

KHAASBAAT

A PUBLICATION FOR INDIAN AMERICANS IN FLORIDA

MAY 2023

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TAMPA HINDU TEMPLE TO CELEBRATE 27TH ANNIVERSARY, BRAHMOTSAVAM MAY 19-22

Story provided by Hindu Temple of Florida

The Hindu Temple of Florida will mark its 27th anniversary and annual Brahmotsavam May 19-22. The word "Sava" means unhappiness and Utsavam helps get rid of "Sava." Thus, the Brahmotsavam refers to the grand festival where Lord Brahma visits the earth for the celebration.

During the auspicious occasion, the temple has arranged several programs:

- **Dhwajaroanam** – hoisting the Garuda flag to announce the start of the festival.
- **Sesha Vahanam** – Shri Satyanarayana Swamy rides on the Adishesha in a procession.
- **Sudarshana Homam** – havan or homam dedicated to Sudarshana Bhagavan.
- **Satyanarayana Swamy Kalyanam** – divine wedding ceremony.
- **Nakshatra Homam** – marks the 27th temple anniversary through 27 or stars. It enhances the positive energy of each individual's Janma Nakshatram or birth star and subdues the negativity of 27 Nakshatras.

Con'd on page 14

ASTON MARTIN CREATES 007 EXCITEMENT

Story, page 19



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WHO'S WHO

Khaas Baat is a monthly publication that has been in circulation since August 2004. Issues are direct mailed to subscribers and also are available at South Asian grocery stores and restaurants. It presents exclusive, informative and relevant news about the Indian American community in Florida to its readers.

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E V E N T S

EVENTS

TAMPA/ST. PETERSBURG/CLEARWATER

MAY 6: CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERT; organized by Shruti; performers are Pandit Nayan Ghosh, Ishaan Ghosh, Suhail Khan and Shankh Lahiri; 6 to 9 p.m.; Hindu Temple, 5509 Lynn Road, Tampa; \$30 per person; for information, call (813) 549-9288 or visit www.shrutifoundationtampa.org

MAY 6: CARNATIC QUARTET INSTRUMENTAL CONCERT; Hindu Temple of Florida cultural hall, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; 10.30 a.m.; Shreya Devnath (violin), Mylai Karthikeyan (Nagaswaram), Praveen Sparsh (mridangam), Gummudipondi R.Jeevanathan (Thavil); organized by Swaralaya; for information, email swaralayaoftampa@gmail.com

MAY 7: "SHRIMATI 420;" Gujarati play in honor of Mother's Day and Gujarat Gaurav Diwas; organized by Gujarati Samaj of Tampa Bay; first, show in honor of senior members begins at noon with lunch at 2:30 p.m.; for all other members, early dinner at 4 p.m. with Gujarati drama at 6 p.m.; for information, call Mukesh Patel at (727) 505-4636.

MAY 9: HANUMAN CHALISA; second Tuesday of month; Vishnu Mandir Tampa, 5803 Lynn Road; 7 to 9 p.m.; for information, call Deo Gajadhar at (813) 817-9714.

MAY 13: TAMPA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER CULTURAL FESTIVAL; in honor of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, Tampa Mayor's AAPI council to host first such festival; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park, 600 N. Ashley Drive, Tampa; free; musical performances, vendors, AAPI culture; for information, visit www.tampa.gov/asianpacificfestival

MAY 14: MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION; proceeds to benefit building fund for Arts & Cultural Center North Tampa; featuring the music boss Raymond Ramnarine and Dil-E-Nadan band; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; for tickets and more information, call Karen at (813) 401-9820.

MAY 17: ICC SENIORS GET-TOGETHER; India Cultural Center, 5509 Lynn Road, Tampa; 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; free seminar, lunch and entertainment; no age restriction; for information, text email address along with your name to Bhikhu Nayi at (631) 560-2718 to receive details about seniors gathering every month; or call Mahesh Modha at (813) 476-1540.

MAY 19-22: 27th ANNIVERSARY/ANNUAL BRAHMOTSAVAM; Hindu Temple of Florida, 5509 Lynn Road, Tampa; for information, call the mandir at (813) 962-6890 or visit www.htfl.org

JUNE 25: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SHOW; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; register at <https://www.idytampa.org/>; for information, call Karen Sreeram (chair) at (813) 401-9820.

Disclaimer: Event details are subject to change. Please check with local organizers. Event submissions are free, e-mail information to editor@khaasbaat.com by the 20th.

LAKELAND/WINTER HAVEN (POLK COUNTY)

JUNE 16-18: "MUGHAL-E-AZAM;" musical play based on K. Asif's 1960 classic film of the same name; produced by Shapoorji Pallonji Group and directed by Feroz Abbas Khan; presented by Cinema on Stage; R.P. Funding Center, 701 W. Lime St, Lakeland; tickets starting at \$79 can be purchased at www.cinemaonstage.com

ORLANDO/CASSELBERRY

MAY 6: INDIAN HERITAGE DAY; organized by Indian Horizon of Florida and Central Florida Indian Cultural Association; VFW Post 10147, 519 S. Central Ave., Apopka; 5:30 p.m.; \$10 per person; for information, call (321) 662-1887.

MAY 7: HSCF NEW AGE GROUP PICNIC; Sanlando Park, 401 W, Highland St., Altamonte Springs (Pavilion 3); 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; snacks, fruits, food/drinks, music, games, antakshri; \$5 for annual paid 2023 members, non-members \$10 per person; RSVP to hscfnewagegroup@gmail.com

MAY 12: WOMEN EMPOWERMENT CONFERENCE; organized by Indian American Business Association & Chamber; 6 to 9 p.m.; Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 10771 International Drive, Orlando; free for IABA members; \$30 for non-members; for information, visit www.iabausa.com

MELBOURNE/COCOA

MAY 14: MOTHER'S DAY; presented by Indian Association of Space Coast; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; F. Burton Smith Park, 7575 W. King St., Cocoa; \$10 for members and kids under 10; \$25 non-members and \$15 for kids over 5, free for moms who are members; for information, visit www.myiasc.com

FORT MYERS

MAY 7: VOCAL CONCERT; presented by RAAGA; 4 to 6 p.m.; Rush Auditorium, J103, FSW, 8099 College Parkway, Fort Myers; free; for details, visit <https://raagafll.org/>

SOUTH FLORIDA (FORT LAUDERDALE/CORAL SPRINGS/LAUDERHILL)

MAY 6: CHEERS TO 20 YEARS; conversation with Hindu American Foundation co-founders Suhag Shukla and Nikhil Joshi; annual gala/fundraiser; 6 to 9:30 p.m.; Renaissance Fort Lauderdale West Hotel, 1230 S. Pine Island, Plantation; purchase tickets at myhaf.org/fllgala

MAY 13: VAISAKHI; presented by Greater Punjab Cultural Society of South Florida; J.P. Taravella High School, 10600 Riverside Drive, Coral Springs; bhangra competition, teen Gidha, kids dance, Bollywood dance, garba, food for sale, raffle prizes, etc. tickets start at \$20; for information, call (954) 856-3421.

