Hyderabad is one of the few cities in India where heritage and development go hand in hand harmoniously, Today, it is the joint capital of two states, Andhra Pradesh and the newly formed Telangana. The old city is full of tiny winding lanes, traditional curio stores, noisy auto rickshaws; and myriad languages and crowds. Hyderabad is also called the City of Pearls given its history as a Pearls, and diamond trading centre.

In terms of cuisine, language, culture and more, the city has been greatly influenced by the Nizams of Hyderabad - who ruled the Deccan Plateau for a long time. Ancient influences from another ruling dynasty, the Kakatiyas, are also seen at Warangal, near Hyderabad.

Today, Deccani, Urdu and Telugu mix to form a tongue that is uniquely Hyderabadi. With teahouses serving sweet milky chai and bakeries selling Karachi biscuits, the city is a delicious mix of Hindu and Muslim cultures.

Hyderabad also used to be twinned with Secunderabad, an erstwhile British cantonment. Separated by the Hussain Sagar Lake, Secunderabad is now considered a part of Hyderabad, despite its different culture and history.

The city, now colloquially called Cyberabad, is also an IT hotspot, attracting companies and young engineers from the world over. Huge malls, clubs, sleek lounges, restaurants and throngs of people from all over India populate the new city, making it vibrant and buzzing all year long.
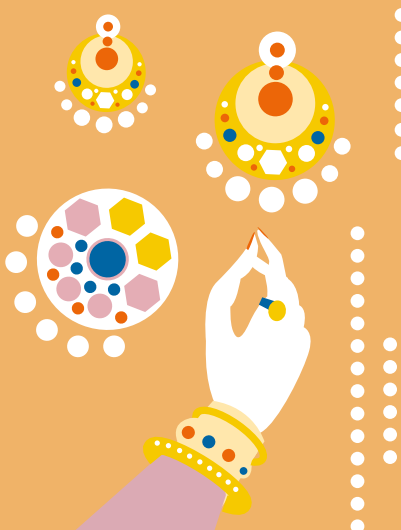
Lights, Camera, Action!

The Telugu film industry, or Tollywood, is the second most prolific one in India, with a huge international audience. Several Telugu films are also remade in Hindi, and films in all languages are shot in world-class studios like Ramoji Film City.

Big screens and malls

If you're hankering for a trip to a mall where shopping and food go hand in hand or want to watch a movie in air-conditioned surroundings to escape the Hyderabad heat, then there are lots of options. **GVK One**, **City Centre**, **Hyderabad Central**, **Inorbit** or **The Forum Sujana** are the ideal weekend hotspots. For movies, you could look at big names like **INOX**, **PVR** and **BIG Cinemas**. Smaller places like **Cinepolis**, **Prasad Adlabs** and **Tivoli** offer great facilities too.

Culture

Hyderabadi culture has a distinct Arabian flavour, with emphasis on courtly manners, the arts, theatre and literature, since ancient times. The The Hyderabad Literary Festival; known for its popularity among Indian Language authors, is a highly regarded event that draws hundreds of writers, scholars and artists from across the globe.

Music

The music of Hyderabad has both Western and Arabic influences and is a delight to the senses. In particular, marfa or kettledrum is very popular at local events when the Old City reverberates with traditional 'teen maar' beats.

Dance

With royal favour bestowed upon dance, Hyderabad's history is redolent with stories of courtesans and their famed prowess. Today, the Golconda Music and Dance Festival, the Premavathi Dance Festival and the Taramati Music Festival celebrate the city's rich cultural heritage.

Go street shopping

When in Hyderabad, go street shopping! While the denizens split their shopping time between the by-lanes of Old Hyderabad and modern day malls, you should head to the city bazaars to soak in the real Hyderabadi culture. Ancient outdoor markets like **Laad Bazaar**, next to the Charminar, and the nearby **Madina Bazaar**, offer great local products including **traditional embroidery**, **mirror-work fabric** and natural perfumes called **ittar**. You can browse for **Deccani Art paintings**, **Bidri silver-work** jewellery and trinkets, **lac bangles** and **pearls**. Don't forget to take a look at the traditional **Kalamkari textiles** and sarees from **Pochampally**, **Mangalgiri** and **Uppada**.

