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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Varun Malhotra
Publisher & CEO



Dear Readers,

Indians dwelling in the land of diverse cultures, celebrated an array of festivals with joy the previous month. Hope you all had a joyous time with your families! Wouldn't you agree that festivities bring together families? With festivities reflecting India's rich culture, the nation is all geared up to exchange fruitful vows to enhance regional tourism and cultural tourism within the country. Showcasing the same, we have marshalled a series of festivals befalling in diversified states embellishing the Indian landscapes every year.

A plethora of states is displaying a promising future concerning Inbound tourism with an upsurge in new tourism spots. The Indian tourism industry is in full swing to promote India on the tourism front with ease in travel restrictions. Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and a few other northeastern states are on their toes to make it to the list of most visited Indian states by augmenting exquisite experiences for the globetrotters. We have strived to put together a few considerable experiences from the state of Madhya Pradesh, the heart of incredible India. Savour your time visiting the state.

Industry captains believe that the rebound closely being scrutinised in the hospitality sector must also be seen in domestic tourism and inbound tourism. However, the thrusting hospitality sector in India is propelling travel desire amongst travellers. Indian hospitality brands are seen offering unique and experiential stays following the warm concept of "Atithi Devo Bhava" meaning "a guest is equivalent to God". Hospitality in Indian culture is synonymous with the warm reception of guests. Hence, the hospitality sector in India is expanding its footprints in multifarious states catering to guests ardently. The hotels are resilient in offering the most experiential and comfortable staycations to tourists. Additionally, as rightly said, "Luxury lies in comfort", the explorers are seeking comfort in their stays.

The Indian states and hotel groups are travelling to WTM London 2022 this month, enticing the world with their warm hospitality. On the other hand, travel associations are working laboriously for the welfare of the travel trade fraternity and are seen putting a lid on the factors restricting the growth of Tourism- Inbound and Outbound keeping visa obstacles at prominence. Even though the challenges persist for visa issuance, there's no halt in being teleported to an enchanting emirate of the Middle East. TravelScapes have assayed distinctive and eccentric experiences to beam you into the world of this northernmost emirate.

At last, as we are closer to another year ending, a new year is about to begin with more promising travel endeavours.

Keep travelling! Keep exploring!

Share with us your valuable feedback and suggestions at varun@versatilemedia.in

Happy Reading!

Varun Malhotra

TravelScapes

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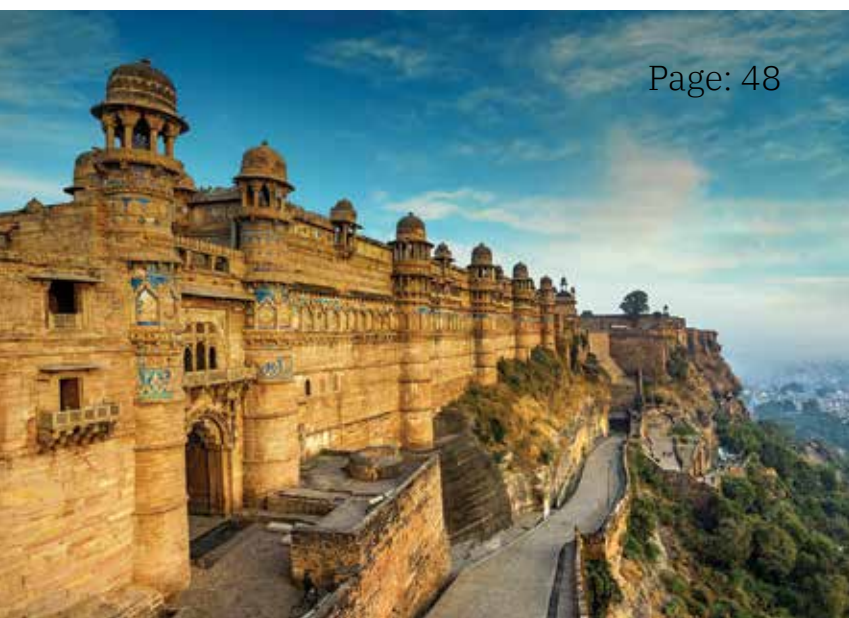
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Facets of Ujjain's 'Mahakal Lok'

Two grand gateways, a majestic colonnade of 108 ornate pillars made of intricately carved sandstones, gushing fountains and a running panel of over 50 murals depicting stories from Shiv Puran are among the major highlights of the 'Mahakal Lok' in Ujjain.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated on October 11, the first phase of the Rs 856-crore Mahakaleshwar Temple corridor development project here, located around 200 km from the state capital Bhopal.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan took stock of the preparations underway for the event on October 11 and oversaw dress rehearsal of various cultural

performances.

The over 900-meter-long corridor - 'Mahakal Lok' -- billed as one of the largest such corridors in India skirts around the old Rudrasagar Lake which has also been revived as part of the redevelopment project around the ancient Mahakaleshwar Temple, one of the 12 'jyotirlingas' in the country that gets devotees throughout the year.

Two majestic gateways - Nandi Dwar and Pinaki Dwar - separated by a short distance, have been erected near the starting point of the corridor, which winds its way to the entrance of the ancient temple and offers aesthetic views along the way.



Rajasthan set to launch Full Moon Tourism Campaign

In Rajasthan, the government intends to launch full moon tourism, where visitors can view clear skies in remote areas. Tourists will also be able to view the moon, stars, planets, and many other things that people miss in their everyday lives. According to officials, the state government's Department of Science & Technology (DST) has written a letter to the Department of Tourism.

