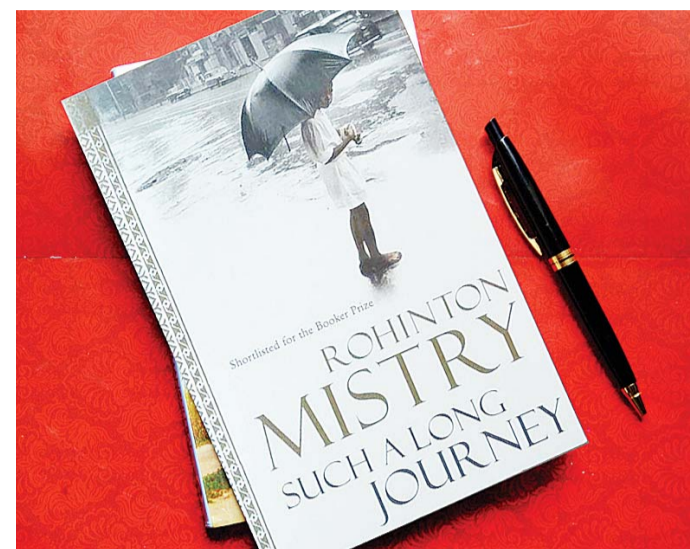


## #POCKET-WORTHY

### All Night Reading

Unputdownable books that will make you stay up all night.

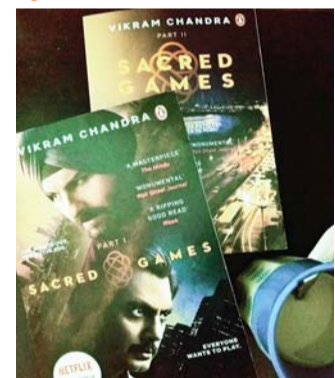


Every once in a while, we come across a book so engaging that we find ourselves lost in its world. Despite our best efforts, we end up foregoing precious hours of sleep and shunning company, conscious only of our need to finish the book. A book such as this truly defines the word 'unputdownable'.

Here is a list of novels you can read overnight-compelling enough that you won't be lured by sleep, but short enough that once you finish, you'll still have enough time to clock some hours before you have to go to work. If you can sleep, that is.

#### Sacred Games

By Vikram Chandra



A critically acclaimed book, and winner of the Vodafone Crossword Book Award, Sacred Games is a complex cops-and-robbers thriller set in Mumbai. When Sartaj Singh, a police inspector with poor career prospects, receives an anonymous tip with the location of the secret hideout of India's most wanted gangster, Ganesh Gaitonde, he rushes to seize the opportunity with lay-ered characters and a crisp language. Sacred Games is guaranteed to keep you reading for hours.

#### The Eye Of The World

By Robert Jordan

Reminiscent of 'The Lord of The Rings', this is the first of 14 books in 'A Wheel Of Time' series. This book introduces the key characters - Rand al'Thor and his friends, Matrim Cauthon and Perrin Aybara as they flee their home after being attacked by Trollocs. They are accompanied by an Aes Sedai, Moiraine, and her Warder Lan. This page-turner will keep you hooked as you follow Rand and his seven companions as they go on an epic quest for answers, make friends along the way, dodge enemies and eventually uncover their destinies.

#### The Night Circus

By Erin Morgenstern

The Night Circus is a phantasmagorical fairy tale centred around a peculiar magical circus with no fixed location that could arrive anywhere, without any announcement. Open only from sunset to sunrise, Le Cirque des Rêves (the Circus of Dreams), boasts of wonders like a garden made of ice and stunning displays of magic. In the midst of the circus are the young magicians, Celia and Marco who have been groomed from childhood to be each other's rivals in a contest of magic, where the punishment for losing is death. Unexpectedly, they find themselves falling in love and have to find a way out from the night circus. The Night Circus is a delightful and mesmerising read which will make you want to stay up all night.