MAY 13: MUSICAL FEAST; organized by Thenpoovaga Tamil Sangam; Kalaimamani Dr. Mano and team to perform Tamil/Telugu songs; Lauderhill Performing Arts Center, 3800 N.W. 11th Place, Lauderhill; 3 to 9 p.m.; to purchase tickets, visit www.lpacfl.com



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MONDAY, MAY 01 (6:00 PM) • EKADASHI PUJA	EVERY MONDAY - 6:30 PM • SHIV ABHISHEK AND PUJA
THURSDAY, MAY 04 (6:30 PM) • GROUP PURNIMA SHRI SATYANARAYAN KATHA	EVERY TUESDAY - 7:00 PM • SUNDARKAND • HANUMAM KATHA
SUNDAY, MAY 07 (4:00 PM to 7:00 PM) • ANAND NAGARBO	EVERY THURSDAY - 7:00 PM • SAI BABA SATSANG • MAHA PRASAD
SATURDAY, MAY 13 (6:30 PM to 8:00 PM) • MATA KI CHOWKI	Pandit Manikya Sharma 813-484-9568
SUNDAY, MAY 14 (6:00 PM to 7:30 PM) • SHRI JAGANNATH BHAJAN	Pandit Rushi Vyas 813-503-3388
TUESDAY, MAY 16 (7:00 PM to 8:00 PM) • PRADOSH PUJA	Pandit Pranav Bhatt 813-720-1460
SATURDAY, MAY 20 (7:00 PM to 8:00 PM) • SHANI JAYANTI SHANTI HAVAN	
SUNDAY, MAY 21 (5:00 PM to 6:00 PM) • SHIRDI SAI BABA PALKI YATRA & MAHA HAVAN	

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LIFESTYLE MEDICINE: PART IV: THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

By **M.P. RAVINDRA NATHAN, M.D., FACC**



Do you get about 7-8 hours of sleep every night? No? Well, join the 50 million people in USA who cannot get a decent night's sleep. One of the essential ingredients of maintaining good health is to get adequate sleep. This is the so-called, "Life's forgotten third," as one researcher calls it. After a healthy diet and regular exercise, sleep is the most important ingredient for your well-being. Unfortunately, insomnia has reached the status of an epidemic in the frantic pace of our modern life.

So, how much sleep is needed for good health and proper functioning? All adults need about seven to nine hours of sleep every night. Sadly, many of us are not getting it. Sleep deprivation has become a major public health problem because of its serious adverse effects on the body. In addition to feeling well and energetic during daytime, getting a good night's sleep can reduce certain major diseases like hypertension, heart disease and possibly stroke as well. There is also a connection between sleeplessness and obesity. Sleep deficiency is also linked to many other chronic health problems like kidney disease, diabetes and depression. Sleep deficiency can lead to a higher chance of injury in adults, teens and children. And we all know, driving while sleep-deprived has the same or worse impact as driving with a high blood alcohol level — high chance for accidents. Even those smart, driven, people who manage to get by with only five hours of sleep will do much better if they can get at least seven hours of sleep. Athletes always perform much better with good sleep.

There is one special situation that everybody needs to be aware of – a condition called "Obstructive Sleep Apnea" that affects almost 18 million people! These people often snore loudly, stop breathing for a few seconds and partially awaken and then get back to sleep. This disturbs their sleep during the course of the night. In addition, they are at high risk for heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes and cancer as well. They need to consult a 'sleep specialist', undergo sleep studies and have to use a CPAP machine, a compact air pump, to breathe at night while asleep. There is yet another problem called 'parasomnia' or sleep walking that needs to be properly treated by a specialist.

In regard to treatment for insomnia, the first step is to develop proper sleep hygiene. This means going to sleep at the same time every night and avoiding short naps during day time except maybe for some of the older folks. Avoid stimulants like tea and coffee within 12 hours before bedtime. Needless to say, no smoking nor use of any nicotine products. Avoid big meals and beverages at least within two hours before going to bed. Stay active during day time, doing your regular exercises, etc., but avoid any major activity before bed time. Limit alcohol intake. Also, finish all your computer work 2-3 hours before bedtime since the blue light from computer can interfere with sleep. Check with your doctor if any of the medications you are taking can cause sleep disturbances. Another issue is pain that affects your sleep. You don't have to put up with any pains and you must do everything, including drug therapy, to alleviate any ache you have.

Now, about drugs for sleep. Melatonin is a natural sleep hormone produced in the body; so, melatonin supplements are helpful to promote sleep and are safe for short-term use. Magnesium may be useful too; it relaxes your brain and increases sleepiness. There are some herbal remedies such as valerian that may be helpful.

Perhaps, the best treatment for sleep problems is 'Cognitive Behavioral Therapy,' according to a Mayo Clinic Study. This "helps you to find out which thoughts and behaviors cause sleep problems or make them worse. And you learn how to replace these thoughts and behaviors with habits that support sound sleep. Unlike sleeping pills, CBT helps you overcome the causes of your sleep problems." Sleeping pills would be the last resort. There are many over-the-counter medications that you can try or get the doctor to prescribe some.

Always remember, by securing a pleasant sleep, you will feel well and can live energetically and young.

To be continued ...

M.P. Ravindra Nathan, M.D., is a cardiologist and Emeritus Editor of AAPI Journal. For further reading, "Second Chance - A Sister's Act of Love" by Dr. Nathan from Outskirts Press, can be found at www.amazon.com



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LEXUS FLAGSHIP LX600 IS ULTRA COMFORT AT ITS FINEST!

Test-drive stories by NITISH S. RELE motoringtampabay@gmail.com

Right off the bat, let's point out that the Lexus flagship sedan, which replaces the LX570 after shedding 441 pounds, isn't for everyone. Ask why? Well, it has a base price of \$102,025, which with options is almost \$107,925. Add tax, tag and you are looking at around \$125,000.