Earlier this year, Rajasthan became the country's first state to introduce Astro-sky tourism. In all 33 districts of Rajasthan, the state government is organizing camps under the initiative.

Astro sky tourism has already approved the purchase of 38 telescopes under this context. Among the 33 stations, four

will be located in Jaipur at the Jantar-Mantar, Jaipur, Amber Fort, University of Maharaja, Jaipur, and JKK, which will serve as the venue for astronomical events this year," said the DST's outgoing secretary.

Besides bringing out hidden scientists among the students from villages and small towns, the DST is also planning to install telescopes throughout the country so visitors and residents can observe the moon, stars, and planets.



MP Tourism Board: Regional Convention FHRAI in Nashik

Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board (MPTB) participated in the 19th Regional Convention in Nashik organised by the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India (FHRAI). In the three-day event, the tourism board showcased possibilities in the hospitality and tourism industry and also invited them to invest in Madhya Pradesh.

Throwing light on the investment policy, Shukla said that the tourism board has tweaked its investment policies to prompt the private sector to directly invest in the state. "This is an agile, asset-light policy that is investment friendly. We will do some hand-holding for those who want to invest here through an investment cell created by the tourism board. We are also investing in film sector tourism, as well as other allied activities such as skilling and training."

Maharashtra to promote Kas as all-season tourist spot

The district administration of Satara announced that it will make Kas plateau an all-season tourist destination to provide earning source to the villagers in the area. The plateau, a world heritage site in Maharashtra gets most of its visitors during the flowering season in the months of September and October.

Satara district collector Ruchesh Jaywanshi said, "In

order to provide an earning source to the villagers of the Kas plateau area, the district administration is planning several activities that will attract tourism round the year. At present, tourists visit only during the flowering season. The climate at Kas stays cool and picturesque round the year. It has all the potential to become an all-season tourist destination."





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MP Tourism to start Narmada Parikrama tour

Spiritual tourism forms a crucial segment in the tourism industry and, on similar lines, the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Department has now announced the Narmada Parikrama tour. It's an initiative taken by the board to organise a religious tour all over the state along the banks of Mother Narmada.

The inauguration programme of the Narmada Parikrama has been held recently in Hotel MPT Kalchuri Residency, Jabalpur, as per reports. While speaking at the event, Vinod Gontia, the Chairman of Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, informed that the event will be organised in the auspicious

presence of priests and sages from Madhya Pradesh and all over India.

Revealing more on this tour, the board informed that lucrative packages starting from INR 63,000 to INR 78,000 are being given away for the tour, which will include accommodations, transportation, and three meals a day.

The tour will last for 15 days commencing from Jabalpur. It will also start from Indore/Bhopal, after which it will proceed to Ujjain, Omkareshwar, Rajpipla, Kathpor, Mithi Talai, Jhabua, Mandu, Maheshwar, Salkanpur, Jabalpur, Amarkantak, Mandla, Kareli, Hoshangabad, Omkareshwar before getting back to both the destinations.



Indian beaches listed amongst coveted blue beaches

India's commitment to protect and conserve the pristine coastal and marine ecosystems through holistic management of the resources, the globally recognized and the coveted International eco-label "Blue Flag", has been accorded to two new beaches - Minicoy Thundi Beach and Kadmat Beach- both in Lakshadweep. This takes the number of beaches certified under the Blue Flag certification to 12.

Announcing this proud moment in a Twitter message, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav expressed happiness and congratulated everyone stating that it is a part of India's relentless journey towards building a sustainable environment led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the people of Lakshadweep after Minicoy, Thundi Beach and Kadmat Beach made it to the coveted list of Blue Beaches, an eco-label given to the cleanest beaches in the world.

The former is one of the most scenic beaches in the Lakshadweep archipelago with hues of white sand mixed with turquoise & blue shade water by the lagoon, a paradise for swimmers and tourists. While the latter is popular with cruise tourists who visit the island for water sports. It is a paradise for nature lovers with its pearl white sand, blue lagoon waters, its moderate climate and friendly locals. Both beaches have designated staff for beach cleanliness, maintenance, safety and security of swimmers.



Visible upswing by 27 per cent in UP Tourism

Domestic tourism in Uttar Pradesh grows by 27 per cent in 2021-2022 as per a survey by the Union Tourism Ministry casting aside the shadow of the pandemic.

Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the second biggest contributor with over 16 per cent share of the national pie. Against 8.6 crore tourists in 2020-21, Uttar Pradesh was visited by 10.9 crore people in 2021-22. It is amongst the top ten states witnessing foreign tourist visits in 2021.

Principal Secretary, of Tourism, Mukesh Meshram said, "While the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor has become a magnet, the Ram Temple in Ayodhya will be the next big thing that will draw pilgrims. Tourist facilities in Mathura are also being revamped in a big way." Tour operators believe that the state will no longer be known for solely the Taj Mahal.

Prateek Hira, a member of the tourism and medical value travel committee, said, "In India, pilgrimage drives the domestic tourism

industry and UP being the birthplace of Ram and Krishna is a natural puller. Better roads and air connectivity in UP are also fuelling the weekend pilgrimage market which is sure to show up in the years to come."




