Images by Gustasp and Jeroo Irani





#### Witch Hunt Exhibits, USA

n 1692, two young girls aged 9 and 11, the daughter and niece of Salem's parish priest, started behaving strangely: throwing things around the house and talking in strange voices. The village doctor was baffled by the symptoms as medical books had no remedies to suggest. After much deliberation, he finally nailed the diagnosis: Witchcraft!

What followed was the most infamous and intense witch hunt witnessed by the US. True, it wasn't as widespread or gruesome as the one that swept across Europe, but 19 innocent women and men ended up on the wrong end of the gallows, one was crushed to death, seven died in prison.

The saga of how the tragic events unravelled is played out with dramatic sound and light effects in Salem Witch Museum. Located in a renovated church building (a telling spot as the hunt was



Gustasp and Jeroo Irani take you to museums that don't showcase splendid art and sculpture, but spotlight the dark and zany side of human nature

### Of Pirates and Prisoners, Argentina

s we walked down the silent corridor of cells—empty, eerie, with flaking paint and doors left evocatively open, our footsteps echoed. Were we being followed? A shiver raked our spines. Was that a high-pitched scream, a muffled groan, a long-drawn-out sigh?

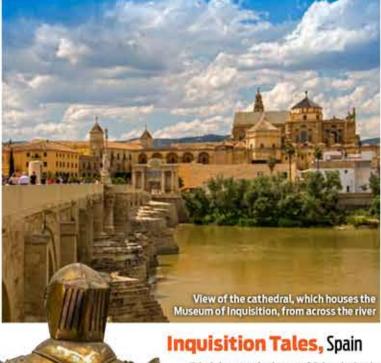
Perhaps it was just our over-active imagination, but the illusion that the former prison in Ushuaia-at the tip of the South American continent-was still in use, felt very real. We even sensed the presence of an other-worldly waif!

The former prison has now been converted into the Maritime and Prison Museum and is in fact an important landmark in this End of the World city as it bills itself. Ushuaia grew up around it and was built by convict labour as was the prison. And this most picturesquely located penal colony was filled with serial killers and other dangerous criminals.

Back-dropped by the snow-streaked Andes, with a view of the wind-swept Beagle Channel in front, the prison had wings radiating out from a hub. Today, the former jail has been re-jigged for viewing. Two wings showcase stunning artworks by local artists, while some rooms are devoted to Ushuaja's maritime past—to pirates like Francis Drake, Thomas Cavendish, and Oliver van Noort and the Spanish explorers. Wing four tells tales about the notorious inmates



# UIRKY, UEASY UARTERS



ordoba was the heart of Islamic Spain and its Mezquita, the iconic mosque (now a cathedral), towering over all the sights like a colossus. But hidden in the alleys of the picturesque, flower-festooned Old Town is the Museum of the Inquisition, earlier known as the Exhibition of Torture Located in the Jewish Quarter, the mu-

seum's nondescript entrance leads to

many gruesome tales and a series of halls, where 700 years of torture (from the 13th to the 19th centuries) is encapsulated in the display of instruments used to extract confessions—chairs with metal spikes, the brain splitter and other gadgets capable of inflicting unspeakable pain. This is not a museum for the fainthearted! It chronicles the excesses of the Spanish Inquisition—set up in 1478 by Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella—that branded women as witches, men as sorcerers and heretics,

The logic was, we are told, "If a prisoner died under torture without confession, the Inquisition was to find him or her not guilty as God had given him the strength to bear the pain!'

often without a shred of proof.



air-tearing teeny boppers in miniskirts, screaming, fighting, fainting... Four faces framed in their signature hairstyles, rocking a wild audience doped out on their music... Welcome to Beatle mania for its Yesterday once more at The Beatles Story museum in Liverpool's landmark Albert Docks

Sound tracks of music—Love Me Do, I Want to Hold Your Hand, She Loves You —that defined the youth of a rebellious generation plays in the background as one relives the euphoria generated by the Fab Four: John, Paul, George and Ringo. And you can't help but feel for Pete Best who lost out on his tryst with destiny when Ringo replaced him on the drums.

Shelves stacked with LP and 45rpm records; John's first guitar; clips from Hard Day's Night, their concerts, of their adoring fans... And John at the end of a performance, "The audience in the back rows may clap Those in the front may rattle their jewellery. The museum captures the rhythm of a band whose music not only rocked the industry to new stratospheric heights, but also defined a way of life of an adoring generation.







