

do! YOUR WEEKEND FIX

AROUND YOUR CITY

GET BEHIND THE WHEELS

CLAY DATE A pottery studio in Mahim is opening its doors for three days this month. Walk in and learn to shape and glaze for free, then take your work home

simple pleasures

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The landscaping around the building that houses self-taught pottery artist Shalan Dere's pottery studio is lush and well planned. Curb appeal, check. The building itself is on a hushed, tree-line Mahim by-lane. Quietude, check. Hot coffee is ready in handmade ceramic cups. Warm vibe, check.

By the time Dere hands you a lump of clay, you're already in a better place, far from the everyday mayhem.

Agile yet patient and quick on her feet, Dere, 65, has decided to throw open the doors of her pottery studio, Potter's Place, to the public three days this month (December 17 to 19) and then regularly every second Saturday of the month.

This means you can walk in, claim your clay and while away a few leisure hours learning to work the potter's wheel under Dere's guidance.

"The potter's wheel is very therapeutic," she says. "That's why I decided to allow people to come in and try their hands at it."

To get started, Dere can help you 'throw the pot', or plop the mass of clay on to one of the three electric potter's wheels in her studio.

"It's important to centre the clay at the start," says Dere, "make sure it is placed correctly in the middle of the wheel so you get a smooth, symmetric shape."

With the wheel rotating rapidly, you dig your elbows into your thighs to steady your hands, holding the clay firmly to find its gravity without letting the rotating lump collapse.

Marvellously, the lump begins to take on a shape, rotating rapidly and unsteadily, then more smoothly, indicating that it is now time for the next step: Shaping the pot with your hands.

Repeatedly dipping your hands in water, you use the thumb and first two fingers of your right hand to shape the upper rim of your lump of clay, your thumb smoothing it into the desired shape and thickness.

"Pottery is an art you feel," says Dere. "Once you know how to feel your pot, you won't even need to look at your wheel."

Do prepare for your hands and clothes to get soiled, though, and your nails to

fill up with clay as they poke at what promises to be quite a lumpy and misshapen pot anyway.

When you're done, Dere will turn off the wheel and help you lift your masterpiece off it. Wait for it to dry, and voilà, you're an amateur potter.

You can take your raw pot home without paying a penny, or pay Rs 50 to Rs 200 to have it glazed in Dere's gas kiln.

You can also try your hand at hand pottery, where you use a rolling pin to create clay coils which you then glue together with the help of a 'slip' adhesive.



Shalan Dere shapes a pot at her studio, Potter's Place, in Mahim.

Pottery is an art you feel. The potter's wheel is very therapeutic. People should try their hand at it.
SHALAN DERE, pottery artist

MAKE, BAKE, BUY

Shalan Dere also sells her own products including glazed pottery bowls, vases, platters, boxes, pegs, murals, art pieces and even glazed pottery-topped furniture.

WHAT: 'Play with Clay' free make-your-own pot event

WHERE: Potter's Place, Sumati building, Lt Dilip Gupte Road, Mahim (West)

WHEN: December 17 to 19, from 10.30 am to 6 pm

LOG ON TO www.pottersplace.co.in or email at pottersplace.co.in@gmail.com.

CALL: 2444 1259



On sale at Potter's Place are some of Dere's products, including pottery bowls, murals, art pieces and glazed pottery-topped furniture.

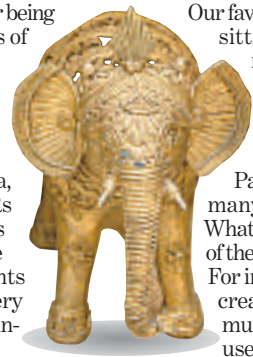
PUNEET CHANDHOK/HT

A slice of east India in west Mumbai

instore

If you cringe every time a global retail chain replaces a local business, this store can be a delight to walk into. An initiative by the government of Jharkhand, Jharcraft, a two-storey store tucked away at a fuel station in Juhu, represents the tribal handloom and handicraft industry of Jharkhand and stocks all the different traditional crafts and arts produced by local artists in the state.

As Jharkhand is famous for being one of the largest producers of wild silk or tassur silk in the country, the store has on sale a variety of tassur silk saris: Pashmina, Madhubani, Maluti temple design, Anjana to Swarnakha, Aakarshini and Samridhi (Rs 1,000 to Rs 6,000). Besides silk saris, you can also browse through a range of garments highlighting hand embroidery like appliqué, zardosi and kantha styles.



A range of stoles, shawls, shirts, dupattas, skirts, kurtas and home furnishing products in both, silk and cotton, are also on sale here.

From the tribal craft variety, the Dhokra craft range is a must check-out. A traditional brass art, a specialty of the Malohore caste of the state, is known to use pure brass (without the use of polish) to craft a variety of art pieces bearing an exquisite rustic finish (Rs 800 to Rs 7,000).

Our favourites included Ganesh sitting in a rath, driven by mushakas and an adivasi couple art piece. Jharcraft also stocks tribal art like Kohber, Sohrai, Jadopatia and Payatkar that speak of the many folk tales of the state. What's interesting is how some of these art styles are produced. For instance, the Payatkar art, created by the Payatkar community, paints on soiled and used papers using vermilion

WHERE ELSE YOU CAN BUY CRAFT OF THE TRIBES



DHOOP
What: Is famous for its tribal accessories and furnishings.
Where: 101 Khar Sheetal Apartments, Ambedkar Road, Union Park, Khar (West).
Tel: 2649 8646/47

OUR LIL BIT
What: Displays kurtas and saris specially crafted from craftsmen all around the country along with other home décor products.
Where: Beach queen, JP Road, Versova, Andheri (West).
Tel: 2637 0011