Now that price is settled for a few, but not for most, here's what you get. The 2023 LX600 offers a 3.4-liter twin-turbo engine with continuously variable valve timing that develops a healthy 409 horsepower @ 5200 rpm and 479 pounds-feet of torque @ 3600 rpm. The all-wheel-drive luxury car is mated to a smooth and quick-to-respond 10-speed auto gearbox. Among the multi-terrain modes available are auto, dirt, sand, mud, deep snow and rock. Torsion limited-slip center differential, uniquely tuned front/rear dampers and a sport suspension ensure that this exhilarating car has a firm trip, traction and cornering stability at every turn. Bringing the gigantic SUV to a slowdown/stop are 13.9 front and 13.2 rear ventilated disc brakes. Ready to haul that boat to the beach this weekend? Go for it since you can tow up to 8,000 pounds in the LX600! Despite the 5,665-pound weight, 0 to 60 is possible in just 6.9 seconds with top speed at 130 mph.

LX600 F-SPORT
Tires: 265/50R22
Wheelbase: 112.2 inches
Length: 200.2 inches
Width: 78.3 inches
Height: 74.2 inches
Suspension: double wishbone front, multilink rear
Steering: electronic power rack-and-pinion
Fuel capacity: 21.1 gallons
City: 17 mpg
Highway: 22 mpg
Web site: www.lexus.com



Surrounding the massive spindle mesh grille are triple-beam LED headlights, turn signals and daytime running lights. Step inside the lavish cabin and you will be in awe of rich-appearing red leather. Atop the dashboard sits a massive 12.3-inch infotainment touch screen with a 7-inch multi-terrain monitor underneath, as well as temperature controls. Other niceties are F-Sport power tilt/telescoping steering wheel with paddle shifters, aluminum pedals and front-door scuff plates; four-zone a/c, power-fold flat third-row seat, Hadori aluminum trim,

heated/cooled power front seats, Mark Levinson sound system, cooled box (fridge!) in the center console, wireless phone charger and an adaptive variable air suspension.

If in the market for a full-size rugged but luxury SUV that can tackle the tough landscape (thanks to multi-terrain select and crawl control) with confidence, the upscale LX600 F-Sport edition fits the bill. And it is ultra luxury to the extreme! You won't be disappointed as long as the steep price tab is within your reach.

GO OFF-ROADING WITH ALL-NEW 2023 RAV4 HYBRID WOODLAND!

And now you can go off the beaten path in an RAV4. That's right. Toyota has introduced the all-wheel-drive Woodland Edition – its first hybrid off-road special edition SUV! With coil springs and twin-tube shocks borrowed from a TRD-tuned (Toyota Racing Development) suspension to back it up, this is another winner for the innovative Japanese carmaker.

A 2.5-liter DOHC inline-4 cylinder gas engine cranks out 176 horsepower @ 5700 rpm and 163 pounds-feet of torque @ 5200 rpm. Two electric motors boast hp up to 219 hp. A 244.8-volt lithium-ion battery is recharged by energy captured as the driver applies the brakes or coasts. Also, the electronically controlled continuous variable transmission-equipped sedan boasts a regenerative braking system. The TRD-inspired independent MacPherson strut front and multilink rear suspension with stabilizer bars does a particularly good job of soaking bumps and potholes. And the all-wheel-drive crossover also is equipped with a rack-mounted electric power steering for ease at higher speeds or pulling into a parking lot.

The RAV4 operates in three modes: EV, which is electric at lower speeds of up to 25 mph; ECO, an efficient mode where the driver can control the throttle opening; and sport for some feisty driving. The rounded instrument display showing

RAV4 AWD (WOODLAND)
Tires: P225/60R19
Wheelbase: 105.9 inches
Length: 180.9 inches
Height: 67 inches
Width: 73 inches
Fuel capacity: 14.5 gallons
Mileage: city 38, highway 35
Weight: 3,775 pounds
Base price: \$33,025
Price as tested: \$34,360
Web site: www.toyota.com



charge, power and eco readings will come in handy for drivers who like to eke out every gallon of gas.

Projector-beam LED headlights flank a dark gray, metallic-colored hexagonal grille hosting a blue-tinted Toyota emblem. Badges, mudguards and roof rails/crossbars, all in black, are unmistakable. There is plenty of room in the cabin and the 60/40-split second row seat can be folded to obtain 37.6 cubic feet of cargo space. Storage areas are scattered throughout the cabin, including an open bin atop the glovebox, center console box, eight cup/bottle holders, five USB ports and

overhead sunglasses holder. Other perks are a power driver seat and tilt/slide moon roof, dual auto a/c, leather tilt/telescopic steering column and shifter, 8-inch infotainment touchscreen and a hands-free lift gate.

The Woodland version, which will appeal to the off-road buffs, further enhances the varied lineup of this No. 1 seller for Toyota. Plus, the hybrid SUV boasts sizable passenger/cargo room. And as the stop at the pump continues to hurt the wallet, who doesn't want a gas sipper for a ride? (we earned a combined 39 mpg).

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GREEN CARDS FOR PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS WORKERS – NEW PROBLEMS

By DILIP PATEL



One option used by religious organizations to process green cards for priests and religious workers in R-1 visa status was through the EB-4 Preference by filing the I-360 immigrant petition.

The I-360 has to be approved before the Adjustment of Status (AOS) application for the green card could be filed by the worker. One challenge was to get the I-360 Petition approved before the R-1 worker used up their maximum stay of five (5) years in the U.S.

In addition to having the I-360 approved, the AOS applicant had to show that visa numbers were available under the EB-4 Preference. This is where a new more serious issue has arisen. For the past few months, a wait list developed for EB-4 applicants when none had existed (except for EB-4 applicants chargeable to Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala). For April and May 2023, the wait list has stretched further back to almost five years to those for whom the I-360 was filed before September 2018.

The Explanation

In the April Visa Bulletin, the U.S. Department of State (DOS) announced changes in how it allocates green cards for the EB-4 category, which include religious workers, special immigrant juveniles, and diplomats, among others. There is an annual numerical limitation on green card issuance. Employment-based (EB) green cards are allocated in five different preference categories. For example, religious workers are in the EB-4 preference category. Immigrant visas are further allocated based on country of chargeability (usually place of birth of applicant), as the law limits 7 percent of the visas being issued to one country of chargeability. If the

demand for immigrant visas from one country exceeds the 7 percent cap, then their immigrant visa availability dates are listed in separate columns in the Visa Bulletin. These dates are important because it signals when an EB-4 applicant with an approved Form I-360 person may proceed to apply for their immigrant visa or adjust their status to permanent residence.

