

Herald **Cafe**



Sun, Sand & Summer Camps

Summer camps are proving to be a big draw in Goa. While children love the outdoor fun, parents hope these will instill confidence in their wards. But do these camps serve their purpose?

Ajit John ajit@herald-go.com

It's almost that time of the year when summer vacations are round the corner and parents start looking around for summer camps. Children love the fun of outdoor activities and parents believe they are important for children's development, offering

opportunities to instill confidence, independence, social skills, and leadership abilities, while also fostering creativity and a love for nature.

Listen to six-year-old Samuel Crasta who attended one such camp last summer: "I love doing things with my hands,

especially clay modelling. I also like to cycle around and meet other kids in the camp. Sometimes, I just love to run around in the open." The popularity of summer camps can be gauged by the fact that the numbers are increasing every year, as vouched by the organisers of camps in different parts of the Goa.

THE WAY FORWARD



Satish Desa works with children, parents, teachers and schools. He organises a camp in Moira. He says, "We look at childhood as an overall theme. We are organising a summer camp from April 7 to the 19. We will be having a morning club, evening club and Saturday time travel club. We do a half-day camp. If you look at these camps, most of the activities are based on parents' agenda. Our camp is based on what the children want. We have books to read in one corner with a storyteller. There is a carrom board and many other such activities. We have an adult to

monitor each activity. We restrict the number of children to 35 so they can be handled better."

He says they get children from different strata of society. They have expats, kids from Mumbai and Delhi and other cities. He says that migrant kids are as talented as the ones from Goa. It is the interaction that teaches them vital social skills. He even organises a scholarship for 10 days which is paid for by rich people who don't have kids.

He says he organises activities only from 8 am to 1 pm to avoid exhaustion. They go to the fields to watch the birds in the morning and then at 10 am, go indoors. Sessions to work on coconut fronds are organised on one day, then some artistic assignment followed by some music. This is organised over ten days. Satish says the focus is not on the activity but to ensure the children get what they want. None of the sessions are compulsory and it is left on the children who are attending. Number of participants, he says, is increasing every year.

Shubhangi Tandon will be organising a camp in Santinez. They will be having four batches of 10 kids each. All the activities will be theme-based and will involve playing games and creative writing and play time.

Play while you learn seems to be the mantra and the exposure gives the children an edge over their peers.



WHY SUMMER CAMPS?

Most of the organisers as well as parents believe that these camps provide children with the much-needed confidence as well as team spirit while they interact and play with other kids. Parents stress the fact that they learn new skills that will hold them in good stead in the years to come.

Sabina D'Cunha, a mother of three kids, says she wants her children to not only learn but also enjoy themselves during the camps. She says, "There is a camp in Moira which has weaving sessions, badminton, board game, art and music. The kids will be exposed to new things that will help them develop new skills. And yes, playing with other kids who are slightly older than them will be a great experience. They have to learn to be smart and deal with situations that will arise. It is a tough world out there and my kids are between 4-13 and it is never too early to expose them to the challenges."

Roulette Gitane has two school-going children. He looks for a camp that will provide sessions of swimming, dancing, outdoor games, colouring, art, yoga and cycling. He

says these activities will happen on certain days and will keep the children occupied. He believes swimming is very good for the children though getting one that teaches the skill in Calangute has been tough for him. He says learning something new and having fun is very important.

Sherwin D'Silva from Parra wants to put the younger of his two kids to a camp this summer. He says, "It is too early for him because he will not follow the rules but I will ensure he plays with different kids and learns to play in a group."

Navedita Singh, a teacher, is of the opinion that a summer camp should help develop skills that the kid may otherwise not gain in today's fast-paced academic life. She says, "I feel activities that allow children to use their hands, head and hearts are the most enjoyable and inclusive activities in the summer camps."

Afshan Mariam, who is a coordinator at an alternate learning centre that focuses on migrant kids, says that it is important to learn any kind of new skill. She says that the kids should be taught the basics of weaving, sports, gardening and anything related to photography so that they can create content for the internet. She says these skill sets would be useful to these kids in their later life.