## Ode to Imelda's Shoes, Philippines

he collection of 3,000 shoes of Imelda Marcos, the controversial First Lady of Philippines, may have sparked outrage in diplomatic circles, but it still has the ability to make women drool with envy.

Now enshrined in the Marikina Shoe Museum in Manila, the assortment of branded footwear has be come embedded in the collective consciousness of

The rather unpretentious mubuilding that dates back to the 1880s. It houses 800 pairs of fanciful shoes (the location of the rest of the collection is a subject of conjecture) plus the more prosaic ones worn by former presidents, ambassadors, Filipino TV stars and ballerinas.

the world as a symbol of extreme excess

Speaking of the woman with

shoe fetish, they range from stilettos, open-back sandals, pumps, strappy shoes, knee-high boots, moccasins to fluffy bedroom slippers! Charles Jourdan, Givenchy, Dior, Chanel,

Gucci, Bally, Ferrragamo...most international designers feature in the collection. A few pairs even have Imelda Marcos' name

embossed on them! reminisced about the storming of the presidential palace after she and her husband escaped to the US: "They went into my closets looking for skeletons, but all they found were shoes

beautiful shoes!"



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Standing on Canada's Athabasca Glacier, Charukesi Ramadurai gets a sense of being alone on the surface of something primeval and powerful, despite the crowds

Walking on thin ice

glacier was sighting Fox and Franz Josef glaciers in New Zealand's South Island. I remember craning my neck and zooming my camera lens to its fullest, feeling utterly exhilarated and vaguely dissatisfied (due to the distance) at the same time. This time around though, the experience was different. To begin with, I was walking right on top of the glacier and even miming crazy dance poses for keepsake photos. I'd been looking forward to it all morning, throughout the stunning 230 km drive

from Banff to Jasper National Parks. The route to the Icefields Parkway-in Alberta, Western Canada—that goes through glacier territory is hailed as one of the world's most scenic drives. And it lived up to its promise; smooth grey tarmac lined with snow-capped peaks and glaciers glinting on imposing slopes in the mellow morning sunlight. Yet, all I could think of was the glacier waiting

for us somewhere in the middle. About three hours after leaving Banff, our small group pulled up at the Columbia Icefield Discovery Centre for tickets and lunch. Fortifying ourselves with more layers of socks and sweaters, we trudged to-

y only prior experience with a wards what I can only describe as a red mechanical monster. The trusty old, allterrain bus called 'Ice Explorer'-with wheels that came up to my shoulders-carried us through steep ups and downs of the slippery ice, to a safe spot on the glacier where we could get off and walk.

The first thing I did on getting off was to remove my gloves and dip my hands into the thin ribbon of glacial spring. As I sipped the cold water from my cupped (not to mention frozen) palms, I got a sense of what the expression 'pure as the driven

snow actually meant. The glacier was formed thousands of years ago, when most of this region was under ice. It's part of the massive Columbia Icefield, itself believed to be a remnant of the last Ice Age. As if that's not impressive enough, it is flanked by 11 of

my thermal wear. But that didn't deter me from exploring the area, stepping gingerly on ice that seemed solid, but was slippery in places. Despite that, kids were running around with gay abandon and adults were lying on the snow, sliding their hands and

legs against the surface to create snow angels. It's just the kind of place, where adults easily regress into childhood. The ice, wasn't an unblemished white like I expected, but was sparkling blue in places; perhaps a play of sunlight, or a hint of water flowing underneath.

October 15 All too soon, it was time to return. Back in the Indian weather, my mind often harks to that day in the Rockies, when I made snowballs on the venerable marvel of nature, standing reminded I was a minuscule part of the Universe. Given that the glacier has receded almost 2 km in the last 100 years and is disappear-



# -2 gets Tastier





n a bid to offer passengers a great gourmet experience, Mumbai International Airport has been upgrading its host of eateries since the beginning of the year. It introduced Aaswad, now internationally famous for its misal pav, in March; popular seafood restaurant Mahesh Lunch Home, Costa Coffee and Häagen-Dazs in July; and its latest addition is Chai Point that not only offers a variety of teas, but also bites to go with it. In all, T2 has 49 eateries-22 outlets at the international terminal and 27 outlets in the do-



Between June

and September, when the weather is

mperate; it's oper

only from May 1 to