#### The Pillars Of The Earth

By Ken Follett

The Pillars of the Earth is Ken Follett's tour de force, a historical novel in sharp contrast to his previous works. This book tells the tales of Philip, a monk in the 12th century, driven by his goal to build the greatest Gothic cathedral in the world, of Tom, a mason who became an architect, and of Lady Aliena who has a shameful secret. The overall theme of the book is that of the struggle between good and evil. Follett's masterful storytelling has managed to recreate 12th century England in vivid detail as the monasteries and castles of Kingsbridge come to life before us. This is a complex tale of love, betrayal and revenge set in motion by the public hanging of an innocent man. You'll find yourself unable to put the book down.

The entire team of investigators sent by the British government was eliminated by Behram. Then the Government decided to send a soldier William Henry Sleeman, in their place, to investigate. In 1822 William was made the magistrate of the district of Narsinghpur of Madhya Pradesh. He had to move and travel to many cities and various places to collect information on Behram but he could not get any.

# The 'Beraham' Thug



Anjali Sharma  
Senior journalist & wildlife enthusiast

Thug Behram, was also known as Buhram Jamedar and the 'King of Thugs', was a leader of the Thuggee cult active in Oudh in central India during the late 18th and early 19th century. He is said to be one of the world's most prolific serial killers. He may have been involved in up to 931 murders by strangulation between 1790 and 1840, performed with a ceremonial rum<sup>2</sup>, a handkerchief-like cloth used by his cult as a garrotte; though in the official records only 125 were confirmed.

Behram is suspected of having committed 931 murders, James Paton, an East India Company officer working for the Thuggee and Dacoity Office in the 1830s wrote a manuscript on Thuggee. He quotes Behram as saying that 'he had 'been present' at 931 cases of murder, and 'I may have strangled with my own hands about 125 men, and I may have seen strangled 150 more.'

#### Ceremonial Execution

The English word 'thug' is in fact borrowed from the Hindi word 'thug'. The thugs were covert members of a group and the term 'Thugge' typically referred to an act of deceitful and organised robbery and murder.

Behram used his kamarbund or rum<sup>2</sup>, with a large medallion sewn into it as a garrotte to execute his killing. Through sheer skill he could cast the rum<sup>2</sup> around the neck of the victim in such a way that the medallion landed at the Adam's apple of his victims, adding pressure to the throat when he strangled them.

Thug Behram was operative in 1790 and 1840 performed murders with a ceremonial rum<sup>2</sup>, a handkerchief-like cloth used by his cult as a garrotte. Behram was executed on January 1, 1840, at the age of 75.

In his childhood Behram was quite shy and was quite reluctant to mix up with others. Later, he became friends to one of the notorious Thugs Syed Ameer Ali who was 25 years older than him. Ameer Ali is the person who introduced Behram to the world of Thuggee and also made him the head of Thugs.

According to the sources, during



In his childhood Behram was quite shy and was quite reluctant to mix up with others. Later, he became friends to one of the notorious Thugs Syed Ameer Ali who was 25 years older than him. Ameer Ali is the person who introduced Behram to the world of Thuggee and also made him the head of Thugs.



Thug Behram 1765 - 1840.

his initial days of 'Thuggee, Behram was also accompanied by a female thug named Dolly; but later on both got separated. By the otherwise tender age of just 10, Behram had started killing and terrifying the people with his crimes. He took to robbing and thugging as a profession at the tender age of 25.

#### Code of Convenience

He had a group of nearly 200 members working with him. Due to their success and invincibility the central states of India were deeply terrified, so much so that they had to alter their route of travel however inconvenient. Though as per their tradition they did not kill women, fakirs, musicians, lepers and Europeans. They only attacked traders, pilgrims and tourists.

Behram's notoriety was such that it reached London. British government sent a five member investigating team to Jabalpur. After intensive search they could come up with only one name - Behram.

The entire team of investigators sent by the British government was eliminated by Behram. Then the Government decided to send a soldier William Henry Sleeman in their place to investigate. In 1822, William was made the magistrate of the district of Narsinghpur of Madhya Pradesh. He had to move

## #HISTORY

and travel to many cities and various places to collect information on Behram but he could not get any.

