

#TOWARDS A BETTER WORLD

Faux Fur Friday

Cozy and cruelty-free, it's the trendy way to stay warm when the weather cools down, with a touch of luxury.



Since man first started killing animals and wearing their skins, furs have been all the rage. Beaver fur, ocelot fur, wolf fur, bear fur, if it had four legs and a fuzzy exterior, we were going to use it as this year's latest fashion.

To be fair, in ages past, fur was utterly necessary, the same thing that kept our prey animals warm during the winter was being borrowed to help our ancestors survive the same. But times have changed, and with electric heating and synthetic fibers, there's no longer a need for fur. But it sure looks fantastic, even hundreds of years of fiber development can't change the fact that fur is a classic look that will never go out of style. But along with the fiber industry, our sensibilities have changed as well, and slaughtering tasty animals for their furs is no longer looked upon favourably. So, what's a lover of fuzzy clothes to do? Abandon it? Not at all! Faux Fur Friday is the answer to all of your animal hide needs, without the aching conscience.

History

The first fake furs started coming into the scene in the 1900s, with 'fur' being made from the wool of either newborn or unborn lamb, and sand was mixed with synthetic fibers soon after.

Since that day, fake furs have been expanding throughout the world and fashion industry. During the hey-day of fur fashion, fake furs were a way for those less financially enriched to get into the fur fashion.

Fur was considered to say a lot about the person wearing it, with *Vogue* Magazine stating that the fur you wear will

reveal 'the kind of woman you are and the kind of life you will lead.' An expert in 1924 once told the *Times* that when a fur of any kind becomes fashionable, the (textile) trade will hunt for a substitute. Every girl wants to look like the fashionista's and would pay for the opportunity to do so. But what started as a way to produce realistic fake furs soon turned itself to a new pursuit. Fake furs had the benefit of being able to be produced in any colour and pattern, and thus, bright purple leopard prints became viable, and soon turned to fashion.

How to Celebrate

Need we say it? Spend the day decked out in Faux Furs! Get your best outfit together or invest in a new one, and show the world that Faux fur is still in. You can even have a 1920s themed party, where everyone shows up at their most (faux) elegance!



Buddhism began in China with a Han Emperor's Dream

The Sutra of Forty Two Sayings was, in most likelihood, written by Kashyapa Matanga to explain the basics of Buddhism wherever he preached. Saunders, who studied the text in detail, said that it was more or less an explanation of *Theravada* principles. It made him wonder that how well monastic teachings, that called for detachment, would have been received in a country of 'filial piety' like China? "But as if to disarm criticism, the Sutra goes on to suggest a sublimated family life. If the monk meets women, he is to treat the young as sisters or daughters, the old as mothers," Saunders said.



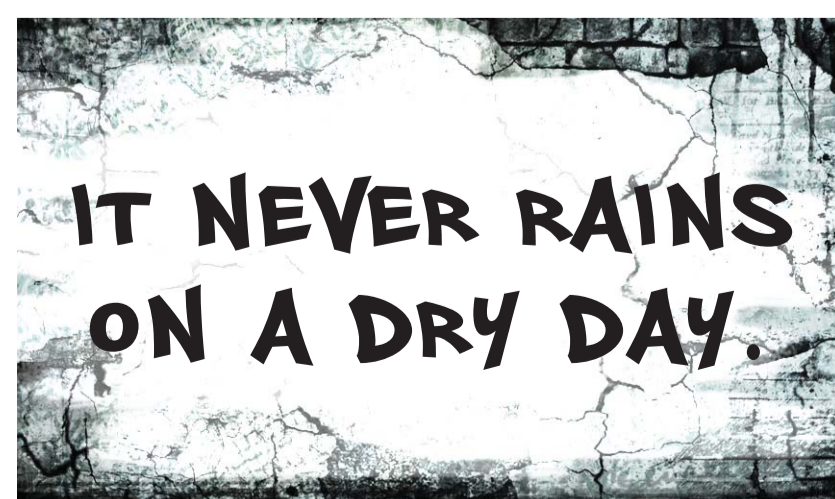
Ajay Kamalakaran

No cultural or historic sight in China links the great Indian and Chinese civilisations more than the White Horse Temple Complex in Luoyang in the country's Henan province. In 68 CE, during the reign of Emperor Ming of Han or Mingdi, this temple became the first Buddhist house of worship in China. It was also from here that Buddhism spread further to Vietnam, Japan and Korea. A reminder of the temple complex's kinship with India is an Indian-style Buddhist temple, inaugurated by Indian President, Pratibha Patil in 2010. "Historically, it has the unique distinction of symbolising an intermingling of Indian and Chinese cultures," Patil said.



