

A chocolatey career!

You've seen the fashion designers and interiors designers. Now meet the chocolate designers in the city who tailor-make chocolates to suit any taste, occasion and mood

FARVI MOTIWALE

NO, YOU actually don't need an educational qualification to call yourself a chocolate designer. But the high creativity of chocolate designers in the city seems to suggest they are specially qualified.

Going a step ahead of the regular chocolate-box concept, several chocolate enthusiasts are making customised chocolates. And lovers of chocolate don't mind splurging in this indulgence either.

"We customise chocolates according to the buyer's needs. We make them according to want and taste of the person. We give them options of taste be it bitter, sweet, mild, strong and also a choice with the fillings.

With various moulds available, we can offer them tailored chocolates. That's the beauty of chocolate designing," says chocolatier Meenal Despande.

Chocolate designing is also a stress buster for many. As, designing a creative chocolate relaxes you, but taking a bite off these heavenly creations lays all your anxieties to rest. "It is also a very challenging task like other forms of designing, where you need to understand the penchant of the consumer and prepare it accordingly. Chocolate designing is more thought-provoking, because once it is made it can't be changed," says Rashida Tamboowala, a student and chocolatier.

And just like other forms of art, there is always ample territory to explore. "There is no end to the new fillings and ingredients one can use



PRICE TAG

The cost of home-made chocolates differs from one maker to the other. It also depends on the ingredients, packing and decorations. A chocolate bouquet could range anywhere between Rs400 to Rs1,000 depending on the chocolates and the packing. Whereas a small gift pack of 100 gms would cost one around Rs85 to Rs100.

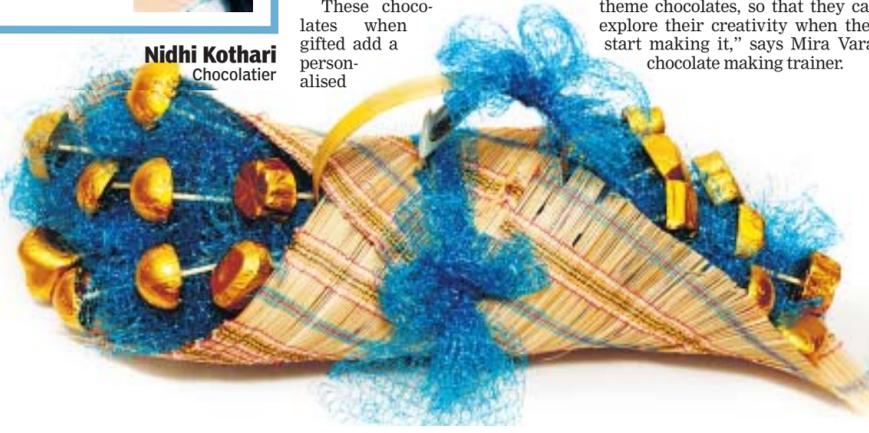
I keep experimenting with the weirdest flavours and something really tasty comes up. That is chocolate designing—making your own styles



Nidhi Kothari
Chocolatier

for chocolates. It makes for a great personalised gift. I personally keep on experimenting with the weirdest flavours and something really tasty comes up. That's what is called chocolate designing—making your own styles," Nidhi Kothari, a home-maker and chocolatier:

These chocolates when gifted add a personalised



Dancing queen

Realising her mother's dream, Poonam Panchwagh has travelled all the way to Germany for a Kathak performance

