

Living life 24x7, die-hard techie Abhay Vaish still manages time for family, music, DIY and, of course, tending to every little detail round his cottage ●●● **TEXT BY** Karan Verma

Living in the city Cottage & Bowled!



>>>my world, my city

This place is a cul-de-sac...no cars zipping down the road and no unwanted characters around. It's absolutely safe and clean and something that is hard to find anywhere else. **Abhay Vaish with son Aabhas (right), nephew Siddharth, wife Malini with younger son, Amal**

IF THE CITY EVER NEEDED A BRAND AMBASSADOR, OUR STAKES lie squarely with Abhay Vaish. After all, what better fellow than the Erickson honcho, who rushes home from work in Gurgaon to unwind with a hot *cuppa* on his cottage rooftop in the City? "Wherever I am, I long to spend time at home," says Vaish, Director, Customer Relations and Education, and incharge, India and Sri Lanka. "We are responsible for the smooth functioning of your mobile," informs Vaish. "Whether it's Airtel, Hutch, Reliance or Indicom, all service providers look up to Erickson for support." Little wonder sitting at home and talking to us, there's hardly a minute when Vaish isn't attending to SOS calls from places difficult to even pronounce.

"Even I don't know half of these places myself," he laughs. And with this kind of work profile, is it a wonder he gets to spend just that little time at home? "To that his answer is but my heart is always here," says wife Malini, also an engineering grad from Aligarh Muslim University, who quit her Panasonic job once their second son Alam was born five years ago.

"If you look around the house you'd realise it needs a lot of work," says Vaish, "but I

love doing stuff around here myself. So work keeps piling until such time I get down to my tools." Talking of tools, Vaish's collection of cool gizmos would put the best-equipped handyman in town to shame. Like the one that emits lasers in a right angle to make the perfect straight line so that you know where to put the next nail.

The perfectionist that he is, he has even fixed the tubelights and all that jazz himself. "I even got an extra layer of POP done on the ceiling so that the height of the room remains same from wherever you measure," he informs. As for the cottage, the couple says they fell in love with it the moment they saw it and booked it in no time at all.

"We were keen on buying a property here, but somehow we always thought there were only flats here," says

Vaish. "Since we were living in Sector 19, Noida, in an independent house, a flat somehow never appealed to us."

So it happened that while visiting relatives in the City some three years back, they were shown the cottages and the rest as they say, is history. "I called my dad in Noida, who also liked the place and we booked it immediately," informs Vaish, who can't get over the safety and pollution-free environment bit.

"This place is a cul-de-sac...no cars zipping up and down the road and no unwanted characters loitering around," says Vaish. "It's absolutely safe and clean and something that you can't find anywhere else with this kind of money." In fact, at the end of the day, if the kids are not home, Malini isn't bothered much "because I know they would be safe at some neighbour's house," she says. ●

cityscape Board of EDUCATION

IF IT'S FEBRUARY, CAN Boards be far behind? As the countdown begins, the City air is so thick with tension and anxiety that you could slice it with a knife! Not just the students burning midnight oil trying to fill in as much as possible of the last-minute details, the parents, too, are losing sleep over the exams starting March 2. Keshav Maheshwari of Apeejay School, Noida, who'll be taking his Class X Boards, puts up a brave front. "I'm not tensed, but my parents are," he admits with a smile.

Keshav's strategy to crack the Boards is pretty simple: revise and solve as many sample papers as it's

possible. "Since my target is well above 95% marks, I'm giving the Boards my best shot. Rest depends



Sumyank Bhatnagar, Class X, Khaitan Public School, Noida

"I watch TV & play when I feel that I need to take a break from my studies."

computer. Like Keshav, Sumyank is also not nervous about the board exams. "I watch TV and play whenever I feel that I need to take a break," he says. Ditto for Priyadarshini, a Delhi Tamil Educational Association student taking her Class XII Boards this March.

"Besides studying for my exams, I must find time for myself," she says. "I have to listen to my favourite melodies and watch TV for a short while." Maneesha Cha-

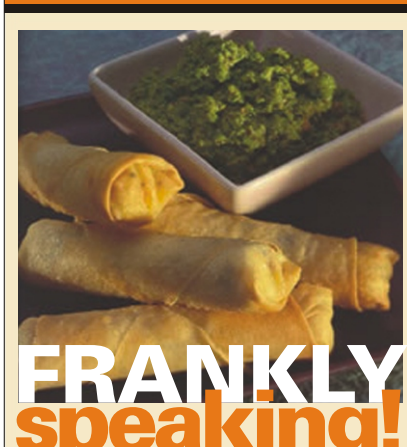
ndrashekhar, a Modern Academy student, on the other hand, is completely off TV, dance, music and all such activities. "I plan to take up Science in Class XI, so I need to start preparing right away," says Keshav. Maneesha also echoes similar dreams. "I want to take up Science and pursue a career in computers," she explains.