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Pending Ticket Issuance

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Pending Refunds

Pending Payment

BOOKING REF	CLIENT NAME	BOOKING DATE	TRIP DATE	SERVICES	DESTINATION	STATUS
UT8806	Shishir Tour & Travels	12 Jan 2022	15 Mar 2022	Flight	DXB	Pending
UT8812	Patty Granderson	23 Jan 2022	22 Mar 2022	Flight	DXB	Pending
UT8818	Shizue Finnerty	28 Jan 2022	03 Mar 2022	Flight	DXB	Pending
UT8822	Guillermo Klutts	28 Jan 2022	10 Mar 2022	Flight	DXB	Pending
UT8836	Ressie Molinari	29 Jan 2022	11 Mar 2022	Flight	DXB	Pending

Create New Booking


Activities

New Activity

March 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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Domestic tourism in India witnesses rise during Diwali

While domestic destinations such as Goa, Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh and Kerala continue to be popular, short haul international vacations to Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia have also emerged as favourites among many travellers for long Diwali weekends among Indians.

"Diwali, Bhai Dooj and Govardhan Puja offer an attractive extended weekend that is propelling travel desire. Our data indicates a strong rebound with our demand pipeline surging by over three times for Diwali versus last year," Thomas Cook (India) Ltd President & Country Head Rajeev Kale said. As customers make the most of the five to nine days opportunity for a festive vacation with family and friends, he said, "Domestic

tourism is clearly on the upswing with the festive season witnessing a forward booking surge of 25 per cent compared to the previous year."

SOTC Travel President & Country Head - Holidays, Daniel D'Souza said pent-up travel desire is driving key demand and customer confidence is at an all-time high and Indians across segments are displaying increased interest to travel to their favourite destinations.

"Customers are keen to utilise the upcoming festive weekend and we have a strong pipeline of customers planning near-term travel - booking holidays 7-10 days in advance, an impressive uptick in last-minute bookers by over 70 per cent versus other weekends in the October-November period," he added.



SOTC Travel expands its network in Karnataka

A record 80 lakh tourists have visited Kashmir since January, the deputy commissioner's office in South Kashmir's Anantnag district has claimed.

"Kashmir is witnessing a 'golden period of tourism' as 80 lakh tourists have visited the UT in the past few months alone, breaking all the records of past 20 years," the Anantnag deputy commissioner's office said.

However, the figures quoted in the tweet are far from the actual number of tourists who visited the valley in the first five months of the calendar year.

According to officials in the tourism department, the number of tourists who have visited Kashmir this year is over nine lakh and is expected to cross



the 10-lakh mark by the end of June.

"If we are talking purely about people who have come as tourists, the numbers have crossed nine lakh from January 1 to May 31," an official of the department said on the condition of anonymity.

"We are talking about an average of 51,000 tourists every day. This is a little more than the listed bed capacity of all the hotels, guesthouses and houseboats in the valley," the official said.

Arunachal strengthens relation with Belarus and Tanzania

The Ambassador of India to the Republic of Belarus, Alok Ranjan Jha and High Commissioner of India to Tanzania's Binaya Srikanta Pradhan called on the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, B.D. Mishra at Raj Bhavan, Itanagar. They discussed the bilateral areas of interest of Arunachal Pradesh with the countries of their assignment.

The Governor emphasized on exploring avenues for enhancing tourism of the State and people-to-people contact so as to build a strong foundation for our relations with Belarus and Tanzania. He also stressed

development partnerships, educational linkages, and export and investment flow with both nations.

Arunachal Pradesh is bestowed with numerous ethnic tribes, traditions and heritage, accordingly, the Governor suggested Arunachali's cultural exchange programmes with the people of the two countries. He also shared about the State's abundant business and investment opportunities in the agro-industrial sector, mining, oil & gas, heavy machinery and equipment with the visiting Ambassador and High Commissioner.



Mandakini & Saraswati Asthpath boosts cultural tourism at Kedarnath

PPrime Minister Narendra Modi embarks on a visit to Uttarakhand's Kedarnath for the launch of various developmental projects.

With the construction of the two Asthpath, cultural tourism is expected to get a huge thrust in the region. The point where there is a confluence of Mandakini or Saraswati is called Sangam snan ghat in the Kedarnath temple. The devotees take a holy dip before going inside the temple to offer prayers. Two roads diverge from here which lead to the temple. The developmental

projects that are underway in Kedarnath include Mandakini Ashtpath and Saraswati Ashtpath, which were inspected by the Prime Minister.

Two separate bridges have been constructed from Sangam snan ghat to Mandakini Ashtpath and Saraswati Ashtpath, from where the devotees will enter the temple. Nearly eight buildings have been built with two floors each. Shops will be set up on the ground floor while the priests will be made to stay on the top floor.

Ropeway to ease travel between Kedarnath and Sonprayag

A ropeway between Sonprayag and Kedarnath shrine in Uttarakhand's Rudrapur district will come up to ease the travel of pilgrims soon. The National Board for Wildlife gave the much awaited development a nod which is most likely to provide a big boost to religious tourism in the state of Uttarakhand.

This will be longest ropeway in the world at an altitude of 11,500 feet above sea level stretching in the air for 13 kms from Sonprayag and Kedarnath. The ropeway will take just 60 minutes (1 hour) to reach its destination.

The estimated cost of the project will be over Rupees 1200 crores as the government plans to ease travel between the two important religious spots. Nearly 3,500 metres above the sea level, Kedarnath is located on the Garhwal Himalayan range near the Mandakini River in Uttarakhand's Rudrapur district. The temple is not directly accessible by road and has to be reached by a 22 km trek from Gaurikund, which takes whole day. The distance between Sonprayag and Gaurikund is 8 kms. Pony, and helicopter services are also available to reach the temple, currently.



