that the focus is on lighter textures being key. We're talking skin tints and sheer formulas—which when applied sparingly, create a breathable base that allows your natural glow to come through.

Glass Like Skin: Tripti Dimri's Hydration Hack

At the heart of Tripti's glow is one thing: hydration. Skin prep is where this look truly begins. Products infused with hyaluronic acid, the gold standard for hydration, help the skin retain moisture and appear visibly plumper. Complement this with ceramide and glycerin-rich formulas to strengthen the skin barrier and lock in hydration.

Layering is kept intentional but minimal, a hydrating serum, followed by a nourishing moisturiser, and finished with a sunscreen that enhances rather than dulls the skin's natural sheen. The routine itself stays refreshingly uncomplicated, as she keeps the layering intentional but minimal. This approach creates that glass-like finish that gives the skin luminosity without looking greasy.

Minimal Makeup: Brow + Lash Essentials

In a pared-back beauty look, your brows and lashes help to subtly frame the face, Tripti's technique is thus focused on lift rather than definition.

Brows are encouraged upward, following their natural direction, creating a lifted effect without looking rigid or overdone. Whether you prefer laminated brows, soap brows, or a simple clear gel, brushing brows upwards instantly adds structure without looking overdone. For added definition, lightly fill sparse areas with a brow pencil that closely matches your natural brow colour.

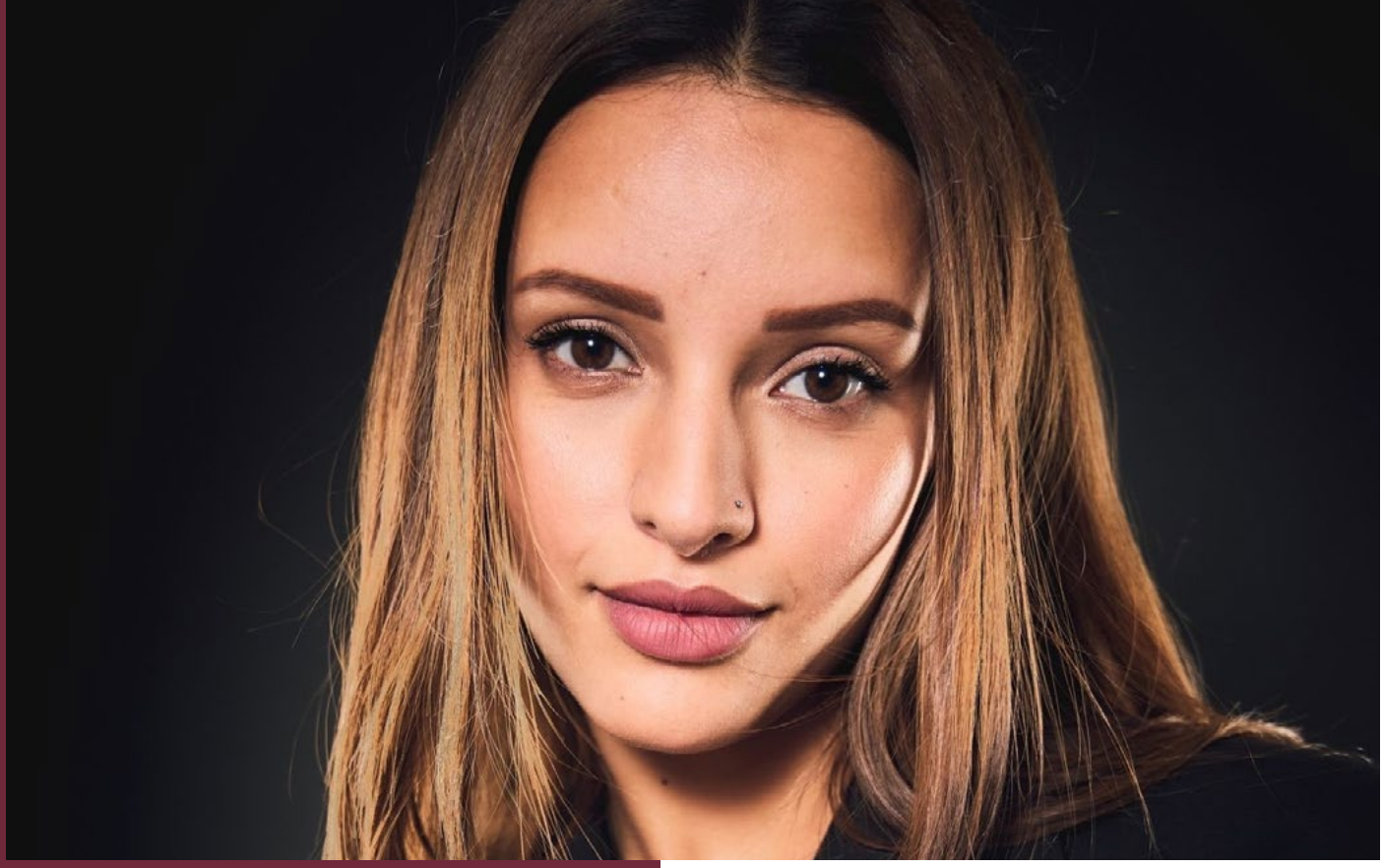
Lashes follow the same understated philosophy, soft enhancement rather than dramatic volume. Prep them with a lash primer, then opt for a brown mascara instead of black for a softer finish.

Natural Makeup Looks: Cheek + Lip Flush

Nothing sells the illusion of a natural beauty quite like a natural flush. Water-based and cream blush formulas work best for this look, melting seamlessly into the skin. Shades of red and pink when chosen according to your skin's undertone recreate that just-back-from-the-beach warmth, making the skin look alive and healthy.

Placement matters, but it doesn't need to be precise. Tapping blush onto the apples of the cheeks, the tip of the nose, and a hint on the chin mirrors the areas that naturally catch colour first.

When we're talking lips, we notice that a softly diffused lip line paired with a hydrating gloss enhances the natural shape without looking overly done. This is the kind of colour that doesn't ask for attention, it just looks right, almost like you caught good golden hour light and decided not to question it.



Recreate Tripti Dimri's 5-Step Vacation Glow

Tripti Dimri's vacation glow isn't the result of clever highlighting tricks but rather on just embracing simplicity. Her 5-step routine unfolds as follows :

Step 1 : She begins with well-protected skin thats nourished and plumped,

Step 2 : Followed up with sheer coverage, targeting only the essential spots

Step 3 : The brows are brushed & the lashes softly lifted,

Step 4 : The cheeks warmed with a cream flush,

Step 5 : Lastly, the lips finished with a matching pink and a touch of gloss.

The routine is a reminder that the best beauty routines often don't demand excess. We find that these elements create a look that feels easy to return to long after the vacation ends, because each step feels rather intuitive, and less calculated.

Glow Like Tripti Dimri Every Day

An everyday glow goes beyond just perfecting your vacation look. What's better than a no-makeup makeup routine? Skin that looks so good you barely need makeup. This means consistent, skin-appropriate skincare from AM to PM that's simple, researched, and sustainable.

Rest, movement, and nourishment influence how skin behaves just as much as products do. A glowing skin thrives on movement. Find what you enjoy, whether that's Pilates, spin, or a simple run and make it part of your rhythm and fuel yourself properly. "Girl dinner" might be trending, but resilient nourishment is what truly delivers glow.

It can't be stressed enough how important it is to prioritise uninterrupted sleep (a minimum seven hours is non-negotiable).Ultimately, skincare without lifestyle changes only goes so far. True glow, as Tripti's effortless radiance reminds us, is always an inside-out affair.

Jackie Shroff celebrates 69th birthday: Know the secret morning drink he has daily for immunity and vitality

Happy birthday Jackie Shroff! The actor is all about ageing gracefully — and naturally. Find out the diet secrets behind his fitness and energy.

Jackie Shroff's obsession with greenery isn't just external – for years, the actor has made it a point to gift saplings at events rather than bouquets, urging his fans to reconnect with earth. While most Bollywood stars have elaborate fitness and diet regimes, Jackie sticks to an earthy, grounded lifestyle to stay healthy in his sixties.

Jackie Shroff stays healthy in his sixties by sticking to an earthy, grounded lifestyle. (File Photo/ AFP)

Jackie Shroff, who marked his 69th birthday on February 1, is a vocal advocate for organic living and ancient wellness practices. To celebrate his 69th birthday, we're looking back at the morning ritual the actor swears by to maintain his health and high energy levels. Jackie Shroff's morning drinkIn a May 21, 2024 interview with GQ India, Jackie shared that his day doesn't start with caffeine, but with a potent concoction of medicinal plants. His 'green' routine focuses on immunity and gut health, utilising common Indian plants and leaves.Betel leaf (paan) is Jackie's primary immunity booster. He shared that he steeps betel leaves in hot water and drinks that every morning. He also incorporates mango leaves for their nutritional benefits and parijat (night jasmine) leaves, noting that while the latter is bitter, its health rewards are immense. For brain health and digestion, he consumes 'baby brahmi' leaves (water hyssop), which he describes as 'lethal' in their effectiveness for the stomach.Jackie said, "Paan (Betel leaf), other leaves, medicinal plants – these are the most essential. I add betel leaf to hot water and drink in the morning. It is good for immunity. Then I have mango leaves, which are also very beneficial. Parijat leaves water bitter but is equally beneficial for you. If you read about these leaves and what they do, you will blow your head off. Then I have these baby brahmi leaves that are lethal. They are good for your tummy."

Jackie swears by these spices and sattu

The actor doesn't stop at leaves. His wellness kit includes a curated selection of spices and a Bihar-staple: sattu (roasted gram flour). When on film sets, Jackie bypasses processed protein shakes for sattu. He also shared that he frequently adds cinnamon, clove, and cardamom to his warm water.He said, "There are a whole bunch of spices that I like to eat – cinnamon, clove, cardamom. You can add these to coffee or make warm water with them. When I come for shoots or work, I drink sattu. It gives me strength. It is from Bihar. Four small bottles of these are filled with nutrition for me."

Sattu is the ultimate versatile superfood – it's perfect for any season, be it scorching summers or chilly winters. Want to know the magic behind this amazing ingredient and how to whip it up at home? Click here to check out the benefits and a simple sattu recipe here.

Note to readers: This article is for informational purposes only and not a substitute for professional medical advice. Always seek the advice of your doctor with any questions about a medical condition.

Imran Khan slams stars exploiting their films with huge fees, praises Aamir Khan: 'He'll never say give me 60 crore'

Imran Khan discussed rising star fees in Bollywood, criticising actors who exploit the system by inflating film budgets.

Bollywood actor Imran Khan, who recently returned to the big screen with a cameo in Aamir Khan Productions' Happy Patel: Khatarnak Jasoos, has sparked a conversation around the film industry's escalating star fees. In a recent interview with Etimes, Imran spoke candidly about how some actors exploit the system, arguing that soaring salaries often inflate budgets and severely impact a film's profitability. Imran Khan slams actors exploiting their film with huge fees

Imran explained that he understands casting decisions based on an actor's market value and box office pull, especially in big-budget films. However, he feels that some stars are now taking undue advantage of the system. He shared that his uncle, Aamir Khan, has taught him—and that he has witnessed across generations before him—that actors traditionally invested themselves in their films, taking personal responsibility and ownership of the project.

Imran further criticised the current system, saying, "If I have a sense that my film is going to cost ₹30 crore to make, that's your cost of production. And I say I will charge ₹40 crore. So now your film costs ₹70 crore— ₹30 crore of which is the actual film and ₹40 crore is my personal salary. What is now our route to profitability? And do I care about that? I should care about it. It's my film. I think if there is potential for the film to be decent, you should take less money upfront. Roll the dice. Take a gamble and bet that the film will do well. If anyone can afford to do that, it's the star—especially if you're commanding a salary of ₹40 crore."He revealed that this has been Aamir's approach for every film too and added, "Consistently, this has always been his approach. He has never taken anything close to his value upfront. He takes it on the back end. He will never say, 'Give me ₹60 crore as a fee' or 'Give me ₹75 crore as a fee.' That is foolishness. You are handicapping your own film. You are exploiting your film and enriching yourself personally at the cost of it. That's what it is. Essentially, it means you don't actually have faith or belief in the film."

Imran Khan will next be seen in a lead role alongside Bhumi Pednekar in an upcoming yet-untitled film. The project is directed by Break Ke Baad filmmaker Danish Aslam and is also co-produced by Imran himself.

'Nothing Can Replace A Guru Or Lived Experiences That Shape An Artist's Soul'

'Social media and AI are tools; they can amplify, archive, and connect, but they cannot replace emotion, discipline, or the years of riyaaz that go into becoming a musician.'

Some of you who grew up in the 1980s and early 1990s may remember **Durga Jasraj** as the anchor of Zee TV's Antakshari.

During her teenage years, an incident where she felt classical music wasn't valued enough, left her "deeply disturbed".