What changed?

Until recently, visa availability for those born in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala were listed in a separate column on the Visa Bulletin for employment-based immigrant visas because demand exceeded the 7 percent limitation in the EB-4 category. Based on this calculation, the immigrant visa availability date for EB-4 applicants from those countries was March 15, 2018, while visa availability date for India was 2022 (not a problem because the I-360 processing time itself was over a year).

In March 2023, DOS decided that it had made a legal mistake in separating these three countries from the rest of the world for purposes of visa availability because, while their visa demand exceeded the 7 percent limitation for EB-4, it did not exceed the limitation in overall usage.

Therefore, the three countries were added back to the rest of the world demand and the available visas were reallocated across the EB-4 category. The result is that immigrant visa availability for all EB-4 visa applicants retrogressed to September 2018, regardless of their country of birth.

How does this impact my case?

Those EB-4 applicants who have already filed an AOS application can remain in the United States even though they are no longer eligible to obtain a green card. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will hold their file until the date on the Visa Bulletin reaches their priority date. When this occurs, USCIS will approve the green card. Until then, AOS applicants are eligible to receive extensions of their employment and travel authorization.

The real issue is for the R-1 workers who have not yet filed an EB-4 AOS application because it is not likely that they will be able to file the AOS application by the time they use up the 5-year limit in R-1 status. They need to maintain status to file the AOS and they cannot work without the R status. One option is to leave and wait abroad to process the immigrant visa through consular processing when their date reaches the front of the line. Once they have lived abroad for a full year, they could be eligible for a new five-year period of R-1 eligibility, but there may be an issue with overcoming the temporary intent requirement.

This is an evolving situation – seek expert immigration advice and look out for further changes.

Dilip Patel a partner at the Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney Law Firm is a Florida Bar Board Certified expert on immigration law and can be reached at (813) 222-1120 or dilip.patel@bipc.com

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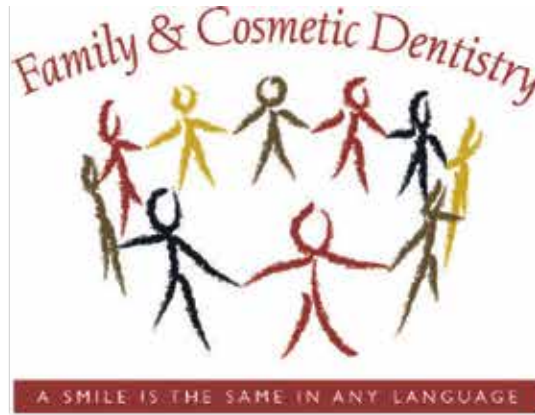
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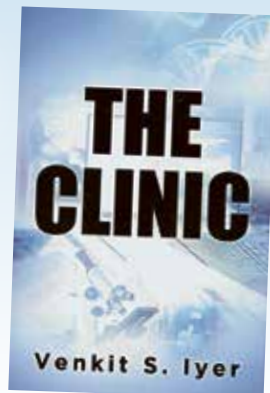
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by Venkit S. Iyer, MD, MS, FACS, FRCS-C



Dr. Venkit S. Iyer

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Happy
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A MOTHER'S BUMPY RIDE THROUGH HER SON'S COLLEGE APPLICATION JOURNEY

BY ROBERT A.G. LEVINE AND HELEN HE



I always think it's valuable for parents to hear what other parents say about their experience with the college admissions process. This month, we present Helen He, whose son Jonathan recently finished his admissions effort.

"Before I started accompanying my son through his college application experience, I felt trapped in a dark tunnel, feeling overwhelmed and lost in information and misinformation. Now that Jonathan has landed on his preferred college, I look back and realize there are key puzzle pieces that I needed to figure out along the way.

Selecting a consultant. There is no "need" to hire an independent educational consultant, but then again, it is not necessary to hire a financial planner, lawyer or other professional. In our hometown, consultants are commonplace, so I naturally felt that I should at least interview a few. After meeting several consultants, I realized that their goals are quite self-selective. I did not want to work with any who only target Ivy League schools, as I didn't raise my son to value name brand and reputation over what is best for him. I did not want to work with anyone who would babysit my son and do his job for him. No, I wanted someone who would guide and push Jonathan to do things the right way, but more importantly coach and mentor him to do the right thing, which to us meant being responsible and independent. Through a friend, I found the right match. Selecting potential schools. When it became time to select ten colleges (that was our high school's transcript limit), it felt like seeking golden needles in a gargantuan haystack. The U.S. has thousands of universities!

Yes, we could input criteria into search engines – location, size, and rankings were our first – but that didn't really help. Then I asked myself (and my son) the most important question: what is the purpose of going to college? This led to a family decision: find schools where Jonathan could feel good about his past, enjoy his present, and pursue his future. With this baseline, the input of our consultant became very valuable in discussing which schools might "fit" our son.

Selecting a topic for the personal statement essay. Reflecting on our parenting style, I realized that we had never hyper-focused on academics, but rather invested our efforts in parenting our son to be a well-rounded person. We invested a huge amount of time and money in supporting Jonathan's competitive sailing, which taught him about commitment, what it means to become successful, and ultimately how to give back to society. That made his essay topic an easy choice. Jonathan's long-term sailing experience provided more than enough interesting and authentic material, but also formed the backdrop for the true story of his personal growth.

Applying "early." In contrast to what the whole world told us, our consultant told us that we should not apply early unless we were ready. That seemed logical: the more experience writing admissions essays, the better the results. At the beginning of grade 12, Jonathan wasn't ready to do his best work, so he did not apply anywhere early.

Then the pressures came from our surroundings, social media and even lifelong friends. Everyone claimed it was a golden ticket to any college! Why hadn't Jonathan submitted an ED application? Honestly, I felt we were screwed. My fears led me to believe that our chosen colleges had no room left for my son. However, when Jonathan finished his final college essay, we realized that only his best work would help him achieve his best dreams.

Although we skipped filing Early, my son ended up with several great colleges, including a school that is absolutely perfect for Jonathan. We are so excited!

The application process was important for my son, but it was also vital for us as parents. There were many, many times when I was confused and struggled to help, and the calm, confident, logical advice of our consultant helped me make sense of so many loose thoughts that were racing around in my head.

