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FROM PINECONES TO PODI

(Working title)

13 CITIES. 12 MONTHS AND A CLUELESS BACKPACKER



**Written and Illustrated
by Indrajeet More**

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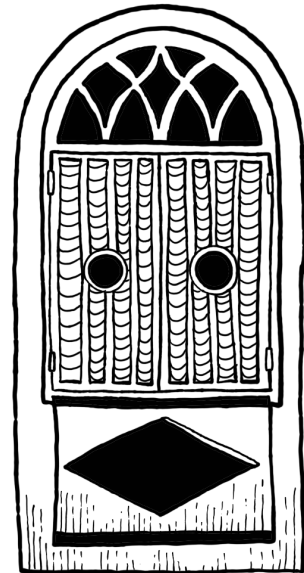
PREMISE

From Pinecones to Podi is an illustrated travel memoir of a 19-year-old's year-long backpacking experiences across 13 cities of India. Initially sent on an assignment to shoot a crafty travel series, From Pinecones to Podi is an account of all the eccentricities, serendipities, epiphanies occurring in between, about the moments when the camera wasn't rolling.

OVERVIEW

In 2018, a desperate attempt in securing an internship at a cool production house resulted in a happy accident of being offered a travel series to host. 'Budget Backpacking with Indrajeet' was started with the idea of exploring a certain city on a budget of mere 3000 rupees for three days. For something that started off as an experiment, the show took a massive leap on Youtube with the release of its first ever episode - Gokarna. This resulted in a miraculous and absolutely unexpected one year of backpacking throughout the states of India.

Although most parts of these trips are in the videos shot, a bigger chunk still lies with the author. Being the only person to vlog the entire experience end-to-end, many moments remain extremely personal to him. This book is a heart-to-heart documentation of all those moments the camera missed; all those moments the camera couldn't have done justice to anyway. It is about all those buses missed, bizarre local food incidents, painful diarrhoea nights, long walks taken, cheap adventures done, mountains climbed, tents pitched, beaches sat on for hours together and ultimately kindness of strangers in extreme mishaps. Within these moments, the book traces paths of an innate personal journey within the journeys, and how they influenced the author.



The book is divided into fifteen chapters. The first chapter 'Home' sets context to references coming ahead while the last chapter 'Souvenir' reflects upon the takeaways of this experience more intimately. Chapter 2 to 14 are dedicated to one city each, and are further divided into sections of some key highlighted moments for the readers to easily surf through the book. Although each chapter is complete in itself, the book has an arc of tracing the trajectory of travelling habits paired with the shifting beliefs of the author.

The book has a simple flow and follows the stream of consciousness writing style, keeping the city as the protagonist in every chapter. With anecdotes, digressions, ponderings and conversations, the narrative adapts various tones of quirk, humour and geeky trivia complimenting the style of illustrations. The complete manuscript currently consists of 72818 words and 175 illustrations.



Considering the shrinking attention spans, it is tough to sit and read a book. The simplistic narrative style, breathable breakdown of chapters, and most importantly the engaging illustrations shall make the book a comfortable read for new readers as well.

Memoirs and travelogues about Indian cities have been written, undoubtedly, however they are either by the older generation or by foreigners. This book conveys a novelty---it uncovers the backpacking experience of India, but from a non-white traveller point of view. Coming from the perspective of a 19 year old, the book has unique nuances of cultural relativity, relatability, and naivety at some places.

From Pinecones To Podi, will demystify the idea of travelling and dig deeper into the concept of travelling, and not just for the sake of wanderlust. This book is for those who are passionate about exploring cultures, and also for those who share similar interests but find it inaccessible to experience them. It shall serve the purpose of delivering the essence of exploring India to the readers and the author's personal journey through backpacking, thereby breaking all the superficiality endorsed by reels these days.



The purpose of From Pinecone To Podi is to inspire people to travel, to cultivate curiosity, empathy and belongingness.

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AUTHOR BIO



Indrajeet More is a 23-year-old visual artist and filmmaker based in Mumbai, renowned for his practical and multifaceted approach to content creation. Graduating with a BA in Philosophy from Ramnarain Ruia College in 2021, he has dedicated the past five years to honing his skills in various roles, including writing, directing, editing and illustration. He also acts on days when professional actors can't be afforded. His creative drive stems from appreciation for the magic of everyday life, the beauty found in the ordinary, and the profound emotions that connect us as humans.