When she shared this with her legendary father Pandit Jasraj, he said something that has continued to guide her important life decisions.

In 1999, Durga -- whose mother Madhura Jasraj, writer, choreographer and television producer was the movie legend V Shantaram's daughter -- started a music programming company and over the last two decades, she has worked and travelled extensively to promote indigenous music talent and classical artistes across India.

In an interaction with **Divya Nair/ Rediff,** Durga Jasraj discusses how her musical journey was deeply inspired by her father and mentors like Annu Kapoor and Gautam Rajadhyaksha, why she values integrity in the art forms and how she has stayed true to her passion.

In one of your Instagram posts, you had mentioned how a chai stall became a place of inspiration in your father's music journey. Was there a moment like that for you, that helped define your career choices?

For me, the defining moment came when I was around 14. I was watching Pandit Bhimsen Joshi perform on Doordarshan, and his performance was suddenly cut short to make way for another programme. I remember feeling deeply disturbed by how casually classical music was treated. When I mentioned this to my father, he said something very simple yet powerful: 'If you feel offended, don't complain. Do something.'

That one sentence changed the way I think. From that day onwards, whenever I encounter something that feels unfair or wrong, my instinct is to ask myself what I can do to improve the situation.

That thought process has shaped not just my career choices, but my approach to life itself.

'Gajendra Singh and Annu Kapoor taught me how to think on my feet'

What was it like growing up as Pandit Jasraj's daughter? Were there expectations, pressure or just inspiration?

It was all of it and much more. The greatest pressure came from within.

When you grow up listening to music of such extraordinary depth and excellence every single day, being 'good for your age' never feels enough. You aspire to something far bigger, even if it takes a lifetime to reach there.

I was raised in a grounded environment where hard work was everything and privilege meant nothing.
At some point, I realised that I was living a life shaped by my father's journey, not my own. Stepping away to find my individual identity was difficult and scary, but it was also the most important decision I made.

Who were your mentors outside your family? How did they shape your taste in music?

I have been fortunate to learn from many people at different stages of my life.

My brother Sharaangdev and Ashok Patki supported me during my struggling years by giving me work and opportunities. Gautam Rajadhyaksha and Mickey Contractor saw something in me and introduced me to the world of modelling and visual aesthetics, which I had never planned for.

Television was another big teacher. Gajendra Singh and Annu Kapoor taught me how to think on my feet, how to hold my ground, and how to stay present without a script.

These experiences shaped not just my taste in music, but my understanding of performance, communication, and confidence.

You have seen music evolve from the days of Zee Antakshari. What is your take on the current Indian music scene?

The most noticeable change is speed. Everything moves much faster, and attention spans are shorter. At the same time, the reach has expanded tremendously; music can now travel across borders instantly.

While trends come and go, I believe that honest music always finds its audience. Formats may change, platforms may evolve, but sincerity and depth in music never lose relevance. With social media, there is so much new that is happening in the world of music. With AI, the possibilities are endless. Do you see it as a threat or as an opportunity for artistes?

I see it as an opportunity, as long as it is used wisely. Social media and AI are tools; they can amplify, archive, and connect, but they cannot replace emotion, discipline, or the years of riyaaz that go into becoming a musician.

Nothing can replace a guru, human interaction, or the lived experiences that shape an artist's soul.

'Music is always evolving'

Tell us about the artists you admire in recent times. What do you like about them, their approach to music?

I admire artists who remain rooted while still being open and curious. I'm drawn to sincerity more than innovation for its own sake.

Across genres, what moves me is honesty -- when an artist is true to their music and not trying to impress or chase trends.

How do you stay updated?

By listening constantly, across genres. By interacting with younger musicians, teaching, curating, and staying curious.

Music is always evolving, and the only way to stay relevant is to stay open while remaining grounded.

How do you think traditional, classical artists can adapt to the new formats while still staying authentic to their craft and do justice to listeners?

Adaptation does not mean dilution. Presentation can change with time, but the soul and grammar of classical music must remain untouched.

Authenticity is non-negotiable. When the foundation is strong, the art naturally connects with listeners even in new formats.

What is the one lesson you learned from your father that has stayed with you?

He'd said: 'If something upsets you, don't criticise; contribute. Do something constructive.'

This lesson my father taught me has guided every meaningful decision I've made.

A composition by your father you'd love to share with young generations.

His bhajans, especially Vaishnav Jan To. There is immense simplicity, devotion, and emotional depth in them. They are timeless and speak across generations.

Your message to young artistes who want to make a career in music. What are some of the Dos and Don'ts they should be aware of?

Be patient and respect your craft.

Don't chase instant fame; chase depth and discipline. There are no shortcuts that last.

Stay honest, stay rooted, respect your teachers, and understand that real success takes time.

If you stay sincere, the journey will unfold naturally.

Malaika Arora says she feels blessed, empowered doing item songs at 50: 'Why do I need to tone it down?'

Despite facing criticism for her recent music video with Honey Singh, Malaika Arora revealed embracing her image, encouraging women to feel empowered. Bollywood actor and entrepreneur Malaika Arora recently impressed audiences with her dance numbers in Thamma and alongside Honey Singh. However, she also faced trolling for performing item songs in her 50s. Now, in a conversation on The Namrata Zakaria Show on YouTube, Malaika opened up about feeling empowered while doing item numbers at this stage of her life.Malaika Arora on doing item songs at 50

Malaika said she sees no reason not to own this 'image' of hers and added, "Why not? Why do I need to tone it down or be apologetic about it? I mean, you get trolled for things and many people say different things–but I don't understand what the big deal is. Dance is an expression, enjoyed in its true glory and its true form. I feel truly blessed that I am able to do all this at 50; I must be doing something right."She further said, "It is very, very empowering. It makes me feel amazing. As I have said before, if women out there take it as an example or view it as something empowering–something that makes them feel good–then it's a job well done."From Chaiyya Chaiyya to Munni Badnaam and Anarkali Disco Chali, Malaika has been part of some of Bollywood's most iconic item songs. In 2025, she featured in a dance number titled Poison Baby in Maddock Films' Thamma, alongside Rashmika Mandanna. The internet was abuzz with reactions, with many noting how Malaika stole the limelight from Rashmika in the song. She later appeared in the music video Chillgum, where her bold moves once again invited criticism. However, Malaika remained unfazed by the trolling.

'Films against Hitler came only after he died': Anurag Kashyap says making certain films is impossible in India today

Anurag Kashyap addressed the challenges faced by political films in today's India with a reference to Nazi German.

Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap has admitted that making certain kinds of films is 'impossible' in the current political climate, where films face lots of controversies. Speaking at an event in Bengaluru, the filmmaker-actor talked about the responsibility filmmakers have to keep the flag of free speech flying high.

Anurag Kashyap addressed the state of political films in India.

Anurag Kashyap on Gangs of Waseypur and Black Friday

Anurag was on stage at the 17th Bengaluru International Film Festival on Saturday, where he spoke about cinema, politics, and technology in a session titled 'Fearless Film Making', moderated by film critic Baradwaj Rangan.During the session, Anurag reflected on his films and said, "In today's times, making films like Gangs of Wasseypur or Black Friday is impossible. Some subjects have become politically sensitive and lead to controversies. Directors from countries like Iran or Russia are making films despite facing far greater restrictions than us. Indian directors should draw inspiration from them."Black Friday was Anurag's first released film. A retelling of Mumbai Police's investigation into the 1993 Bombay blasts, the film starred Kay Kay Menon, Aditya Srivastava, and Pawan Malhotra in the lead. Gangs of Wasseypur, a two-part crime drama, is regarded as one of the finest Indian films ever made. It boasted of a strong ensemble cast including Manoj Bajpayee, Richa Chadha, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Tigmanshu Dhulia, Huma Qureshi, Pankaj Tripathi, Piyush Mishra, and Zeeshan Ayyub.'Films against Hitler came only after Hitler died'In the session, Anurag was asked about the lack of political films in mainstream cinema in today's time, when he poignantly said, "In Germany, films against Hitler came only after Hitler died. Everything requires its own time."

Why Rose Gold Jewelry Is the Perfect Valentine's Gift in 2026

Rose Gold Jewelry continues to be one of the most stylish and thoughtful Valentine's Day gifts. With the rapidly changing consumer values for emotional, sustainable, and long-lasting gifts in 2026, rose gold jewelry is becoming a strong preference for Valentine's Day gifting.

For Valentine's Day, shoppers are seeking jewelry that offers more than surface-level beauty. Rose gold jewelry provides emotional value and flexibility for both the buyer and the recipient. With thoughtful designs and synthetic diamonds, rose gold jewelry is a modern classic that balances contemporary aesthetics with vintage romance.

Why Rose Gold Jewelry Is More Romantic Than Other Jewelry

The romantic attributes of rose gold come from the copper that is alloyed with gold. The copper gives gold a slightly pink hue, and the gold-copper combination creates warm, romantic, and sentimental characteristics.

The other two popular gold choices do not evoke the same emotional response:

Yellow gold is traditional and heritage-driven
White gold is modern and clinical
For emotionally significant occasions like Valentine's Day, sentiment carries more weight than trend alone. Rose gold jewelry is often seen as a safe yet meaningful option. It is personal without being overly dramatic, making it suitable for both new relationships and long-term partnerships.

Rose gold jewelry is subtle and easy to wear. It complements daily jewellery and pairs exceptionally well with diamonds and other gemstones due to its muted tone. This makes it ideal for regular use, not just special occasions.

Valentine's Jewelry Trends for 2026

1. Everyday Valentine's Jewelry: Rose Gold Necklaces

Rose gold necklaces are among the most versatile Valentine's gifts. They can be worn daily and layered with other jewellery, making them practical and emotionally meaningful.

Necklaces are one of the most gifted jewellery categories because they sit close to the heart and often carry symbolic value. In 2026, minimalist rose gold necklaces with pendants, initials, or subtle gemstone accents are expected to dominate Valentine's Day gift trends.

2. Emotional Symbolism: Rose Gold Rings

Valentine's Day and gold diamond rings are among the most searched jewellery categories year after year. Rings carry strong symbolic meaning related to commitment, connection, and future intentions.

Rose gold rings, especially those with symbolic designs, are popular choices for couples who want to express togetherness without choosing traditional engagement-style jewellery.

3. Rose Gold Earrings and Undoubtedly Elegance

For individuals who value simplicity and understated luxury, rose gold earrings are one of the most practical Valentine's gifts. They are easy to wear, comfortable, and suitable for both everyday and formal settings.

Studs, small hoops, and minimal drop earrings in rose gold remain timeless and versatile, making them ideal for recipients with a minimalist aesthetic.

4. Styles of Rose Gold Bracelets for Flexible Gifting

Rose gold bracelets are flexible in styling and appeal. Chain bracelets and slim bangles pair well with both Indian and Western outfits.

These styles are especially popular among women who enjoy mixing jewellery types and creating layered looks. Rose gold bracelets work equally well for daily wear and special occasions.

Rose Gold and Lab Grown Diamonds Valentine's Gifts: A Natural Pairing

1. Why Lab Grown Diamonds Are Better for Valentine's Gifts in 2026

Technological advancements have transformed modern jewellery gifting. Lab-grown diamonds are one of the most significant innovations in the industry.

Unlike natural diamonds, lab-grown diamonds are ethically sourced and produced in controlled environments. They offer the same brilliance, durability, and visual appeal as mined diamonds, with no compromise in quality.

For Valentine's Day gifting, lab-grown diamonds set in rose gold create a refined and modern aesthetic. The warmth of rose gold enhances the sparkle of the diamond, creating a balanced and elegant look.

2. Lab Diamond Heart Ring: A Modern Icon of Valentine's Day

The lab diamond heart ring continues to be a classic Valentine's Day design. When set in rose gold, heart-shaped diamonds appear softer and more refined.

Rose gold adds sophistication to the design, making it less literal and more elegant. This balance makes the lab diamond heart ring a popular choice for contemporary Valentine's gifting.

ANAND SHAH.
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The Performance of Rose Gold Jewelry in the Indian Market

In India, jewellery gifting is deeply rooted in culture and emotion. Jewellery is often associated with love, commitment, and celebration.

Rose gold jewellery performs exceptionally well in the Indian market because it blends modern design with emotional depth. It pairs beautifully with western clothing and surprises many buyers with how well it complements traditional Indian outfits such as sarees and lehengas.

This blend of western, ethnic, and modern appeal resonates strongly with younger, urban Indian consumers.

Tips for Choosing Rose Gold Jewelry for Valentine's Day

When selecting rose gold jewelry, consider:

- Whether the piece will be worn daily or occasionally
- The jewellery type (rings, necklaces, earrings, bracelets)
- Symbolic elements such as hearts or dual-stone designs
- Compatibility with existing jewellery

Because rose gold pairs well with most metals and gemstones, it remains suitable for future celebrations beyond Valentine's Day.

How to Care for Rose Gold Jewelry

Caring for rose gold jewelry is simple. Cleaning it with mild soap and water helps maintain its shine.

