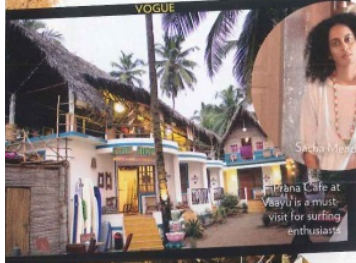


Right: The plates as Sablime food illustrations by Chef Ch...



# IN SEARCH OF GOA 2.0

With a swarm of new stays, eateries and stores, Goa's shores are rapidly changing. *Vogue* asks boutique owner and Goa native SACHA MENDES to share her favourites from the sunshine state



Prana Cafe at Vasa is a must-visit for surfing enthusiasts



The wholesome deli at The Space

No longer a sleepy fishing village or a hippie haven, Goa has got better with age. It's now a bonafide culinary destination with state-of-the-art boutique hotels and chic eateries. While La Plage and Thalassa may be essential stopovers on every gourmet's itinerary, we decided to navigate the changing shores of this beach locale with a little help from a local—fashion stylist-turned-store proprietor Sacha Mendes, who set up Sacha's Shop on the ground floor of her family home in Panjim a few years ago. That Mendes, a curator of all things cool, has an eye for style can be seen in the popularity of her fashionable boutique that stocks everything from handpicked accessories, clothing and home decor products. From a stay at a Portuguese villa packed with personality to sampling nouvelle cuisine no short of art, she shares her definitive guide to Goa today, picking new favourites from her old town.

## SHOP

► **TIA'S SHOP**  
Tia's tent shop is located on the same premises as her mother's café, Natti's Naturals. If you need a sexy swimsuit or a patterned kaftan, this is the place to go. Extend your shopping experience by heading to the café, which specialises in organic food. My on-the-go fix is a slice of Natti's chocolate cake—gluten- and dairy-free, it's made from almonds. *Natti's Naturals: Calangute-Anjuna Road, Mazal Waddo, Anjuna; Tel: 08550999422; Tia's Shop, Tel: 08550996095*

► **SOTOHAUS**  
Seeds, leaves and even (shed) snake-skin all come together here in the form of furniture, lighting and home collectibles. The shop by Swiss designers Sonja Weder and Thomas Schneider is always a delight to visit, but my latest obsessions are Sonja's objets d'art, which are made of shell, wood and other natural materials. *Anna Vaddo 1266/F, Candolim. Tel: 09822983321*

## EXPERIENCE

► **THE SPACE GOA**  
This holistic centre is off the beaten track and hosts healers and teachers from around the world. It has a little café in its enchanted garden setting that serves wholesome, healthy food. Don't skip their tiny shops—there are some unique trinkets and collectibles to be found. *261, Devabag Palolem-Agonda Road, Canacona; Tel: 0832-2643258*

► **SUNAPARANTA, GOA CENTRE FOR THE ARTS**  
There's always something interesting to see here. The last show I experienced, as part of the Sensorium festival, was

SACHA MENDES: SACHA MENDES; SOTOHAUS: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; COBES



The pool area at Vivenda Dos Palhacos in Majorda



Burger Factory specialises in expertly crafted, gourmet burgers



The dining area at Sunbeam

this beautiful one titled *Love*. It brought together 40 artists and performers, like Pablo Bartholomew, Thukral & Tagra, and Nikhil Chopra, who tried to answer the questions of love through photographs, paintings and performances. (This month, there's an exhibition of photographs by the writer and historian William Dalrymple.) Between shows, they even host a range of workshops, from perfumery to ceramics. *Sgcfa.org*; Tel: 0832-2421311

► **VAAYU WATERMAN'S VILLAGE**

If watersports is what draws you to Goa, this is the best time to indulge in activities like kayaking, surfing, kite surfing and wakeboarding. This adventure centre allows you to stay where the action is—choose from their bamboo huts, cottages or tipis. Vaayu also boasts of the super-healthy Prana café, which has an excellent vegan and vegetarian menu—Jamaican mango rum curry or pumpkin ricotta are just some of my favourites. *Mandrem-Aswem Beach Road, near Holy Cross Chapel*; Tel: 9850050403

**EAT**

► **BLACK SHEEP BISTRO**

The bistro has become the go-to place in Panjim and is a welcome change from the bustling shacks. The wine list is impressive and their cocktail menu even more so. I love their peanut-crusted fish fillet. *Swami Vivekananda Road, next to ICICI Bank, Panaji*; Tel: 0832-2222901

from that. This season, try the chicken leg tempura with red apple, spinach, grapefruit and an orange reduction at this nouvelle cuisine eatery. *Vithaldas Waddo, Morjim*; Tel: 09822484051

► **BURGER FACTORY**

This grungy-cool spot has some of the best gourmet burgers to sample. If you've worked up an appetite, try their bacon, pulled pork and roast chicken burger—definitely not for the faint-hearted. *Anjuna-Mapusa Road, Anjuna, Panjim*; Tel: 08600990220

**STAY**

► **SUNBEAM**

If you're looking to break free of the monotony of hotel rooms, check in here. This delightful homestay is an extension of designer and style connoisseur Jivi Sethi himself—opulent and unapologetically stylish. They also offer a private dining experience. Just make sure to call in two days in advance to discuss the menu, and trust me, it'll live up to the hype. *E13 Saunta Vaddo, Assagao, Bardez*; Tel: 0832-2268525

► **VIVENDA DOS PALHACOS**

The 100-year-old mansion renovated by brother-sister duo Simon and Charlotte Hayward features eight tastefully decorated rooms, named after the places they've lived in. Their pool will make it hard for you to leave. *Costa Vaddo, Majorda*; Tel: 08323221119

**FOUR SQUARE**

Vogue-approved design stores in Goa

○ **PAPER BOAT COLLECTIVE:**

The newest addition to the Indian design world, this gorgeous store located in a quaint Portuguese home in Sangolda features an eclectic yet beautifully curated collection of ceramics, jewellery, homeware and clothing—all of which are bound to be conversation starters.

Tel: 0832-6521248



○ **CASA GOA:**

Housing designer wear by the likes of Wendell Rodricks to prints of Mario Miranda's cartoons as well as a colossal variety of restored and antique furniture, this iconic design store in Calangute doubles as an art gallery.

Tel: 0832-2281048

○ **WHITE BRICK WALL:**

This concept store in Panjim features handpicked designer wear alongside a collection of pretty things you may not need but definitely want. Their dessert-scented candles (crème brûlée and strawberry shortcake) are what sweet dreams are made of.

Tel: 0832-2428242



○ **BUNTI:**

This design hut in Palolem specialises in edgy Indian clothing as well as kitschy home furnishings. With curious knick-knacks for your home, it's impossible to step out of here empty-handed.

Tel: 07875856712