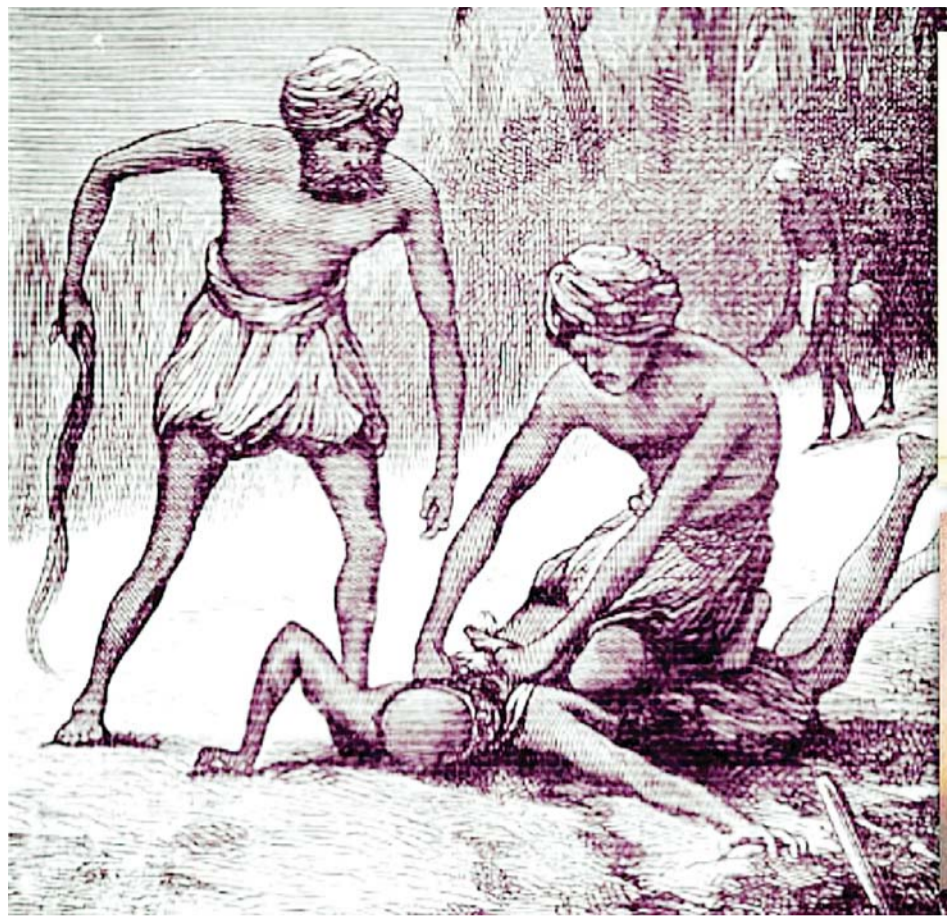
Meanwhile Lord William Bentinck was appointed the Governor General of India. He gave the investigating teams more means and also security forces to help with better investigation. Sleeman had received information about Sayyad Amir Ali, one of the associates of Behram. The British team reached Amir's house but he had fled by that time. His mother and one of the other family members were arrested by the British.

In 1832, after a lot of persuasion physical and otherwise he gave clear information about Behram. Thereafter he surrendered for the sake of his family. Consequently Behram was also arrested.

Finally in 1840, Behram and his gang members were hanged on a tree out in the open. The newest members were given some concession and they were sent to a reform jail in Jabalpur. Thus the village Seelamanabad has been named after the British officer.

#### Methods and traditions

Thugs are said to have travelled in groups across the Indian subcontinent. There were numerous traditions about their origin. One recorded by D. F. McLeod traced it to some Muslim tribes formed from those who fled Delhi, the capital city of India, after murdering a physician. Another traced it to some great Muslim families who fled after mur-



dering a favoured slave of Akbar the Great, the emperor of Hindustan (India).

These original Muslim Thugs spread Thuggee amongst Indian Rajputs, Hindus, Lodhis and Ahirs. According to other traditions by Thugs, they were Kanjars or descended from those who worked in the Mughal camps. Others have blamed the rise of Thugs on the disbanding of armies in employment of Indian rulers after the British conquest.

During a 1906 meeting of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Sir William Turner submitted part three of his research 'Contributions to the Craniology of the People of the Empire of India', included were the photographs of individual skulls from a group who the British Medical Journal said: 'They made it their business to frequent the great highways of India and become friendly with travellers, with a view to setting upon them and strangling them.'