Having lived through the horrors, my best advice is to become informed yourself. When you get lost during the college process, find your way back by keeping an open mind, disregarding the noise yelled by the world, and learning as much as possible. I pushed myself to study everything, which allowed me to converse intelligently with my son and my husband. That way, we were able to make our best decisions, together."

Robert Levine is the founder and CEO of University Consultants of America, an independent educational consultancy assisting students around the world with applications to colleges, universities and graduate schools. For more information, call University Consultants of America, Inc. at 1-800-465-5890 or visit www.universitycoa.com



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INSIDE CREATIVE VORTEX

By **BRINDA PAMULAPATI**

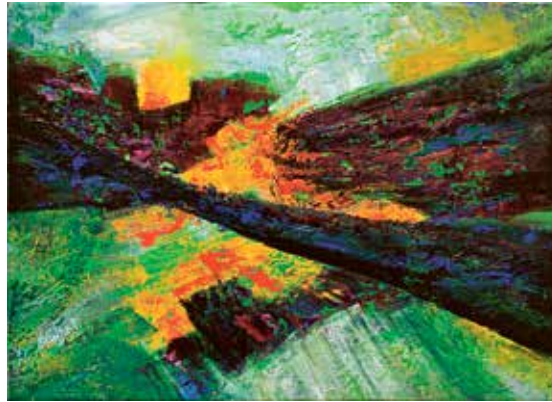


Artists seek inspiration for their paintings from a variety of sources, including immediate surroundings and imagination. Industrialized objects such as automobiles, high-rise buildings with hard edges, harsh lines, bold colors and sharp angles were a main inspiration for artists that were a part of the Vorticism movement. The movement was an artistic

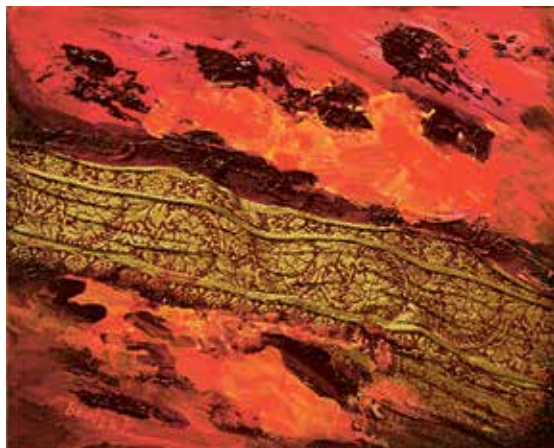
reaction resulting from the increase in progress that was being witnessed in their culture. The artists' works were highlighting the happenings of their own urban environment.

Vorticism was a short movement that lasted only for a few years, from 1914 to 1920, when World War I began and brought the movement to an end. Additionally, the undertaking was emerging in Britain during the same time as Futurism was gaining popularity in Italy. Both movements found inspiration in the simple shapes of the industrialized cityscape and depicted the dynamism, energy and movement of modern life.

Vorticism was first founded by Wyndham Lewis, who focused on depicting the speed, movement, business and emotionlessness of urban life. He created complex geometrical figures that evoked both dynamism and stillness. Lewis was tired of what he saw as the pretensions of the British art world and sought to pave a way for work that better reflected



Crossing the Bridge by Brinda Pamulapati, 18 x 24 inches Acrylic on canvas



Saree Series Peach by Brinda Pamulapati, 8 x 10 inches Mixed Media-Saree and acrylic on clay board

the modern and ever-changing world. To me, Vorticism represents the energy of the artist after absorbing all the immediate visual scenes that we are presented with. This intake results in a passionate and creative blast of ideas filled with energy and movement that are translated onto the canvas. In my recent solo art exhibition, "Revitalization" at Venvi Art Gallery, my new abstract paintings were more inclined to this style of vorticism. Like the Vorticists' works, they convey dynamic shapes and scenes but instead of the urban environment, they emerge from my imagination and the vortex of desire and knowledge inside. This internal and external creative process has resulted in a series aimed at breadth ranging from mixed media using Indian saree in abstract style to energetic abstractions.

Brinda Pamulapati, owner/managing director, of Venvi Art Gallery in Tallahassee, can be reached at (850) 322-0965 or visit www.VenviArtGallery.com



Wyndham Lewis, Workshop c. 1914-15
Image courtesy of tate.org.uk

PUNJABI ASSOCIATION OF TAMPA ROCKS THE STAGE APRIL 15

Story provided by *Punjabi Association*

More than 500 people attended the Punjabi Association of Tampa's (PAA) Vaisakhi celebrations on April 15 at India Cultural Center. The evening was filled with performances of Giddha and Bhangra by young children and adults, as well as delicious Punjabi food.

Vaisakhi, a celebration of harvest festival in Punjab, is also a religious celebration that marks the birth of Khalsa (meaning the pure one) by tenth Sikh Guru Gobind Singh on Vaisakhi of the year 1699.

This year's president is Dr. Sanjay Madan and event chair was Dr. Hiroo Kapur. In continuing the tradition of charity, PAA also recognized the work and mission of Children's Home Network of Tampa with a donation.

To join PAA, email name and phone number to punjabitampa@gmail.com



Dr. Satinder Sondhi, left, Dr. Hiroo Kapur and Dr. Sanjay Madan.



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TAMPA HINDU TEMPLE CELEBRATION

Cont'd from page 1

- **Garuda Vahana Seva** – Satyanarayana Swamy is taken on Garuda in a procession.
- **Brahma Rathotsavam** – considered to be the highlight of the Brahmotsavam. Satyanarayana Swamy will ride on a ratha chariot in a procession. It is believed that the presiding deity of the temple steps down from the sanctum sanctorum to bless worshippers.
- **Avabhruta Snanam or Thirthotsavam** – finale, a special abhishekam to Shri Sudarshana Bhagavan, who represents the main temple deity. To complete this ritual, the holy water is sprinkled on the devotees as blessings.

