

Love comes a full circle

Kochi-based teenager's embroidery hoops, made out of threads, are the perfect gift



The customised embroidery hoops by Kochi-based Anjana Stanley take about a week to make

JANE BORGES

COME birthdays, weddings or housewarming parties, the big question that resurfaces again (and always) is "What to gift?" Flowers, wine, cheese platter hampers, crockery—every possible idea in the rulebook has been done and dusted. That's perhaps why Kochi-based Anjana Stanley's embroidery hoops (starting at ₹1,500) seem like a breath of fresh air. This writer first learnt about Stanley when a friend in Mumbai commissioned an artwork. The results blew our mind.

Stanley, who is all of 18, took to embroidery artwork during the pandemic. "My parents were struggling [to make ends meet] during the lockdown," she says, "I wanted to help, but didn't know how. At first I made vintage books, jeans bags, and painted bottles." When her tiny venture became a sleeper hit among friends and family, Stanley launched a

business account on Instagram and started working with diverse material, including embroidery hoop art.

The venture, Alora, makes cute-sy embroidery hoops with dream catchers that can be given as wedding gifts (either to the couple or as souvenirs to guests with a hand-embroidered calendar marking the special month and day), as birthday presents to loved ones, or even to your best friend to celebrate what the two of you share. All she needs is a photograph of the people you'd want featured, a few personal details, and the address you'd like it delivered to. She usually completes her project within a week.



ANJANA STANLEY

One of her most memorable clients was a woman, who placed an order, but passed away a few days later in an accident. "I thought they'd cancel the order," she says, "but her fiancé asked us to send it anyway, because he knew how much she loved what I did, and wanted this one as a keepsake. That was when I began taking my work seriously."

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From mummy's kitchen

FROM being a model, to a photographer to now a first-time author, Prasanna 'Pressy' Pandarinathan has worn many hats. Ammi—An Expression of Love (Rupa Publications, ₹1,495) is a cookbook memoir, and Pandarinathan's homage to her mother, Nirmala Pandarinathan. Through this book, she relives the memories she and her family shared with her mother. 'Ammi' is short form for 'Ammi Kallu' in Tamil, a traditional South Indian stone grinder.

The book chronicles a lifetime of recipes from Nirmala's kitchen,

long-forgotten stories, and anecdotes. The recipe images in the book are taken by Pandarinathan herself. Nirmala's repertoire of recipes spans South India, Ipoh, Penang, Singapore, Indonesia, and Europe. The recipes are simple, home-styled, easy to cook and packed with aromas, flavours, and textures. The cookbook is divided into 10 sections like vegetables, eggs, poultry, meat, and seafood. Each section has carefully curated recipes.

Available online



The cookbook memoir is Pandarinathan's homage to her mother



PRASANNA PANDARINATHAN

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