To preserve its finish:

Avoid harsh chemicals and perfumes
Avoid contact with abrasive surfaces
With proper care and storage, rose gold jewellery retains its beauty for many years.

Why Rose Gold Jewelry Is an Emotional Long-Term Investment

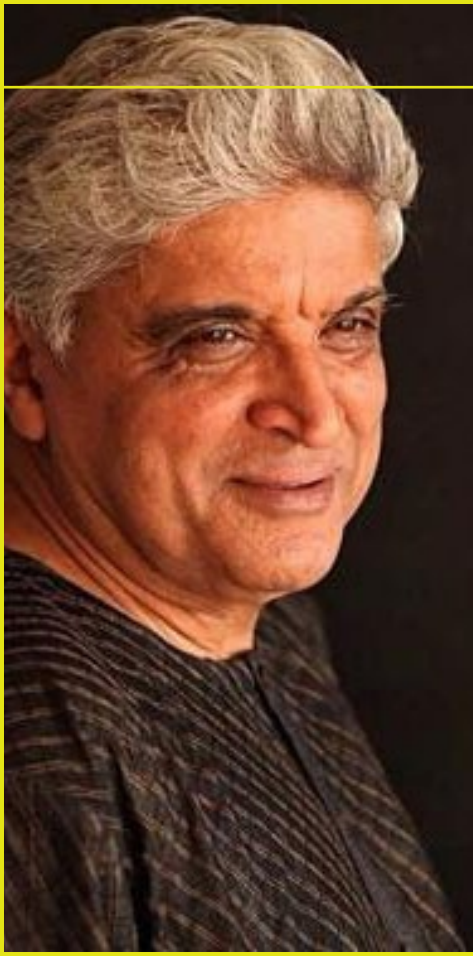
Unlike short-term gifts, rose gold jewelry does not lose relevance after Valentine's Day. It can be worn for anniversaries, birthdays, celebrations, and everyday moments.

In 2026, consumers increasingly seek gifts that combine emotional meaning with long-term usability. Rose gold jewellery meets both needs, making it a lasting emotional investment.

Conclusion: Rose Gold Jewelry Defines Valentine's Gifting in 2026

In 2026, Rose Gold Jewelry represents the true expression of romantic gifting. Its emotional warmth, compatibility with lab-grown diamonds, and everyday wearability make it the ideal Valentine's Day gift.

Whether chosen as a ring, necklace, earrings, or bracelet, rose gold jewellery communicates intention, love, and a shared future, everything Valentine's Day



'WE SUFFER FROM A LACK OF HISTORY, SANSKAR

'Somewhere our society's collective morality is lost. There's a kind of moral confusion in our society which reflects in our films.'

'Filmmakers are hiding behind romance, ghost stories, murder mysteries and sex. No film is looking at social issues.'

If the truth be told it's a life well versus living.

On January 17, poet, screenwriter and lyricist **Javed Akhtar** turned 81.

The occasion triggered off a train of thoughts on the sorry state of music and cinema in these troubled times.

"If you enter a dark room and you don't know where the light switches, you keep groping in the dark. I'd like to believe I know where the switches are," .

Javed Akhtar: 'Today I'm in competition with only with myself'

How do you look back on the 55 years of your career as a scriptwriter and lyricist?

There have been bruises and pleasures, achievements and failures... both are equally integral to life. But in totality life has been kind.

Without trying to be over-modest, I'd like to say that I wasted about 10 of those 55 years.

If I had worked in a more disciplined way I'd have done a lot more. That's a lingering regret.

I'm trying to compensate for that lost time. But I don't think I can.

Today I'm competing only with myself.

If I look at the mediocrity all around me I can only get depressed.

Javedsaab, you've made poetry accessible to the common man...

Isn't that what poetry is supposed to do?

If you can't communicate your lines to the common man, then why are you making your art public? Some artistes say they don't care if their art is not understood.

There should be some difference between your diary and shayari.

What do you feel about the falling standards of music in our films?

It can be best expressed by what Lataji sang in Silsila -- my first film as a lyricist -- Yeh kahan aa gaye hum. Jo halaat hainussmein kya karen?

I think the songs are a part of the narrative. If the narrative is of an inferior quality, the situations are bound to be inferior. These in turn demand inferior songs.

Songs for Kaagaz Ke Phool, Pyaasa or Baiju Bawra could only have been

possible in those films. Those songs couldn't be a part of a film today.

Also, there's a kind of fear in filmmakers that audiences' attention span has shortened. Hence, there's a frenzied tempo in the narrative at the cost of depth.

When songs run at a frantic speed words are no longer important. And since words no longer register as poetry or anything near it, lyricists are allowed to get away with anything.

The quality of music also is very unsympathetic towards poetic lyrics.

The people who are extracting work out of lyricists aren't trained to understand poetry.

Earlier on, composers understood music and poetry.

Sachin Dev Burman wasn't fluent in Hindi. But his sense of poetry was still impeccable.

Something is wrong with society at large.

In our educational system the Hindustani and Urdu languages are being marginalised.

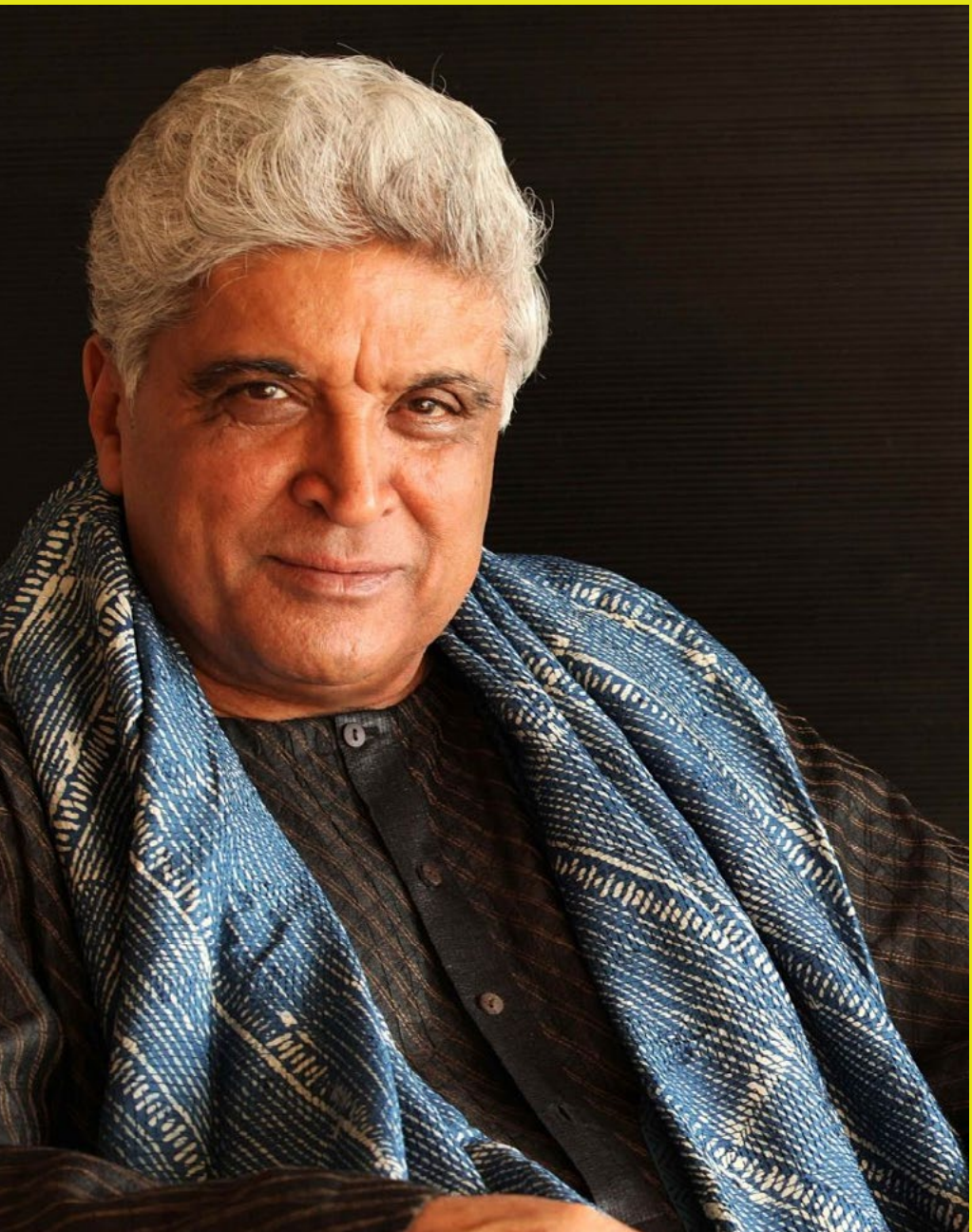
We're living in an era of a cultural void.

How do you manage to keep your head above water?

It has taken me a lot of time to come to where I am.

When initially my lyrics did well I was offered a lot of films. I declined all the films where I felt I'd have to write something I didn't want to, and couldn't.

The film industry got the message loud and clear. Yeh agar likhenge to iss terah se warna nahin. I cannot go beyond my inbuilt sense of morality.



Today I work with one-fifth of other successful lyricists. And I don't regret it.

You ask me how I seek out good projects. I think such projects seek me out.

I admit there aren't too many filmmakers and composers I'm comfortable with. Main to wohi karunga jo karta aaya hoon.

No bad language, no grammatically incorrect metres for me. Poets can take liberties but within the given grammatical structures.

Who have been your idols as a lyric writer?

Shailendra and Sahir Ludhianvi have written mindblowing songs. Why just them? Majrooh Sultanpuri, Jan Nissar Akhtar, Raja Mehndi Ali Khan, Bharat Vyas, Pradeep, Kaifi Azmi, even today's popular Sameer's father Anjaan... they've all written exceptional songs.

I've set certain standards for myself.

I believe language is for communication.

What's the point of writing a song if it doesn't communicate itself to the listeners?

My father Jan Nissar Akhtar used to say, it's very easy to write difficult songs and very difficult to write easy songs.

A simple language possesses a kind of transparency which a lyricist can afford only when he's sure of his ideas.

You have to be very clear about your ideas to write simply.

If you enter a dark room and you don't know where the light switches, you keep groping in the dark.

I'd like to believe I know where the switches are. Ambiguity forbids simple expression. I shy away from ambiguity.

'Without sanskar it's difficult to tell black from white'

Why aren't you writing screenplays any more?

At one stage I felt I was becoming a mechanical scriptwriter. I felt I was moving towards mediocrity.

Before that happened I stopped and concentrated on what excited me, namely lyric writing.

In recent times I was enthused to script my son's film Lakshya.

I'll not do commissioned screenwriting. I'll write when I feel galvanised into the process.

As for writing talent, GulzarSaab is an exceptionally talented dialogue writer.

But yes, we need script writers. There's a dearth of new ideas among them.

The good screenplay writers are filmmakers themselves -- Karan Johar, Ashutosh Gowariker, Farhan Akhtar and Aditya Chopra.

Do you see hope among our contemporary filmmakers?

Even if we lose everything else we shouldn't lose hope (laughs).

Sanjay Leela Bhansali whom I haven't worked with so far, Karan Johar, Ashutosh Gowariker....they're extremely talented.

Technically our films have progressed. The same cannot be said about the content. And the problem is outside the film industry.

Earlier on we had ideals, philosophies and values upon which the heroes and villains of our films were based. But without sanskar it's difficult to tell black from white.

Films do not address social issues any longer. There're no Sujata or Paigham being made.

Earlier the mill owner was the bad man and the farmer was good. We no longer know who's bad and good any longer!

'I'm not pessimistic about the future'

To what do you attribute this aridity of moral values in art?

Somewhere our society's collective morality is lost. There's a kind of moral confusion in our society which reflects in our films.

Filmmakers are hiding behind romance, ghost stories, murder mysteries and sex. No film is looking at social issues.

Swades and Lakshya were made. They flopped. We suffer from a lack of history and sanskar.

When Lakshya which I wrote, flopped, I felt the time wasn't right for me to write screenplays right now.

How can better socially relevant films be made if they don't get the audiences' support?

But I intend to return to screenplay writing this year.

How do people like you intend to stop the desecration of aesthetics in Hindi cinema?

I'm not pessimistic about the future. I feel things are changing.

If you listen to the film songs between 1985 and 1995 they were in extremely bad taste.

I'd say comparatively things are better now. Gradually people feel the need for an improvement in lyrics and melodies. There's a resistance to mediocrity.

It may take another 5-6 years. But we're moving towards a renaissance.

Your closing thoughts on the quality of lyrics today?

How I miss the masters!

I miss Lata Mangeshkar. There's no singer in this universe who can intone words the way she can.

Even if you don't know the meaning of a word you know by her expression. That's what a lyricist craves for.