KARIGAR
What: Displays traditional Kalamkari art in contemporary designs and has a gifting section.
Where: High Street, Phoenix 462, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel. Visit www.karigar.in

TRIBAL ROUTE
What: Find affordable tribal art sculptures and paintings.
Where: Cottage No.18 & 29, Aram Nagar - 2, Versova, Andheri (West).
Tel: 99670 58848

and natural colours (Rs 4,600). Jharcraft's variety of wood and leather crafts, lac bangles, bamboo crafts and tribal jewellery also make for good gifts, this festive season.
Where: At Excel Service Station, VM Road, Juhu.
Tel: 98208 93008 or 2612 2869
- Neha Ghatpande



Jharcraft stocks products made by local artists in Jharkhand, including stoles, shirts, jewellery and home furnishings.
HT PHOTOS: PRODIP GUHA

Food, fire, action

thefood

Teppanyaki cuisine is not for the weakhearted. For one thing, the grill (teppan) is in the middle of a table where everybody can reach it — and the flames from the yaki or stir-frying rise from it at regular intervals. The chef on the grill isn't a quiet host either; at any time during your dinner, expect a sharp knife to flash or a sizzling hunk of meat to be tossed.

Teppanyaki is a style of Japanese cuisine that isn't popular in Japan. The concept of a live counter was introduced in Japan in the mid-40s. It never caught on with the locals, but tourists took to it in large numbers. By the 1960s there were scores of Teppanyaki restaurants opening in America. Hence, the typical ingredients used have a Western-influence. The most popular form consists of steak cooked on a hot plate — Teppanyaki-style beef, shrimp, scallops, lobster, chicken — served with vegetables. The choice for vegetarians, unfortunately, is limited.

"The chef cooks it in front of you and entertains you in the meanwhile. It's food theatre," says Rushina Munshaw Ghildiyal, gastronomy writer.

At Shiro, Worli, which just introduces its Teppanyaki counter, Philippine chef Mark Ed Gallardo delicately greases the hot plate with soybean oil. Once the plate heats up, the action begins — within no time, a crispy Californian salad and a slightly ho-hum miso soup is accompanied by a daredevil knife-juggling act.

A variety of meats — pork, chicken breast, tiger prawns and lobster tail — are served with steaming Japanese friend rice and stir-fried vegetables. An egg trick follows. Gallardo tosses an egg and catches it in his chef's hat. "This cuisine is not just about the food, it's about the experience. It's all about having fun," says Chef Vinayak Pathakji of Shiro.

"Perfect for first dates," chuckles Nirav Kankaria, 23, "the awkward silences are taken care of and the chef does all the impressing."
- Radhika Raj



WHERE TO TRY TEPPANYAKI

WHAT: A set menu at Shiro's comes with your choice of meat served with miso soup, Japanese fried rice, salad, side vegetables and dessert. Pair your meat with 13 different sauces. A dinner for one costs ₹1,200 onwards.

WHERE: Shiro, Pandurang Budhkar Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai
Teppanyaki cuisine is also available at San Qi, at Four Seasons and at India Jones, Hilton Towers, Nariman Point.

PRASAD GORI/HT

Pop, house and all that jazz

thegig

Blue Frog, at Lower Parel, turns three this weekend. Celebrate with them, not just for the love of music, but because Tortured Soul guarantees an unforgettable experience.

This three-piece band — jazz pianist Ethan White (keyboard and backing vocals), Broadway-influenced J Christian Ulrich (lead vocals and drums) and remix artist Jason Krivloff (bass and background vocals) — dressed primarily in skinny ties, pressed slacks and starched white shirts, will set the tone with its unique brand of soulful house. Tortured Soul, which pitches itself as a band with the energy of a thousand rhinos, says their concept stems from the belief that modern dance and music can be performed live.

The sound is a blend of pop and jazz, with comfortable dance beats. Tortured Soul is known for its stage presence — with a bassist that jumps with the rising rhythm, a drummer who plays dance beats while singing



WHAT: Performance by Tortured Soul
WHEN: Saturday (December 11), 10 pm to 11.55 pm
WHERE: Blue Frog, Mathuradas Mill Compound, NM Joshi Marg, Lower Parel
ENTRY FEE: ₹700
TEL: 4033 2300

soul, and a keyboardist that lets the fire in his fingers do the dancing.

With eight albums under their belt, the band has played for audiences from Istanbul to Chicago; their sound has been compared to Stevie Wonder and Jamiroquai. The band has collaborated with artists such as Maroon5 and trance DJ Paul Oakenfold. - Pankti Mehta

virtuallythere

www.jamendo.com

Upload your tunes, earn royalties



Jamendo.com is nothing like a regular independent (indie) music website. Based in Luxembourg, the site has 32,000 albums by indie artists and over 2 lakh songs available for free legal download in over six languages. But what it does best is bring music authors from around the world onto a single platform.

Dig this: If you have a band or are experimenting with loops on a software application and want your work reviewed, you can just upload it and ask for comments. If your tunes catch on, you even have a chance at getting royalties on downloads. Jamendo (derived from 'jam' and 'crescendo') has a concept of voluntarily donations too. So if a user likes an artist's work, he can donate a minimum of €5 (about Rs 300) to the artist directly. The site also claims to donate half its advertising revenues to musicians.

Jamendo users can also set up blogs on the site, post updates on their gigs and links to other websites that host their work. Once you have uploaded a certain number of tracks, you can even get your own internet radio station. And if your music is downloaded enough, the website will feature it on its own internet radio channel.

The site also allows you to browse through music of your choice and preview albums completely free of charge. You can either stream them online individually or download entire albums.
- Aalaap Deboor

WHAT IT'S ABOUT
Download more than 2 lakh songs by indie artists. Donate money to the ones you like.