

Not a village anymore

It's the hottest location in the suburbs (after the traffic choked bylanes of Bandra). Nestling in Kandivli East, Thakur Village is a far cry from the image of a rustic locale. With cybercafes, bakeries, salons, supermarts and showrooms galore dotting the area. Shilpi Madan takes you through the shopper's paradise that holds more than just Pizza Hut, Cafe Coffee Day, D Mart, Wella salon, Loreal Tress Xcel and Naturals ice cream parlour...

CLOTHES

1. Disha

This shop, inside Evershine Millenium Paradise, is bathed in earthy hues And offers exclusive items from Bengal: including a curious confusion of tiny jute dolls, colourful coasters, cell phone covers, eco-friendly bags studded with beads and shells, pleasing photoframes, delicate terracotta neckpieces and bracelets and unstitched yards with the famous kantha thread work of East India. On offer are crisp kurtis in pastel shades with kantha work, at an affordable Rs 300. And a modest range of home accessories like unusual lamps, ruddy table mats, bright linen and kantha work bedcovers. And what also makes Disha a must visit is the warm (not pesky) attention of the Bengali owner. Price range: Rs 25-1200

2. Aneena

Looking for an outfit to make a splash in the party circuit? Head for Aneena opposite Thakur Cinema. High on style and modest in price is this shop that showcases the hottest fabrics: from soft complexioned Pakistani suits to vibrant block prints to slinky, soothing chiffons, cool georgettes and evergreen cottons in a colourful palette. And gives you the desired quantum of sequin, shimmer and shine quotient in ready-to-wear, stylish Indo Western garb and traditional Indian suits. You can accessorise the purchased outfit with semi precious jewellery and richly textured tote, clutch and purses on offer. Abreast with the fickle fashion trends, Aneena upgrades its stock every week to turn out exciting variations in apparel. Price range: Rs 250-4500

3. Cotton Villa

Yes, this is the complete family store that houses threads for everyone. Even for granpa. Cool picks in cotton in candy pink stripes, minty green, soft caramel and crisp white make this store a hotspot. From hip pants, corded pyjamas, cutting edge shorts, pretty smocked frocks complete with tassels and bows, sleeveless tops, flowing kurtas and sassy gunjees, Cotton Villa has it all. Prices begin as low as Rs 100. So if you are springcleaning your wardrobe and are looking for the best buys this season, you know you have to head down the lane after munching pizza at Dominos. All major credit cards are accepted. Price range: Rs 100-500

Food

1. French Connection

Lusting for yummy chicken croissants and creamy chocolate eclairs? Gun for French Connection, the tiny confectionery shop tucked away in Evershine Millenium Paradise. And started by a young entrepreneur who has worked with the Taj group of Hotels. It's a sumptuous spread --from paneer and manchurian rolls, fresh mango pastries, chocolate cookies, fruit muffins, walnut brownies and jeera biscuits. If you don't fancy nibbles, opt for the succulent burgers, kathi rolls and exotic soufflé. Wash down with coolers and ice creams. Highly recommended is the Black Magic cake.

2. Makhan Bhog

You get the best chat here on Sundays. Dilli style. Think crunchy kachauris, hot samosas, crisp jalebis, floating rasmalais and plump kesar rasgullas. Think Makhan Bhog, opposite Pizza Hut. This tiny sweet shop heaves with drool-worthy fare like malai pedas, gur sandesh, balushahi and an exotic variant called Nargis Kalam (in Bengali sweets) Glugging the kesari thandai and special lassi here is the best way to beat the heat. Price range Rs 5-12 per pc

3. Southern Treat

The true taste of South Indian fare is what you get here. Not too adventurous with the variations but the tang of a typical udipi flavours the food. Fresh fruit juices or chach, and a light, quick snack- meal of rava dosa, uttapam and idlis works well. The palak masala dosa is worth trying out. In line with Thakur College. Price range: Rs 10-45

Others

1. Gala Optics

Need a hip pair of sun combatters? Head for this sunglass hut diagonally opposite Thakur Cinema. From DKNY to Fossil to Gucci, they have it all. Apart from a 'with it' array of frames to complement every face. Price range: Rs 250 onwards

2. Small Wonder

For modest Mumbai apartments, this toy library is a godsend as it eliminates the possibility of your tiny tot's playthings taking over your entire space. For only Rs 125 a month, you can enroll at Small Wonder and borrow from the choicest of wooden blocks, imported play n learn books and innovative toys. Located on the first floor, above Jalaram Timber shop in Evershine Millenium Paradise

3. Thakur Cinema

It's the defining landmark of Thakur Village. Single screen but runs the latest films. Believe it or not, you get 'seat service': order popcorn, snacks like hot corn, samosa and sandwiches and beverages before you slide into your seat and it all gets delivered into your hands at the time you specified. You can even order food at the restaurant on the first level

and chomp away while watching the movie. Or have your own flick party by booking the entire Box section of the cinema. Cool or what?

4. S. Pan Bhandar

A must stop for betel aficionados. At Thakur Cinema. It's open from 7:00 am to 2:00 am. 365x7. The cheapest paan costs Rs 3 and the most expensive Rs 15. Kalkatta magai and banarasi meetha are the specialities to savour here. From a colourful collection of saunf to a variety of cigars and cigarettes, you get it all here