Keshav Maheshwari, Class X, Apeejay School, Noida

"I'm not tensed, but my parents are. I'm giving it my best shot. Rest depends on the final performance."

Priyadarshini, for that matter, wants to pursue a career in medicine and along with managing her timing at school, she also takes lessons at the Akaash Institute. "Moreover this is my second Board exams, so I'm not very tensed about it," she informs. We at SSCN also hope City kids take their Boards easy and come out with flying colours. This is the time when the temperament of a person is judged and much depends on the parents to do the extra bit to boost the morals of their children. Taking regular breaks and solving sample papers in a sacrosanct manner will help them crack the Boards. Here's wishing all the very best! ●

SHIPRA



FRANKLY speaking!
NO CROSSOVER CUISINE THIS. AFTER all, when Madhu Tandon supplied us with her very first recipe for Chinese Idlis, we were sure that she would come up with yet another delectable duet of cultures. However, this time she decided to go slow on the phoren import and came up with Frankies that are by far one of the most preferred and yummy snacks anywhere.

- Recipe By **MADHU TANDON**
- VEG FRANKIES**
- (Serves: 4)
- INGREDIENTS**
- For the wrap**
- Maida ½ cup
 - Water ¾ cup
 - Oil 1 tbsp
 - Salt ½ tsp
- For the stuffing**
- Onions (large) 2, finely chopped
 - Boiled peas ½ cup
 - Mashed potatoes 1 cup
 - Carrot 1, grated
 - Capsicum 1, finely chopped
 - Red Chilli Powder ½ tsp
 - Amchur ½ tsp
 - Coriander leaves finely chopped
 - Oil 1 tbsp
 - Salt to taste

- METHOD**
- For the wrap**
- 1 Firstly boil the water with the oil and salt. Add this water to the maida and knead into dough. Set aside for 10 minutes.
 - 2 Roll the dough into chapatis and lightly heat the chapatis over the tawa without oil. After heating the chapatis properly on light flame, set them aside.
- For the stuffing**
- 3 Heat oil in a pan and fry the onions. After the onions become golden brown add the masala and the vegetables.
 - 4 After the stuffing is cooked, take 1 tsp of the stuffing and put them in the already prepared chapati. Then fold the chapatis from all the four sides carefully so that the stuffing doesn't come out. It will be better if you could apply a little sticky maida on the folds so that it doesn't open.
 - 5 Deep fry the folded rolls and serve it hot with pudina chutney or a sauce of your choice.

BRITS MIGHT BE GRIPPED BY A SPICE scare, but the City can't get enough of the Spice Girls, er women, who are putting their talent with taste to good work. We are talking about your neighbourhood *masala* matrons who go by the name of Zaika and have endeavoured to keep cooking fresh in the City. If you still are as clueless as we think you might be, then we need to bring in the protagonists of the get fresh movement that has taken the City by storm, courtesy the fabulous foursome of Rekha Mishra, Shelley Kapoor, Madhu Tandon and Shashi Yagnik.

Followers of Shipra Sun City News (SSCN) are by now familiar with the gorgeous and mighty talented Madhu Tandon, who has made it to these columns on several occasions. But the fab four make an appearance here not for their talents at fluffing a cushion or hanging the drapes just right - they are here for their entrepreneurial ingenuity. "It all started in September last," reminisces Mishra, the driv-



neighbourhood watch Spice Girls

The 'get fresh' movement is here in Shipra, courtesy four enterprising women who decided to launch Zaika masalas to add their own flavours to the City ●●● **TEXT BY** Nupur Amaranth

ing force behind this endeavour: "We were all sitting together and wanted to do something creative." And what better to experiment with than something you already know best of: cooking!

So we caught up with the three mistresses of spices, Yagnik was in the US at the time of writing the story, to savour the flavour. "Four of us felt that the City could do with some fresh *masala* in everyday cooking," Kapoor chips in,

Zaika ladies have never advertised until now by way of pamphlets. "That's also because we are diversifying into a tiffin service that should start from March depending on the response that we are able to generate," Kapoor clues us in on their future plans. Having recently started with pickles, the summer season is going to

>>>**masala magic** The four budding entrepreneurs make a monthly trip to Khari Baoli and have set up a packing machine to serve Shipra with freshest of spices

be busy for them. "That's when the demand for mango pickle is at the peak and we plan to go in for production of pickles and *murrabhas* that we get made from Khari Baoli," Mishra states.

