

WAY OF LIVING

JAPANESE WABI SABI DESIGN INSPIRES PLAYERS IN LUXURY BRANDED HOMESTAY

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Wabi Sabi is a concept that originated in Japan and it opposes many typical decoration rules. More than a decorative style, Wabi Sabi is a philosophy of life; a way of living and perceiving the world, with the aim of peacefully accepting the natural cycle of growth and decay inherent in life.

Seclude, one of India's pioneering players in the luxury branded-homestay and boutique resort ecosystem, announced the opening of its latest property in the stunning off-beat tourist destination of Pangot inspired by Japanese Wabi Sabi design philosophy. Situated at a height of 6300 feet, Seclude Pangot Perch is the newest addition to Seclude's enviable portfolio of luxury home-style hotels across India. Pangot is a village in the Kosya Kutoli tehsil of Nainital district, Uttarakhand, well connected by road and just under a 6-hour drive from New Delhi.

Additionally, the eight-cottage resort was built entirely using locally sourced materials and employed local workers to complete the project. Following a scenic drive through the rich forested area of Naini Peak Range, vacationers will be able to experience the beauty of the Himalayas, with its abundance of outdoor activities and serene atmosphere. Pangot is also renowned for its lush forests and abundant birdlife, well known amongst bird-watching circles as a hotspot for over 300 species



Seclude Pangot Perch Exterior.



Bedroom with large picture windows.

of birds. The property is just a 14-minute drive to the Pangot and Killbury Bird Sanctuary, making it the perfect destination for couples, groups and families looking to reconnect with nature.

"We are excited to launch Seclude Pangot Perch, as we aim

to further scale up the niche category of branded homestays, being pioneered by us. We aim to double our room count to over 200 rooms and 200 employees by the end of 2023. The latest launch sets Seclude up for an optimistic 2023, and we are excited to

see what the year ahead has in store for us," says Ramit Sethi, Founder, Seclude. The latest launch follows the previous year's highlights for Seclude, which includes a 50% growth rate in 2022, riding on ambitious plans to scale-up, via collaboration with small

businesses for merchandising, and creating a conducive ecosystem promoting local artisans, artists, local service providers. Seclude also plans to diversify its offering by entering events, weddings, wellness programs, and launch drives within multiple Seclude properties.

"Each of Pangot Perch's luxurious private cottages overlooks a breath-taking view of the valley. We've utilised the Japanese inspired Wabi-Sabi design philosophy across the property, with large picture windows, use of rustic locally sourced materials, and minimalist approach. The latest launch really pushes the benchmarks in terms of design and location. Pangot is a true gem within the Himalayan Mountains, and we are thrilled with the opportunity to welcome and offer travellers a truly unique experience," adds Rohit Sethi, Founder, Seclude.

Marriages: Karmic Connections or Soulmates

THE LIFE LAB
INDU BHARGAVA



trying to teach an important lesson to the spiritual being, which he or she has been disregarding or eluding to learn. Every relationship good or bad every event happy or sad

Institution of marriage is an important aspect of our life and society. When the civilizations were evolving, the basis of this concept was companionship and love.

Over the period of time as societies became more civilised and evolved many more aspirations and expectations got attached to this relationship.

I have come across two kinds of married couples around me. There are partners who are connected like two hilltops. Two very separate entities on the top but certainly connected at the base somewhere. And the best part is, you cannot find out where one ends and the other begins. Their energies and consciousness are so aligned and in rhythm with each other that they can communicate without words or actions.

Then there are couples who are like two adjoining islands in the sea. They are connected by the virtue of families and children they share symbolizing sea around them. They exist together in the Sea, but their lives go on independently. Their energies and rhythm are so different that they appear to be strangers to each other at times.

I always wonder, if the concept of soulmate is for real? But then I do see couples around me who



Two people in matrimony connect with each other on different levels like physical, emotional, mental and spiritual.

occurs with a purpose of our spiritual growth and awakening. But again to understand the underlying messages or learnings from universe, the spiritual beings need to be in synch with their own consciousness.

Self-realization or awareness sounds so simple and easy to ears but is the most complex concern one can have. Grasping the objective, purpose and way forward for our existence is a daunting task and lesson to learn.

Let's be happy and spread happiness around us in this journey of self-discovery and awakening called life.

Indu Bhargava has professional experience in training, counselling and education. Currently she is working with Metropolis Healthcare as Manger Projects (HR) and is in the process of setting up a skill academy for the diagnostics industry.

HOW TO START A NEW YEAR EVERY DAY

HOW TO.....
GEETALIMA DUTTA



Nourish your body with a wholesome breakfast. Sit down, pay attention, chew, taste, swallow, breathe if only for 10 minutes. Eat enough, but not more. Choose ahead for the day.



Someone reminded me the other day to write about new year resolutions.

New years do not really exist, I protested.

