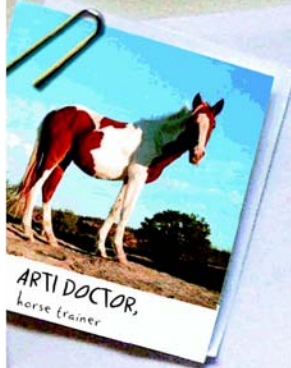


15 July 2006



ARTI DOCTOR,
horse trainer

'I wasn't cut out for a 9 to 5 job!'

From being a graphic designer to becoming the first horse trainer in India, Arti has saddled her roles with success. Winner of the Classic 2000 Guineas in Mumbai in 2001, she is a veteran on the racing tracks.

HORSE TRAINING: I was involved with racing right from my childhood. After passing from National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, I worked as a graphic designer for a couple of years. But I just wasn't cut out for a 9 to 5 job. So I began working as an assistant horse trainer.

SOCIAL REACTIONS: Initially, my family was very reluctant. But eventually they realised that I was very serious about my decision of taking up horse training as a career. Racing is a very close-knit community and you need to have the right contacts. The finances are also very stringent and you have to be reasonably well-off to sustain yourself. Also, winning your share of races is a must for owners to trust you with your horses.

CHANGING TRACKS: Honestly, I actually started out wanting to be a jockey, but it was too late as I had overshot the age limit. So, the next best option was to become a trainer.

SUPPORT SYSTEM: I shift base every six months between Pune and Mumbai and it's hard on family life. So being single has helped. I am very close to my siblings and their families.

MALE DOMINATED: Racing and polo are inclined towards physical strength. Maybe that's the reason why these fields are still so male dominated. But it really doesn't matter as it's your horses that are racing. So it's immaterial whether you are a man or a woman.
—IPSITA BASU



MADHU KRISHNAN,
chef

'Chefs are not just kitchen managers!'

Madhu, Executive Chef, ITC Hotel Grand Maratha Sheraton and Towers, is the city's only high-profile female chef. She is the pioneer of India's first culinary game show, 'IFB Star Sunday Brunch' and hostess to the famous cookery show 'Jhatpat Khana'.

COMMERCIAL COOKING: Born in a family that discusses lunch over breakfast and dinner over lunch, I was always curious about food. With this culinary orientation, it was inevitable that I would choose to be a chef.

SOCIAL REACTIONS: Sixteen years ago, being a woman and a chef was unheard of. Girls at hotel management colleges preferred the front office or housekeeping. So, all the reactions were of awe. Today, a chef's role has enhanced greatly. They have evolved from kitchen managers to being responsible for customer satisfaction.

SUPPORT SYSTEM: As the most pampered daughter, when I decided to be a chef, my family supported me. My husband is a hotelier too. This leaves me with very little time. So, I've learnt to be a better time manager. My three-year-old son, Anay and my three-month-old daughter, Inaara, now want my time.

MALE DOMINATED: The kitchen still has a negligible ratio of women to men. Those that make the grade and stay on are extremely determined, driven and passionate about being chefs.
—ASHISHWANG GODHA



MEGHA KAWALE,
disc jockey

The guys had a bet on how long I'd last!

Megha is amongst the first women to get into professional deejaying. Not a stranger to struggle, she is now one of the top-most DJs in the country.

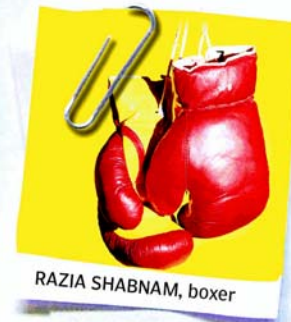
DJING: I began djing in second year of college. A discotheque at a five-star hotel was looking for a DJ. I gave it a shot then and it worked. The guys there had bets amongst themselves on how long I'd last! But I realised that this was the job for me. Once I'd handled a whole night's music by myself, I became confident.

SOCIAL REACTIONS: Gaining acceptance was the biggest challenge. I've heard such crude, rude remarks. Sometimes, I felt I don't belong here. It's been a tough struggle and when you're the first in any field, there's more pressure. I wasn't allowed the luxury of mistakes. I knew that people would come to check me out simply because I was a female DJ. When I quit my first job, people thought I would disappear. But I proved them wrong.

SUPPORT SYSTEM: I first told my parents my choice. I convinced them that I am only trying. I was the first one to drop out of the family business. My parents had only one condition. I had to complete my education. And I thank God I didn't. I didn't turn out to be a jockey. For the first time in my career, my parents wait till I get home. The support didn't go astray.

CHANGING TRACKS: Introducing music around the world is definitely a challenge for the world modelling for the djing definitely is.

MALE DOMINATED: In the male dominated world, some women are established and some are not. It's time for some change.



RAZIA SHABNAM, boxer

Razia is on the rise in the boxing world. She is a native of Kolkata and is now 23. Now, she is the youngest boxer in the country. She has a young child and a family. She is a boxer and a mother. She is a champion and a role model. She is a woman and a warrior. She is a fighter and a winner. She is a champion and a role model. She is a woman and a warrior. She is a fighter and a winner.

SOCIAL

'My neighbours was a bad influence'