#### Meet the original thugs

The word 'thug' traces its roots to the Hindi and Urdu word thug, which means thief or swindler, which itself is derived from the Sanskrit verb shtagati (to conceal). The word entered the English language in the 1800s during the British Imperial Rule of India.

However, the earliest known reference to the 'Thugs' as a band of fraternity, rather than ordinary thieves is found from the early 14th century when sultan (king) Jalal-uddin Khilji had arrested 1,000 thugs and had sent them in isola-



Two thugs distracting by pointing towards sky and the third creeping up from behind.



The scarf and the coin used by Behram to strangle victims.



The tree on which Behram and his gang was hanged.



Lord William Bentinck.



William Henry Sleeman.

The methods used by Thug were meant to reap maximum loot without being caught. They did not accost travellers unless their own numbers were greater than the victims. They flattered travellers they met, which gave them a chance to assess what wealth their targets might have.

hours or even days sometimes. This would allow them to surprise and strangle the travellers with a handkerchief or noose. They would then rob and bury their victims. This led to the thugs being called 'Phansigar' which literally means 'using a noose' in English. This term is more commonly used in southern India.

They usually attacked in the evening. A common method used by them was to distract their targets while striking to strangle them from behind. In order to avoid suspicion, they avoided carrying more than a few swords. Sometimes they mutilated corpses of their victims to avoid detection. The corpses were then hidden.

A leader of a Thuggee gang was called jemadar. They used a jargon known as Ramasee to disguise their true intentions from their targets. It was an unintelligible, yet meaningful language. Although strangulation was one of their most-recognized methods of murder, they also used blades and natural poisons.

The garrotte is often depicted as a weapon of the Thuggee. Other evidences suggest that a kind of dagger called the 'Katar' was their personal status weapon. The thug men wore this weapon proudly across their chests.

Early references to thugs reported that they committed their strangulation murders with nooses of rope or catgut, but later they adopted the use of a sash or scarf, and thus can more easily be concealed. This cloth is sometimes described

## World Sauntering Day

The world around us is moving at such a hectic pace that we often forget to slow down and smell the proverbial roses. Even our walk is at high speed, pushing every inch of haste to get out of what is otherwise the most leisurely of modes for locomotion. It isn't just an opportunity for us to remember to walk. It is, more importantly, an opportunity for us to take a genuinely relaxed tack to the day and choose to saunter.

## #TRIED&TASTED

Enjoy an array of small dishes or appetizers in place of a big meal in order to thank the country of Spain for introducing the world to tapas.

# Simply Spanish

Spain is responsible for so many wonderful things; their food and drink is among some of the best in the world. There are a lot of factors that play a role when it comes to enjoying some of the most delicious food in the world. If you are looking for the perfect taste of Spain, then tapas is going to be the choice for you. So, try to make sure you do what you can to experience the most delicious and amazing tapas as much as possible. You have a lot to consider if you want to make the most of the tapas from Spain has to offer.

### Vegetarian Slow-Cooker Stuffed Mushrooms

- Ingredients**
- Ghee or vegetable spray
  - Vegetarian Worcestershire sauce
  - 10 mushrooms
  - 1/4 cup walnuts, toasted
  - 1/4 cup cream cheese
  - 1/4 cup frozen spinach, thawed and excess moisture squeezed out
  - 1/4 cup jarred artichokes, drained
  - 1/4 cup shredded mozzarella
  - 2 tablespoons breadcrumbs, preferably panko
  - 1 tablespoon scallion, chopped
  - 1 teaspoon garlic salt
  - Fresh parsley, chopped, to garnish

- Preparation**
- Spray a small slow-cooker with ghee or vegetable spray; Splash with Worcestershire sauce.
  - Remove stems of mushrooms and put in food processor. Place mushroom heads, gills side up in base of slow cooker.
  - In a food processor, along with the mushroom stems, combine all remaining ingredients except for parsley. Chop until a thick paste is formed.
  - Using a melon ball scooper with a spring handle, fill each mushroom cap with 1-2 tablespoons of filling.
  - Place lid on slow cooker and cook on low for 2-3 hours, until mushrooms have wilted



slightly and filling is heated throughout.