In 2018, Indrajeet joined Bharatiya Digital Party, a prominent Marathi content platform with a substantial following of over one million subscribers. During his time at BhaDipa, he showcased his talents through the creation of short films, music videos, and sketch comedies, while also hosting the popular show 'Budget Backpacking with Indrajeet' on Bharatiya Touring Party, a sister channel of BhaDipa. Building on these experiences, he expanded his repertoire by directing and strategizing diverse formats and non-fiction content for the channel.

Since the age of 3 he has been illustrating and switched to making it as a profession 5 years ago. Under the name of his studio Boujeebaba, he makes posters for films/plays, designs merchandise for brands, and creates independent comics.

Indrajeet has been backpacking across India since 2017. driven by his curiosity for diverse cuisines, languages, and the profound interactions that unfold along the way. These experiences have fueled his creation of independent short documentaries, including notable works such as, *The Magic Hour*, *Off Guard*, and *Durga Aunt*y, which provide intimate glimpses into various cultures.

With an intense passion for storytelling, he loves to experiment with diverse mediums and see the process unfold newer narratives. This upcoming book marks his first foray into long format literature, where he aims to capture the essence of Indian cities and epiphanies of travelling with authenticity and relatability.

He is a left handed Virgo Libra cusp if that is of any help. And being raised in a middle class Indian family, He thrives on validation and takes rejections personally.



TARGET AUDIENCE

1. Age group: 18-40 years. Gen Z and Millennials primarily.
2. Demographically the book's primary audience is aspirational young adults from tier I and tier II cities. However it is equally relatable for the people of the cities mentioned in the book
3. Although having a predominantly male gaze, the book talks about personal vulnerabilities and challenges which makes it accessible to individuals from diverse genders and sexual orientations.
4. It targets an audience with interests like travel, backpacking, regional food, local languages, homegrown art and cultures.
5. Foreign backpackers (USA, Europe and Japan)

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

This being my first ever book, I am researching about promoting non-fiction literature. Feedbacks and insights from the publisher would be of great help. From my end I have prepared the following steps to promote my book individually.

PRE LAUNCH

- Release cover and share behind the scenes content on personal instagram handle with 25k followers. ([@my_blue_backpack](#))
- Hand out copies to an existing list of influential people from writing as well as non-writing background to share their reviews for the launch.



LAUNCH

- Approach Bha2Pa for collaboration (Producer of the travel series the book is based on)
- Send out postcards using the illustrations in the book to the first 50 copies.
- Instagram live sessions.

POST LAUNCH

- Print Stickers and Merchandise using illustrations from the book.
- Promote the book along with other art prints at Art fairs and Zine festivals.
- Dedicate 40% of the advance for paid ads and digital marketing for international audience.



CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

CHAPTER ONE: HOME

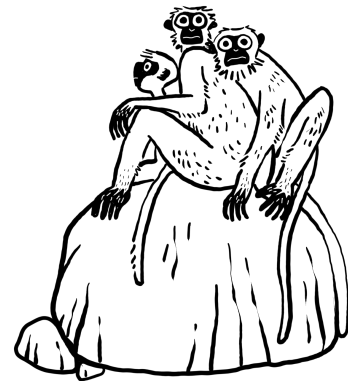
The first chapter of the book is an extension of the preface but in a more fleshed out narrative. It gives context as well as unfolds the motivation behind choosing to travel, finding work in a creative industry and out of fluke, finding the author on the cross road of the two. It narrates how the idea of the travel series ended up materializing it.

CHAPTER TWO: GOKARNA

Gokarna being the first trip of the series, the chapter reflects anticipation, nervousness and novelty. Right from missing the destination on the very first day to camping in the woods, many instances make Gokarna an eventful journey. Gokarna, being a quaint town back then, gives an account of simple living and slow-paced life.

CHAPTER THREE: HAMPI

After the pilot episode, the very first inhouse series of the channel picks up. Hampi being the most suggested place in the comments, becomes the second trip of the journey. In this chapter, observations from ancient architectural marvels are juxtaposed with personal quandaries and contemplations. A crucial incident in this part talks about the kindness of strangers one may experience during backpacking journeys.



CHAPTER FOUR: JAIPUR

A flavourful ride packed with adventures and mishaps, this chapter is the ultimate guide of what can go wrong on a solo trip. You miss home when you go broke and figure out a way to return. It is a balance of unforeseen disasters, homesickness and finding joy in the hustle bustle of this beautiful chaos. Realising one's capabilities and shortcomings when beautiful things get challenging.