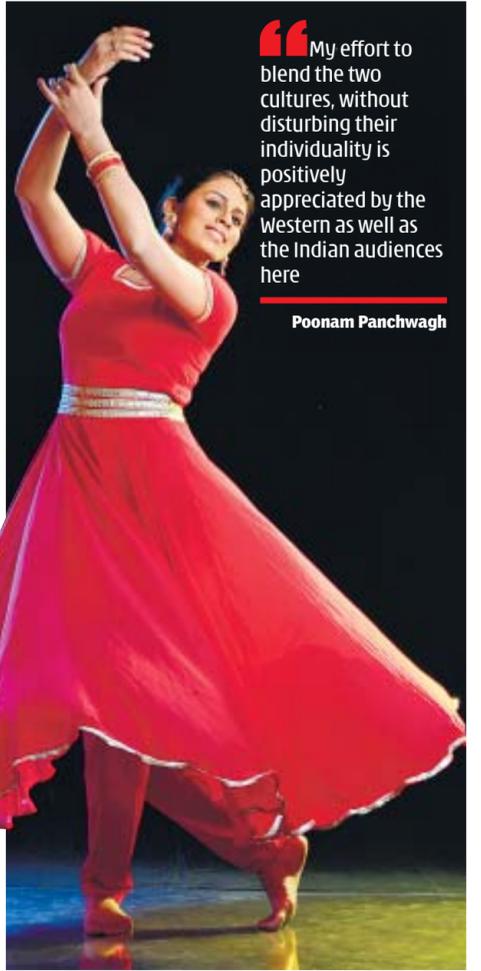
PRIYANKA NAITHANI

POONAM PANCHWAGH, a young Kathak dancer from Pune, is currently winning over the hearts of German audiences. And this is something she humbly credits to her mother and her guru. Presently in Leipzig for an Indo-German dance project called Srijan, Panchwagh informs us that she started learning dance when she was barely six years old.

Speaking about her passion that is now taking her places, she says, "The credit of me being into the field of classical dance goes completely to my mother Chhaya. It was her dream to become a dancer when she was young, but it did not materialise. So, she wanted to live her dream through me," adds Poonam who is stationed in Leipzig for the next few weeks.

A disciple of renowned kathak dancer Rujuta Soman, Poonam studied kathak under her guidance for almost 15 years. Her guru's constant encouragement led the 25-year-old to perform in front of the audience on national as well as international platforms. Poonam has also participated in various festivals like Vasantotsav.

When asked about her experience of performing in Germany, she says, "My project, Srijan (meaning creation) with my colleague Anne Dietrich is our combination of the East and West, walking along the path of a common ambition, daring different theme-based productions through the medium of Indian classical dance. The experience will help me discover the distinct



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Poonam Panchwagh

TWINKLING TOES: Poonam Panchwagh

possibilities of combining the two dance cultures in a very alternative approach."

Poonam further says that the audience in Germany has been very receptive. "My effort to blend the two cultures, without disturbing their individuality is positively appreciated by the Western as well as the Indian audiences here."

On the various kinds of workshops she arranges in Europe, Poonam reveals, "I

am also taking workshops on kathak and Indian folk dance in Europe. The people here are very much interested in the language of gestures like the *hasta mudras*, which are the hand gestures, the *nav rasas* and some references from Indian mythology. My connections with good European dancers here will definitely be a treat for the class of connoisseurs in a city like Pune."

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Me & My Style

Name: Sahana Sriram
Age: 17
Profession: Student



Neckpiece
Bangkok street shops
Rs500

Waistcoat
S Oliver, Jewel Square
Rs1,500

Dress
Blue Corner
Rs3,000

Shoes
Shoe Box Inc.
Rs1,200

Compiled by
Ishita Moghe

Think you are stylish and wish to be featured in Me & My Style? Send in your contact details and a photograph to puneafterhrs@dnaindia.net.

'You must make room for the cosmos'

The title track on his new album marks the onward progress of singer **SONU NIGAM** towards spirituality

ASHISH VIRMANI

What prompted you to do an album like Buddha Hi Buddha Hai?

I have just one song in it — the title track. Rajesh Dhabre approached me through my friend programmer Jackie Vanjari, who was working for my World Music project at that time. I liked Dhabre's passion and taste, and agreed to be a part of it.

I once read an interview where you said that you seek inner and outer peace in your life. Is this something that is manifesting in your life nowadays?

