

THE TAMARIND GLOBAL NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2021

# tang

TAMARIND  
GLOBAL

## TANG IS BACK!

After a brief break, we are back with the December 2021 edition of Tang - this time, with an interesting lineup of activities that happened during the pandemic. Going forward, Tang will bring you relevant happenings and events in the travel industry, covering everything from new properties and destinations, to personal blogs and sustainable ideas. Our monthly newsletter aims to bring you the tanginess of the travel world, curated especially for you!

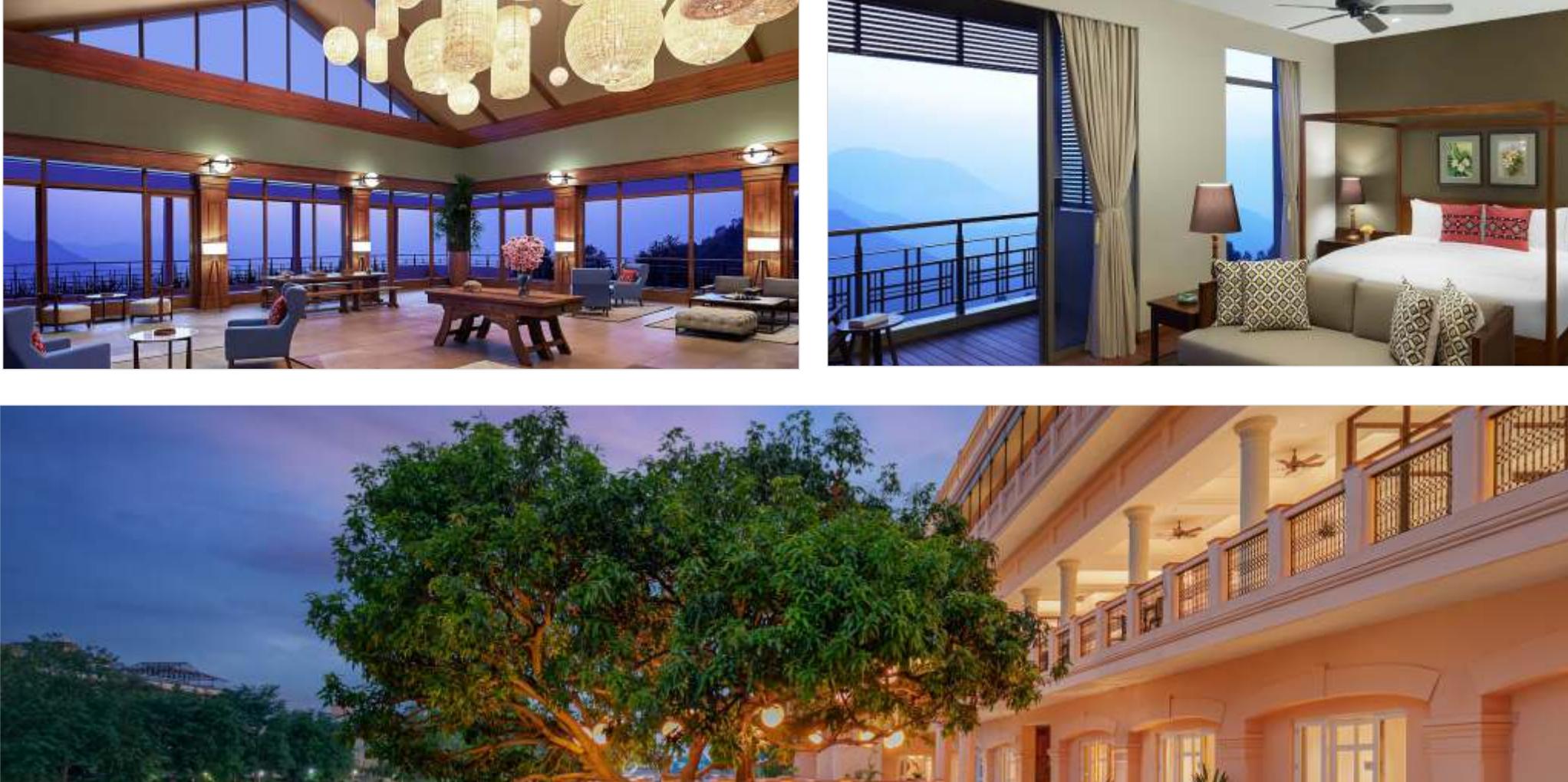
### NOVEL BEGINNINGS DURING PANDEMIC IN INDIA



#### RAFFLES, UDAIPUR

Where? Udaipur, Rajasthan

What is unique about the property? First ever Raffles of India, preserving unique standard of luxury hospitality, introducing the world to private butlers, the "Singapore Sling Cocktail" and its enduring, legendary service.