CHAPTER FIVE: RISHIKESH

Rishikesh is an account of self reflection on things that were changing rapidly. It was as if a novice had recently learned a new skill—a lot was there to be figured.

This chapter explores newer emotions of personal love experienced for the first time, and narrates the longing and excitement. It not only romanticises the city but also the author's life, in confusion.

CHAPTER SIX: DHARAMSHALA

Dharamshala is a solo trip to the mountains—it starts with a disaster and ends with a beautiful view; of life as well. It narrates the futile and successful attempts of traversing through Dharamshala in all its noise and solitude. From camping in a lone tent atop the mountain for the first time to bringing home a broken bottle of a local wine, the trip was packed with adventures.



CHAPTER SEVEN: AUROVILLE AND PONDICHERRY

The Auroville and Pondicherry duo broke the pattern for the author—this time it was a trio trip. Amid the appreciation of local food and city aesthetics, the trip speaks a lot of things about itself and the trio's bond. All that was taken back along were memories, eccentricities and the beautiful crown of aesthetic imagery Pondicherry owns.

CHAPTER EIGHT: VARANASI

Varanasi, Kashi, Benaras—it's almost like the city is a human showcasing its dilemma to the world, and if the city was such, the experience had to be similar. Varanasi is an intimate exploration of the author's individuality as he experiences the world of Ganga aartis, crowded ghats and chaat stalls. Having stayed in Varanasi before as well, the changed landscape of the city made the author reminisce over the concept of familiarity and change this time.

CHAPTER NINE: NORTH GOA

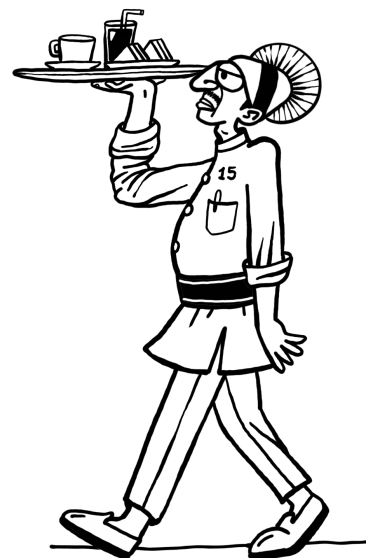
Although a tourism hazard, the author has a comical take on Goa's tourism. A geeky detour also talks about the state's colonial influence in its culture and food. On the last day, an encounter with a mysterious old man and his fiddle ends up as a moment that couldn't be captured in camera but make the trip memorable forever.

CHAPTER TEN: SHILLONG

Being one of the initial trips to North east, Author is inquisitively gazing at shillong. Although on a shoot for Shillong's popular cherry blossom festival, disappointed the author finds surprise in its local bazaar. A tour in Shillongs oldest market, Lewduh reflects the places age old tradition and farming practices. It is also an outsider's gaze into a matriarchal sorority.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: KOLKATA

The good old city of Kolkata with its Jhalmuri-esque chaos of modern and vintage has stories hidden in every lane. The author draws comical similarities of Kolkata and his hometown Mumbai. A flowy pace of writing shares observations of little things around and



peculiar behavior of people.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: NAGALAND

After a wait of 5 years, the author finally gets to live his dream of attending the grand Hornbill festival. Roaming around the festivities, this chapter gives a taste of the uniqueness of Naga culture. It is a tour on the fashion, cuisine and the place's tradition with sustainable lifestyle. Throughout the chapter, the writer draws parallels between the ever widening gap of urban standardization and ethnic identity.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: KOCHI AND ALLEPPEY

This being the last trip of a yearlong journey of backpacking is a ride through the swinging palms amid the rice fields while the author comes to terms with parting with this experience. After a much necessary conversation with the producers and clearing his reasons for taking a break, the author's mentors agree to join for this trip. Starting from regretting signing up with traveling with bosses, the trip unfolds into many pleasant surprises forming a more personal bond among everyone.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: SOUVENIR

This chapter is a reflection of all the past trips after the lockdown shuts down life outside for several months. The author questions his upbringing and beliefs after seeing everything around him change drastically. He questions what traveling meant to him and tries to find 'whys' for most of his choices. The chapter is a take on coming to terms with uncertainties of early 20 while on the road. This chapter looks at all the individual trips as a whole cohesive journey that shaped him to be more grounded, grateful and curious.

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