The White horse Temple in Luoyang, China.

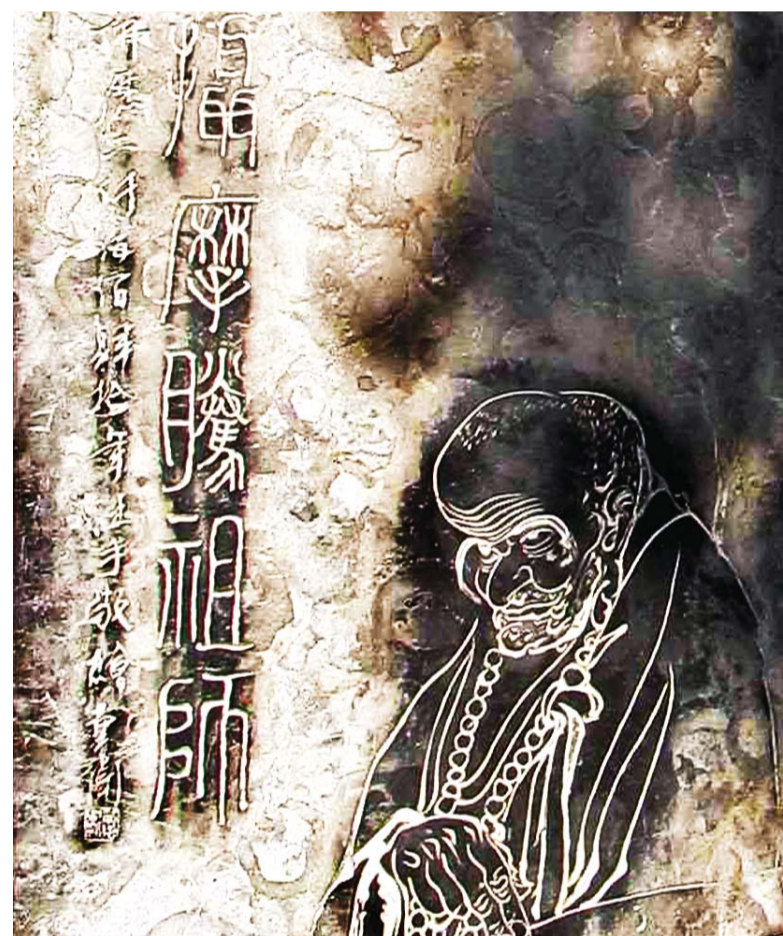
THE WALL



#HISTORY

While Gotama was preaching in the Ganges Valley, Confucius and Lao-tse were grafting upon the ancient Chinese stock of Animism, or 'Universism,' their own distinctive teachings," American Buddhist scholar, Kenneth Saunders, wrote in the *University of California, Berkeley's Journal of Religion*.

only the learned men of China who knew of Buddhism, since the message of the Buddha arrived with traders and travellers, while the dominant religion of the country was Confucianism. "While Gotama was preaching in the Ganges Valley, Confucius and Lao-tse were grafting upon the ancient Chinese stock of Animism, or 'Universism,' their own distinctive teachings," American Buddhist scholar, Kenneth Saunders, wrote in the *University of California, Berkeley's Journal of Religion* in 1923. "And while in India and the adjoining countries, the exclusive *Theravada Buddhism* was being transmitted into the universalist *Mahayana*, this great parent-stem of Chinese religion was being shaped to receive the new graft." Saunders believed that Mingdi's dream could not have come out of the blue. "There must