'The Soldiers Ordered Us To Be Strip-Searched'

'...including my baby sisters, age three and one.'

'My dad was humiliated, and he started screaming at them.'

In the summer of 2023, Palestinian American writer, director and actress Cherien Dabis was all set to direct her third feature, an epic saga about a large intergenerational family's struggles from the Nakba in 1948 to the current day.

Nakba is the term used to describe the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians through violent displacement and dispossession of their land, property and belongings, by Zionist paramilitaries after the establishment of the State of Israel.

The film All That's Left of You had a big cast which included three actor members of the well-known Palestinian Bakri family -- Adam Bakri (Oscar-nominated film Omar) plays the younger version of the family patriarch Sharif, Adam's real life father -- the late Mohammed Bakri (Wajib and the TV series Homeland) played the older Sharif; and Adam's older brother Saleh (The Band's Visit, Wajib and The Teacher) plays Sharif's older son Salim. Dabis cast herself as Salim's wife Hanan.

But the events of October 7, 2023 changed Dabis' plans and she had to start from the scratch, raising funds again and looking for alternative shooting locations.

Eventually, Dabis did complete the film and it premiered at the 2025 Sundance Film Festival.

After that, it traveled to several festivals where it won a number of awards.

A deeply moving film All That's Left of You takes the path of forgiveness and redemption as a means to bring peace between the Palestinians and Israelis.

All That's Left of You was selected as Jordan's official entry for the Best International Film Oscar, and has been shortlisted among the final 15 international films.

India's entry Homebound is also in that shortlist as are two other Palestine-themed films Palestine 36 (Palestine's entry) and The Voice of Hind Rajab (Tunisian film and Grand Jury Prize Winner at the Venice Film Festival). The film is co-presented by two celebrity executive producers, Mark Ruffalo and Javier Bardem.

Things were moving fine for All That's Left of You and the other Palestinian films when suddenly last month, the Indian government did not give them clearance for screening at the International Film Festival of Kerala.

Dabis' filmography includes the Cannes film festival winner Amreeka (2009) and a number of hit shows, Only Murders in the Building, Ramy, Ozark and Quantico.

Dabis tells Aseem Chhabra, "The Palestinian story in the western media has been incomplete if it is ever featured in the mainstream narrative. At worst, it's racist the way in which we are portrayed. Palestinians become displaced, and we are dispossessed and that story is never told."

Cherien, I want to talk to you about what we witnessed in Gaza in the last two years -- the genocide, which eventually ended because of the 'ceasefire'. I am sure your script was being prepared long before. **But did the script, the shoot and the post-production get impacted in any way with what was happening on the ground?**

Yes, I started writing this back in 2020, long before all of this began.

In fact, I had the idea for it much longer than that, about 10 years ago. We started prepping the film in Palestine in May 2023. I was working with a local crew for close to five months. I had my key crew fly in from Germany.

We had already begun construction on our locations. We had amassed a giant warehouse with beautifully curated period props and set dressing. We were two weeks away from shooting when we were forced to evacuate in October.

So the film was deeply impacted by what happened on October 7, and really forever changed by what happened next.

The movie basically went into crisis after that.

We were in a financial crisis, we were in a logistical crisis.

We had to figure out whether we could keep going.

We had to raise more money.

We ended up going to Cyprus, where we were planning to shoot a small part of the film. We shot a little bit more than we were supposed to there. I kept hoping we could go back to Palestine, but we were just never able to make that happen.

So after Cyprus, we shot in Jordan, in the Palestinian refugee camps. The topography is very similar with Palestine.

You mean similar to the West Bank?

We had planned to shoot all over Palestine, in the West Bank, Jericho, Nablus and Ramallah. We had also planned to shoot in Haifa and Yaffa in Israel. Jordan was a good fit for the West Bank part of the film, but Haifa and Yaffa are very hard. You can't find those places in Jordan.

So we did some of the shooting in Cyprus, and then in Greece.

The Tel Aviv scenes were shot in Greece.

The old city of Yaffa was recreated on Rhodes Islands, which are part of Greece and close to Turkey.

We had to start and stop so many times because we were looking for financing, figuring out where to go next. We ended up having to look for Palestine everywhere but in Palestine.

We also found ourselves making a movie about what was happening as it was happening, which was so incredibly intense. Some days we were shooting scenes and images that we were watching unfold on our news screens and on our social media feeds.

It was really utterly surreal and very painful. We were very immersed in the Palestinian story and everything that's been happening since 1948 and it made the movie that much more important to us.

What was so great was that as crew and cast, we were so bonded after having to evacuate and going through all that together, and knowing that we were making something that had suddenly become even more important, more urgent.

The film became a container for our grief, our compassion and our love. It was beautiful to be able to create something during a time of such destruction, like it was such a gift to us, to be able to pour ourselves into it.

This is not a fictional story. It's a story that happened to many Palestinians families. I read that your father migrated and went as a refugee to the US.

Yes, my father was born in a village in the north of the West Bank, and basically lived most of his life in exile. My mother is from Jordan.

My father became a refugee in 1967 and was not able to return to Palestine, until he got a foreign citizenship in order to just visit his family and return to the only home he had ever known.

He was separated from his family during that time, and it was obviously a major trauma for him.

I watched him suffer his entire life in exile and watched the situation just deteriorate more and more.

The character of Sharif, played by Adam Bakri and Mohammad Bakri (when the character is older), is somewhat inspired by my father.

He was obsessed with news from Palestine and was always watching TV.

You were born in the US?

I was the first of my family to be born in the diaspora. But I grew up going back and forth to Jordan and the West Bank.

We would spend months at a time visiting my dad's native village in the West Bank.

So I got a window into what life was like for Palestinians, and I saw my dad discriminated against and humiliated at borders and checkpoints. One of my first experiences traveling to Palestine was when I was eight.

You and your family had American passports.

Yes, but that didn't matter. We were held at the borders between Jordan and the West Bank for like 12 hours.

The contents of our suitcases were picked through.

The soldiers ordered us to be strip-searched, including my baby sisters, age three and one.

My dad was humiliated, and he started screaming at them.

That was my first experience of what it meant to be Palestinian. It stayed with me.

Then there were stories I heard about, stories from the Nakba from 1948 and 1967. I wondered why the world didn't know about these things. I wondered why the world didn't know the origin of Palestinian suffering and injustice.

What do you want the viewers to take from this film? A lot of people just associate the Palestinians and their struggle with Hammas.

I want them to understand the origin of Palestinian suffering.

I want them to understand what happened to the people.

The Palestinian story in the western media has been incomplete if it is ever featured in the mainstream narrative. At worst, it's racist the way in which we are portrayed.

Palestinians become displaced, and we are dispossessed and that story is never told.

I am a big fan of the Bakri family. You cast Mohammad Bakri and his sons Saleh and Adam. Where do they live? In Amereeka, you also worked with the wonderful Palestinian actress Haim Abbass (Succession).

I have always wanted to work with all of them, so to get to work with all three of the Bakri men in one film was really remarkable.

Mohammed (he passed away on December 24, 2025) and Saleh live in Israel. They are from north of Haifa.

Adam lives in New York and Dubai, Haim lives in France.

About your own career in Hollywood, do American filmmakers hesitate to cast you?

You know, it's such an interesting question.

My straight answer is I don't know.

If people did have any hesitation, I don't think they would show me. I don't think I have ever really felt it overtly.

It's a difficult identity to have, but I wouldn't want it any other way.

'I Can Be A Whacked Out Person'

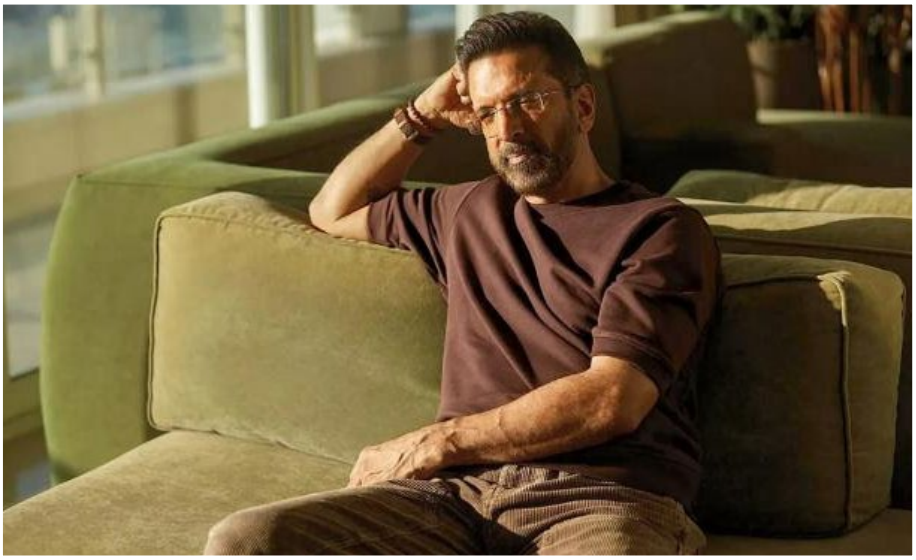
'Had I been launched as a leading actor, it would probably have worked better.' 'Prabhu Devaa came eight years after me. Maybe if a filmmaker had thought of a film for me like the ones he got, my career would have been a different trajectory.'

Jaaved Jaaferi makes comedy look easy on both the big and small screen with his seemingly off-the-cuff witticisms. But there is more to the actor.

He has expanded his image to include more dramatic roles of late.

Jaaved passionately talks about playing the central role in Tumbbad writer-director Rahi Anil Barve's upcoming film Mayasabha and also takes a deep dive into his chequered rise to prominence over the last 40 years.

In this two-part interview, "Appreciation of the fruits of your labour is a critical aspect of an actor's journey. It's all about validation."



Your solo presence on the Mayasabha poster is attracting buzz. What can you tell us about the role and its significance to your career?

This is one of the best roles I have played in my career.

For an actor, a good role is a boon.

I practically did it for free.

In Mayasabha, my character was once the biggest film producer of his time, but he has since vanished.

The movie begins with a brother and sister pair befriending a 14-year-old boy The teen brings them to his house, a dilapidated theatre.

There it unfolds that he is the son of the once-famous producer who is now living a secluded life, wearing a mask and spraying smoke with a mosquito spray gun.

The two outsiders have heard the story about how the filmmaker had once married his leading lady, but she had run away with his male protege. The producer is said to still own 40 kilos of gold. Thus starts a cat-and-mouse game, exploring human psychology.

What was your reaction to bagging the central role in a film with an acclaimed director at the age of 63?

This is my 40th year in films -- my debut film Meri Jung was released in 1985 -- and by a strange coincidence in the span of a year-and-a-half (from late 2024 to March 2026 when Dhamaal 4 will release), I will have had five Web series and three movies releasing.

Do you feel lead opportunities should have come your way earlier?

Aadmi feel toh bahut kuchh karta hai..

Any close calls that you regret losing out on?

It happened once.

I remember Anurag Basu approached me for Life... In A Metro.

He said, 'Look, Irrfan Khan was doing this role but he had to go for a Hollywood film. Would you like to do the film?'

I loved the role and said yes. We even worked out the dates.

But then Irrfan came back and he said, 'I'm so sorry about this.'

Mayasabha had a long journey while underproduction. Did you lose heart at any stage?

Yeah, there is a sense of disappointment which comes in, like this is some of the best work I have done but it has not being seen by people.

Job contentment when you like what you have done is necessary, but an actor performs for an audience.

Appreciation of the fruits of your labour is a critical aspect of an actor's journey.

It's all about validation.

You have done serious dramatic roles earlier too in Fire, Shaurya, Lupt. Yet somehow, your comic image is very overpowering.

If my comedy films achieve a bigger level of success, obviously that will be people's reference.

My 'Eggjactly'-spouting character from Salaam Namaste got a lot of traction but Dhamaal has an even wider audience. Families have connected with Dhamaal's wholesome comedy.

Now a fourth Dhamaal is coming up.

People have loved my character, Manav. It's like a Gabbar Singh or Mogambo -- Amjadsaab and Amrishji did various roles but that's how they are remembered.

Besides the serious films you mentioned, I also did the hit Web series Taaza Khabar 2 in which I played a very dark but classy villain who says some fantastic lines which went viral.

In the recent De De Pyaar De 2, your quips seem organic. Was anything unscripted?

No. Some people give you a lot of leeway for improv, but Luv Ranjan is one of the writers, who is very particular about retaining the flavour and flow of the lines.

You have worked with Shah Rukh Khan, Ajay Devgn, Sanjay Dutt, Saif Ali Khan... What's the vibe like among male actors?

Sanju and Jackie are the most chill. They don't try to enter your space.

Shah Rukh is very involved. I worked with him in Oh Darling Yeh Hai India.

If a normal hero is punched, he will probably flinch and jerk his head and stagger but Shah Rukh will fall down, take one gulati and roll over.

I like that Shah Rukh doesn't throw attitude or say 'I am a star, how can I do this?'

