

Wednesday 28 November 2012

[iJobs](#) [Dating](#) [Property](#) [Shop](#)

Select Silver includes benefits like LOVEFiLM, mobile insurance and much more £8 monthly fee applies

[Switch today](#)

Helpful Banking

NEWS VOICES SPORT FOOTBALL LIFE PROPERTY ARTS &amp; ENTS TRAVEL MONEY INDYBEST BLOGS STUDENT

News &amp; Advice Simon Calder 48 Hours In Africa Americas Asia Australasia &amp; Pacific Europe Middle East UK Hotels Skiing Video Secret Escapes

Travel &gt; Asia

Search The Independent  Go[Advanced Search](#) [Article archive](#) [Topics](#)[Most Viewed](#) [Most Shared](#) [Most Commented](#)

'Tis the season: Christmas activities



Which currency will give a better rate when paying for flights, sterling or euros?



100 things to do before you die, 1-50



The 50 Best Winter Breaks



Get to the heart of Seoul

Select Platinum includes benefits like Green Flag breakdown cover, mobile insurance and much more £16 monthly fee applies

[Switch today](#)

Helpful Banking



Chic resorts.  
City breaks.  
Boutique hotels.

Huge member discounts on travel  
[Join now for free!](#)



## Recently Read

Facebook

Unshare A new social reading experience from The Independent, powered by Facebook. [Learn More](#).

OLIVIA GREENWAY | WEDNESDAY 04 APRIL 2012

[Send](#)[Recommend](#)

34

[Tweet](#)

42

[Share](#)

12

3

[PRINT](#) | [EMAIL](#)

AAA

### Independent Travel Videos



Simon Calder in Amsterdam



Simon Calder in Giverny



Simon Calder in St John's



News in pictures



Video Choices



The weekly market at Nelamangala, 30km north-east of Bangalore, is bustling. The main road is choked with slow-moving traffic, each vehicle repeatedly beeping its horn and throwing up clouds of yellow dust. Next to a low wall, fortune-tellers sit with their packs of cards and green parrots. To one side, a rough patchwork of coloured plastic awnings keeps off the worst of the Indian sun. Underneath, stallholders sit cross-legged on the bare earth behind the small mountains of their wares.

Squeezing myself between the noisy crowds of buyers, I see row after row of produce: tidy pyramids of brown elephant-foot yams, fat round pumpkins, fragrant guava, blush-pink pomegranate and bright green papaya.

From the bustle I head back to my base: Shreyas, a small lodge an hour's drive from Bangalore airport. At 3,000ft above sea level, and almost in the middle of southern India, Bangalore does not suffer the searing heat of lower-lying parts of the country. Shreyas is a dazzling retreat, best known for its yoga. However, I am here to sample the lodge's brand new "Culinary Experiences" package. Over

### Related articles

[On your marks, get set, cook: One couple have set themselves an Olympic cooking challenge](#)

[My life in food: Michael Caines](#)

[Rise and rise of flat bread: How to bake the Indian way](#)

[Mysore: a dazzling Indian summer in Karnataka](#)

[Vegetarian bibimbap with spicy sauce](#)

Ads by Google

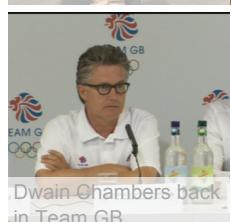
### X Factor Ticket Giveaway

Win Tickets for the X Factor Final every hour thanks to Pepsi Max! [www.pepsi.co.uk/XFactor](http://www.pepsi.co.uk/XFactor)

### Property Fund Investment



48 Hours in Boston



Dwain Chambers back in Team GB



Long queues for iPhone 5



Merchant Sailors

by Taboola

## NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP

[Sign-up for our weekly Travel email](#)

Travel news plus hotel and holiday offers

[Sign up ▾](#)

[Other Independent newsletters](#)

Daily news | Daily football Competitions and offers

the course of a week, I've been promised 10 cookery classes, each lasting 90 minutes, where I'll learn to make 40 dishes – and be immersed in Ayurvedic food philosophy.

Ayurvedic principles suggest that ailments derive from eating the wrong stuff, particularly processed foods, and drinking alcohol and carbonated drinks. Many foods, including meat, refined flour and white sugar, should be shunned, and we should eat more vegetables, fruit, herbs and spices. The visit to Nelamangala market introduced the fresh, local produce that forms the basis of this cuisine.

My home for the week is one of eight tented luxury cottages set in a former coconut plantation now enhanced with flower-filled gardens and curving paths. There's an open-air yoga hall; a spa with open treatment rooms; a library, and a dining area, with large windows overlooking a grassy spot where evening meals are eaten al fresco. At the heart of the resort is an infinity pool.

In the immaculate teaching kitchen, classes are small. The focus is on simple, home-cooked food. My teacher is Rame, who also accompanied me to the market. He started here as executive chef when Shreyas first opened and is responsible for its reputation for gourmet vegetarian food. We will be cooking dishes from the south, including idli (fluffy rice cakes served at breakfast), sambar (the spicy sauce) and masala dosa (crisp, savoury pancakes, usually stuffed with potato). Spices play an important role. "Stick to seven of the most popular ones, and keep them for only six months," Rame tells me. "Don't have lots of spices you hardly ever use."

Our morning classes are hands-on, while the afternoons are spent observing the experts. We use little oil, no eggs and just occasionally some yoghurt or paneer (unsalted white cheese).

The cooking is uncomplicated and we don't use any fancy equipment. Quite often we use our hands. I'm shown how to make lentil rissoles by using the inside of one palm to persuade the mixture into a teardrop shape.

In each session we make four items and taste them afterwards. On the first day, we learn about knife-sharpening and chopping, an important lesson to master, since all the food is made from scratch. Vinod, the assistant chef, reduces a bunch of coriander to a finely chopped pile in nano-seconds.

Rajan, the executive chef, is my teacher on the other days. With his help, I whip up a spicy tomato shorba soup, a spinach and paneer masala, stuffed potato paratha and scrambled tofu with peppers. We dry-roast sesame seeds to go into spinach soup, roast corn over a flame to transform it into burnt corn salad, grate carrots to make sweet halva and soak basmati rice to prepare biryani.

On some mornings, I find myself in the open-air yoga studio at 6.30am, cross-legged on my mat waiting for the sun to rise. Occasionally, I try breathing lessons, meditation and chanting.

I also visit the organic gardens where I help to ease up onions, the rich, red earth clinging to my hands; and pick chikoo, which tastes like toffee apple, from a tree. I'm shown aloe vera plants that we use to make a refreshing drink and the shady greenhouse where the houseplants and flowers are grown.

At the end of the week, I'm hooked on the Ayurvedic approach to cooking. Instead of feeling deprived, I am energised. And rather than forget everything once I'm home, I've already prepared two dishes – and my knife skills are improving, too.

### Travel essentials

#### Getting there

The writer flew from Heathrow to Bangalore with British Airways (0844 493 0787; ba.com). Returns start at £666.

Commercial property investment via the SWIP Property Trust.  
[www.swip.com/PropertyFunds](http://www.swip.com/PropertyFunds)

**India Tour Packages**  
Get Best Packages for India Tour. Ask our Experts for Free Now!  
[IndiaTravelBookings.com](http://IndiaTravelBookings.com)

### Suggested Topics

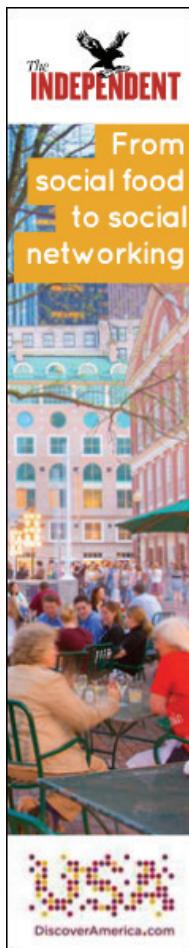
[Air Transport](#)

[Sea And Ocean](#)

[Bangalore](#)

[Log In](#)

Be the first of your friends to use The Independent.



### INDEPENDENT PARTNERS



**Regular international payments: the ultimate in convenience**

Save time and money on foreign exchange with HiFX

[Find out more ▾](#)

### SPONSORED FEATURES



**Discover America**

From Texas to Vegas and LA to NYC, uncover all the myriad delights on offer in the greatest

**Staying there**

Shreyas Retreat (00 91 80 2773 7102; shreyasretreat.com) offers the seven-night Culinary Experiences package from \$2,095pp (£1,397), including transfers, full board, yoga meditation and cookery sessions.

**More information**

British passport-holders require visas ([in.vfsglobal.co.uk](http://in.vfsglobal.co.uk)).

India Tourist Board: 020-7437 3677; [incredibleindia.org](http://incredibleindia.org).

[Send](#)[Recommend](#)

34

[Tweet](#)

&lt;42

[Share](#)

12

3

**Comments**[MORE IN ASIA >](#)

Ads by Google

**Travel Video by Canadians**

The best 2 minute travel video you'll ever see! Watch and share.  
[uk-keepexploring.canada.travel](http://uk-keepexploring.canada.travel)

**Late Holidays**

Get late holidays, cancellations & bargain holidays view now  
[www.icelolly.com](http://www.icelolly.com)

**55/YO Mum Looks 35**

Mum Reveals Shocking Trick for Erasing Wrinkles! Doctors Hate Her  
[RevitaSkincare.net/AntiAging](http://RevitaSkincare.net/AntiAging)

**Cheap Flights to India**

1 Search=100's of India deals Book Now.  
[India.CheapFlights.co.uk](http://India.CheapFlights.co.uk)

**Independent Comment**

country on earth.

[Visit Adelaide](#) [Teaching career](#) [Heineken Hub](#)  
[Networking 2012](#) [Prizes & offers](#) [Business videos](#)

**INDEPENDENT PARTNERS****Regular international payments: the ultimate in convenience**

Save time and money on foreign exchange with HiFX

[Find out more ▶](#)

Ads by Google

**Free Solar is Still Free**

Free Solar panels are still free, join our 14,000+ happy customers!  
[www.ashadegreener.co.uk](http://www.ashadegreener.co.uk)

**Travel and Tourism Degree**

Travel and Tourism Degree in LONDON Starting THIS October! Call NOW  
[greenwich-college.ac.uk/Travel](http://greenwich-college.ac.uk/Travel)

**Isle of Wight Holidays**

Stunning Hotels & Apartments for Memorable Island Holidays. Offers  
[www.gardenislehotels.co.uk/islewigh](http://www.gardenislehotels.co.uk/islewigh)

**Golden Triangle Tours**

Get Budget Travel Deals for Golden Triangle Tour. Ask our Experts Now!  
[Incredible-India.com/GoldenTriangle](http://Incredible-India.com/GoldenTriangle)



View the latest travel & hospitality jobs on iJobs

**DAY IN A PAGE**

[Sun](#) | [Mon](#) | [Tue](#) | [Wed](#) | [Thu](#) | [Fri](#) | [Sat](#)

28

November

2012

Go

**0 comments**

★ 0

Comments for this thread are now closed.

Discussion ▾

Share ▾



No one has commented yet.

**ALSO ON TRAVEL**

What's this? X

**Get to the heart of Seoul - Asia - Travel - The Independent**

2 comments • 10 hours ago

**Seefax** — Ah Seoul... is the bottom of my list of places to visit!**Exclusive: Date revealed for first scheduled departure of ...**

6 comments • 2 days ago

**LudwigsLughole** — O'Hare hasn't been the busiest airport for about a decade. The busiest is**Stephen Wood: For skiers, this winter could be the new age ...**

2 comments • 3 days ago

**Loco2** — I think the next step, which could be really transformative for UK skiers, ...**Simon Calder's Holiday Helpdesk: Why is Manston ...**

1 comment • 6 days ago

**LillyPaper** — Kent Airport at Manston will be instantly transformed into an ...

Comment feed

Subscribe via email

**Robert Fisk****Leveson inquiry: 12 months, 378 testimonies, four options...one judgment****Vince Cable: Banking on green shoots of recovery****Ideas that didn't find a platform****The 10 Best country pubs**

**The Independent**  
2 Derry Street London W8 5TT  
© independent.co.uk

[Terms & Policies](#)  
[Privacy Policy](#)  
[Cookie policy](#)  
[Code of Conduct](#)  
[Complaint form](#)  
[Email newsletters](#)  
[RSS](#)

[Contact Us](#)  
[Subscriptions](#)  
[Apps](#)  
[Work for us](#)  
[Evening Standard](#)  
[Homes & Property](#)  
[iJobs](#)

[Advertising Guide](#)  
[Syndication](#)  
[Novaya Gazeta \(English\)](#)  
[ES Business Connections](#)  
[London Private Rentals](#)

[Advanced Search](#) [Article archive](#) [Topics](#)  
[© independent.co.uk](#)