#### WESTIN, GOA

Where? Goa, Maharashtra

What is unique about the property? Spacious contemporary rooms and suites including patio accommodations with direct access to the sparkling outdoor pool. Also featuring Westin's plush-all "signature heavenly beds" and the rejuvenating heavenly bath with its fully customizable shower and bath with nourishing white tea aloe bath amenities.



Why choose Westin Goa? Set in one of the world's most renowned places close to the Anjuna beach, vibrant nightlife spots, sand beaches kissed by the Arabian Sea and set against verdant green hills, hotel has countless opportunities for adventure and rejuvenation. Experience the essence of susegad, the Goan concept of relaxed contentment, at The Westin Goa.

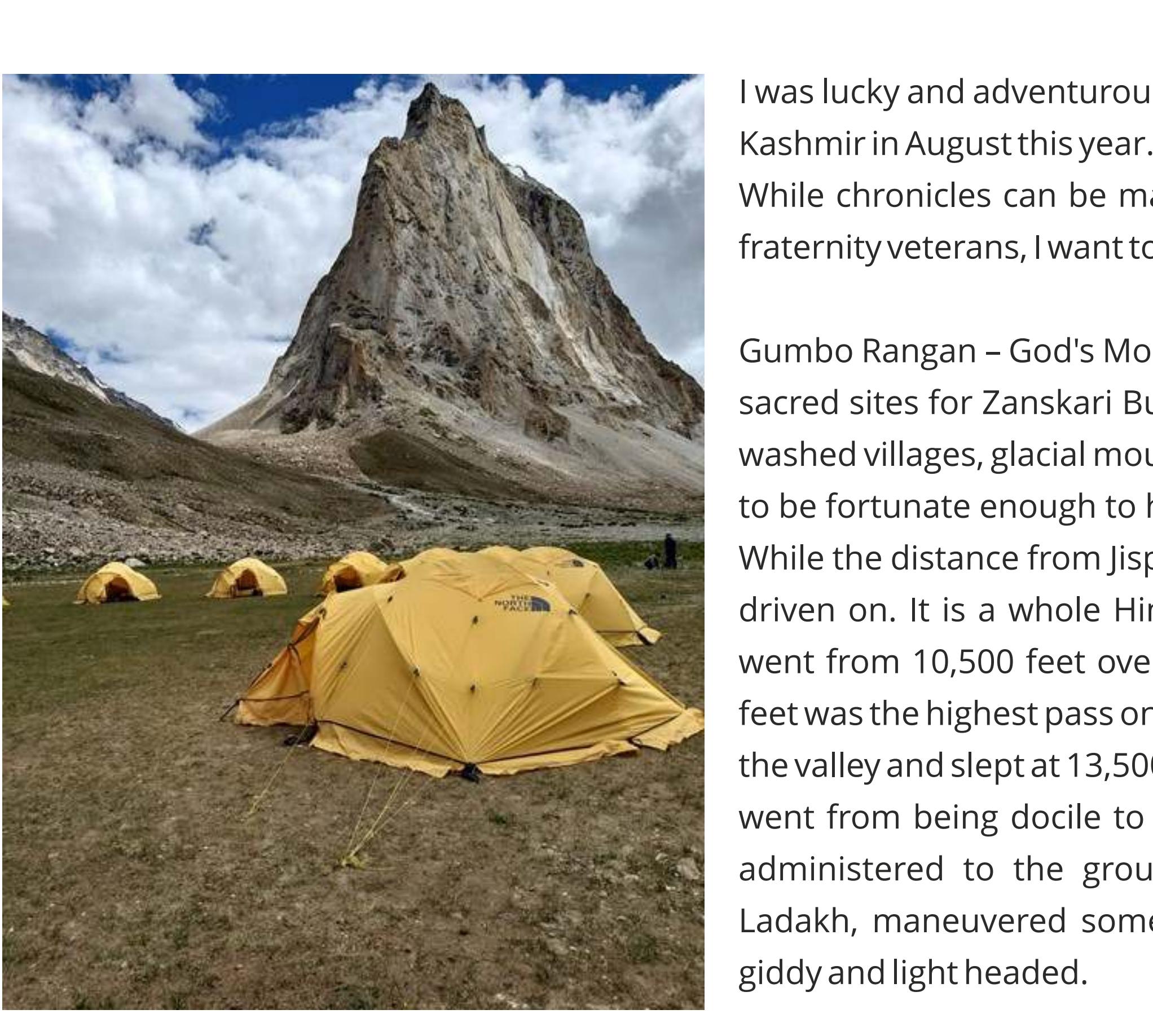


#### TAJ CHIA KUTIR RESORT & SPA, DARJEELING

Where? Darjeeling, West Bengal

What is unique about the property? It is set in the famous Makaibari tea estate that dates back to 1859, barefoot luxury at its best amidst plantations with a sustainable ecosystem. Rooms boast discerning wooden interiors, telescopic views and in most cases balconies that bring in the vibes of a hill station estate.