Similarly, in Salaam Namaste, Saif stuck to his part, and I have big respect for that. It would have fallen flat if he had said, 'I'm the hero but this guy is overpowering in this scene, so I should get the punch line'.

Has your role ever suffered at the editing table?

It has happened once or twice. I don't like to talk about it, but hua hai.

In real life, are you always ready to make people laugh with a quip or are you more inclined to be serious?

I have two sides. I can be a whacked out person and also very serious. I like to be quiet and contemplative.

Where does your humour come from? Do you practise your jokes and delivery?

Well, a lot of my humour is from within.

I don't practice anything except figuring out when to pause and stress while saying my lines.

You chose to enter films in Subhash Ghai's Meri Jung with dancing, not comedy, as your forte. Was it a deliberate choice to strike out in a different direction?

I didn't choose anything.

I got an offer, I said, okay.

I didn't think dancing-comedy-villain-hero.

At the time of Meri Jung, I was head and shoulders above the competition around me in dance.

I had won the All India Dance Championship et al. Meri Jung gave me the leeway to wear the kind of clothes I like, so I got a lot of that baggy pants and the earring. It was a very cool look for the time.

Despite the success of your song, Rock and Roll, your film career didn't shoot up immediately.

When I reflect today, I realise dance was, for a long long time, associated more with the hero, not with the antagonist.

But Mr (Subhash) Ghai and Javed Akhtarsaab came up with the novel concept of a bad guy who is also a dancer, a charmer. He didn't want the typical growling, menacing villain, he wanted this very cool college kid to play a bad guy. But that doesn't translate into other films.

Had I been launched as a leading actor, it would probably have worked better.

Prabhu Devaa came eight years after me. Maybe if a filmmaker had thought of a film for me like the ones he got, my career would have been a different trajectory.

'I'm A Heroine; Will Not Play A Mother's Role'

Nyrraa Banerji's reason for staying away from Bollywood for a while: 'In Bollywood, there was a phase where all the movies were getting very bold. Physical intimacy was the criteria at that time for films. I didn't want to be part of that.'

There was an easy, pleasant vibe from the moment we walked in to interview **Nyrraa M Banerji.**

She is currently promoting her new comedy film One Two Cha Cha Chaa, which also stars Ashutosh Rana.

Visibly busy with back-to-back promotional activities, Nyrraa brought a cheerful energy as she warmly greeted us with New Year wishes.

"2026 looks very different from 2025! It feels like a new energy."

The new year marks a fresh chapter for Nyrraa, as she returns to Hindi cinema after 10 years in a never-seen-before avatar, even learning Bihari for the role. She admits she had deliberately paced her career earlier by turning down film offers.

Nyrraa started her film journey with Priyadarshan's Kamaal Dhamaal Malamaal in 2012 and has since appeared in Tamil and Telugu films, along with a stint in Hindi television.

"I am stubborn. I don't say yes to everything," Nyrraa tells "I had the guts to say no to so many movies back then."

Tell us about One Two Cha Cha Chaa.

One Two Cha Cha Chaa is a situational comedy film with a beautiful ensemble cast.

The best part is working with Ashutosh sir, he is a living legend. It is a very big honour for any actor to work alongside him. I got this film literally out of nowhere. It fell into my lap. I was relaxing after finishing a television show. It my proper chill zone where I was unwinding and enjoying myself. Suddenly I got a call from a very old friend who told me about this film.

I got a narration. I enjoyed it a lot. Then I asked about the star cast. They told me Ashutosh sir. I was very surprised. We have mostly seen Ashutosh sir in intense and grey shades. I was very excited to see him in this role.

You seem to be playing a proper Hindi masala film heroine in this one.

Yes! No one has ever seen me in this avatar in Bollywood.

In my first film Kamaal Dhamaal Malamaal, I was playing a Christian girl named Maria. In One Night Stand, I was a devoted wife. Then in Barun Rai and the House on the Cliff, I played a Bengali nurse who gets possessed.

This Bihari-flavoured, proper heroine look came to me for the first time. I enjoyed it a lot. I also love the look of my character. I am wearing a sari and always have a flower on my ear. It's a very desi character. I learned Bihari for this role.

Ninety per cent of my scenes are with Ashu sir. It was a nice experience. It is a very different kind of romance that you might not have seen before. Our scenes are very cute.

WATCH: Nyrraa talks about her character and the 'chaotic' plot of One Two Cha Cha Chaa...

You have worked in television, commercials, music videos, and theatre. Was acting in Hindi films always your goal?

Honestly, I am where I am today because of the choices I have made.

My first work as a child artist was Kadambari, a Doordarshan show. From there on, my pictures were circulated, and people started approaching me for South movies. There were no agencies at that time, only managers and coordinators.

When I was in college, a celebrity manager spotted me. Someone told me, you look very cute, you dance very well, you should do movies. They spoke to my mom.

I signed South films, and at the same

time, I also started Bollywood projects. I got more busy in the South, because in Bollywood, there was a phase where all the movies were getting very bold. Physical intimacy was the criteria at that time for films. I didn't want to be part of that. stopped taking projects because every film was being made in the same way and I didn't want to get into that zone. I don't see myself associating with that genre. That's why I took a break from Bollywood.

But you did One Night Stand...

One Night Stand is not an intimacy film. It was about a woman whose husband has cheated on her and how she had given her entire life to the husband and now that she wants to give time to herself.

It was a film about self-worth. If there are a few such scenes in the entire film, then it is understandable, but the film should not be about that.

Did Khakee: The Bengal Chapter help you find better opportunities?

When you do very intense roles, it becomes very difficult for you to get another type of role. If casting directors see me in that role, they will start giving me roles like that. You know, (roles like) a pregnant lady, or with a child.

See, it is not necessary that if I have played a mother, now I will not do a motherly role for everyone. I am a heroine. I am not going to play a mother's role.

Khakee: The Bengal Chapter was an exception. It was Neeraj Pandey's series. It was a franchise which was a super hit. There are a lot of calculations.

For me, being part of that show was more important. It takes a while to shed the perception.

You have over six million followers on Instagram. Does that help you get more work?

Perhaps. See, I am stubborn. I don't say yes to everything, whether it is a TV show or a film.

I had the guts to say no to so many movies back then. I felt that I did not want to be part of that genre. They definitely pitch me, and I get a lot of inquiries, but it materialises only when I want it.

From what we see on your social media, you sing really well. What's your equation with singing?

I am a law graduate. I specialised in intellectual property rights.

My mom wanted me to have a career in singing. So, she used to wake me up every morning at 6 and make me do riyaaz. She taught me ghazals. She taught me Hindustani classical music and ragas.

It was my mom's wish because she also sings very well. I am a lazy person. I don't want to get up in the morning and do riyaaz. So, I didn't do that. But today, when people still tell me that my voice is good, I know that if I practice even for a month, my voice will really open up.

What drew you to Bollywood?

I have the biggest crush on Madhuri Dixit, Kareena Kapoor and Priyanka Chopra. I still have a crush on them. I have grown up watching Madhuri Dixit films. It will be a huge compliment if someone says that you are like Madhuri, or you dance like her, or your expressions are like hers!

I like Kareena for her cool attitude, and Priyanka for her confidence, and the way she has led her life. I love them. These are my role models.

'I Don't Want To Be Underpaid'

'If they said the shift is at 9, I would reach by 9.'

'But no one came until 12.'

'Slowly over the time, I felt very disappointed with the whole thing.'

Talluri Rameshwari, who stole hearts in films like Seetamalakshmi and Dulhan Wahi Jo Piya Man Bhaye, was recently seen in Devara and Uppu Kappurambu.

The actor lost out a lot of movies because of an eye injury. But that wasn't the only reason.

"After about 30 films, I felt I was stagnating," Rameshwari tells "The realisation came to me when I was doing an Odia film called Manini in 1985. I had evolved as an actress, but felt I was not going anywhere."

I have been looking for your number for years. No one seems to have it.

Because I am not popular.

No, you are popular even if you didn't act in any more films after Dulhan Wahi Jo Piya Man Bhaye and Seetamalakshmi.

Even today, there is a freshness in Dulhan Wahi... There is so much innocence in Rajshri movies.

You became an instant star. Do you remember those days?

At the same time, I used to get scared that I am not like that.

I played this simple, straightforward woman who is willing to please everyone.

She is no doormat but still, very obedient, and traditional. It was an amazing role.

What did you do next?

At that time, I did some 12-15 films, out which three-four were successful. After about 30 films, I felt I was stagnating.

The realisation came to when I was doing an Odia film called Manini in 1985.

It was good work, even better than Dulhan Wahi Jo Piya Man Bhaye.

I had evolved as an actress, but felt I was not going anywhere.

Did you want to move away from the image of the ideal bride?

No, that was not a problem. But people misinterpreted the character in Dulhan Wahi Jo Piya Man Bhaye.

They felt she was a doormat, but she was not.

During shoots, I used to question directors. Directors like Lekh Tandonji (who directed Dulhan Wahi Jo Piya Man Bhaye) were happy with the questions. Other directors resented it.

My second film was the Telugu film Seetamalakshmi. It was a big hit. I didn't ask questions in that.

Would you say Dulhan Wahi Jo Piya Man Bhaye spoilt you for your future projects?

Oh absolutely! Recently, I was working in a film where I'm supposed to be eagerly waiting for someone. And she's become old.

She walks with a lathi and then goes, 'Oh my God, that person is here, that person is here'.

The director said, 'Where did this come from? You did it in one minute, without any preparation.'

I said it just came to my mind that this is how it should be.

I don't want to be involved with projects where I have no voice.

You played a funny mother in the Telugu film Uppu Kappurambu.

I didn't want to do it. The old character has to cough and talk all the time. That wasn't easy to do.

You know the difference between the time I was offered Dulhan Wahi Jo Piya Man Bhaye and now?

Yes?

When P K Gupta thought about me for this role in Dulhan Wahi, he called at least five-six times. I didn't go because I had some ego in me.

I felt these people make you sit and finally say there is no work for you. So I don't want to go. So Mr Gupta came home.

I told him I would come to the Rajshri office on the condition that the door should be open.

You can't believe it. When I went there, they kept the door open!

Rajbabu (Sooraj Barjatya's father Raj Kumar Barjatya) was laughing. He treated me like his own child. I was paid Rs 10,000 for the film.

But how much love did I get? So much! There used to be 40 saris for me to choose from.

Prem Kishen was very unproblematic as the hero.

He was new, but he was a man from the film industry: Veteran actor Prem Nath's son. He could have been troublesome, but he was so accommodating.

So Rajbabu and Rajshri spoilt me and treated me like a princess.

It wasn't the same in other production houses?

I didn't understand how to behave outside.

If they said the shift is at 9, I would reach by 9.

But no one came until 12.

Slowly over the time, I felt very disappointed with the whole thing.

But Rameshwariji, there was an accident, right?

That happened during Sunayana, produced by Rajshri.

Your eye was hurt.

It was very tragic, very tragic. I suppose, it had to happen.

Did that affect your career?

It did. Also, my attitude.

I didn't give a damn about what people thought.

I had a black eye, and it took nine months to heal.

I did some films even after the injury. J Om Prakash's Asha was a bit hit but I didn't know how to capitalise on that.

Are you open to offers now?

I want to see what impact the character has on the story.

In Uppu Kappurambu, the director convinced me to do it. I didn't want to do it because it was physically strenuous.

I was part of Devara. It's a small character, but very mysterious.

I have a lot of time to do films.

At the same time, I don't want to be underpaid. There are a lot of offers, but they want to downgrade you in some way.

There are two or three incentives for a character artist. One is that you get lovely characters.

When you do these lovely characters, even if it is a two-day job, it's very satisfying. That is what I want.

I want job satisfaction.

'One Person's Luck Doesn't Decide A Film's Fate'

'I often give myself a pat on the shoulder, reminding myself that I've done a good job considering where I started and the mindset I grew up with.'

Rashmika Mandanna has had a good year, thanks to blockbusters like **Chhaava** and deeply personal stories like **The Girlfriend**.

She looks back at 2025, and says "I want to explore different personalities and versions of myself, rather than being boxed into one image. I don't want to be seen as just the good girl, the innocent girl, the happy-go-lucky girl, or the mean girl."

Do you feel a sense of contentment about the year and your career in 2025?

The whole reason we work as hard as we do is to one day, feel this way.

I'm very proud of the year I've had, even though it doesn't mean every year will be like this.

Maybe things will get better, maybe they'll stay the same. But for all the work I have put in, it means a lot to see my friends, family, and extended family feel happy for me.

That happiness reflects back on me.

I feel extremely proud, deeply content, joyful, and loved for everything I received in 2025.

While Chhaava was your first blockbuster of 2025, the one that really spoke to me, and probably to you, was The Girlfriend. What was your reaction when you were offered the part?

My first reaction when I heard the script of The Girlfriend was that this was one of the most important stories to be told right now. I understood the emotions it carried. It felt essential to share it.

