

Herald Cafe

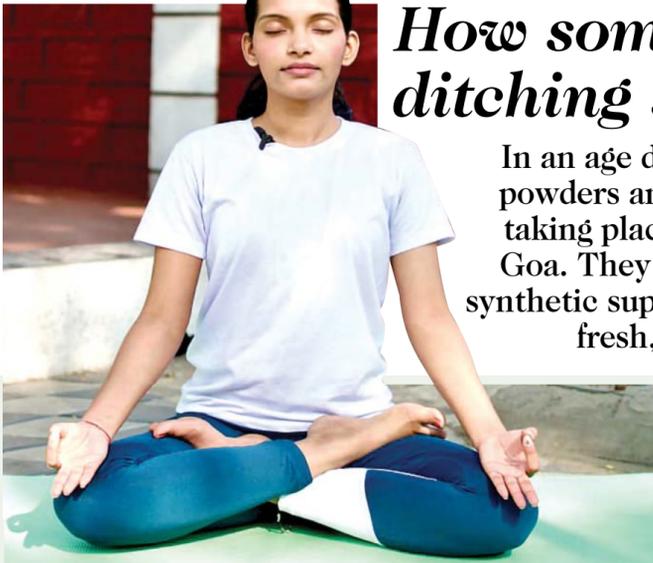


WHY MORE INDIANS ARE STRUGGLING WITH GUT SENSITIVITIES



THE BOND WITH THE BANYAN TREE

The wellness U-turn: How some Goans are ditching supplements



FROM CORPORATE TO CONSCIOUS LIVING

Pallavi Phatangare, a yoga trainer originally from Mumbai, now teaches yoga in Arambol, fully immersed in the peaceful rhythm of Goan life. After years in the corporate grind, she turned to yoga for her own well-being, a shift that soon blossomed into a full-time passion. "Every breath feels like I'm doing something new, something positive," she says. Although her yoga journey began in childhood, it was the pressure of a 9-to-5 job that reignited her connection with the practice.

In an age dominated by protein powders and pills, a quiet shift is taking place among the people of Goa. They are moving away from synthetic supplements towards what's fresh, local, and natural

Ojal Gaitonde

From healthy juices and homemade herbal teas to age-old Ayurvedic remedies and yoga-infused lifestyles, the younger generation in Goa is adopting a more mindful approach to staying healthy. What's refreshing is that it isn't just an Instagram trend, it's a conscious return to their roots. Many are also reviving traditional remedies passed down through families. Haldi doodh (turmeric milk) before bed, soaked almonds in the morning, and kokum water during hot afternoons are once again part of the daily routine. In a state like Goa, where coconut, turmeric, tuls, and kokum grow in nearly every backyard, young people are finally turning to their surroundings and choosing healthier paths.

Her wellness approach is rooted in natural living, no supplements or synthetic shortcuts. "I stick to local, seasonal foods and home-cooked meals. Yoga itself gives me all the energy I need," she explains. She has witnessed a strong shift among her students, from Egypt to the USA, towards embracing a more holistic lifestyle. "Yoga is their tool to stay fit and mentally strong," she observes. With every class, Pallavi isn't just spreading flexibility; she's sharing a lifestyle rooted in self-awareness and natural wellness.

CHOOSING FITNESS THE NATURAL WAY

In a world driven by fitness fads and supplements, Yash Pawar, a Guinness World Record holder for most jumping jacks in 30 seconds, proves that natural discipline can take you far. His journey began through 10m air rifle shooting, where stamina was vital but running didn't appeal to him. Jumping jacks became his go-to, and soon, a childhood dream of breaking a world record took shape. When not chasing records, Yash follows a simple routine, gym 3-4 times a week, cycling, and most importantly, home-cooked food. When training intensifies, he does up to 1,000 jumping jacks a day, still, no supplements. "I avoid chips, chocolates, and soft drinks while prepping," he shares, stressing that health needn't be complicated. His advice to young Goans: "Home food, regular activity, and small lifestyle changes, that's the key. And if needed, consult a professional."