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May-19-2023, Friday 9-00 a.m.
Moola Devatha Prarthana, Aalaya Pradakshina Poorvaka Ganga Puja, Ganapathi Puja (Vishvaksena Puja), Punyaha Vachana, Deva Nandi, Panchagavya Melana, Panchagavya Snapana Panchagavya Prashana, Raksha Bandhana Puja and Dharna, Ritwik Varanam, Mrithsangrahanam, Ankurapanam, Sahasra Modaka Ganapathi Homam, Poornahuthi, Maha Mangalarathi, Theertha Prasada Viniyogam

May-19-2023, Friday 5-30 p.m.
Ganapathi Puja, Punyaha vachanam, Vasthu Mandala Puja, Vaasthu Rakshoghna Homam, Vaasthu Paryagni Karanam, Yagashaala Pravesham, Chathurdwara Puja, Dhvajarohanam Kalasha Sthapana, Sesha Vahanotsavam, Maha Mangalarathi, Prasada Viniyogam

May - 20 - 2023 Saturday 8-00 a.m.
Suprabhatha Seva, Veda Parayanam, Prabandha Parayanam, Ganapathi Puja, Punyaha Vachanam, Kalasha Puja
9-00 a.m. : Sudarshana Homam
10-30 a.m. : Poornahuthi
11-00 a.m. : Sathyanarayana Swamy Kalyanothsavam, Maha Mangalarathi Theertha Prasada Viniyogam

May - 20-2023, Saturday 5-00 p.m.
Vedaparayanam, Kalasha Puja, Nakshatra Homam 6-30 p.m. : Poomahuthi, Astavadhanam, Garudvahanotsava Seva, Maha Mangalarathi Theertha Prasada viniyogam

May - 21-2023, Sunday 8-30 a.m.
Suprabhatha Seva, Veda Parayanam, Prabandha Parayanam, Vedikarohana, Sarva Devatha Homam, Maha Poornahuthi, Rathanga Homam, Ratha Ballharana, Yatra Danam, Aalaya Prakerothsava Purvakam, Ratha Aarohanam
11-30 a.m. : Rathothesavam (Kataka Lagnam) Astavadhana Seva
1-00 p.m. : Maha Mangalarathi, Rashtreseervada Seva, Theertha Prasada Viniyogam

May - 21-2023, Sunday
6-00 p.m. : Dhvajarohanam
7-00 p.m. : Shayanotsavam
8-00 p.m. : Maha Mangalarathi Theertha Prasada Viniyogam

May - 22-2023, Monday 9-30 a.m.
Suprabhatha Seva
10-00 a.m. : Avabhruta Snanam, Maha Mangalarathi Theertha Prasada Viniyogam

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GENESIS G90 IS A PALACE ON WHEELS!

Test-drive story by **NITISH S. RELE** motoringtampabay@gmail.com

Meet the 2023 Car of the Year as picked by Motor Trend and so ingeniously illustrated by the award presenter: "The flagship Genesis G90 is luxury distilled — everything you see, touch and experience has been carefully considered and executed with the greatest of care, from crisp lines of the body work, to quilted-leather and warm wood surfaces throughout the interior, and surprisingly intuitive technological touches."

And the accolades keep on coming for the fully redesigned car. After all, the G90 is unlike any other sedan you will come across the road. And that is no exaggeration. Under the hood sits a 3.5-liter V-6 cranking out 409 horsepower @ 5800 rpm and 405 pounds-feet of torque @ 1300 rpm. A 48-volt mild hybrid system or what Genesis terms "electric supercharger" further boosts power to the engine. Zero to 60 is possible in around 5.4 seconds in the agile and quick ride, mated to a remarkable 8-speed auto gear box. Up front, the familiar diamond-like grille is flanked by jewel-like, parametric-pixel two-line LED headlights to convey a distinguishing presence. As you near the vehicle, flush automatic door handles are a sight to behold. As are the switches to close the power doors! Two high-tech 12.3 screens for infotainment and a digital cluster of speedometer, power gauge, charge level and trip odometer appear futuristic. Both rows get heated, cooled and massage functions while the driver enjoys 18-way power and the front-passenger 16-way seats. Oh, and the second row power reclines besides enabling its passengers to have controls of all types



GENESIS 90 (AWD)

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Wheelbase: 125.2 inches
Length: 207.7 inches
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Suspension: multilink, plus multi-air chamber suspension
Steering: rack-mounted, motor-driven power
Fuel capacity: 19.3 gallons
City: 17 mpg **Highway:** 24 mpg
Base price: \$98,700
Price as tested: \$100,370
Web site: www.genesis.com

on their fingers! And then there's the pillow-like headrest and footrest and how can we forget the wireless charger for the rear row? A Mind Curator (pick vitality, delight, care, comfort) allows occupants to relax with different themes such as for audio, lights, massage and even fragrance! Furthermore, there's the suede headliner, real wood trim, 23-speaker Bang & Olufsen sound system, head-up display, power tilt/slide panoramic moon roof, three-zone climate control, rear power sunshades, etc.

Truly, the G90 is nothing short of a palace on wheels. Everyone aboard is treated to royalty in the beautifully-made and skillfully executed cabin. Lest we forget, the sedan has tremendous power to leave a lasting impression. Dream about this commanding machine and if you can afford the steep price tag, it's yours.



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MAY FORECAST

By PANKAJ KOHLI



ARIES / Mesha (Fire sign, ruling planet is Mars) - (March 21-April 20) Mars Sign – Stars covered Ashwini, Bharani, Kritika (1st Part) Arians, this is a great period in terms of money, happiness, family, domestic setup and social circle. It is a successful time; in respect of money, finance and wealth, one stands to gain. There is a possibility of eye trouble, take care. Do not get involved in petty issues, back biting, etc. Take care of bad temper, stress and blood pressure problems. Be wary if you plan to change jobs.

TAURUS / Vrushabha (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Venus) - (April 21-May 21) Venus Sign - Stars covered Kritika (last 3 parts), Rohini, Mrigashira (first 2 parts) Many feel powerful with creative and calculative faculties, which will be at their best. Good gains are seen in terms of money and finance. Material gains are possible all around. Stay away from wasteful expenditure. Younger siblings stand to gain from your efforts. For some, chances of big earnings cannot be ruled out. It is a good period overall.

GEMINI / Mithuna (Air sign, ruling planet is Mercury) - (May 22-June 21) Mercury Sign - Stars covered Mrigashira (last 2 parts), Ardra & Punarvasu (first 3 parts) Address family-related issues as some may face hurdles. Do not lose temper or speculate; stay focused. Many will gain tremendous wealth through hard labor. Be careful with investing money as confusion may lead to wrong decision. People with rheumatic troubles need to watch out. Avoid confrontation with younger siblings.