I had lived parts of that story even before I became Bhuma, so it was deeply personal for me.

Doing this film was my way of giving a warm, tight hug to my younger self.

It made me happy long before its release because, at its core, this was purely for me.

The Girlfriend has become a movement on toxicity in relationships.

Today, seeing people watch the film and connect with it makes me even happier.

I'm grateful that when you give so much of yourself to cinema, it isn't brushed aside -- it's accepted, loved, and protected.

That's when you truly feel happy.

The Girlfriend puts a responsibility on your shoulders. As a representational character whom women would look towards for relationship goals, how do you see that responsibility?

I don't see it as a responsibility. I'm a woman, and have always shown up for the women in my life.

Today, I'm simply showing up for the women in my extended family.

There's no real difference for me -- I'm just being myself and staying true.

At the same time, I'm deeply grateful that people felt comfortable creating this.

I kept telling my director Rahul Ravindran how thankful I am that a man could understand a woman so intimately and sensitively, and feel confident enough to write a character like this.

I'm also grateful to the producers who were willing to invest in telling a story from a woman's perspective.

Do you find a paucity of such stories in our cinema?

I'm happy to see more stories like this being written, and more directors and producers coming together to make them happen.

There should be many more films told through a female lens, and that's finally happening.

It's not just about me, there will be many more artists who will come forward with incredibly special stories and performances.

In that sense, if there is a responsibility to continue telling honest stories from a woman's perspective. I promise I'll keep working hard to do justice to that.

As an emotionally and intellectually evolved actress, do you find it hard to rationalise what your characters demand of you? For example, what sense did Thamma make to you? I'm an actor, an entertainer.

I want to entertain people.

I want to explore different personalities and versions of myself, rather than being boxed into one image.

I don't want to be seen as just the good girl, the innocent girl, the happy-go-lucky girl, or the mean girl.

An actor is very different from who I am as a person, and I want that distinction to be clear.

As an actor, I want people to feel proud that I'm willing to take on anything.

That/s how I want to be perceived -- someone who keeps pushing herself to grow and get better.

That's why I surrender completely to my directors and writers. If they write something that makes sense and convinces me, I give myself to it fully.

How do you look at your journey as an actor so far?

I'm a very different person today than I once was.

I've grown up in a certain way, carried certain habits and beliefs, and learned so much along the way, both on the job through my performances and in life, through my experiences.

Everything I've picked up has shaped me into the woman I wanted to become.

Since childhood, I've dealt with anxiety, insecurity, and many internal struggles.

Slowly and steadily, working through them has made me incredibly proud of who I am today.

I often give myself a pat on the shoulder, reminding myself that I've done a good job considering where I started and the mindset I grew up with.

Even if these changes feel small or invisible to others, I see them.

I know them. That's enough to make me happy.

How do you divide your time between Hindi and Telugu cinema?

I work from a place of deep gratitude and never take any industry for granted, whether it's Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, or Hindi.

When I commit to a film, I give it my 100 percent.

I'm completely present when I'm on set, and when I'm not, I step away fully.

I'm grateful to work with incredible teams from the directors and producers to every department because their energy is what I thrive on.

Since most of your films are hits, do you like being labelled a lucky mascot?

One person's luck doesn't decide the fate of a film.

Film is a collective effort, with anywhere from 50 to 200 people working together.

What you can control are the choices you make for yourself, and even then, sometimes the film doesn't work.

From shooting to release, so many people and factors are involved that ultimately shape a film's destiny.

Very little is truly in our hands, but I do feel deeply blessed and grateful.

I'm thankful for the choices I've been able to make and for the opportunity to work with some of the most brilliant minds in the industry.

Is marriage on the cards in 2026?

That's not something I would like to comment on right now.

'Prashant Tamang Was Like King Of Nepali Community'

'He was the Michael Jackson of the community.'

The sudden death of **Prashant Tamang** at 43, a former cop from West Bengal, who won the nation's heart by winning Indian Idol, Season 3 in 2007, has shocked his legion of fans.

Tamang carved a successful career as a singer-actor and played a key character in Paatal Lok 2. During the shoot in Nagaland and Darjeeling, Tamang drew more crowds than lead actor Jaideep Ahlawat who played Hathiram Chaudhary.

His last film is the upcoming Salman Khan-starrer The Battle of Galwan.

Bendang Walling, who acted with Prashant in Paatal Lok 2 and was recently seen in The Family Man 3, built a lasting friendship with Tamang beyond the sets.

"While we were shooting in Nagaland, even though the lead was Hathiram, the people of Nagaland recognised only Prashant. They were taking pictures with him,"

The Darjeeling Boy who became an Icon

Apart from being a friend, Prashant was like a brother to me. Last August, I went to Darjeeling on work and he insisted that I stay in his house.

Though he lived in Delhi with his wife and little daughter, he had taken me to his house in Darjeeling when we were shooting on location for Paatal Lok 2.

I think he built the home after he won Indian Idol. He built it for his mother. He was very close to her.

Unfortunately, she died during Covid. It took him a while to recover from her loss.

[Prashant Tamang lost his father early in an accident and was appointed as a constable in his father's place.]

Among the photographs in the house are pictures of Prashant's journey to winning Indian Idol.

He was not only famous in Darjeeling, but among the whole Nepali/Gorkha community and diaspora.

He was like the king of the Nepali community. They respected him a lot.

He was the Michael Jackson of the community.

In Darjeeling, wherever he went, everyone wanted to talk to him or take pictures because apart from winning Indian Idol, he acted in Nepali films and travelled a lot for his performances.

People took pride in him and his achievements. He was their own. That's where his soul was.

People appreciated and loved him, and took immense pride that he was from their hometown and state.

How we hit it off on the sets of Paatal Lok 2

There are some things in life that happen naturally and organically. We clicked because of our personalities. I am from Nagaland and it so happened that his wife is a Nepali from Nagaland.

He really had great love for the Naga people.

He was fun loving and yet humble. He did not boast or show attitude. There was a child-like innocence to him and that is why he was growing in his craft because like we say in the world of art, until you become a child, you will never learn.

We used to joke around on the sets, most of the time pulling each other's leg.

We first met in Kohima during the acting workshop for Paatal Lok 2. Of course, I knew Prashant from before. Who didn't know Prashant?

I just went up and told him, 'Prashant, it's so nice to meet you. I watched you perform in Indian Idol and never thought we'll be meeting in person'.

He responded in a friendly way with a smattering of Nagamese -- and that is how our friendship began.

We were partners in crime.

Our final shot was in Darjeeling. He was so happy about it and invited us to his house. I remember we cooked chicken at his place.

He even took us to see the Nepal border.

Don't waste time making enemies, bearing grudges

There are so many memories. Even after the shoot of Paatal Lok 2, we always kept in touch.

I last met him when his brother-in-law died in Nagaland and they flew down to Dimapur. My wife and I met him.

We kept in touch over the phone.

When I appeared in The Family Man 3 and posted a reel from the sets, he applauded me.

When he got a role in The Battle of Galwan, he called me up and shared the news with me. I was so happy for him.

While we were shooting in Nagaland, even though the lead was Hathiram, the people of Nagaland recognised only Prashant. They were taking pictures with him.

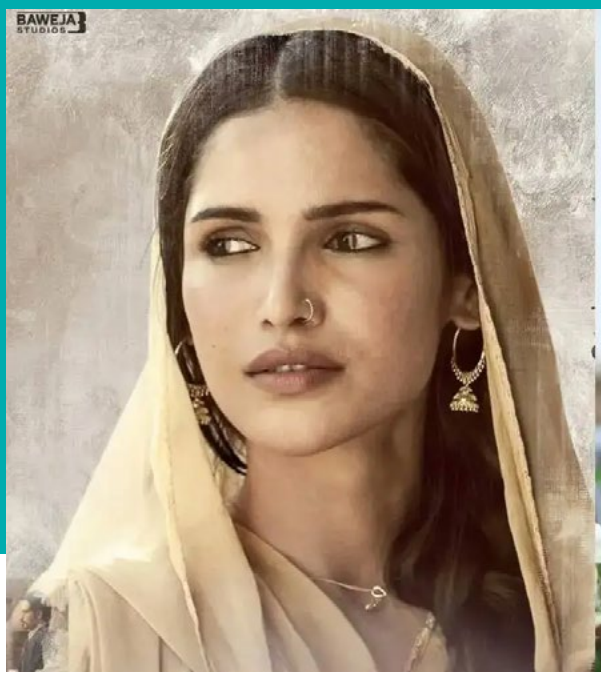
His sudden passing is very sad and shocking.

Life is very tragic, very uncertain.

The best thing that I can take from Prashant's life is that we should be good to everyone and try our best to be happy with everyone around.

Don't waste your time in making enemies or bearing grudges. That was how Prashant lived his life.

'You Have To Be Okay With Being Imperfect, Vulnerable'



'You Have To Be Okay With Being Imperfect, Vulnerable' My life and career have changed in subtle but meaningful ways.'

Former Miss India **Vartika Singh** made her debut as Emraan Hashmi's second wife in Suparn S Verma's Haq.

She looks back at the experience it gave her and says "As a beauty queen, you're expected to be perfect all the time. As an actor, it's the opposite."

Haq is not only your debut but also an unusual way to start your career. How did the offer come your way?

Being Miss India, offers did come my way. But I was always very clear that I wanted to start with something content-driven and not just based on glamour.

When I read the script of Haq, I loved what it was trying to say and create.

I auditioned for the part without really expecting to get it, went through a couple of rounds, and eventually landed,

It was one of those unbelievable moments in life, and I knew I wanted to begin my journey with something like this rather than ticking boxes just to start my career.

What was it like shooting for Haq?

It was a learning curve in the best way.

Working with Yami Gautam and Emraan Hashmi was enriching because they're so secure and generous as actors.

I was constantly observing, absorbing, and pushing myself.

They never made me feel like a newcomer on set.

How closely did Suparn Verma direct you?

Suparn was very closely involved in the process.

I'm grateful that he trusted me with Saira, which gave me the confidence to explore my character without fear. That balance helped me grow.

Did you work on your Urdu diction?

Yes. I wanted Saira to sound natural and truthful, not rehearsed. It helped that I come from Lucknow.

I grew up hearing people speak the way she does, so that familiarity stayed with me and made it easier to slip into her voice and build her more honestly.

As a beauty pageant queen, did you find it hard to be taken seriously as an actor?

Yes, it does come with its own baggage.

People do tend to put you in a box early on.

Also, as a beauty queen, you're expected to be perfect all the time.

As an actor, it's the opposite.

You have to be okay with being imperfect, vulnerable, and ready for anything and everything.

I've never felt the need to fight that perception loudly though. I believe consistency and good work speak for themselves.

Haq gave me the space to be seen as an actor first, and that meant a lot to me.

After Haq, how has your life and career changed?

My life and career have changed in subtle but meaningful ways. It has given me perspective.

I feel more grounded, more patient, and definitely more mature and confident as an actor.

I understand myself better now: My process, strengths, and where I need to grow.

It's one of those experiences that quietly shapes you.

What can we expect from you this year?

You can expect me to be more focused.

I'm seeking work that excites and challenges me, even if it takes time.

I want to keep surprising myself and the audiences, and most importantly, stay honest to the kind of stories I want to tell.

'Never Thought I Would Get So Much Love'

Jaideep Ahlawat, who was last seen in Ikkis, is all set to work with Shah Rukh Khan in King.

He's thrilled about the experience he's had, and says "It doesn't feel like such a big, iconic, global star is working with you, so it feels great."

2026 has started with a bang for you with Ikkis. Did you expect your role to have such an impact?

There are few stories that deal with human emotions, so being a part of such a venture feels very lucky.To be honest, I expected Ikkis would be well received.

You have reached a stage in your career where everything you do is considered brilliant by both critics and audiences. Isn't that a dangerous place to be for an actor?

It's a big compliment that people are watching my work and that it is well-received. I don't know if it can be harmful or not.

I had never thought I would get so much love.

Of course, I'd hoped my work would be appreciated, but didn't expect to reach where I have.

I know that it can be dangerous when people's expectations increase, but I don't think like that. I just do my work honestly and let fate decide the rest.

At this juncture of your career, what is your criteria for accepting a role?

I think the basic thing is to fit into a story.

When you read a story, you feel there is something new, you will get to do something different.

You also like the story.After that, I look at what kind of people are associated with the film.

But I think the basic criteria is still that I am a part of a project which I enjoyed reading.

What is that one role you still crave to play?

There is a lot of work ahead. If you ask me this question after 10-15 years, I might be able to say there is a certain type of role left for me to perform.

Right now, there is a lot of work still to do.

What can we expect from you in 2026?

Some of my projects will be released, others will be in progress.

I'm in a project with Shefali (Shah) ma'am, directed by Vipul Shah, and in an Anand L Rai production directed by Neeraj Yadav.