Well.... the seeking days are almost over. I had understood it, but couldn't apply it until last year. It's only then that I realised what I am and what this stuff (spirituality) is about. So do I quit everything? Or do I opt for everything? I decided to opt for everything because only then I'd know there is nothing to quit from, nor opt for! The perceptions of happiness and non-happiness, these imaginations have been my own choices all this while!

Have you ever had a spiritual experience while performing or connecting with your fans?

I've said this before, I'd say this again... I die on stage. I don't exist when I am on stage. I wouldn't be able to do half as good a job if I existed. I believe it's only when you make room for the cosmos to intervene, excellence happens. Every show is a spiritual trip. By spiritual I don't mean religious by the way. I don't see the conventional

Gods, like *Sheravaali maata*, Shivji, Allah *mian*, Jesus to be honest! I just feel a vacuum, a timelessness, a no gravity situation. No sorrows, no happiness... just pure bliss!

Have there been any turning points in your life that set you on the path to becoming a spiritual seeker?

Well, it's difficult to put it all in words. Like any typical Indian, my journey began with religion. Hinduism, in my case. In the year 2003, in my home temple, I felt something strange, something I still can't explain. But I was crying. Then I separated from my wife for a while, and then reunited, and then separated again. And then reunited again. During this patch, extensive yoga initiated me in this quest. Then interactions and discourses with a close and realised friend of mine added reality to it. But at the end of it, it's our own journey, willingness and surrender.

Spirituality is a word that I generally don't use as it's more misused than used in the world. But this experience has given me the strength to walk alone if required.

Is there any spiritual philosophy or spiritual values that you follow?

The only thing that I am doing on this path is, to keep a check on myself. I am not ruthless with myself. On the contrary, I socialise often, party, drink, laugh, entertain, etc. But I watch my Self. I'm witnessing my patterns. For instance I just witnessed myself having a lot of fun beating people in word play on Twitter. Even though the excuse was that I was giving it back to the ones who had been unfair or nasty, I could notice myself getting entrapped in negativity, secretly enjoying hurting the other party. The old Sonu resurfaced. So I quit Twitter.

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sudoku

Download SUDOKU on your mobile for Rs 99 per game. SMS <SDK> to 57575. Only on GPRS WAP enabled mobile sets.

Yesterday's solution

How to play

Fill each of the blank boxes with the number grid from 1-9, and the letter grid from A-I with no letters or numbers repeating in vertical, horizontal rows or 3x3 grids. Do not repeat any letters in a line. Each puzzle has only one solution.

3	1	4	7	6	5	8	2	9	F	A	B	C	E	D	H	G	I
9	6	8	4	3	2	7	5	1	C	H	G	A	B	I	F	D	E
5	7	2	8	1	9	3	4	6	I	D	E	H	F	G	A	C	B
2	3	6	5	7	4	9	1	8	H	E	A	D	C	B	G	I	F
4	8	7	2	9	1	5	6	3	G	B	C	F	I	H	E	A	D
1	5	9	3	8	6	4	7	2	D	I	F	G	A	E	B	H	C
6	9	3	1	4	7	2	8	5	B	G	I	E	H	C	D	F	A
7	2	1	9	5	8	6	3	4	E	F	H	I	D	A	C	B	G
8	4	5	6	2	3	1	9	7	A	C	D	B	G	F	I	E	H

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YAP! YOUNG ADULTS CORNER

Children can send in their paintings with a photograph to DNA Newspaper, 1099/B Shirole House, Model Colony or e-mail us at yapune@dnaindia.net

Fun in the rain

My favourite monsoon activity is to make paper boats and play in rain water. I also fill water with different vessels and my mother told me that water takes the shape of the container. I also enjoyed the first shower of hail this rainy season. I ate the hail and it was really a wonderful experience. Ice dropped from the sky and we ate it, wow!



Krish Chabrya, Jolly Dwarfs Nursery