In addition to masalas, Zaika supplies homemade *vadiyan* (a hot-favourite) and *papads* and procure all the material by the beginning of every month. With a no-profit, no-loss business till now, the foursome is all set to venture out into catering for small parties and get-togethers. "We even put up a stall at the Rail Vihar fest and generated great response from there," Kapoor tells us. With plans to run an advertisement on the local cable network, the four are poised for greater things in life. Here's wishing them all the best! ●

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the city's talking about...

Write-in all you City wallahs! Your City needs you. NOW! ONLY SIX ISSUES DOWN THE LANE and the City can't help talking about Shipra Sun City News (SSCN). The kitty circuit laps it up, while men would love to see more of themselves in these columns. But that's something beyond our control: women seem to be in the forefront of all the hip and hot happenings in the City. We being the media, work purely on the basis of news and who's creating it. Though we aren't complaining, but all ye City men need to pull up your socks. Create a buzz and you bet, we'd be there with our cams and stuff to cover it all. Right from Lovely the Lamborghini to Lulu the Doberman, SSCN is always hungry for news. So pick up that phone or put that laptop to good use and get in touch with us. If it makes sense to you, it would make sense to us, too. And if nothing interesting comes up, you could write for us. We will give you a platform to tell your side of the story like the way it is. Let's hear it from you and your life in the City. Make us your sounding board. And we'll take care of the rest.

>>> Write in your stories to: saamag.media@rediffmail.com or simply call 5140 1702/03

Like mother, like daughter. If Alka Brushundi can make her canvas do the talking, daughter Madhura is doing the same through dance as her medium

Twinkle Oes

talent in town

TEXT BY Debanjana Choudhuri

THE BRUSHUNDI HOUSEHOLD IS A COVEN FOR ART AND culture. If mom Alka is a Tanjore artist of repute, daughter Madhura's accomplishments in the field of dance surpass her 11 years. It all started seven-and-a-half years ago when Madhura took her first lessons under Guru Thyagarajan and took to stage at the tender age of four. From then on, there has been no looking back. Currently a disciple of the legendary Yamini Krishnamurthy for the past six months, little Madhura is a treasure-trove of talent. "We liked the *guru-shishya param-para* at Yamini Krishnamurthy's school, so that's why we got r



her enrolled there," Alka explains. And travelling all the way to Hauz Khas twice a week for a half-hour class is a sacrifice that the young girl is ready to make to perfect her dance form.

A student of Class VII of Apeejay School, NOIDA, she's managing the supreme balancing act of both dancing and academics. "I have to maintain a balance between the two as both are important," Madhura tells us, "I practice everyday at home also so that I can master the art quickly," she adds. It's not all dance and books for this pre-teen, who likes to chill out with a Shah Rukh and Preity Zinta flick.

"I love to read also but that's as and when I get time," she shares with us. Being a master of balancing acts, what with balancing Indian classical dance and studies, Madhura is also enrolled into the Shiamak Davar classes to learn western dance. Over there, too, she has proved her mettle by winning the best dancer award. "My family has been very supportive of



Madhura's moves: striking a pose; on stage and with Davar

hot in the city

Gimmy MORE!



Indo-Pak relations seem to be the flavour of the season with everyone doing their bit to promote peace. Gimmy Rana, aspiring actor-model and City resident is no different as he gets set to make his feature debut with *White Blood Red Soil*

SO IT GOES, DIFFERENT strokes for different folks. Especially so for wannabe actor Gimmy Rana who's all set to make his debut in the big bad film world with the *'zara bahe'* cross-over film on Indo-Pak relations, *White Blood Red Soil*. Essaying the role of Aslam in the film, Rana is one of the many starry-eyed twenty somethings who wants to make it happen on the silver screen. "I used to mimic Amitabh Bachchan as a kid and my dream project would be to act with Amitabh and Kareena," he blushes.

Staying at Regal in Shipra, Rana is pursuing a Masters in Individual Communication from Asian Film Institute in NOIDA. "I've been dabbling in this industry for the past three years," he supplies us with a backgrounder on himself, "My family has been very supportive of my career. They used to come to the sets of the movie to motivate me."