What is it like working with Shah Rukh Khan in King?

This is the second time I'm working with him. I had a very small role in Raees.

It doesn't feel like such a big, iconic, global star is working with you, so it feels great.

Siddharth Anand is the director; I did Jewel Thief with him, under the same production house. It is always fun to be on that set.

'I know that it can be dangerous when people's expectations increase, but I don't think like that.'

'I just do my work honestly and let fate decide the rest.'

BOLLYWOOD'S FITNESS WARRIORS STARS WHO SWEAT LIKE ATHLETES TO STAY AT THE TOP.

Hrithik Roshan

Hrithik Roshan's fitness journey is a story of resilience and focus. Despite past injuries, he trains like an athlete, mixing intense cardio with strength training and flexibility work. His approach emphasises balance, recovery, and mental strength. Hrithik believes in pushing boundaries while maintaining mindfulness, showing that true transformation comes through patience, persistence, and an unshakable drive to improve every day.

Akshay Kumar

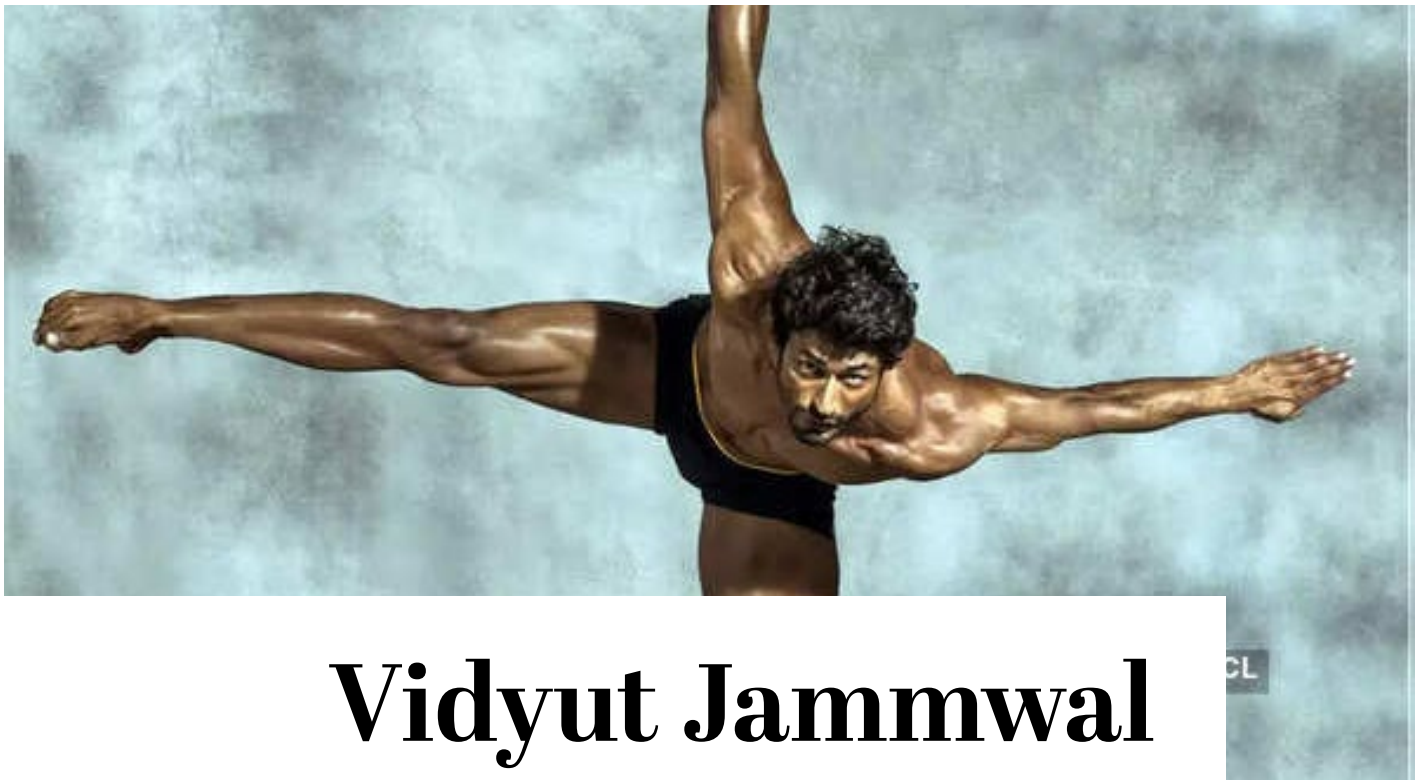
Akshay Kumar is the ultimate fitness inspiration, blending martial arts, calisthenics, and discipline into his daily routine. Known for training at sunrise, he prefers functional workouts over fancy gym machines. For him, fitness is a way of life built on balance, simplicity, and self-control. His mantra is consistency, clean living, and staying connected to nature—because true strength comes from within.

John Abraham

John Abraham's fitness philosophy is refreshingly straightforward: train hard, eat right, and stay humble. He avoids shortcuts and believes in building functional strength through clean nutrition and consistent workouts. Known for his love of weight training and early mornings, John treats fitness as a lifelong commitment rather than a temporary goal, proving that discipline beats motivation every time.

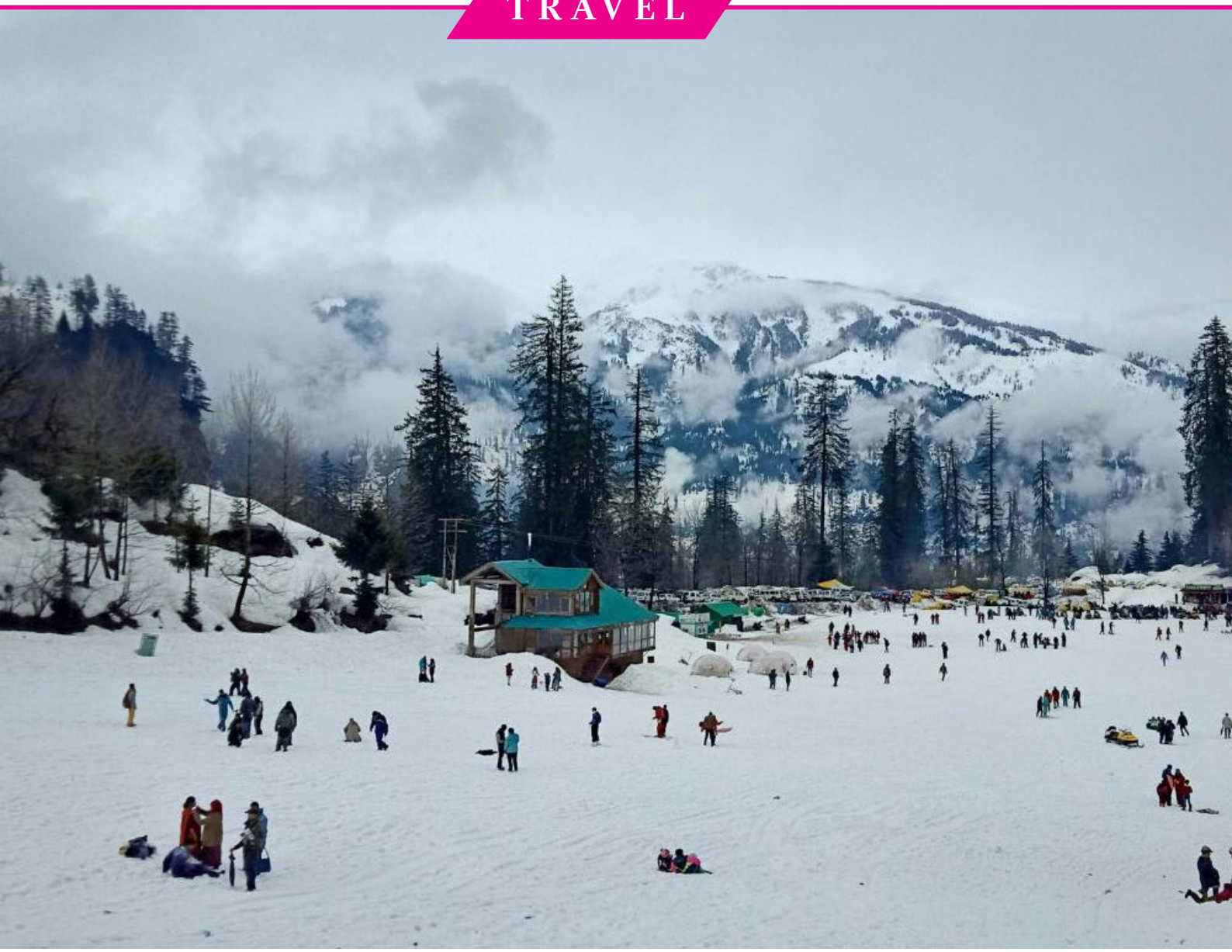
Tiger Shroff

Tiger Shroff's athleticism is pure passion in motion. From martial arts and parkour to dance and weight training, he blends art with intensity. His dedication is unmatched, and he treats every workout as a performance of precision and power. Tiger's fitness motto is simple—train with heart, fuel with care, and always chase progress over perfection.



Vidyut Jammwal

Vidyut Jammwal's training goes beyond physical fitness—it's a spiritual practice rooted in Kalaripayattu, the ancient Indian martial art. His workouts emphasise control, grace, and inner focus, merging modern strength training with traditional techniques. For Vidyut, the body and mind are one. His fitness journey is about harmony, balance, and the pursuit of complete mastery over self.



Top Cozy Hill Stations in India for Winter Vacations

Plan a perfect winter holiday with India's coziest hill stations, offering snow views, warm cafés, nature trails, and relaxing mountain stays.

Winter in India transforms the country's hill stations into quiet, atmospheric retreats that are perfect for travelers seeking crisp air, moody landscapes, soft sunlight, and a slower pace of life.

From snow-covered Himalayan towns to the mist-draped slopes of the Western Ghats, the country's highlands offer an incredible variety of winter experiences. Some destinations deliver thick blankets of snow and alpine adventure, others provide gentle cold, rolling tea gardens, and warm, inviting cafés. What unites them all is a sense of coziness, the feeling of being wrapped in a world that encourages reflection, warmth, comfort, and scenic immersion.

This guide explores India's most charming winter hill stations across the north, south, east, and northeast, combining atmospheric appeal with travel practicality. Whether you're looking for soft winter sun, a snowy panorama, a romantic escape, or a peaceful retreat, India's hill landscape has something for every traveler.

How to Choose the Right Hill Station for Winter Travel

With such a wide variety, choosing the perfect hill station depends on the kind of winter experience you seek. Here are the key factors to consider:

1. Snow or No Snow?

If snow makes your winter complete, the higher Himalayan stretches in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Jammu & Kashmir are the best options.

Snow-heavy destinations: Gulmarg, Auli, Manali (Solang, Atal Tunnel North Portal).
Chilly but snow-free hill stations: Munnar, Ooty, Coorg, Darjeeling, Shillong.
Travelers who prefer cold weather without extreme temperatures or road closures often find the Western Ghats and the Northeastern hills ideal.

2. Accessibility in Winter

Weather can impact accessibility, especially in high-altitude regions. Himalayan destinations may experience occasional road closures due to snowfall or landslides. On the other hand, southern hill stations remain accessible throughout the season with mild weather and stable road conditions.

Nearest airports also matter, especially for short trips:

Chandigarh for Shimla, Manali, and Kasauli.
Dehradun for Mussoorie, Auli (via Joshimath).
Bagdogra for Darjeeling and Sikkim's hill towns.
Kochi for Munnar; Coimbatore for Ooty and Coonoor.

3. Type of Experience

Hill stations vary in energy and ambiance:

Adventure seekers: Gulmarg, Auli, Manali.
Romantic retreats: Mussoorie–Landour, Coorg, Munnar.
Family-friendly breaks: Nainital, Shimla, Darjeeling, Ooty.
Quiet escapes: Lansdowne, Kausani, Coonoor.

4. Budget and Crowd Patterns

The Christmas–New Year week is peak season almost everywhere. Prices rise sharply in major destinations, so booking in advance is essential. For budget-conscious travelers, mid-January or early February offers good weather with fewer crowds.

5. Sustainability and Cultural Sensitivity

Hill destinations are fragile ecosystems. Travelers are increasingly choosing homestays, supporting local communities, and visiting during off-peak dates to help reduce overtourism. Winter is also a great time to engage with local culture, cuisine, and handicrafts, as the tourist rush is lower compared to summer.

1. Shimla, Himachal Pradesh - Colonial Charm in a Wintry Setting

Once the summer capital of British India, Shimla still exudes old-world charm with its sloping roofs, pedestrian-friendly central ridge, and grand colonial-era buildings. Winter adds another layer of romance to this quaint hill town. The crisp air, occasional snowfall, and warm cafés make it inviting for travelers seeking a gentle winter experience without extreme conditions.