### Baked Churro Chips

- Ingredients**
- For the chips:**
- 4-5 pieces plain naan bread
  - 1/2 cup salted butter, melted
  - Cinnamon sugar
- For the mocha fudge sauce:**
- 1 cup granulated sugar
  - 1 1/3 cups special dark cocoa powder
  - 1 tablespoon instant espresso powder
  - 1 cup heavy whipping cream
  - 1/2 cup salted butter
  - Splash of vanilla
- For the caramel sauce:**
- 1 1/4-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
  - 1/2 cup salted butter
  - 1/2 cup half and half
  - Splash of vanilla
- Preparation**
- To make the Churro chips, preheat the oven to 375



degrees Fahrenheit. Cut each piece of naan bread into 10 triangles. Brush each naan chip with melted butter and dip into cinnamon sugar. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 16 minutes (flip the naan chips halfway through bak-

- ing). Let it cool.
- To make the mocha fudge sauce, combine the sugar, cocoa powder, espresso powder and heavy whipping cream in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk until combined. Add butter and stir until melted. Cook the fudge sauce over low heat for 3-5 minutes. Remove from heat. Add vanilla. Let cool 5-10 minutes. If you won't be using the fudge sauce right away, store in a mason jar in the fridge.
- To make the caramel sauce, combine the sugar and sweetened condensed milk in the saucepan over medium heat. Add butter and stir until melted. Cook the caramel sauce over low heat for 3-5 minutes, until it comes to a slow boil. Remove from heat. Add half and half and vanilla. Stir to combine. Let cool 5-10 minutes. If you won't be using the caramel sauce right away, store in a mason jar in the fridge.
- Serve Churro chips with fudge sauce, caramel sauce and some fresh whipped cream.

### Patatas Bravas with Cheat Garlic Aioli

- Ingredients**
- 1 1/2 pounds fingerling potatoes
  - 3 tablespoons olive oil
  - Sea salt and pepper
  - Fresh thyme and parsley
  - Spanish paprika
  - 3 garlic cloves, pressed
  - 1/2 cup high-quality mayonnaise
  - 2 tablespoons olive oil
  - 1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

- Preparation**
- Make the Garlic Aioli: Combine the pressed garlic, mayonnaise, olive oil, lemon juice, and sea salt and pepper to taste in a blender or food

processor and process until smooth and creamy. Allow the aioli to sit in the refrigerator for at least an hour before serving. This can be made ahead.

- Make the Patatas Bravas: Boil the fingerling potatoes in salted water until they are just tender, about 10 minutes. Drain and let dry.
- Carefully slice the potatoes in half lengthwise once they are cooled.
- Heat a cast iron pan with 3 tablespoons of olive oil until very hot. Work in batches (don't overcrowd the pan) and fry up the potatoes until each slice is crispy and evenly browned, about 2 minutes per side. Using tongs, transfer the potatoes to drain on paper towels; while they are still