CANCER / Kataka (Watery sign, ruling planet is Moon) - (June 22-July 22) Moon Sign – Stars covered Punarvasu (4th part), Pushya, Aslesha Be cautious of the company you keep, stay away from undesirable people. Domestic petty issues are controllable. Your hard work will pay off. Financial ventures can be met with success; plan and execute carefully. Government employees may get a pleasant surprise, promotion or something positive. Some of you might plan to move out of parental houses.

LEO / Simha (Fire sign, ruling planet is Sun) - (July 23-Aug. 22) Sun Sign – Stars covered Magha, Purva Phalguni, Uttara Phalguni (1st part) Chance of success in commercial ventures is probable. Finance and money-related issues may be successful, however, after facing some obstacles. Domestic and professional setup will be happy. Luck and chance are seen in small ventures. Just beware of possible rheumatic and bilious troubles. Professionals in the field of communication, journalism, media and artists will have growth opportunities.

VIRGO / Kanya (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Mercury) (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Mercury Sign – Stars covered Uttara Phalguni (last 3 parts), Hasta, Chitra (first 2 parts) Singles and eligible can meet their partners. Be careful with health. Many will win over enemies, your social status will rise, some may gain name and fame through spousal efforts. You will meet with commercial success in whatever you do. Expenses can be greater than income. Be careful of hyperacidity. Business partnerships or any alliances may flourish. Professionals in communication business, teachers and

mathematicians stand to gain.

LIBRA / Tula (Air sign, ruling planet is Venus) - (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) Venus Sign – Stars covered Chitra (last 2 parts), Swati, Vishakha (first 3 parts)

Despite obstacles, many will prevail over enemies or negative forces. Some may face financial difficulties; think before you invest money. Gains in social circle and influence may rise. Music, art and positivity will shine. Money, finance, domestic happiness and peaceful conditions prevail all around. Health is great and many feel confident of your actions.

SCORPIO / Vruschika (Water sign, ruling planet is Mars) - (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Mars Sign – Stars covered Vishakha (4th part), Anuradha, Jyestha Face every situation with determination. Gains cannot be ruled for some through their maternal side. Strained relations with younger siblings are possible. Returns in wealth through financial ventures is possible. Plan your investments; success cannot be ruled out. Just be extra careful in your judgment of situations.

SAGITTARIUS / Dhanush (Fire sign, ruling planet is Jupiter) - (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) Jupiter Sign – Stars covered Moola, Purva Shada, Uttara Shada (first part) Domestic issue may come up if tempers are not controlled; do not let situation go out of hand. Watch the tone in your voice, people might find it rude. Financial situation needs attention. Some will need to work hard to remain profitable. Gambling and speculation are not your forte at this time. Count less on luck and make more efforts in every respect.

CAPRICORN / Makara (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Saturn) - (Dec. 22-Jan. 20) Saturn Sign – Stars covered Uttara Shada (last 3 parts) Shrivana, Dhanistha (first 2 parts) Some feel blessed. Money, wealth and happy domestic life are offered for some to enjoy. Many will feel spiritual. Be courteous with people in your dealings. You may have the urge to speculate and gamble, be cautious. Count less on luck, work with sincerity; do not expect anything in return.

AQUARIUS / Kumbha (Air sign, ruling planet is Saturn) – (Jan. 21-Feb. 19) Saturn Sign - Stars covered: Dhanishta (last 2 parts) Satabhisha, Purva Bhadra Pada (1st 3 parts) Your spiritual pursuit will be at its highest. Money and material benefits are possible for many. Luck is on your side, just be careful of actions. Domestic peace and happiness prevail, love life is great, so make use of new matrimonial associations. Finances are not a constraint. Singles should be hopeful of finding a loveable companion.

PISCES / Meena (Water sign, ruling planet is Jupiter) - (Feb. 20-March 20) Jupiter Sign - Stars covered: Purva Bhadra Pada (last part) Uttara Bhadra Pada, Revathi Excellent time period starts as Jupiter enters Aries. Some will feel confident and have positivity all around. Some may even have an aura that will motivate others. Many will command love and respect from all. Financial matters can be rewarding. For others, financial ventures can be successful. Many will emerge winners on personal and professional fronts. Take care of stomach ailments and lethargy.

For detailed horoscope analysis and chart reading, courtesy Pankaj-Astro Jyotish, call Pankaj Kohli at (905) 910-1441 or e-mail Pathofastrology@gmail.com



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529 PLAN AND RECENT CHANGES

By TEJAL DHRUVE



Savings or paying for college can be expensive. Tax-advantaged 529 plans can blunt the cost. Thanks to various legislative changes in recent years, you have more options for 529 funds.

Contributions to 529 plans are treated as gifts to the beneficiary. And you’re able to front load up to five years’ worth of tax-exempt gifts ... \$85,000 in contributions per beneficiary this year (\$17,000 if your spouse joins in). If you give the maximum, you’ll be treated as gifting \$17,000 (or \$34,000) to that

beneficiary in each of 2023 through 2027.

A rule change makes it easier for grandparents to own and fund 529s without jeopardizing the grandchild’s future eligibility for financial aid.

New rules kick off

Under financial aid rules now in place, distributions from 529s owned by anyone other than a parent or student are treated as cash support, which can reduce eligibility for student’s financial aid by as much as 50 percent of the 529 distributed amount. New rules, which first take effect for the 2024-25 school year, resolve this problem. Students will no longer have to report 529 distributions from non-parent owned 529s when filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Ditto for cash gifts received by the students from non-parent family members.

Distributions from 529 plans used for college are tax-free. Eligible expenses include the cost of room and board for students enrolled at a college or university at least half-time, tuition, books, supplies, fees, computers, and internet access.

529 plans can help pay for K-12 education as well. Tax-free distributions of up to \$10,000 per student per year can be taken from 529 accounts to pay tuition for elementary and secondary private and parochial schools. The state-tax treatment of these payouts doesn’t always follow federal law, so be sure to check with your state.

What if the beneficiary of the 529 account decides not to go to college

Or if he or she does go to college, and there are funds remaining at the end?

There are options for using the leftover money: Keep the funds in the account for grad school, etc. Use the 529 money to pay for certain apprenticeship programs. Roll over leftover funds to a 529 plan for another family member’s education needs. Use up to \$10,000 tax-free to help pay off some of the beneficiary’s college debt. (This \$10,000 is a lifetime limit.) Roll over funds tax-free from a beneficiary’s 529 plan to an ABLE account for a disabled beneficiary or the beneficiary’s siblings.

Secure 2.0 provides another helpful alternative for leftover 529 funds.