On the map

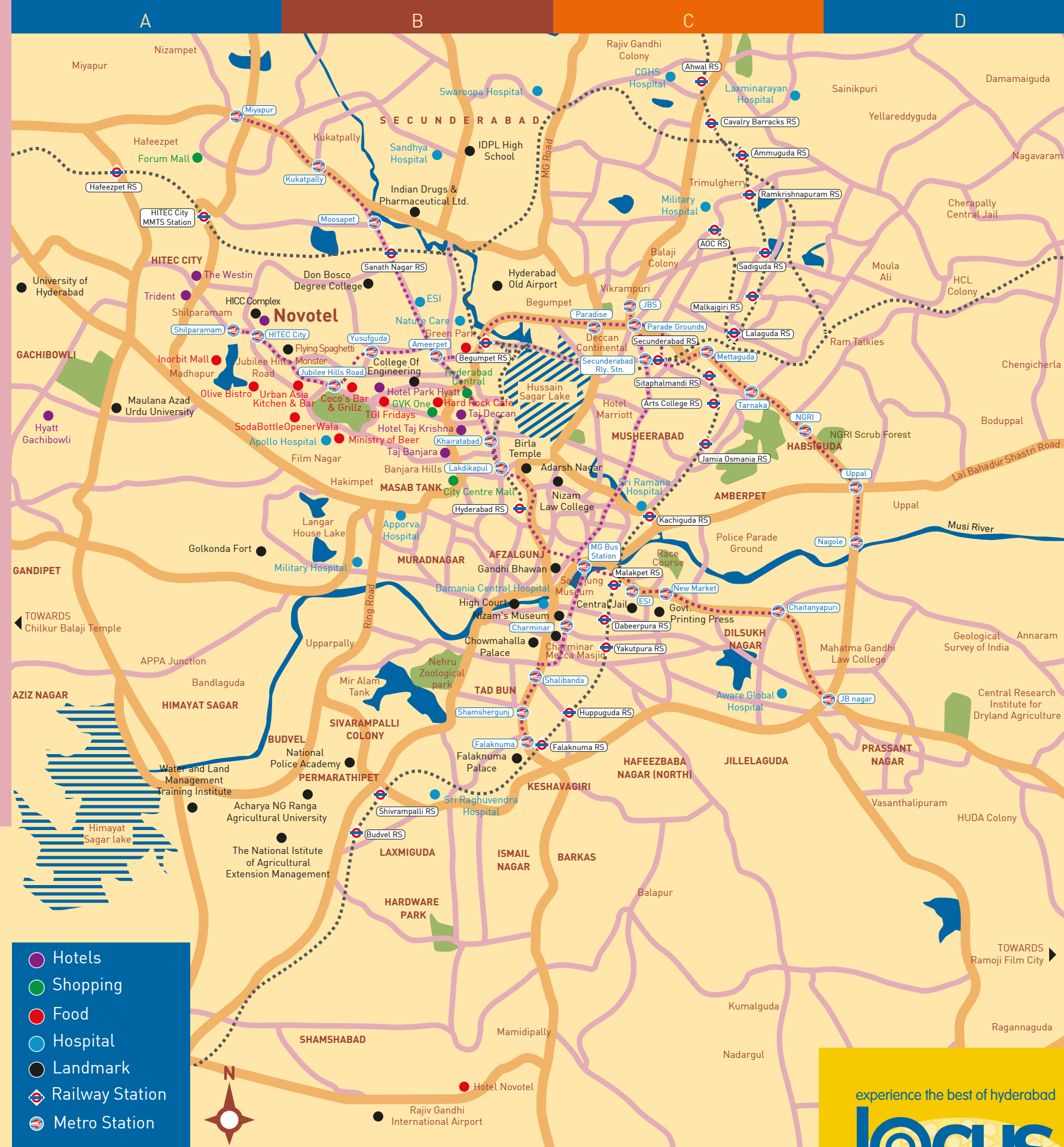## Key areas

Old Hyderabad
With narrow, crowded lanes and historical spots like the Charminar as well as ancient bazaars, Old Hyderabad is a fount of bargains and delicious cuisines.

Uptown Hyderabad
Jubilee Hills and Banjara Hills are upmarket neighbourhoods in Hyderabad. Jubilee Hills is one of the most expensive commercial and residential locations in India. Banjara Hills is a wealthy commercial district, with malls like GVK One and five star hotels, and is close to HITEC City.

HITEC City
The Hyderabad Information Technology and Engineering Consultancy City, known as HITEC City, is a major technology township in India. Spread over 151 acres, HITEC City is within 2 kilometres of the Novotel Hotel and HICC complex.

Food, glorious food!

The food in this city is fantastic. With a multitude of influences - Arabic, Turkish, French, South Indian and Mughlai culinary traditions - Hyderabadi or Deccani cuisine is slow-cooked, redolent with spices and rich ingredients, and is a gourmand's dream come true. Hyderabad is most famous for its **Haleem**, a traditional meat pâté that is specially made during Ramadan; and the **Hyderabadi Biryani** - with different kinds of meat, rice and spices, this dish is a must-have.

Here, you will also find **Andhra style food** that is simpler to prepare but no less delicious. Described as blow-the-top-off-your-head spicy, this food comprises rice and thin gravies, chutneys, curries, lentils, curd and poppadums, making for a hearty and satisfying meal.

Legend
- Hotels
- Shopping
- Food
- Hospital
- Landmark
- Railway Station
- Metro Station