Meghalaya to start Shillong-Dhaka flight service

The Meghalaya government will soon initiate flight services between Shillong and Dhaka. The service is being considered to boost tourism in the Northeast state of majestic beauty. In a press conference, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma stated the vast potential this route carries as it would also attract tourists from Bangladesh.

"Provided that we get the entire infrastructure and the required systems in place, we are hopeful that these kinds of things will happen," the CM said. Adding to that he also said that there are specific challenges to connect to international destinations and more should be done to link the North East to neighbouring countries by flight.



The region is around 90 minutes away from the capital cities of half a dozen countries and can prove to be an important zone of connectivity for India with the neighbouring Southeast Asian nations. Alongside this, the state is also looking forward to attract tourists from Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal and Bangkok by initiating further connectivity in Meghalaya.



Nagaland preps for magnificent Hornbill Festival

The 23rd edition of the 'Hornbill Festival' is set to begin from December 1 at the permanent venue in Naga Heritage Village, Kisama around 12 km away from the state capital Kohima. The vibrant celebration aims to preserve Nagaland's rich cultural heritage by showcasing its grandeur and glorious traditional values.

Advisor for Tourism and Art & Culture, H Khehovi Yephthomi chaired

a coordination meeting with the tribal hohos on the preparations for the festival, the annual tourism promotional event of the state government that brings together the Naga tribes. This will be the 23rd edition of the festival, which began in 2010.

"The celebrations were disrupted in 2020 and 2021, but this year's Hornbill Festival will be a grand affair with new ideas and concepts", Yephthomi said.



KSRTC announces new service to Kallippara

The Kerala State Road Transport Corporation announced a new service to Kallippara in Idukki district of Kerala where the Neelakurinji flower blooms. The stunning purple flowers are now attracting a large number of travellers and photographers to Kallippara, a part of the Western Ghats in Santhanpara panchayat.

The bus will operate from the Munnar depot of the

KSRTC starting its service at 9 am. From Munnar, the bus will reach Kallippara by 1 pm, taking the Anayirankal route. Passengers can spend two hours enjoying the sight of the purple blossoms covering the hills of western ghats. The return trip is scheduled to depart from Kallippara at 3 pm and arrive at Munnar depot by 6 pm. The tickets would cost rupees three hundred per person.

SAVOURING STAY IN THE AROMA OF LUXURY AT RENAISSANCE BENGALURU RACE COURSE HOTEL

In a conversation with Manisha Sharma, General Manager of Renaissance Bengaluru Race Course Hotel, TravelScapes triumphed in diving into the luxury experience of the hotel by Marriott Group. They hold their insightful belief in providing a holistic pleasurable experience to travellers, tailoring their products in accordance with the explorers

By Aanchal Sachdeva



Innovation in the hospitality sector has been blazing ahead rapidly, what new trends/initiatives can be seen in the upcoming years which might add spark to the existing and new properties?

As consumers' needs and priorities change, the hospitality industry like all other sectors must adapt. The market is shifting to an "Experience Economy", where the experience is at the forefront of the consumer's needs. Personalised and quick responsiveness for each guest from their arrival till their check out is crucial when building a holistically pleasurable experience. We must tailor our products and services to enhance the consumer experience. Incorporating technology within every facet of the experience is integral, whether that be through the analysis and understanding of big data to implement specific discounts/deals, or through incorporating smart technology throughout the hotel to create a smooth and seamless experience. Digitalization will allow us to enhance the experience provided to every guest through the elimination of certain negative aspects of a hotel experience such as long queues and waiting times while increasing safety. Somewhat counterintuitively, digitization will open up opportunities for staff to interact with guests more meaningfully. Furthermore, efficient data centralization and the ability to effectively understand the data will allow hospitality staff to better understand the feedback given.

How important is it to offer tourists more personalised and unique experiences now that they are more inclined towards staycations? What different and exquisite experiences are you providing for domestic and international tourists?

With more brands joining the hospitality space and the consumer market moving towards valuing experiences, the competition within the hospitality industry has never been fiercer. It is crucial to incorporate personalised and unique experiences to differentiate oneself from the competition and tap into all the possible markets. Hotels can give appropriate answers when they can better understand their

consumers' needs. As the world transitions into a 'Transformation Economy' it is imperative that hospitality industry players understand how this affects them. Individuals are travelling for an experience, and to become a better version of themselves. Therefore, unique and personalised experiences are the best ways to respond to this growing need, as well as tap into every niche market possible. Within this industry, guest satisfaction is the main priority. By offering unique and personalised services, hotels can cultivate loyal customers, gain a competitive edge, and improve the overall customer experience.

Responsible and sustainable travel is the key as per current travel trends, what strategies have you deployed in this direction?

As time passes, consumers have become more conscious of the problem of climate change and everyone's part in exacerbating it. Our worldwide community is considering methods to reduce our environmental effects across all industries, and hospitality is no different. Hence, there is a clear movement towards a preference by consumers for sustainable hotels. However, as a corporation, we feel that we have a moral obligation to do our part in helping the climate crisis. Therefore, we have pledged to consume less energy overall, and are working towards making sure that we can offset the energy consumption through sustainable practices. One of the ways this is being done is through the implementation of electric vehicles throughout our properties, which has already begun to be introduced across India. The bath amenities posed a challenge in terms of environmental sustainability as well, so we have changed the small and constantly disposed of bottles to larger ones. Finally, we are and aim to continue to minimise the food wastage which occurs.