Do we stop being sad or angry or hurt as the clock strikes 12 on the night of the 31st and become a new person shedding old cares, like changing soiled clothes?

A new calendar year is for the businesses of the world, not for the heart.

If you wish to you can create a new year whenever it becomes necessary. Start afresh with perhaps small but never insignificant steps, gently but firmly, perhaps beginning one random morning.

Let us start with mornings. Tidy up before going to bed at night. Wake up early to greet the sun. Let the sun in - through windows, through doors, through the cracks in between and beneath.

Understand how you're breathing- calmly, deeply,

in long inhalations & exhalations or are they raspy short gasps because you're already hurrying ahead mentally with your day?

Understand, and then slow down if you're ahead of your morning. Tell yourself this is your moment when you do not have to be anywhere else but here, in the now.

Water, water, more water - for yourself, your skin, your plants.

(If you do not have a plant, do get at least two. Lonely, friendless plants do not thrive. But then, let us talk about it another time). Move your body before you let your thoughts move ahead into the day.

Stretch, dance, bend, wiggle, jump, yoga - a tiny ritual, not a rigorous scary regime.

Hug your dog, hug your cat, hug your journal, your favorite book, anyone, anything that warms your heart.

Be kind, be gentle with what you choose. Keep a reminder to be kind to yourself when things go wrong, as they will. Create a list anyway, one that you can tick off from as you wrap up your day.

Find a tune to hum, one that lightens your spirit.

Never forget to think of what inspires you - can be a who, a face, a voice, a smile, a goal, an anecdote, a quote. Never forget to smell nice - that perfume, a lotion, a dab-on cream on your wrist. Step into your day - be it at your desk, your kitchen or the world outside - with a wild faith in your heart, clutching hope, dreams and love. Especially love.

Refuse to let go of it all day. "Be willing to be a beginner every single morning"-Meister Eckhart

Geetalima Dutta is a surgeon, photographer, traveler, animal and plant whispereer.

FOOD FESTIVAL

'Rice above the Rest' showcases versatility of rice as a staple food

DEBJEET DEY
NEW DELHI

Rice is not only a staple food on the plate but also a cultural mainstay in India. Rice makes a number of appearances in Indian culture, weddings, prayers and scriptures as a symbol of well-being and prosperity. The annual calendar of festivals has many celebrations based on the harvest cycle of rice.

Café Delhi Heights is known for its innovative Food festivals from time to time, but this time they have designed a new concept in the form of 'Rice above the Rest'. Vikrant Batra, Founder of Café Delhi Heights gives his insights about the importance of rice and food festival 'Rice above the Rest'.

EXCERPTS

Q. What is the concept and the idea behind this innovative food festival 'Rice above the Rest'?

A. The basic concept behind 'Rice above the Rest' was to showcase the versatility of rice, which makes it the most loved grain all over the world. In Indian Culture as well, rice holds great spiritual and ritual significance. It is a symbol of wealth and prosperity. Rice is a must at any major Indian cultural event, be it a morsel of kheer (rice pudding) or boiled rice being fed as the first solid food a child ever eats.

Q. What are the main delicacies and variety of rice which will be available during this food festival?

A. The menu has been de-



Different varieties of rice.



signed keeping in mind the rice acceptance in different states in different forms. We have introduced many rice delicacies like Hyderabad Biryani from Andhra Pradesh, Curd Rice from Karnataka, Pongal from Tamil Nadu, Bisi Bele Bath from Karnataka, Tehri from Lucknow, Zarda Rice from Kashmir, Yakhni Pulao from Kashmir, Goan Pilaf from Goa, Masale Bhaat from Maharashtra, Khichudi from West Bengal, Payesh from Assam and Jadoh from Meghalaya.

We have also introduced international rice cuisines

like Risotto from Italy, Pael-la from Spain, Jasmine Rice from China and Chipotle Burrito Bowl from Mexico.

Q. What is the reason behind rice centric food festival?

A. The reason behind "Rice above the Rest" was to highlight rice's versatility, which makes it the most much-loved grain in the entire globe. Also, we aim to show how beneficial rice is, to our bodies. It is a rich source of carbohydrates, easy on the digestive system, natural anti-inflammatory, controls blood sugar levels and protects body against the chronic diseases.

Q. What is the response and footfall you are witnessing at your various outlets after organising this food festival?

A. We are already getting great responses from the customers. Since rice can be eaten as a side dish, customers are having fun eating it with the dishes that are already on our menu. Through our specially curated "Rice above the Rest" booklet, the customers are coming to know about the benefits of rice and how it is no less than any other grain.

Q. What are the other initiatives Café Delhi Heights is planning to organise in 2023?

A. For the coming months, we are planning to do Valentine's and Fish Trap menus and many more menus keeping up with the food trends and choices of our guests. Other than this we plan to introduce various offers and fun activities for the customers to enjoy.