What makes Shimla cozy in winter:

1. Easy walks on Mall Road and the Ridge.
2. Heritage architecture and classic bakeries.
3. Light to moderate snowfall from late December onwards.

Nearby Kufri and Narkanda typically receive heavier snow and offer scenic day trips, providing the best of both worlds - comfort in Shimla and adventure a short drive away.

Ideal for: Beginners, families, and travelers preferring walkable, easily accessible winter destinations.

2. Manali, Himachal Pradesh - A Snowy Wonderland with Alpine Scenery

Manali is one of India's most sought-after winter holiday destinations, thanks to its dramatic valley views, the Beas River, and reliable snowfall in surrounding areas like Solang Valley and the Atal Tunnel's North Portal. It's a perfect blend of mountain tranquility and youthful energy.

Highlights of winter in Manali:

1. Snow activities include skiing, sledging, tubing, and snowboarding.
2. The lively café scene of Old Manali.
3. Hot springs in Vashisht - a delight in cold weather.

The newly popular Atal Tunnel area allows travelers to experience deep snow even on days when Manali town remains relatively straightforward.

Ideal for: Adventure lovers, couples, and groups seeking a dynamic winter experience.

3. Gulmarg, Jammu and Kashmir - India's Premier Ski Destination

Gulmarg is India's most definitive winter sports destination, drawing skiers and snowboarders from across the world. With consistent heavy snowfall, thick alpine woods, and one of the world's highest gondolas, the town resembles a picture-perfect European ski village.

Why Gulmarg stands apart:

1. Powder-soft snow through most of winter.
2. Gondola rides to spectacular snowy heights.
3. Opportunity for professional-level skiing and snowboarding.
4. Serene, pine-lined walking trails that remain postcard-perfect.

Though snowfall is heavy, Gulmarg is accessible through most of winter, making it both adventurous and cozy for those who appreciate remote, alpine landscapes.

Ideal for: Serious winter travelers, snow lovers, and photographers.

4. Auli, Uttarakhand - Quiet, Peaceful, and Alpine in Spirit

Auli offers a quieter alternative to Gulmarg, with gentle slopes, spectacular mountain views, and a distinctly peaceful vibe. Overlooking peaks like Nanda Devi and Hathi-Ghoda Parbat, Auli is a retreat for winter travelers seeking silence and scenic majesty.

What makes Auli charming:

1. Well-maintained ski slopes and seasonal ski courses.
2. Ropeway access from Joshimath, offering sweeping Himalayan vistas.
3. Starry skies and serene surroundings are ideal for slow travel.

Because Auli sits at a high altitude, acclimatization is essential. Winter roads to Joshimath may get icy, but accessibility is generally manageable with proper caution.

Ideal for: Couples and quiet-seekers looking for a peaceful winter escape.

The Charming Kumaon-Garhwal Belt: Romance, Heritage, and Himalayan Views

This region offers softer landscapes, atmospheric town centers, and great winter views of the Himalayas - perfect for travelers who like a balance of nature, culture, and comfort.

5. Nainital, Uttarakhand - A Storybook Lake Town in Winter

Nainital's iconic crescent-shaped lake turns misty and atmospheric in winter, surrounded by deodar forests and snow-capped peaks. The charm here is more sensory: lakeside walks, steaming cups of tea, crisp morning air, and panoramic views from Snow View and Naini Peak.

What to experience in winter:

1. Quiet boat rides (weather permitting).
2. Heritage walks around the central town.
3. Café culture along the lakefront.

Winter here is pleasant rather than extreme, making it perfect for families and low-key travelers.

Ideal for: Families, couples, and first-time Himalayan travelers.

6. Mussoorie and Landour - Colonial-Era Elegance with Cozy Hill Ambience

Perched above Dehradun, Mussoorie is known as the "Queen of the Hills," famous for its sweeping views of the Doon Valley and the Himalayan range. In winter, the air turns crisp, the skies clear, and occasional snowfall dusts the hilltops.

Landour, adjacent to Mussoorie, offers a quieter, more refined charm, with old colonial houses, bakery-cafés, and tranquil walks through deodar and oak forests.

Why it's cozy:

1. Clear winter views from Lal Tibba and Gun Hill.
2. Bakery stops, heritage trails, and scenic sunsets.
3. Peaceful atmosphere in Landour's cantonment zone.

Ideal for: Couples, readers, writers, and travelers who prefer serene, heritage-rich settings.

Eastern and Northeastern India: Misty Hills, Tea Gardens, and Winter Sunshine

These regions offer mild winters, dramatic viewpoints, and lush green landscapes - perfect for travelers who prefer cozy mountain climates without extreme cold.

7. Darjeeling, West Bengal - Timeless Charm with Himalayan Grandeur

Darjeeling's blend of colonial-era architecture, tea gardens, toy trains, and sweeping views of Kanchenjunga makes it one of India's most iconic hill stations. Winter is especially atmospheric, with clear mountain views and crisp sunshine.

Winter highlights include:

1. Sunrise at Tiger Hill - among India's most spectacular winter viewpoints.
2. Heritage ride on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway.
3. Tea estate visits and tastings.

Though not snowy, Darjeeling's winter is still cold and refreshing, perfect for long walks and reflective travel.

Ideal for: View-seekers, culture lovers, and leisurely travelers.

8. Shillong, Meghalaya - Gentle Winters & Lush Evergreen Hills

Shillong is ideal for travelers who want a mild, pleasant winter - cool but not biting. The city is surrounded by pine forests, waterfalls, and dramatic viewpoints, making it a refreshing escape throughout winter.

What to enjoy:

1. Walks around Ward's Lake and Shillong Peak.
2. Café culture - the city is known for its music and coffee scene.
3. Day trips to Laitlum Canyon or Cherrapunji.

Shillong's weather rarely becomes extreme, making it a comfortable winter getaway for those who enjoy nature without harsh conditions.

Ideal for: Casual travelers, food lovers, and those exploring Northeast India.

Western Ghats: Misty Valleys and Gentle Winter Breezes

The Western Ghats do not receive snowfall, but their mist-covered forests, rolling plantations, and cool breezes make them perfect destinations for winter warmth and relaxation.

9. Munnar, Kerala - Tea-Carpeted Landscapes and Crisp Mountain Air

Munnar is one of India's most photogenic hill towns, with emerald tea gardens stretching across undulating hills. Winter adds a layer of tranquility, with soft sunlight, cool air, and misty mornings.

Experience highlights:

1. Tea plantation walks.
2. Viewpoints like Top Station and the surrounding valleys.
3. Fresh local cuisine infused with Kerala spices.

Ideal for: Couples and slow-travelers seeking peace and natural beauty.

10. Ooty and Coonoor, Tamil Nadu - Heritage Hill Stations in the Nilgiris

The Nilgiri mountains offer colonial charm, botanical gardens, mountain railways, and pleasant winter weather. Ooty is lively, vibrant, and family-friendly, while Coonoor, just 20 km away, is quieter and increasingly preferred by travelers seeking more solitude.

Winter delights:

1. A ride on the Nilgiri Mountain Railway.
2. Long walks through eucalyptus forests.
3. Misty views of tea estates around Coonoor.

Ideal for: Families, older travelers, and those who prefer gentle winters.

11. Coorg, Karnataka - Coffee Estates, Forest Trails, and Cozy Stays

Known as the "Scotland of India," Coorg is a year-round favorite. Winter brings pleasant weather, dew-kissed plantations, bonfires, cool evenings, and aromatic coffee.

What makes Coorg special:

1. Plantation stays are offering immersive countryside experiences.
2. Waterfalls, forest walks, and valley viewpoints.
3. Distinctive Kodava cuisine.

Ideal for: Couples, nature enthusiasts, and those seeking quiet winter comfort.

Offbeat Cozy Hill Stations for Crowd-Free Winter Travel

If you prefer quieter destinations, these offbeat choices offer stillness, scenery, and immersive experiences without tourist rush.

Lansdowne, Uttarakhand

A peaceful cantonment town surrounded by pine forests, Lansdowne offers crisp winter nights, tranquil views, and calm surroundings. Ideal for travelers looking to disconnect completely.

Kausani, Uttarakhand

Known for its sweeping Himalayan vistas, Kausani is wonderful in winter, with clear views of peaks like Trishul and Nanda Devi.

Pelling, Sikkim

With monasteries, waterfalls, and dramatic views of Kanchenjunga, Pelling becomes wonderfully quiet in winter - perfect for those seeking serenity and spirituality.

Practical Tips for a Winter Hill-Station Getaway

1. Packing Smart

1. Carry thermal layers, moisture-wicking base wear, gloves, caps, and thick socks.
2. Waterproof footwear is essential for snowy destinations.
3. Sunscreen and lip balm help prevent dryness and sunburn at altitude.

2. Staying Safe in Snowy Conditions

1. Always check road conditions and weather reports before traveling.
2. Avoid night travel in high-altitude regions during heavy snowfall.
3. Use chains for car tyres in deeper snow.

3. Health and Acclimatization

1. Hydrate regularly; winter dehydration is common.
2. In high regions like Auli or Gulmarg, avoid strenuous activity on day one.
3. Carry medications for altitude-related discomfort if needed.

4. Booking and Planning

1. Book accommodations early for Christmas and the New Year.
2. Choose stays with reliable heating and backup power, especially in remote regions.
3. Always keep buffer time if traveling to heavy-snowfall zones.

5. Responsible Travel

1. Carry reusable bottles and avoid plastic waste.
2. Respect local communities, customs, and wildlife.
3. Stay on designated trails when trekking in winter.

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February 2026

TAROT

Loveena Crystal Gaze

(Tea and Coffee Cup Reader, Tarot card reader)

ARIES
(March 21- April 19)

Universe is bringing major changes in your life, New beginning in relationship or reunion is possible. Your dreams n desires have been heard by Angels. Have faith. Finances are highlighted.

Angel msg - Stay Optimistic, deals will be finalized.

TAURUS
(April 20- May 21)

Keep up your hopes, dreams, Visualisations as they will be wonderfully manifested. Allow yourself to glow and receive in the beautiful and positive Aura of Universe. Appreciate Small things in your life to receive blessings from Universe.

Angel msg- Angel Msg - Angels are guiding you to your next step, keep charging ahead.

GEMINI
(May 22- June 20)

Dreams and Ambitions are realised, wishes coming true and the universe sends a special blessing just for you. Dreamt of projects will be manifested in exactly the manner visualised. Universe is in a generous mood to grant favours.

Angel msg- Aura is energized for financial gains.

CANCER
(June 21-July 22)

News you have been waiting for anxiously comes through, hv faith on your Angels. Your prayers have been heard. Success in business ventures is indicated. Expect the best, make a wish and enjoy its manifestation.

Angel msg- Universe is taking care of you and always will.

LEO
(July 23- Aug 22)

Magical energy is around you, what's meant for you is on its way to you. Good period ahead of you. Rejoice, Celebrate abundance is coming your way. Angels are blessing you and sending divine love in your life.

Angel msg- Angel of Wishes are with you and helping you make a wish come true.

VIRGO
(Aug 23- Sept 22)

Bonds of love will be strengthed. Aim high to achieve Success. Miraculous Solutions will appear in your life. Stop worrying ,you will soon have reason to Celebrate as some very good news is on its way to you now. Finances are highlighted.

Angel msg- Release all unnecessary fears as a happy outcome is assured.

LIBRA
(Sept 23- Oct 22)

A trip out of town for career will be beneficial for you. A happy flow of Abundance is heading your way. A new home is in the works for you. Rainbow of happiness is coming your way. Have faith. You are going closer to your Career goals.

Angel msg- Reach for the stars, you will succeed.

SCORPIO
(Oct 23- Nov 22)

Investments in property is highlighted. Rough phase is over. Visualise your dreams. Surround yourself with positive people. Better things are coming your way, financial stability is assured. Reach for your goals.

Angel msg- Fly high, don't descend. Angels are guiding you.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov 23- Dec 21)

Loved ones in heaven are blessing you. Your dreams are blooming and coming true. Have faith in universe. Your prayers have been heard. More luxury, comfort coming your way. Love life blossoms.

Angel msg- A new Venture will turn profitable.

CAPRICON
(Dec 22- Jan 20)

Angels are guiding you to new horizons and growth in your Career. Universe is bringing major changes for you. All stumbling blocks around your Career are over. This is big relief for you. Be thankful for blessings from Angels coming your way.

Angel msg - Celebrate, live in the now.

AQUARIUS
(Jan 21- Feb 18)

Time is right for new career, and Opportunities Doors of blessings are opening for you. Have patience and faith in your creator. Delays in your deals are over. Sunshine days ahead for you bringing positive, energy around your home and work.

Angel msg- your dreams are blooming very fast.

PISCES
(Feb 19- March 20)

Expect miracles in your life, happiness awaits you now. Look forward to new growth, gains in Financial investments. Ask and you shall receive from Universe. Money inflow is encouraging.

Angel msg- Angels are showering you with good fortune.

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