



AN ARMENIAN HERE FOR 11 YEARS, AN ARGENTINIAN FOR 14

Meet the expat teachers who have made Gurgaon their home

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A handful of expats are teaching in Gurgaon schools and have made the city their own. Most of them have spent more than five years in the city and take great pleasure in cultural exchanges with the Indian kids they teach.

After a few initial hiccups, these teachers have adjusted well and developed a fondness for the city's food, infrastructure and people. They have also grown as teachers through their efforts to devise new approaches to teach kids despite the language and culture barriers. TOI met with a few of these able teachers. Here's their story:

Lilit Harutyunyan teaches English at Lancers International School.

The Armenian has been residing in Gurgaon for 11 years. Harutyunyan has a wide range of experience with students of different levels, ages and cultural backgrounds.

"I have been in India for more than 10 years now. It was not difficult to adjust with the students. I knew Hindi to a great extent which helped to settle in the school," she said. Lilit has taught in the US and Russia. Teaching in India was, therefore, a step that did not seem too difficult for her.

"I always make sure that my children are enjoying their lessons. In case I feel that the children are not connecting with a lesson or a subject, I try and explain things to them by playing games," she said.

A decade in Gurgaon has given her ample opportunity to get acquainted with the places in the city. "I have also lived in



(From left) Lilit teaches English and Olga is HOD of German at Lancers International School while Carina and Yolanda teach Spanish at Suncity School and Scottish High International School

Delhi for a short period of time. However, I liked Gurgaon and felt it is more modern and livable as compared to Delhi," she said.

Carina Bansal teaches Spanish at Suncity School. The Argentinian has been residing in Gurgaon for 19 years. To think that Carina didn't want to move out of her cozy home in Buenos Aires.

But then she met Sanjeev

Special Report

Bansal, who proposed to her. The two decided to get married and move to India. Coming to India was a complete culture shock for Carina but she made it her home and started teaching children a few years into her stay.

"My first stop after landing in New Delhi was Gurgaon. My husband was settled in this city and I also made it my home. After spending a few years in India, I told my husband I wanted to teach." Teaching gave Carina an opportunity to share her culture with Indian kids. "I not only try to teach them Spanish as a language, but also try to share my culture with them so as to motivate

them to learn the language," she said.

Carina thinks that the best part about the city is that she gets to meet a lot of people from different walks of life here.

Yolanda Lopez Regojo teaches Spanish in Scottish High International School. The Spaniard has been residing in Gurgaon for a year. As a teenager, Yolanda knew that she wanted to do something different that no one she knew had done before. The Spaniard dreamt of working in a country that was completely different from hers.

"I love travelling and that's how I landed up in India," she said. Yolanda did her masters from University of Santiago De Compostela in Spain. "I try and keep my teaching very communicative. Since I teach language, I speak in Spanish with the children as much as I can," she said. Yolanda has grown to like the city in a short period of time and is fascinated by its many malls that she likes to visit on the weekends.

Olga Isaak is the head of the department, German language, in Lancers International School. She has been residing in Gurgaon for four years.

Olga was born in Russia and grew up in Germany. Olga admits that as a result, she had problems adjusting in India initially.

"When I came to India, I had problems adjusting with the students. However, the school and other faculty members helped me to settle down in the school and the city," she said.

After her studies, Olga had an opportunity to work with street-children in Ukraine and Russia which helped to expand her experience in dealing with kids. "Since I am a language teacher, I try to connect with children in a friendly way. I try to keep my lectures very open. I try to encourage children to discover, analyse and find out things on their own," she said. As a teacher, Olga draws her ideas from her experiences in other parts of the world.

She was involved in rehabilitation projects for refugee children in Afghanistan. In Gurgaon, Olga loves to "hang out" in the popular hubs, including Cyber Hub and Sector 29, where she gets to indulge in different cuisines. "I really love the food culture of Gurgaon. It offers all authentic cuisines," she said.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/gurgaon/meet-the-expat-teachers-who-have-made-gurgaon-their-home/articleshow/61650521.cms>

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