

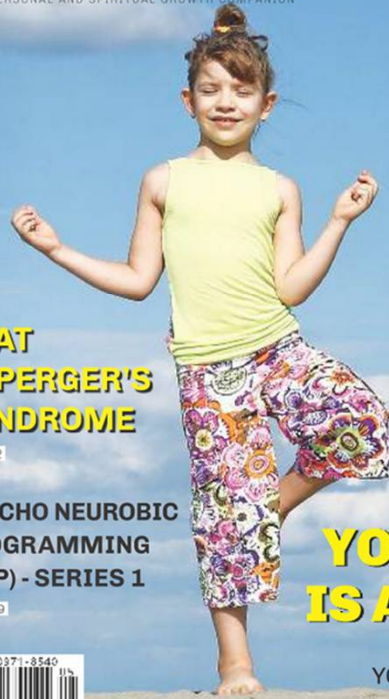
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of Vedic agriculture, which has been picked up from the Vedic script of 'Vrikshayurveda', a system which is self-sustainable and uses local ingredients to replenish the soil with the use of cow dung and cow urine.

Moksha at Mekosha

Recharged, I stepped into the new year, 2018. But January and February 2018 proved to be months of ceaseless travel. Hopping between flights and hotels, all the danger signs of another body breakdown started appearing on the horizon. This time, a dear friend Mamta, appeared as an angel in disguise. Mamta's husband, Ram is a well know hotelier and one of the movers behind the Michelin-starred restaurant, Indian Accents, in Delhi. Mamta informed me that Ram had started Mekosha, an Ayurvedic boutique spa and resort, just off Trivandrum, in Kerala. Mamta and Ram graciously extended an invitation to take healing Ayurvedic massages and unwind at Mekosha.

Mekosha stands like a powerful testimony in the heart of Kerala, of how man and Nature can work in tandem, to create a thing of joy. It's a Seven Senses kind of property on the



Lazying around: River jetty at Mekosha

banks of a meandering green river with the lush greenery that you can find only in God's own country. It has its own organic spice and vegetable garden to delight you during mealtimes. There are heaps of seating points all over the three-acre property where you can just plunge into the heart of Nature, sitting by the side of a wide and expansive green river, under gently arching trees and listen to cooing birds enliven the atmosphere. They conduct yoga and meditation by the side of the river.

Mekosha feels like a *rishi's* ashram from olden times, however, it has all the luxe amenities of a modern resort. We were welcomed with a soothing, fresh lime-cucumber-and-mint drink and escorted to our room. Mekosha rooms are huge suites done up very tastefully with eco-friendly designs, artefacts, and materials. Each suite has a large verandah overlooking the river and clusters of trees.

Prayers to Dhanwantari

At Mekosha, a bouquet of Kerala Ayurvedic massages and healing ayurvedic treatments are on offer and they form part of the room package. Soon after arrival, we were gently encouraged to start the healing massages. We were led to the Spa centre. My masseur, Shaiji, a gentle, smiling Amazonian, gave me a wonderful spiritual experience along with the massage. A devotee of Shri Karunakar Guru, founder of the famous Shanthigiri Ashram,

Trivandrum, she generated huge positive energy by chanting throughout the massage. Shaiji lit a lamp and chanted to Dhanwantari, the God of Medicine at the outset. Then, throughout the one-and-a-half-hour full body massage, she chanted various invocations to the guru. Entering the quaint wooden chamber at the end of the massage and then a typical Kerala washroom with brass tubs and brass mugs, and *besan* to scrub the body were very interesting experiences. Mealtimes at Mekosha are an organic and culinary delight. The brass plates and bowls, the organic salads and juices to begin any meal with and the cooling drinks to end the meal were a gourmet's delight.

Anoop, the F&B Manager, does not allow a single item to be repeated at any meal. The beetroot and oat soup, the tasty local curries, and the lighter than light *uthappams* were a treat for our tasting buds. We chose to sit on the portico by the riverside and eat our meals. That in itself was a heavenly experience.

With a verdant and tastefully done up estate sprawling along a meandering and expansive river, Mekosha symbolises how man and Nature work in tandem to create a thing of joy.