A lot of brands are emerging in the hospitality industry offering experiential stays to travellers. How do you plan to retain your identity in the brand clutter?

Brand programs are the main tool we can employ to differentiate ourselves from

competitive brands throughout the industry. It is imperative to serve our loyal customers and ensure that they continuously have a good experience, while also giving recurring customers perks and bonuses to show how much they mean to us. From a purely financial standpoint, this method is more profitable than other marketing efforts such as price reduction or promotional campaigns. As a mature sector, the hotel industry must prioritise market share gains above market growth gains. Furthermore, we excel at helping guests connect with local brands and amenities, giving them an authentic yet luxurious experience. Enabling guests to spontaneously discover new places and form a genuine connection with the neighbourhood's latest and greatest is where we excel.

Which states do you see the most surge in? With Renaissance/Marriott Hotels adding new properties to its portfolio, which new destinations can we see tapped in the coming times?

Multiple classic and contemporary brands are upcoming within the Indian market, such as Edition and Moxy. These brands cater to the younger generation of Gen Z and Millennials and can tap into a target market which has a lot of potential within the coming years. It is extremely important to be able to appeal to younger generations of consumers by understanding their unique needs and priorities. Marriott as a multinational conglomerate itself has over 30 brands which allows it to cover all consumer segments and target markets. Due to the development of cities all across India, from Tier 1 cities such as Bangalore and Hyderabad to Tier 3 cities, the hospitality industry has been booming in every one of them. There is a huge market which is beginning to develop across India, for every type of consumer.



CURATE LIFELONG MEMORIES AT THE ANANTA UDAIPUR

The Ananta Udaipur is a 5-star resort magnificently cascading over 90 acres in the Aravalli Hills, with blossoming verdure, luxurious villas and a signature hospitality for a leisurely sojourn in the city of lakes.

Located in one of the most sought after wedding destinations in the world with two grand ballrooms, multiple sprawling lawns and an exclusive amphitheater Ananta Udaipur is an exquisite wedding resort. Our management teams, technologically well-equipped boardrooms and luxurious banqueting facilities ensure flawless corporate functions, meetings and rejuvenating company off-sites.



WELCOMHERITAGE HOTELS

A HOSPITABLE CONCOCTION OF HERITAGE AND ARCHITECTURE

India, the nation that promotes very warmly, the concept of 'Atithi Devo Bhava' with its incredible hospitality is now seeing an upswing in staycations. TravelScapes decided to collate ideas from one of the captains of the hospitality industry, Abinash Manghani, CEO of WelcomHeritage Hotels on the major crowd pullers offered to guests compelling them to savour their stay

By Aanchal Sachdeva



Innovation in the hospitality sector has been blazing ahead rapidly, what new trends can be seen in the upcoming years which might add spark to the existing and new properties?

Today, technology drives everything we do on a day-to-day basis. From Virtual and Augmented Reality to support customer services and experiences to increasingly sophisticated Internet of Things and Energy Saving Technologies, the extent of technology adaptation in hospitality operations is limitless. Even for a brand rooted in heritage and history like we are, keeping up with technology isn't just a matter of hygiene, but presents great opportunities to enhance our operations and experience. We emphasise regular upgrades and new additions to our technology portfolio. In addition to the common technology adoption such as contactless check-in, we've introduced Onefinerate: a digital platform that enables the distribution of WelcomHeritage Hotels room inventories and special rate plans directly to travel agents; Revinate, an Online Reputation Management tool that enables us to collate reliable, actionable data on guest satisfaction and hotel performance to be able to apply our learnings better and GetSimpl, a buy now, pay later facility that guests can choose whilst make a booking on our brand website.

Innovations towards sustainability as well as experience offerings for new perspectives and interest groups are also crucial to us.

How important is it to offer more personalised and unique experiences to tourists now that they are more inclined towards staycations? What different and exquisite experiences are you providing for domestic and international tourists?

While staycationing guests return for the consistency in the hospitality services we offer, they also look for re-refreshing perspectives that make their holiday yet another rejuvenating experience. For this, we've crafted varied experiences for them to choose from. Romantic sojourns focuses on

“

We are scaling our portfolio to include lesser-explored but fascinating destinations to showcase more of our rich heritage

-romantic escapes and experiences. Adventure Unleashed is designed for thrill seekers and adrenaline lovers. These experiences offer exciting activities while enjoying the absolute luxuries and comforts of our hotels. Re-live the Legacy transports guests through time to ages bygone. Similarly, we also offer Gourmet Tours, Royal Retreats, Nurture with Nature and Into the Wilderness.

Responsible and sustainable travel is the key as per current travel trends, what strategies have you deployed in this direction?

WelcomHeritage is taking significant strides towards aligning with Sustainable practices with initiatives such as increasing the use of renewable energy through solar power and installing EV stations and smart-energy sensors for electricals. We're working towards eliminating and replacing single-use plastic, going paperless, and offering locally sourced food, rainwater harvesting, and waste treatment plants. We've adopted a stringent sustainable design approach by ensuring no trees are cut or harmed during construction. Our architecture now follows a mix of traditional and modern sustainable architectural elements, featuring regional materials.

We see quite a progressive shift in the attitude of our guests concerning how we, as hotels, respond and interact with the environment around us.

A lot of brands are emerging in the hospitality industry offering experiential stays to travellers. How do you plan to retain your

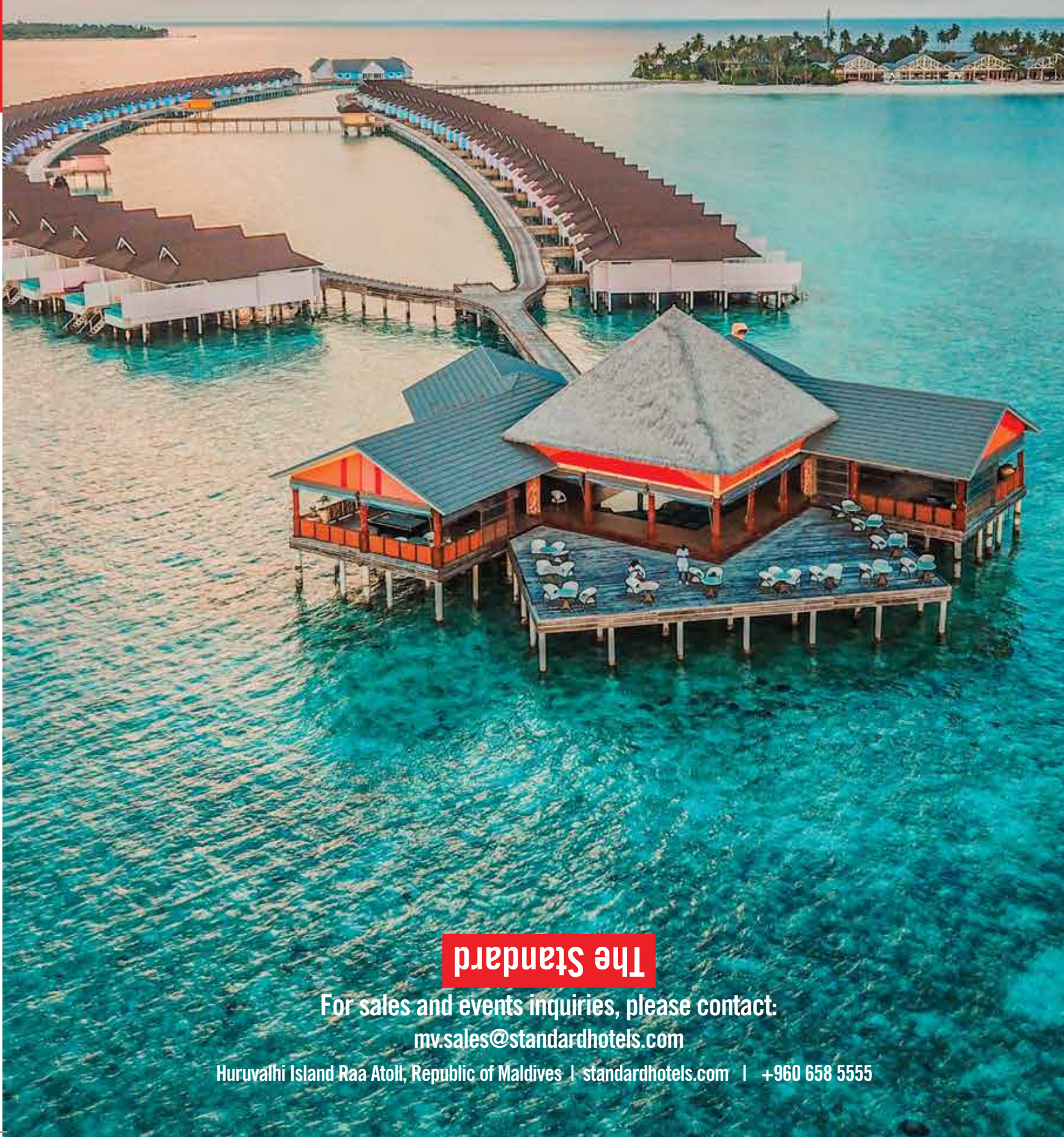
identity in the brand clutter?

Our innovative, intuitive offerings and agile initiatives allow us to stay unique, and relevant and the choice of hotel for our guests and trade partners. The 'Buy now, Pay later' scheme that we recently announced, a first-of-its-kind in the industry is a hit among old and new guests. We're scaling our portfolio to include lesser-explored but fascinating destinations to showcase more of our rich heritage. Integrating select and suitable technologies for smoother operations with our trade partners and guest services has already shown very positive results. Our sustainable initiatives are not just well received and respected by our guests but it is proving instrumental in reaching out to new markets as well as building and deepening a longer-term relationship with them.

Which states do you see the most surge in? With WelcomHeritage Hotels adding new properties to its portfolio, which new destinations can we see tapped in the coming times?

We've seen a jump in hill destinations. While our presence in North India is strong with 22 properties only across Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Rajasthan, we're consciously exploring the South to cater to the growing interest in this region. We have three planned openings coming soon, WelcomHeritage Azora in Fort Kochi, WelcomHeritage Ayatana in Ooty and WelcomHeritage Parv Vilas Resort & Spa, Kasauli Hills in Solan.

We're also looking at expanding our presence in East India. We plan to have 65 hotels by FY 2025-26 with 2500 keys in all.



The Standard

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IMMERSE IN THE STERLING LUXURY OF LE MERIDIEN KOCHI

FOSTERING THE PRESENT DAY AND AGE
TOWARDS A TRANSITIONAL FUTURE

Mervin Mathew, Director of Sales and Marketing, Le Meridien Kochi elucidates on how experiential stays are in vogue making travellers more conscious about their choice of hotel stays. Struggling times have resulted in an aggravated thirst for experiencing new and rekindling old. TravelScapes has endeavoured to collate what Le Meridien has in store for explorers...

By Aanchal Sachdeva

Innovation in the hospitality sector has been blazing ahead rapidly, what new trends can be seen in the upcoming years which might add spark to the existing and new properties?

Innovation is an imperative part of the growth journey for every industry. We foresee a further penetration of technology in the enhancement of the customer experience. There can be a lot less dependency on people in the future. Artificial intelligence will play an important role in the overall transition of the industry. It will help the hotels in understanding the customers better and engaging the overall customer experience.

How important is it to offer tourists more personalized and unique experiences now that they are more inclined towards staycations?

Experiential travel is a growing segment in the hospitality industry. With the availability of multiple options, it's becoming all the more important to offer more in terms of experiences. With the increase in disposable incomes, people today want to travel and

“ Innovation is an imperative part of the growth journey for every industry

explore different experiences that a city and a hotel has to offer.

Responsible and sustainable travel is the key as per current travel trends, what strategies have you deployed in this direction?

Sustainable and responsible travel is an initiative for a better and healthy future. Every brand needs to be mindful of its environment and take action to make sure there is minimal negative to its environment. As a brand, introducing vegan menus, saying no to plastic, promoting public transportation, and taking initiatives to save water can be a couple of initiatives that can be taken up at a micro level

to promote sustainable and responsible travel.

A lot of brands are emerging in the hospitality industry offering experiential stays to travellers. How do you plan to retain your identity in the brand clutter?

Marriott hotels is the largest and most reputed hotel chain in the world with 30 brands spread across more than 130 countries.

Marriott as a brand has always been known for its impeccable hospitality and that's what separates us from all the other hotel chains.

We are the ones who set standards in the industry and the rest follow. Our goal is to deliver the best service to our patrons so that whenever they think of a hotel stay, they think of us.

ABOUT THE HOTEL

Style, comfort and sophistication blend effortlessly at Le Méridien Kochi. The hotel is situated on sprawling 18 acres, surrounded on each side by the calming Kochi backwaters. You'll feel right at home in the resort's rooms or suites featuring deluxe bedding, a flat-screen TV, a mini-fridge and a coffee maker. Business travellers to Kochi will appreciate an ergonomic workspace. Kerala's most celebrated destination for business and social events alike, with 60,000 square feet of exquisite banquet space can accommodate up to 5,000. The serene on-site Ayurveda spa, two distinctive hotel restaurants, a chic bar, a fitness centre and a pool ensures we are the preferred hotel for both tourists and business travellers.

ABOUT THE SPOKESPERSON

Mervin Mathew works with Marriott for the last 4 years and he seeks to work in an environment that will challenge him every day. This has helped him to prove himself in his personal growth and the success of the organization. His skills and past exposure to the betterment of the industry expanded his leadership abilities and improve organizational productivity to exceed corporate goals.

CORA CORA[®]

Maldives

it's freedom time



A PARADISAL VISTA OF PALLADIUM

Palladium Hotel Group brings a paradise within the reach of travellers chasing unique and fresh luxury experiences. **Sandra Polo Canudas, Asia & MEA Commercial Director, Palladium Hotel Group** takes us on the journey of the hospitality group levelling up the standards in this direction

By Aanchal Sachdeva

What is your outlook for Palladium Hotel Group in the upcoming future?

It is great to see the hospitality sector recovering and reaching pre-COVID levels. We at the Palladium Hotel Group too concluded our summer season with strong results, a very optimistic outlook and outcomes exceeding the group's cautious initial forecasts.

Despite the various travel challenges, restrictions and implementation of the necessary health and safety measures, the 2022 season for us has developed in a very positive way and has allowed us to achieve our key objectives to lay a strong foundation for 2023.

We were able to reopen the doors of all the company's hotels in Spain; later, we exceeded the initial occupancy forecasts and we also celebrated two new openings including the first TRS Hotel in Europe located in Ibiza and a new hotel under the Hardrock Hotel brand at Marbella in 2022.

We all know how important it is to offer guests the most exclusive and new experiences. How is the Palladium Hotel Group levelling up the accommodation standards in this direction?

Palladium Hotel Group is a company with more than 50 years of experience in the hotel sector. The group was born with the dream of bringing paradise to travellers and offering them incredible experiences with a clear commitment to innovation and excellence.

Through this, we personalize the experience of our guests by designing exclusive accommodations with personalities where quality and service are fundamental pillars along with experiences.

We are constantly working to improve and surpass the holiday experiences of travellers from all over the world and to adapt and personalise our offers and services. In this regard, we strive to improve our internal processes and raise our standards. We are also known for placing people at the heart of our core business. They are the main value of everything we do and care for. People are the key to fulfilling our mission: "to turn customers into fans".

Given this changing market scenario, what marketing strategies are planned for Indian guests?

The Indian market continues to be a priority market for Palladium Hotel Group. We have been remarkably active in the market via our representatives' Global Destination as we continue our endeavour to connect and

“With changing travel mindset, we are happy to provide Indian clients with more experiential travel opportunities”



strengthen their association with the Indian Market. We have been present in the Market since 2014 and clearly understand Indian clients and their requirements. The change we have seen is that now Indian clients are more open to experimenting, discovering and exploring newer locations as well as indulging in gastronomical experiences. With changing travel mindset, we are happy to provide Indian clients with more experiential travel opportunities like that of TRS Hotel Ibiza. We see that this product is a new Hotel in Ibiza that will bring another opportunity to experiment and live on another side of Ibiza.