Why choose Taj Chia Kutir Resort & Spa Darjeeling? The quintessential luxury estate experience amidst the tea estate, green acres rolling upon each other as far as the eyes can see. There's plenty of adventure, forest treks and tea trails and the misty magic of Makaibari. The estate sustains local communities and environment friendly and regenerative practices.

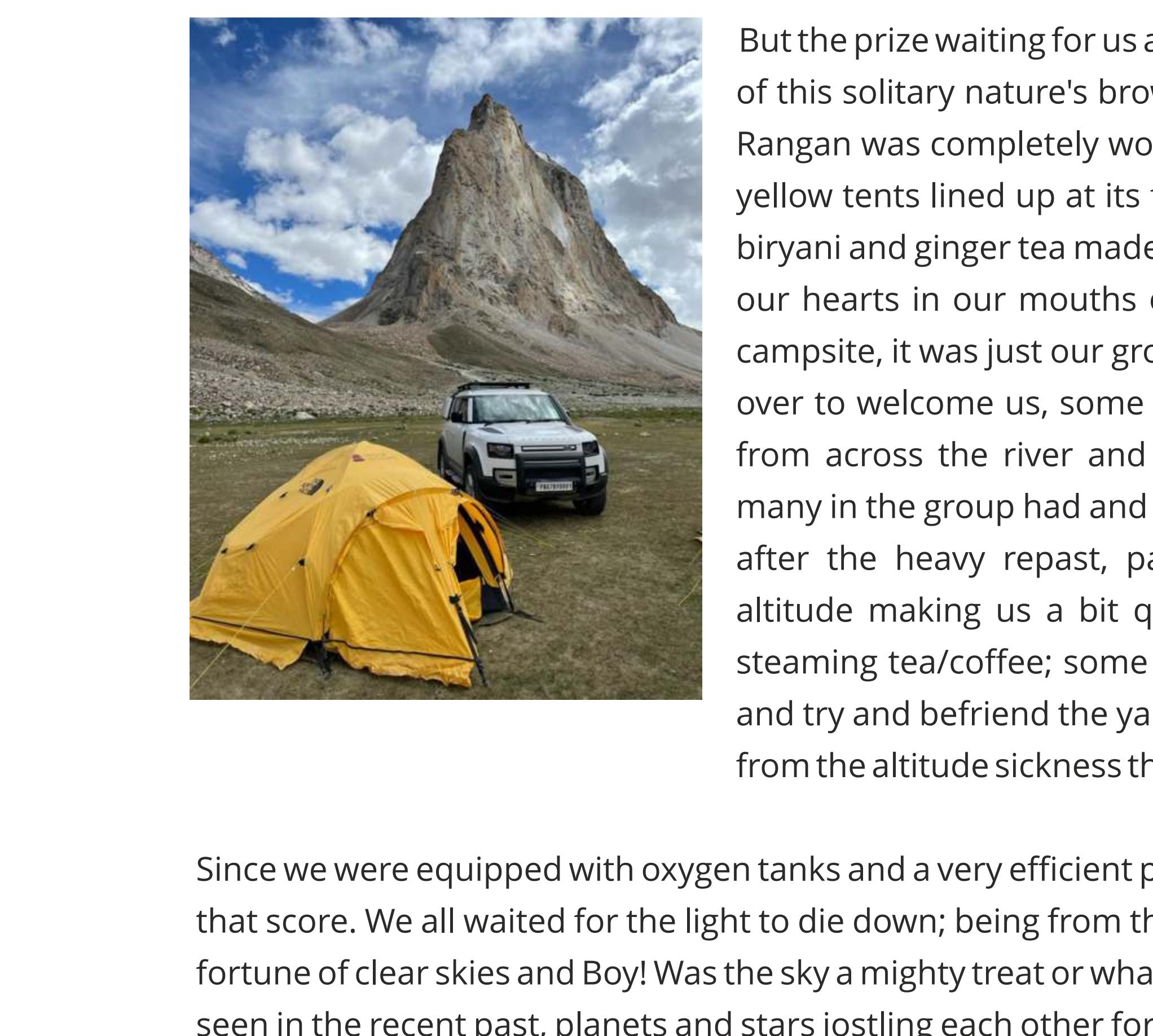


#### PILIBHIT HOUSE, HARIDWAR

Where? Haridwar, Uttarakhand

What is unique about the property? A 100 year old aristocratic mansion by the Ganges, largest private bathing ghat and the river room, unique experiences and rituals around dining, wellness, spirituality and the most luxurious address to experience Haridwar.

Why choose Pilibhit House Haridwar? A realm of tranquillity, Pilibhit House sits charmingly by the Ganges overlooking the glorious Shivalik Himalayas. In keeping with the destination, Pilibhit House keeps it simple and yet profound, all the time framing the divinity of the Ganges. Located in the holy abode of Haridwar, it's a haven for vegetarians and a liquor-free hotel.



#### COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT, MAHABALESHWAR

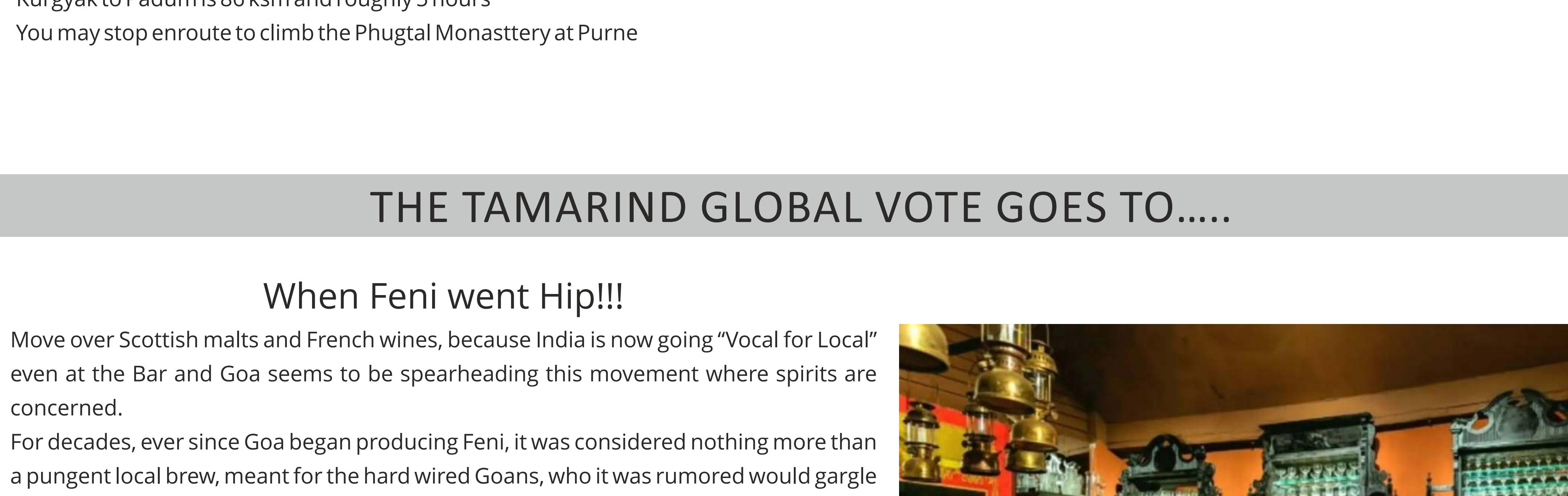
Where? Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra

What is unique about the property? Second addition in the city, refreshingly streamlined valley view and superior patio rooms with a panoramic view of the valley and soon to open villas with beautiful balcony views with direct access to a plunge pool. Offers an array of unique experiences including strawberry picking at various pluck parks and scenic picnic spot close to the Lingmala falls.

Why choose Courtyard by Marriott Mahabaleshwar? Set against the stunning backdrop of lush valleys at 1353m. above sea level and situated atop the Lingmala Waterfalls, overlooking the Venna River, property boasts of alluring dawns and dusks, a calm breeze at all times & vantage point offering stunning views.

### SPECIAL TRAVEL EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE EYES OF ANJALI TOLANI

Anjali is Tamarind's own globetrotting travel enthusiast - she can be trusted to get to the heart and soul of any destination she explores! From hidden gems to local cuisine and customs, Anjali delves deep. Here, Anjali relates her driving experiences in Ladakh.



I was lucky and adventurous enough to have embarked on a Cliffhanger Driving Expedition through Himachal, Ladakh and Kashmir in August this year.

While chronicles can be made on the entire trip which was led by experts who also happened to be friends and travel fraternity veterans, I want to mention this particular place we camped enroute which was the highlight of the trip for me.

Gumbo Rangan - God's Mountain is an imposing solitary peak located in the remote Kurgayak valley and is one of the most sacred sites for Zanskar Buddhists. Zanskar in Ladakh is a high altitude semi-desert, home to fabled monasteries, white washed villages, glacial mountains and savage gorges. The Gumbo stands tall at 18,360 feet/ 5596 mt, I felt lucky to be alive, to be fortunate enough to have made it thus far and to be the special chosen one to camp under this majestic mountain.

While the distance from Jispa in Himachal to Kurgayak in Ladakh is only 60 kms, it is one of the most rugged surfaces I have driven on. It is a whole Himalayan adventure by itself; we went from 10,500 feet over the Shinku La which at 16,700 feet was the highest pass on our journey and descended into the valley and slept at 13,500 feet. We crossed streams which went from being docile to roaring forces, had a quick RAT administered to the group when we crossed over into Ladakh, maneuvered some very tight turns and felt a bit giddy and light headed.

But the prize waiting for us at the end of this drive in the form of this solitary nature's brown imposing force - the Gumbo Rangan was completely worth it and more. The sight of the yellow tents lined up at its feet - the wafting aromas of the biryani and ginger tea made us forget how often we had had our hearts in our mouths over the past 5-6 hours. At this campsite, it was just our group, a solitary donkey who came over to welcome us, some yaks who carefully observed us from across the river and the sighting of the ibex which many in the group had and I missed. Many of us passed out after the heavy repast, partly also because of the high altitude making us a bit queasy. We woke up to cups of steaming tea/coffee; some of us dared to walk to the river and try and befriend the yaks while the rest tried to recover from the altitude sickness that was starting to peak.

Since we were equipped with oxygen tanks and a very efficient paramedic, we had no worries on that score. We all waited for the light to die down; being from the city, most of us don't have the fortune of clear skies and Boy! Was the sky a mighty treat or what! One of the clearest skies I have seen in the recent past, planets and stars jostling each other for space, satellites racing across, a sight I can never forget but never adequately describe. Cozying into the sleeping bags in our tent after a nightcap of hot chocolate, with hot water bottles tucked between our feet, the only incentive to wake up in the middle of the night was to be able to glance up at the surreal vision and be able to take in more of the Gumbo Rangan.

Morning brought a flurry to wrap up, grab breakfast and take in the Gumbo one last time before we headed off to our next adventure of climbing up the Phugtal monastery in Purne. But that is a story for a different time.

Stay at Jispa: Gemoor Khar which is now part of the Banjara Camps

<http://www.gemoorkharbnbjispa.com/>

Jispa to Kurgayak is 60 kms and 5-6 hours

Stay at Padum: Omasila : <http://www.omasilahotel.com/>

Kurgayak to Padum is 86 ksm and roughly 5 hours

You may stop enroute to climb the Phugtal Monastery at Purne

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### THE TAMARIND GLOBAL VOTE GOES TO.....

#### When Feni went Hip!!!

Move over Scottish malts and French wines, because India is now going "Vocal for Local" even at the Bar and Goa seems to be spearheading this movement where spirits are concerned.

For decades, ever since Goa began producing Feni, it was considered nothing more than a pungent local brew, meant for the hard wired Goans, who it was rumored would gargle with this first thing in the morning. Many outside of Goa found this too potent for their liking, comparing its heady aroma to the smell of burnt rubber. But things are turning around and the Feni is acquiring a new hipster image.

In order to retain the cultural significance of Feni and also in a bid to popularize this drink amongst Indians outside of Goa, some locals like the Vaz family – distillers of Cazulo and Nandan Kudchadkar – curator of the "Museum of Alcohol" - have taken matters into their hands. Feni is all set to be tagged "Heritage Spirit" by the Goa Government and has the unique distinction of being the first indigenous Indian liquor to receive the

Geographical Indication Tag in 2009. The Vaz family has taken Feni production back to the traditional old ways when cashew fruit was crushed in stone basins dug into the ground and crushed underfoot before being transferred to underground clay pots for distillation.

The first extract urruk also makes for a great drink but has limited shelf life. Feni is obtained after another round of distillation. Traditionally both coconut and cashew have been used to distil Feni and traditionally a bottle of Feni would cost just about Rs. 100. Today its fancier packaging, going back to traditional methods of production has resulted in it being sold upwards of Rs. 1200.

Visitors to Goa can also visit the Feni museum and get up close to traditional Feni implements like Garrafoes and vats etc. They could also look at Feni processing during the season starting February to May. Plus, try interesting Feni cocktails and carry back souvenirs.

With white spirits like Gin being the current favorites, the time for Feni to go Global has arrived!



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