FIDELITY A KEY TO LASTING TIES IN MARRIAGE



ONLINE ENTREPRENEURS RIDE THE WIN-WIN WAVE

SWIPE RIGHT

Tom Holland reveals 'Spider-Man 4' is 'Brand New Day'



Tom Holland appeared in a video clip to announce that the next Spider-Man film is titled 'Spider-Man: Brand New Day' and is set to hit theaters July 31, 2026. Filmmaker Destin Daniel Cretton ('Shang-Chi' and the 'Legend of the Ten Rings') also took the stage at CinemaCon. He explained that he was a lifelong fan of the character and has been drawn to Peter Parker's 'humour' and 'messy humanity'. Tom, who last portrayed the beloved web-slinger in the 2021 billion dollar blockbuster, 'Spider-Man: No Way Home', expressed his gratitude to fans saying, "A massive thank you for all of your support," he said and added, "Spider-Man: Brand New Day' is a fresh start."

Vin Diesel teases Dominic Toretto's return in 'Fast X: Part 2'

Fast and Furious franchise

lead actor Vin Diesel hopes to push the action-packed film series past the finish line in style as he continues work on 'Fast X: Part 2'. Diesel's main character, Dominic Toretto, returns to the garage in new Part 2 behind-the-scenes images. Via his Instagram page, Diesel shared multiple teasers over the past two days showing Toretto and his famous garage as he and his family look set to tune up new and vintage vehicles in Part 2. The first image shows the front of the Toretto garage with his patented 1970 Dodge Charger R/T parked outside, claiming that he "can't wait to show you the horsepower of what's cooking up." The second sees Diesel sporting his character's shirt plugging the garage, with the motto, 'Heart, Family, Legacy.'



MORE FUN, LESS STRESS!

The number of summer camps is increasing every year



Summer camps help children gain confidence and team spirit while they interact with other kids

Camps help develop skills they may not develop in today's fast paced academic life



Camps offer a diverse range of activities, including arts, outdoor adventures, yoga, cycling, sports, and skill-based workshops

Camps are reducing the number of kids per session to reduce stress



ANJUNA FLEA MARKET: ICONIC OR INVISIBLE?

Once a vibrant hub for hippie traders, the much-hyped Anjuna Flea Market now struggles to attract tourists, fading into obscurity with each passing season

Elsa Angel Rose

The much-hyped Anjuna flea market, originally started by hippies to sell their goods, has now become a doubtful last option for tourists to explore. The market remains oblivious to many of those who arrive in Goa. The future of this bazaar hangs by a rusty anchor. The market, which opens only on Wednesdays, tends to empty by evening, despite shops remaining open from morning till night.

Market in a challenging phase

The crumbling market is facing a plethora of difficulties to not lose its standing in this tourism realm. Chef Rohan D'Souza, co-partner at a restaurant, said, "We have been in this market for quite some time, and we have seen the market over the years. Previously, the market was great, but there are certain months where it does have a challenging aspect to it. People are not interested in exploring this market anymore. The items the market has to offer have no quality nor variety according to few travellers visiting the market."

Nothing new to offer

Unlike olden times, when this bazaar was run by hippies, today's stall owners are all people from all over India, who possess nothing different or unique that one can't get in any other market in India. People would love to come to a flea market where they could get some unique souvenirs at good prices. A local restaurant owner said, "Vendor quality at the market won't help it to become a tourist attraction. Vendors are selling the same mundane things that you get in any market at better prices as far as tourists are concerned."



Vendors on profitability

Siniya Naik, a local clothes stall owner, said, "There is no profit, as there are no customers." Renuka, another local stall owner of bags, said, "There is no business as such; there are no international tourists, only domestic tourists are visiting the market, but they are not interested in buying anything." Anjuna Flea Market, to up its game, requires more tourists to know about it and visit this place. "Immense efforts have to be put in by the tourism department of Goa, as well as the locals and tourists visiting this place," stated a local at the market.



Optimism in these tough times

Despite the market trailing a little behind, there are a few souls and elements that manage to keep it alive. Tourists seemed to be entirely spellbound by the concept of handicrafts and handmade objects. Anita Suresh Bai, owner of a handmade bag stall, was delighted to say, "I make everything on my own, and both international and domestic tourists are fascinated by handmade items, hence, I am expecting to receive more sales." Dr Rashmi Rajpal Singh, a traveler from Jodhpur, said, "Who doesn't enjoy a stroll in a picturesque bazaar like this? We thoroughly enjoyed the market." She further added, "There's good food to eat, and you can get souvenirs for your family and friends from here."