Starting in 2024, some 529 funds can be rolled over tax-free to a Roth IRA for the beneficiary in a trustee-to-trustee transfer. But there are lots of rules to follow. There’s a \$35,000 lifetime rollover cap. The 529 account must have been open for at least 15 years, with the same beneficiary. Annual rollover amounts can’t exceed the annual contribution limit for Roth IRAs, which is \$6,500 for 2023. And 529 contributions made in the prior five years are ineligible for the rollover.

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ASTON MARTIN CREATES 007 EXCITEMENT, EVEN IN DBX707 SUV!

Test-drive stories by NITISH S. RELE motoringtampabay@gmail.com

As 007 and M drive off in an Aston Martin DB5 in the 2012 "Skyfall" film, M says, "It's not very comfortable, is it?" James Bond quips, "Are you gonna complain all the way?"

Heck, we wouldn't grumble but we tested the 2023 Aston Martin DBX707, the carmaker's debut into the high-performance SUV segment. And it's an entry worthy of 007. We are more than thrilled to share our experience of the iconic "bond" the British carmaker has with the secret agent.

Under the clamshell carbon-fiber hood of the high-end all-wheel-drive exotic SUV sits an irresistible 4.0-liter twin-turbo V-8 engine (sourced from the renowned Benz AMG division) that thumps out a ferocious-roaring 697 horsepower @ 6000 rpm and 663 pounds-feet of torque @ 4500 rpm. The 9-speed auto transmission (individual, terrain, GT, sport and sport plus) can be shifted via steering-mounted paddle shifters or through the drive control on the dashboard.

Push the starter button to summon the bi-turbocharger and the rev-happy DBX707 emits an exhaust roar to delight any grand tourer buff. Step on the gas and the SUV will catch you off guard, lunging forward with fervor you won't find in most sport cars. It's quick on its feet, reaching 0 to 60 mph in only 3.1 seconds with a top speed of 193 mph. This sophisticated beast rolls on 22-inch forged carbon-ceramic alloy wheels, which get their stopping power from 16.5-inch front discs, 15.3-inch rear discs, employing carbon-ceramic brake pads.

The hood scoops and primarily wing-shape enamel badge up front proudly herald the marque. It's atop the chromed all-metal grille flanked by bi-LED headlights and integrated daytime running, side and corner lamps. "Swan wing" frameless doors, huge carbon-fiber spoiler, power tail gate and black quad exhausts make up the rest of the appearance.



ASTON MARTIN DBX707
Tires: Front 284/40YR22; Rear 325/35YR22
Wheelbase: 120.5 inches
Length: 198.4 inches
Width: 80.7 inches
Height: 66.1 inches
Suspension: independent double wishbone front, multilink rear
Steering: electric speed-dependent rack and pinion
Weight: 4,940 pounds
Fuel capacity: 22.5 gallons
City: 15 mpg
Highway: 20 mpg
Base price: \$236,000
Price as tested: \$292,586
Web site: www.astonmartin.com

The cabin conveys the class, sophistication and splendid craftsmanship that are the British automaker's tradition. Lending credence to the rich ambience is full leather upholstery on and around the dashboard and instrument panel, doors and center console. And nobody can miss the quintessential wings crest adorned in the seat backrests. Other luxuries include 16-way power heated/cooled front seats, power-adjustable tilt/telescopic steering column, Alcantara headliner, 800-watt, 14-speaker sound system, panoramic full-length glass roof, dual-zone auto a/c, 12.3-inch driver information display and a 10.3-inch infotainment screen.

Built in Aston Martin's St. Athan, Wales plant, the high-performance SUV drew heaps of spectators throughout our drive in Tampa Bay. With a power-at-all-times engine and elegant styling inside and out, this top-tier ride speaks for itself.

STYLISH 2023 VOLVO XC90 PLUG-IN HYBRID CAN GO PLACES!

There are quite a few attractive seven-passenger luxury SUVs on the market but the Volvo XC90 is our favorite. We have test-driven one every couple years and were overwhelmed with the 2023 Recharge AWD Ultimate edition that was dispatched to us recently. The T8 plug-in hybrid has received some modifications that make this incredible ride more appealing than before.

Under the hood sits a 2.0-liter inline-4 turbocharged and supercharged engine, which puts out an enormous 455 horsepower and 523 pounds-feet of torque. A rear electric motor and a center-mounted 14.9 kWh lithium-ion battery can take the midsize luxury crossover SUV nearly 36 miles (previous was just 18) before the gasoline engine kicks in. Charge time is hardly five hours on a 240-volt volt. The 8-speed auto gearbox in our all-wheel-drive vehicle is sprightly in any untoward situation. And the start-stop feature (auto engine stop when the vehicle halts) ensures substantial savings in fuel and weight.

The stunning crossover shows off a centered Volvo iron mark amid a bright chrome bar grille, flanked by LED headlights and Thor's hammer-like daytime running lights. The substantial cabin conveys an upscale aura with a 12.3-inch instrument panel decked in shimmer graphite aluminum inlays. Adult passengers have ample space for leg and shoulder room in the two rear seats. Volvo Sensus infotainment, with a distinct vertical 9-inch display touch screen, is essentially made up of four tiles: navigation, media, phone and user-defined. Activate one and watch it expand while keeping the other tiles visible for future use. The Gray Ash wood décor and tailored dashboard in charcoal is a nice touch from the typical leather in most luxury vehicles. New for 2023 is a Google built-

XC90 T8 (ULTIMATE)

Tires: 275/40R21
Wheelbase: 117.5 inches
Length: 195 inches
Width: 79.1 inches
Height: 69.9 inches
Suspension: double wishbone front, integral axle rear
Steering: electric power rack and pinion
Drive modes: comfort, eco, dynamic, off-road, individual
Fuel capacity: 18.8 gallons
Mileage: 27 mpg combined gas, 58 MPGe
Base price: \$79,400
Price as tested: \$85,495
Web site: www.volvo.com



in Assistant, Maps and Play store. Standard amenities include two-zone auto a/c, 10-way power front cooled/heated Nappa leather seats, leather tilt/telescopic steering wheel, panoramic moon roof, head-up display, aluminum cargo scuff plate, 19-speaker Harman Kardon sound system and hands-free power tail gate.

Whether you are off the beaten path or strolling the highway, the 5,000-pound XC90 is incredibly rapid off the mark, graceful in traffic and a dream to drive. Truly, it is a fantastic combination of beauty and performance.



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