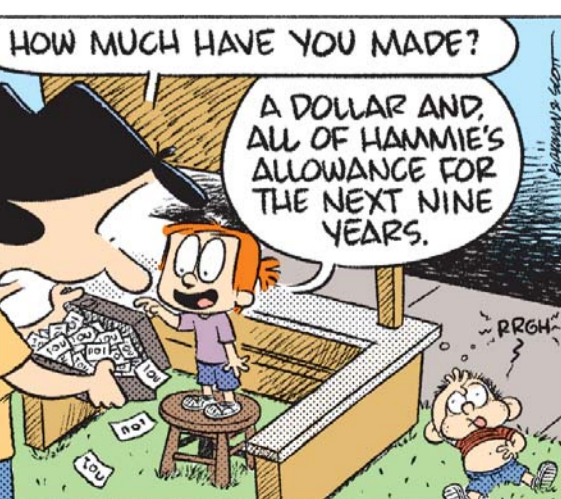
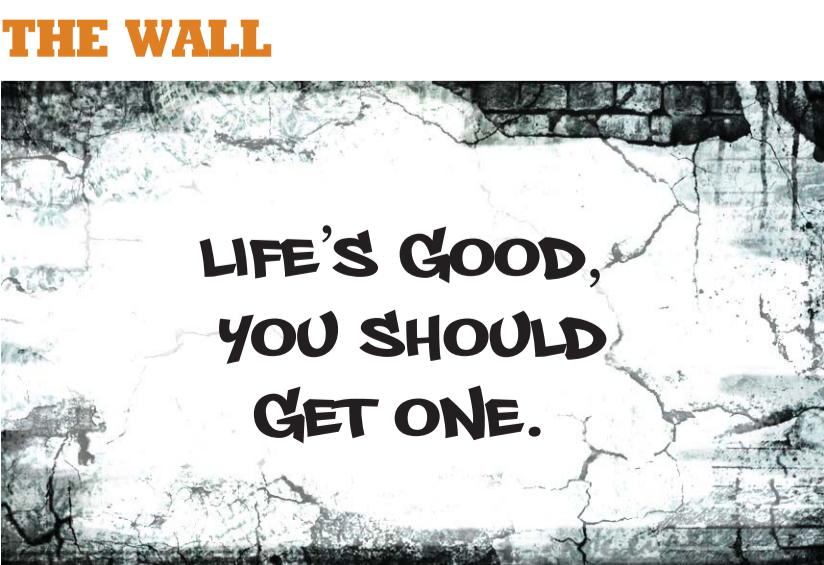


very hot, sprinkle with sea salt, pepper, paprika and fresh thyme.

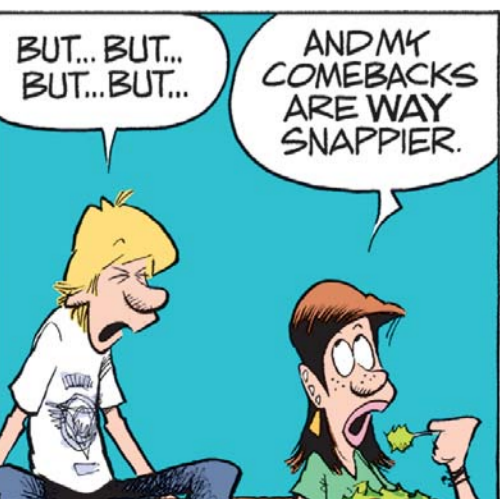
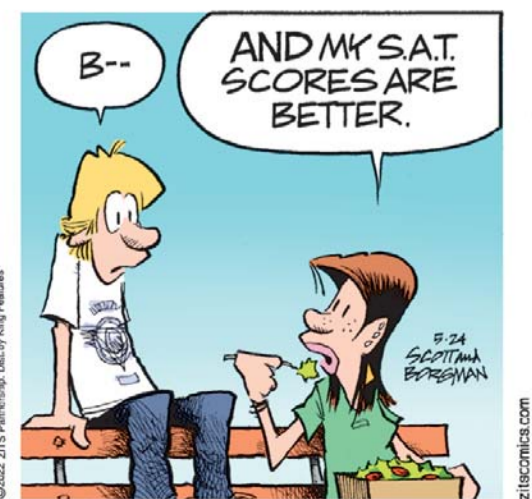
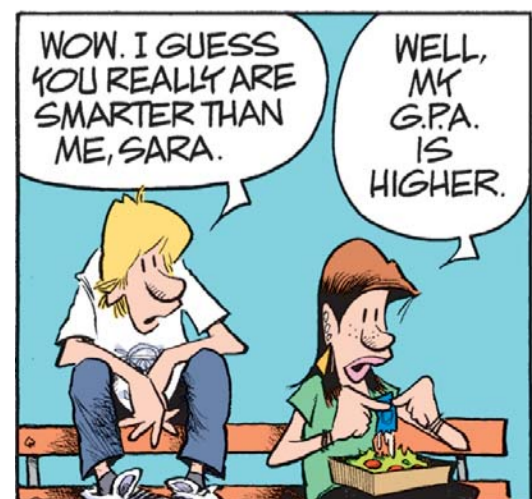
- Serve the potatoes immediately while still warm on a bed of fresh parsley, sprinkled with additional parsley and thyme. Serve with the aioli. Enjoy!

## BABY BLUES

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



## ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman