

INDIA!

PARUL

WHEN I started considering the topic of my book, *The Indians*, I wanted to do something extraordinary, which had not been attempted before. And when I sat back and thought, I realized to find the extraordinary, you have to look at the ordinary, for the obvious is so obvious, we tend to see through it," Sumant Batra turns the pages of his coffee table book, *The Indians*, Interesting Aspects, Extraordinary Facets. An eminent corporate lawyer, who graduated in law from Panjab University, Chandigarh, the inspiration for the book came up from the need to grow not just professionally, but personally too, a stimulation for the mind and soul. To celebrate the vibrancy, spirit, goodness, courage of the common people of India, the book through its vivid visuals takes you on a journey across the country, and showcases the common man and his daily life, be it rituals, superstitions, dhobhi ghats, chai vendors, desi

monuments, landscapes...What's most tempting is the attention to detail in most of these books, be it the paper and picture quality, jackets, flap pages, tremendous and deep research on each topic and the effort to include every aspect of the ever-changing landscape. History, the story of India, landscapes, culture, architecture, travel, DK's India presents the ultimate sights, people and experiences. Vir Sanghvi's *India Then, Now*, unfolds the ever-changing cultural landscape in a series of photographs, with extensive focus on the multi-faceted kaleidoscope.

Another interesting addition is *Elite Collectors of Modern and Contemporary Indian Art* by Purshottam Bhaggeria and Pavan Malhotra. This is a unique collection of profiles of 25 living and two late premier collectors of Indian Modern and Contemporary art all over the globe, people who go beyond mere collectors of art, but make a contribution to India's artistic heritage. Take a closer look at the collections of



khana, bazaars. The photographs taken by 26-year-old Sonhal Nichali are accompanied by interesting facets about these men and women, "who are omnipresent and are an integral part of the social fabric of India, many a time failing to recognize their achievements and this is my tribute and thank-you to India," Sumant hopes the book will also benefit Loomba Trust's Club 500 initiative which works for the awareness of widows' plight.

Browse through the book shelves at Browser and spectacular India is incorporated in many coffee table books, a treat for both the eyes and senses. "This is a genre which is growing, and there are takers, though not many, with many of these books being limited editions," points out Pankaj P Singh, as he points towards *Spectacular India* by Mapin, a journey of India, places,

people like Basant Kumar Birla and Sarala Birla, Paremswar Godrej, Tina Ambani, Harsh Goenka, Sangita Jindal...Talking of art, *The Magic Makers*, folk and tribal arts (PC Jain) is a collector's item. From the personal collection of Ajeet and Arpana Caur it delves into each artifact and explores its essence. Painting, sculpture, tantra...the essence, metaphoric meaning, spiritual connotations are all there.

The days of royalty come alive in the spectacular *Made for Maharaja*, *A Design Dairy of Princely India* by Amin Jaffer. Get a close and personal look at the private collections of luxury goods of princes and explores the fascination among Indian royalty for western luxury goods. Anecdotes, pictures, instances...it's an absorbing experience. Read on...

Places, people, art, food, monuments, moments...Coffee table books explore India inside out

KAMLESHWAR SINGH

