

# 10 Must Watch Indian Films of 2022

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In a year when the Indian film industry slowly started recovering from the pandemic, movie buffs were in for a treat as a number of OTT and theatrical releases came our way. Sadly, it was also a year in which Indian movie halls became propaganda hubs and cinema was used to spread hatred. Any true lover of this art form will know that cinema is meant to unite people and not divide. With that being said, here is my attempt at listing the ten Indian films of 2022 which I feel are a must watch:

(Note: Some films which premiered at film festivals in 2021 were made available to the Indian audience in 2022).

**0** *Aavasavyuham: The Arbit Documentation of an Amphibian Hunt* (Malayalam)  
Director: Krishand

This experimental Malayalam film can easily make it to the list of must watch Indian films

of this decade and not just 2022. The brilliance with which fantasy and realism blend in this mockumentary is a sight to behold. Rahul Rajagopal excels as the Homme Grenouille in this ecological fantasy. It sure reminds you of the Franz Kafka novella *Metamorphosis*. One of my favourite lines from the movie goes like this 'Kissing a frog to get a prince is the absolute waste of a beautiful frog'.

**1** *Chhello Show* (Gujarati)  
Director: Pan Nalin

India's official entry to the 2023 Oscars and the movie justifies the selection. Even without that tag this is a beautiful film that anyone with a passion for cinema will fall in love with. Pan Nalin might have been inspired by Giuseppe Tornatore's 1988 Italian film *Cinema Paradiso* but there is a lot of originality in this movie and it is not a cheap copy. It is a semi-autobiographical film about how the filmmaker discovered the magic of movies.



**2** *Paka (River of Blood)* (Malayalam)  
Director: Nithin Lukose

Nithin Lukose, the much-acclaimed sound designer turns director with this realistic crime drama. The movie stands out with its minimalistic treatment of the cycle of vengeance between two families. There is no over the top drama which you usually find in such movies. A perfect example of how a good filmmaker can turn the same old story into something new and exciting.

**3** *Ariyippu/Declaration* (Malayalam)  
Director: Mahesh Narayanan

Mahesh Narayanan is a genius who is at the top of his game with this excellent film. The making style resembles some of the finest Iranian films. Art has the capability to make the mundane seem romantic and vice versa which is on full display in this classic. Divya Prabha outshines everyone with her brilliant portrayal of Reshmi in this gem which talks about the complex layers of human nature.

**4** *Gargi* (Tamil)  
Director: Gautham Ramachandran

The movie tackles an interesting premise of what happens when one of your loved ones is

accused of sexual abuse. Sai Pallavi, one of the finest actors in India right now takes us on a roller coaster ride of emotions in this thriller. Kaali Venkat as the junior lawyer who helps Gargi has dished out one of the performances of the year. The movie is sure to haunt you for a few days after watching it.

**5** *Dollu* (Kannada)  
Director: Sagar Puranik

A simple film with a profound message. 'Dollu' focuses on the popular traditional art form of Karnataka's 'Dollu Kunitha' and how an artiste tries to preserve this tradition in his village when most of his friends are deserting him attracted by the glamorous city life. The film ends with a positive thought of breaking stereotypes to preserve our rich traditions and culture.

**6** *Vendhu Thanindhathu Kaadu Part I: The Kindling* (Tamil)  
Director: Gautham Vasudev Menon

Silambarasan and Gautham Vasudev Menon unite once again for a gangster flick this time. Although the story might seem a bit cliched for a movie about the Mumbai underworld, it is the way in which it is presented that makes all



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the difference. Add to it some fine music by A.R. Rahman and you are in for something special. You also get to see some delightful romantic scenes, well that's Gautham Vasudev Menon for you.



*Gangubai Kathiawadi* (Hindi)  
Director: Sanjay Leela Bhansali

This makes it to the list solely based on Alia Bhatt's performance. She delivers one of her career best roles as the mafia queen of Kamathipura. Sanjay Leela Bhansali's handling of the subject might seem a bit odd here and there while showing the red-light area with so much visual flair. But the film has its moments and is worth your time.



*RRR* (Telugu)  
Director: S S Rajamouli

SS Rajamouli's magnum opus is the quintessential *Grand Indian Masala Flick*. Made

on a whopping budget of around ₹550 crore, this is the most expensive Indian film till date. It is a package with everything that an average Indian movie-goer hopes for. A typical example of cinema transporting you to an imaginary world where every adventure seems possible for the protagonists and making you forget the hardships of daily life for some time.



*Bhoothakaalam* (Malayalam)  
Director: Rahul Sadasivan

The only horror film in this list. One of the finest horror films to come out of the Malayalam industry in recent times. Shane Nigam and Revathy excel as the mother-son duo who are facing psychological issues. The depressing tone of the movie and the pace at which everything unfolds might not be everyone's cup of tea.

### Special Mentions

*Puzhu* (Malayalam), *Badhaai Do* (Hindi), *Ponniyin Selvan: I* (Tamil) and *Kantara* (Kannada) ■