HOLISTIC LIVING



Ankita Kishor Mhamal, 33, a yoga trainer from Mandrem, believes the shift toward natural wellness is more than a trend, it's a conscious lifestyle choice. "Yoga boosts energy

by improving circulation, reducing stress, and enhancing sleep, while naturally strengthening immunity," she explains. For Ankita, wellness isn't just about movement but nourishment too. She recommends seasonal whole foods, warm herbal drinks, and early dinners to stay healthy without relying on supplements. "Young people are embracing natural wellness for its holistic benefits, fewer side effects, and its alignment with sustainable, conscious living," she adds. Her insights reflect a wider change she observes in her students, many of whom are ditching processed diets and chemical boosters in favour of grounding habits rooted in traditional wisdom. She sees this return to basics as a way of reconnecting with both body and land, something Goa's lush surroundings naturally support.



ROOTED IN DISCIPLINE

At just 17, Ima Patil, a national-level judo athlete and Class 11 student, is setting an inspiring example of natural fitness. "I began my yoga journey at the age of 10, and it became the foundation for both my physical and mental well-being," she says. Yoga, she explains, enhances flexibility, balance, and discipline, key qualities for judo.

Ima doesn't rely on supplements to stay fit. Instead, she values the strength and calmness yoga builds. "During a judo match, when I'm caught in a choke or lock, yoga helps me stay calm and focused enough to escape," she explains. Her daily routine includes morning workouts, evening judo practice, and simple, home-cooked meals. "I avoid chips and soft drinks and eat what my mum cooks," she says proudly. To other young Goans, Ima's message is clear: "You don't need pills or powders to be strong. Stay consistent, stay natural, and cut out distractions. I even surrendered my phone in Class 10 and it helped me focus on what truly matters."



SWIPE RIGHT

Karisma Kapoor's ex-husband Sunjay Kapur passes away



Karisma Kapoor's ex-husband Sunjay Kapur died of a heart attack in England. He was 53. Sunjay was a well-known Indian businessman and the son of renowned industrialist Dr Surinder, founder of the Sona Group. He was playing polo at the Guards Polo Club when he felt suffocated. He requested to stop the game and then went out of the ground. Thereafter, he suffered a heart attack and died. He apparently swallowed a bee and the sting in his throat caused a heart attack. Sunjay married Karisma in 2003 and they became parents to daughter Samaira in 2005 and son Kiaan in 2011. In 2014, Karisma and Sunjay filed for divorce through mutual consent. Their divorce was finalised in 2016. After the separation, Sunjay married Priya Sachdev in 2017. The couple have one son, Azarias.

Eunice de Souza: The volcano still burns

Vivek Meneses

Eunice de Souza was already 67 when she delivered her first public reading in her ancestral homeland, on a luminous evening in 2007, on a little stage under a vast rain tree (now cut down) behind the magnificent 150-year-old Old Goa Medical College building that had just then been handed over – absolutely shockingly – to Delhi developers to convert into a shopping mall. The great poet, and legendary professor of English Literature at Mumbai's St. Xavier's College had been invited to Panjim (actually it was by me) as part of Aparanta: The Confluence of Contemporary Art in Goa, an exploratory and eventually pathbreaking art exhibition curated with rare brilliance by Ranjit Hoskote, which did wind up having the desired effect of reversing the mall plans. But there were many other significant reverberations from that moment, when four generations of Goan artists were shown side by side from Angelo da Fonseca (born 1902) to Shilpa Mayenkar Naik (born 1981). Together, next to each other, their interconnectedness became undeniable. Hoskote described the effect as "an invisible river" in his (in retrospect hugely impactful) curatorial essay, pointing out "geographical contiguity does not mean that Goa and mainland India share the same universe of meaning: Goa's special historic evolution...its pride in its ancient internationalism avant la