A man of many talents, Rana has always wanted to be part of limelight, so before jumping on to the Bollywood bandwagon he also tried his luck in cricket. "Glamour has always excited me," he mentions, "so I wanted to be a cricketer because it's a very glamorous game, but later on I realised that my interests rest only in cinema," he says.

Though Dehradun remains his favourite place, he's all praise for Shipra Sun City. "I think Shipra is a very friendly place and the greenery is commendable. Moreover, it is very pet-friendly and my Labrador Noni, who is very close to my heart, has free space to move in and about the City," Gimmy says. Taking life as it comes is his favourite punch line and he lives for that.



I used to mimic Amitabh Bachchan as a kid and my dream project would be to act with Amitabh and Kareena.

inside information

KNOWLEDGE BANK

Their house is strewn with deities of all types. No wonder the first step into the Misras' Royal Tower residence is like stepping into a temple of knowledge

TEXT BY Nupur Amarnath



PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT THE IDOL OF Saraswati comes into the picture because without her we are nothing," is the only instruction the amiable Professor K. S. Misra, former Vice-Chancellor of Rohilkhand

University, gives us. Welcoming us into their *vaastu*-wise second-floor house on a breezy Sunday afternoon, the learned septuagenarian and his equally learned spouse, Dr Shashi Misra, say they just love living in the City. "We were out shopping when my husband and son-in-law decided to check out the place," informs Shashi Misra. "We liked it so much that we immediately booked two flats.

"It's been only couple of years that they have since shifted to their Royal residence. "I'm very religious and was very particular about the *vaastu* of the house," she mentions. On her part, she made sure that the house was flowing with positive energy. That can be easily gauged from the religious idols that adorn every nook and cranny of the house. If there's huge Nataraj in the middle of the living room, Saraswati sits pretty on one corner, while the walls flaunt a serene Sai Baba and Lord Ganesha, "Whom I believe in implicitly," she mentions. In another corner, a huge Ganesha idol, "a wedding anniversary gift from the kids," adds to the entire look of the house.

"We haven't done any major changes to the house," chips in son Pradeep, who's currently pur



(Clockwise from top left) Home sweet home: Prof Misra with wife Shashi and son Pradeep in their living room; the idols take centre stage in Misra household; Prof Misra in his favourite corner and the Nataraj in the middle of the room



have a nice group of women here in the City and we meet regularly and compare notes about everything," she says. The general camaraderie around here is also something the Misras admire about the City. "People here are amiable and look out for each other," Professor Misra shares with us.

But like everything, this, too, has a flip side. "A post office is something that the City needs," he points out. "Even for little things like stamps, we have to make a 20-minute trip." Postal authorities, please note. As for the Central Park, the couple feels its has become more of an infor-

mal community centre with functions that keep happening every other day. "They had beautiful park there, but now with all the tenting and pegging, the place is in a mess," says the Professor. "Whoever puts a tent there needs to fill in the holes later." While cheering Shipra's bonhomie, the duo feels that people could do with a little more civic sense. "Especially, around the Central Market," they voice their concern, "People just eat and litter that area." Despite few grouses, the couple has taken to the City like fish to water. And look forward to spending their golden years here amongst friends.

Makeover Mantra

City's resident *vaastu* expert, **Kalpana Kansal**, helped the Misras to *vaastu*-wise their Royal Tower residence. Here's how you could use the tips to do the needful in your house, too

AT A TIME WHEN THERE'S a boom in real estate in the country, *vaastu-shastra* and its practitioners couldn't have asked for more. Feng-shui might be a latter day import, but traditionally, for us *vaastu* holds as much reverence as maybe the age-old *Ayurveda*. But in this age of concrete jungle, it's virtually impossible to find a house or building that is *vaastu*-perfect due to many constraints like space and feasibility. If



Sleep Well: First of all, the master bedroom has been placed towards the southwest direction for the

benefit of the dwellers. **Career Move:** In order to speed up their son's career, he was allotted a bedroom in the northeast direction because north-east direction boosts career and it helps in overcoming obstacles. **Get Together:** The dining table has been placed in the southwest direction as it generates positive vibes and reflections. **Right Tinge:** Red bulbs have been used to negate evil or unwanted occurring. The walls in the bedrooms have been coloured light-pink in accordance to *vaastu*. **Door-Away:** Prof. Misra's flat had two entrances, but the south-east entrance has been permanently blocked as it was colliding with the harmony of the house.



VAASTU with KALPANA KANSAL
W.P.S.E
Kalpana Kansal is a freelance interiors designer, who has been dabbling in *vaastu shastra* for the past seven years and heads her own firm Sai Impact Associates and lives in Shipra