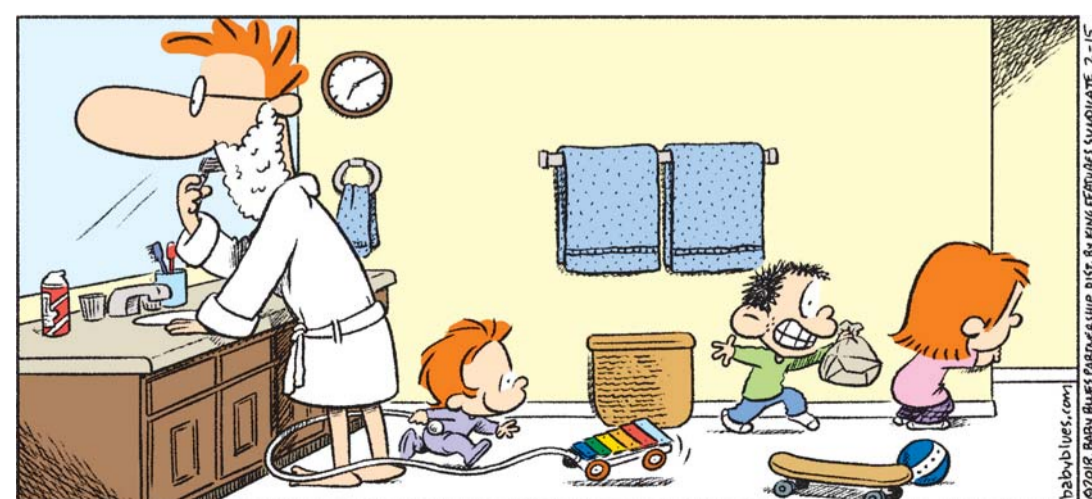


An image of Kashyapa Matanga and his name in Chinese at the White horse temple in China.

have been some basis for the vision in thoughts already in the emperor's mind, and in some Buddhist image or Buddhist teachings already circulating in China," he said. "Indeed, an image is said to have been brought back by an expedition in 121 BC." After consulting his ministers, Mingdi sent a delegation to India to learn more about Buddhism. Numbering 18, the group set off for India, travelling West and through modern-day Xinjiang. For three years, it was away from Luoyang. The mission interacted widely with laymen and Buddhist monks.

Perilous Journey
It is believed that Mingdi's mission convinced two Indian monks to move to China. One of them was Kashyapa Matanga, who hailed from a *Brahmin* family in Central India and became well-versed in the *Mahayana sutras*, and the other was the learned Dharmaratna. Saunders believed that the monks were already missionaries in Central Asia and had tried to spread the word of the Buddha to the Yuezhi people, a nomadic community that lived in modern-day Afghanistan and parts of what is now Pakistan.

BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



Bartender Day

Most occupations have a day dedicated to them and the job of tending a bar is no exception. Bartender Day aims to make customers think about the great service their favourite bartenders give while pouring pints and mixing cocktails as well as their great people skills of talking, listening, joking and being a shoulder to cry on and a person to confide in. Over the centuries, a bartender's job has somehow evolved from just pouring your pint or shot into being a therapist of sorts, to the point that these days, that's what bartenders are best known for.



Mingdi born Liu Zhang became emperor of the later Han or Eastern Han Dynasty at the age of 30.

Chinese Journal of Linguistics in 1996. They argued that the name of the temple came from the Sanskrit word for lotus (*padma*), adding that the Chinese word *bai ma* (white horse) was originally a transcription and the symbol of the white horse came about as a result of 'folk etymology.' Liu and Wang added, "This is a process whereby an expression in a source language X, being semantically opaque in a target language Y, gets associated with a phonetically similar expression in Y, which has a different meaning."

The explanation offered by Liu and Wang is quite possible. The lotus is an important symbol in Buddhism, and several older temples in China and other parts of Asia are named after the flower. Still, whatever the origins of the temple name, it is the story of the white horse that is accepted by most pilgrims and the temple management.

Finding Respect

The white horse's companions on the journey did not live long. Chinese historians largely agree that Kashyapa Matanga, who was called Jia Yemoteng in Chinese, passed away in 73 CE. Dharmaratna, called Zhi Falan in Chinese, probably died a few years later. "The two pioneers did not long survive their arrival at the capital, but they left a tradition of sound scholarship and earnest work, and their Monastery of the White Horse, became the model for many of its successors," Saunders said. "Toil on as the ox plods through deep mire, his eye fixed on the goals that lie ahead," in these words of their Sutra, we may find

perhaps an echo of their resolute endeavour, and their fitting epithet. Both Indian monks were buried in the White Horse complex, a rare honour for clergymen in China. Centuries later, the great scholar and traveller, Xuan Zang, who returned to China after an epic India visit (629-645 CE), became the abbot of the White Horse temple.

After the death of Kashyapa Matanga and Dharmaratna, many other monks from India and Afghanistan began to undertake the arduous journey to Luoyang. "Indian monks were no doubt motivated to travel to China, in spite of the difficulties of their journeys and the slim likelihood of ever returning to their homeland, because of the respect and warmth with which they were received in China," Madhavi Thampi, who taught Chinese history at Delhi University for 35 years, wrote in her book *Indians in China, 1800-1949*. "From all accounts, the Indian missionaries to China were highly appreciated by their patrons, the Chinese emperors and princes, as well as other sections of society."

Indian Buddhist monks were regular travellers on the ancient Silk Road until the end of the 11th century, after which the decline of Buddhism in India was complete. As K. M. Panikar, the writer-diplomat, who served as independent India's first ambassador to China, pointed out that this millennium of contact between the two countries, that was facilitated by Buddhist missionaries, was one of the most important occurrences in Asian history.

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An Indian style Buddhist temple in Luoyang.

#RESTROREVIEW

Kai Experience @Leela palace

The sit down began with a 'jewelled' *Kachori*. Now, could it get better in a city of jewellers?



Sadhana Garg
Journalist & Social Entrepreneur

Can a love language be food? Yes, if you are at Hawa Mahal of Leela Palace. Like the rest of the uber lux hotel, the white walled rooftop dining against the backdrop of oldest mountain range in the world, the Aravallis, the food coma begins to unfold. The inner moonlight emanating from a beautiful ambience is matched by the one cascading down the walls, fresh flower rangoli, candleabras flickering to notes of live music. It's the evening of many firsts. Not many of us had heard of a Michelin Green Star Chef or at least had not savored the spread curated by one.

For the uninitiated, a Michelin Green Star means a Chef given to sustainable gastronomy that supports local and ethical produce with seasonal ingredients. "The sit down began with a 'jewelled' *Kachori*. Now, could it get better in a city of jewellers? For stuffing, it had braised onions, local goat *paneer*, smokey *kasundi* with ginger, sesame added to smashed cucumber, a little like the *kheera ka Kachori* that Granny deep fried sans the goat cheese *paneer*.

If unlike hers, the ones served by Chef Jess were not piping hot, it was because of the guests who trickled in at different times believing like a true-blooded *Jaipurite* that it's never too late, even for a sit down! As the journey from the West of Ireland, home to Chef Jess began, we were in for more fusion. The next was a delicious salad of papaya ceviche, reminiscent of a *Thai papaya* salad. All of us carry our hometown in our hearts, no matter what pinnacles we scale, and Chef Jess Murphy is no different. Hometown Galway's food traits got blended with those of this city of palaces. For the vegetarians and the burst of flavour that followed was



with creamy *dahi* while for the carnivorous ones, there was Chicken *Snitzel*, coated in millet and oat-meal crumbs, somewhat Irish style trickled in buttermilk and served with Waldorf salad and *Kashmiri chilli* butter. The word 'Schnitzel' has German roots meaning thinly sliced and fried. Said Chef Jess, "We use so much buttermilk in Ireland, so this is the ultimate Yin and Yang dish," referring to its soothing and spicy kick, derived from *Kashmiri chilli* butter. Not to forget the almond cauliflower served with saffron rice. The rich deep flavours of *Lamb Osso bucco* were enough to enhance the feast mode of guests. A few minutes of polite conversation and the burst of flavour that followed was



inspired by memories of India playing New Zealand and of the cult drink of 70s, Thumbs Up. Millions of Indians had sought comfort in this bottled delight. So, now it was used by the Chef in a pre-dessert dish made of shredded *tandoori* pineapple, streaked with maple chilli, salt, yogurt and thumbs up granita. The dessert, made of local bananas, toasted coconut gelato with a smoked tuffet whiskey butterscotch, turned out to be a delicious overload, truly combining two amazing cultures and their mouth-watering goodness, served in an uber lux moonlight setting that only Leela does with such flourish. As the Irish would say, 'slán go fóill!'