lettre, sets it at a tangent to the self-image of an India that has been formed with the experience of British colonialism as its basis. The relationship between Goa's artists and mainland India has, not surprisingly, been ambiguous and erratic, even unstable." Looking back from today's vantage, Aparanta was the pivot away from the plight Hoskote described, and Eunice de Souza also played a crucial part in turning the trajectory towards what it is today (where the Old GMC hosts many annual cultural jamborees: IFFI, Serendipity, Goa Open Arts). It is true you could almost feel the ground shift when she read her poems – so many with raw naked power about being Goan – and I recall agreeing enthusiastically with the acclaimed writer/director Venita Coelho afterwards when she told me "this is the Goa I want to live in." To some extent, against all odds, that did come true, especially after the Goa Arts + Literature Festival (GALF) was founded in 2009 by the Goa Writers group (represented by the eminent



PHOTO COURTESY MELANIE SILGARDO

Konkani writer Damodar Mauzo and myself) in partnership with International Centre Goa, taking explicit inspiration from Eunice's insightful line about "ways of belonging." It has proven a durable founding principle over 15 years and 14 editions, and before she died in 2017 it is a point of pride we repeatedly hosted and continuously honoured our literary titan.

but with a nondescript cover, and disappointing title compared to A Necklace of Skulls, which is what Eunice had herself chosen. Unfortunately, Ravinthiran's introduction to Volcano similarly underwhelms – including some inexplicably lazy tone-deafness about his subject's cultural history like describing 1970s Goa as "deeply and

At least this one time, justice was served. Happily, it looks like Eunice de Souza's oeuvre – without any doubt one of the most incandescent of our times – will continue to galvanize new generations thanks to her literary executor, fellow poet and very close friend and colleague of more than 40 years Melanie Silgado, under whose guidance Penguin India has just published Volcano, an instantly invaluable new collection. Here are all of Eunice's published poems plus seven that are entirely new, as well as three introductions: by the poet herself for her first collected poems in 2009, another by Silgado for the second edition published posthumously in 2019, and a new one by the Harvard University professor Vidyan Ravinthiran. Volcano is a great book, but with a nondescript cover, and disappointing title compared to A Necklace of Skulls, which is what Eunice had herself chosen. Unfortunately, Ravinthiran's introduction to Volcano similarly underwhelms – including some inexplicably lazy tone-deafness about his subject's cultural history like describing 1970s Goa as "deeply and

idiosyncratically Portuguese" – when compared to his own fine 2020 analysis of this same oeuvre in Yale Review. Interestingly, in that essay Speech Acts, he zoomed in on the identical lines that lit a spark under us in Panjim in 2007: "No matter that/my name is Greek/my surname Portuguese/my language alien.//There are ways/of belonging." Today, when blood-and-soil rootedness has become tyrannical in India, her objections sound more than frazzled; they sound heroic." I think that is true, and it seems to me that Eunice de Souza's work continues to ring out with exemplary relevance while much of what was written with far more bombast by her (almost all male) contemporaries is tending to fade away. Silgado says it best herself in her 2019 introduction: "she never balked at using her life, her curiosity, her engagement with lovers, friends, students, retainers as her material. But her poems transcended the personal, the 'confessional' – she gave them context and moral perspective with a lightness, dryness, irreverence and humour that became her hallmark. She was a poet whose touchstone was the honest, the authentic, the unguarded self. She left us a small but potent legacy-poems that will survive us all." Via email from London, where she has lived since the 1980s, Silgado told me that Eunice's book collection is at her beloved Xavier's after "she had whittled them down to the essentials, touchstones for living and writing – so there is a library alcove dedicated to her. (She always joked about wanting a groto on the campus). But it would be nice to have a poetry prize for women in her name – she would like that." What we already know is "her poems are as fresh as ever – and I would put that down to her directness and sparseness of thought, and the way she had of digging deep into the particular – her particular – and finding the universal. Tonally, she had perfect pitch, and was able to harmonise the speaking and poetic voice – while freighted it with frailties and fierceness. She touched everything she taught and wrote with an honesty and urgency – and, in life did get up some people's noses. 'Best to meet in poems' she says in Five London Pieces – and I hope she has new readers meeting her for a long time to come."