Since 2021, what kind of demand have you experienced as the world is recovering from the pandemic outbreak?

Palladium Hotel Group is a hotel chain with 41 hotels and 9 different brands. Every brand has its personality and thus a different USP.

In 2022 we exceeded the share of Indian clients at Palladium Hotel Group vs arrivals into Spain in 2019. We are confident to further the percentage of Indian clients coming into our properties in 2023.

What role do you think social media plays in hotel marketing? How are you leveraging this platform?

Today, social media as a medium plays an inevitable role and holds a very significant place in any hospitality groups marketing plans and strategies. It is no different for us at the Palladium Hotel Group. We are extremely active across all our social channels keeping our audiences engaged, informed and involved with the brand.

During the highs and lows that the global hospitality industry has experienced over these last two years, what new trends have you observed taking the front seat? Any sustainable practices that the Palladium Hotel Group is implementing at the moment?

Post the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a dynamic shift in trends across the hospitality sector with adopting a sustainable approach becoming the need of the hour.

Palladium Hotel Group continues to reinforce its firm commitment to sustainability with a structured approach to three fundamental areas: the environment, the circular economy and the social sphere. Present in six countries around the world, we have announced new advances in all our hotels globally, including advocating renewable energies, the reduction of plastics, and a focus on working and supporting local producers.

Are any promotional initiatives planned for the year ahead?

We have a whole lot of trade and consumer initiatives planned for 2022-23. We aim to focus our energies on regular engagement activities with the trade through sales calls, product updates, educational training/webinars, and reward programmes for our priority partners, keeping the trade abreast with the latest developments and information. In addition to this, we are looking to organise 'trade and media family trips' to our hotels to build confidence and exposure for our brands in India.

THE RISING PHOENIX

CONSCIOUS LUXURY IS THE WAY FORWARD, SAYS COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT AHMEDABAD – SINDHU BHAWAN ROAD

Post-pandemic, travellers are more conscious of what they invest in. That might mean smaller, more intimate holidays or an alternative style of luxury where it is possible to combine a luxury experience with respect for the environment and local communities. To give a peek into the conscious attempts of reviving hospitality post-pandemic, Zulfiqar Ali, General Manager, Courtyard by Marriott Ahmedabad – Sindhu Bhawan Road reveals his insights and ambitions with us

By Tavishi



Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a notable transformation in three key areas – enhancement in sustainability practices, infrastructure upgrades matching the current world scenario, and elevation of the guest experience from the standpoint of heightened sanitation and hygiene. Courtyard by Marriott Ahmedabad – Sindhu Bhawan Road is the best choice for hosting high-profile state delegations, corporate leadership summits and celebrity visits. Designed with sophistication

that allows them to decrease their ecological footprint. Courtyard by Marriott Ahmedabad – Sindhu Bhawan Road, part of Marriott Bonvoy's portfolio of 30 hotel brands, is one such hotel that ticks all the boxes in terms of conservation, engagement and sustainable practices.

The hotel has also been working to reduce its carbon footprint in other areas, like the removal of the usage of single plastics. It has adopted machinery that consumes less energy. The hotel derives its power from Torrent, which

“Luxury travellers today are demanding not just a room with a view but also tourism with a conscience

Conscious luxury is having its moment in the sun. Confined to their homes for close to two years, the new-age luxury traveller has re-evaluated what luxury means to them and is choosing hospitality brands that reflect those values. Two values are being prioritised over others – authenticity and a responsibility to the planet.

Personalised experience in Authentic Spaces

Travellers today want to make their vacation count and are increasingly looking for authentic experiences that are personalised to them. Brands that curate personalised offerings for their guests at every touch point are seeing greater demand, thanks to this need for authenticity. Luxury for Courtyard by Marriott Ahmedabad – Sindhu Bhawan Road has always been about personalisation. Through uplifting spaces and curated experiences, the hotel endeavours to offer best-in-class hospitality to all their independent, forward-thinking guests who may want to pursue their personal and professional passions while on the road.

Tour de force of 'Conscious Luxury'

It is a no brainer that following the

and attention to refinement, the hotel ensures a safe, clean and hygienic experience for its diverse and elegant clientele. It is safe to say that here, cleaning is the new amenity.

Towards a Sustainable Future

Luxury travellers today are demanding not just a room with a view but also tourism with a conscience. Post-pandemic, they are increasingly looking for a destination and stay

hardly goes off once a year.

The age of Green Hotels

Over the last two years, the green hotel has been striving to adopt a holistic, eco-friendly approach by hosting non-smoking rooms and electric vehicle charging stations. One such step that they implemented was taking a more thoughtful approach to dine and how best they can reduce food wastage. To control and monitor food waste, the hotel uses a Marriott International proprietary software called MESH which helps track food wastage in the hotel and helps in identifying areas of improvement.

Courtyard by Marriott Ahmedabad – Sindhu Bhawan Road is an IGBC Green New Building. It holds a gold position in the Indian Green Building Council for the term 2021-2024.

Exclusive Staycation and Travelling

Safety remains a priority for travellers and having survived multiple Covid-19 waves, travellers are more conscious of safety today and choose to patronise brands that are mindful of it. Driven by this demand for personal space and exclusivity, luxury travel is seeing a boom that is not likely to subside soon.



CORA CORA MALDIVES

A LITTLE SLICE OF HEAVEN



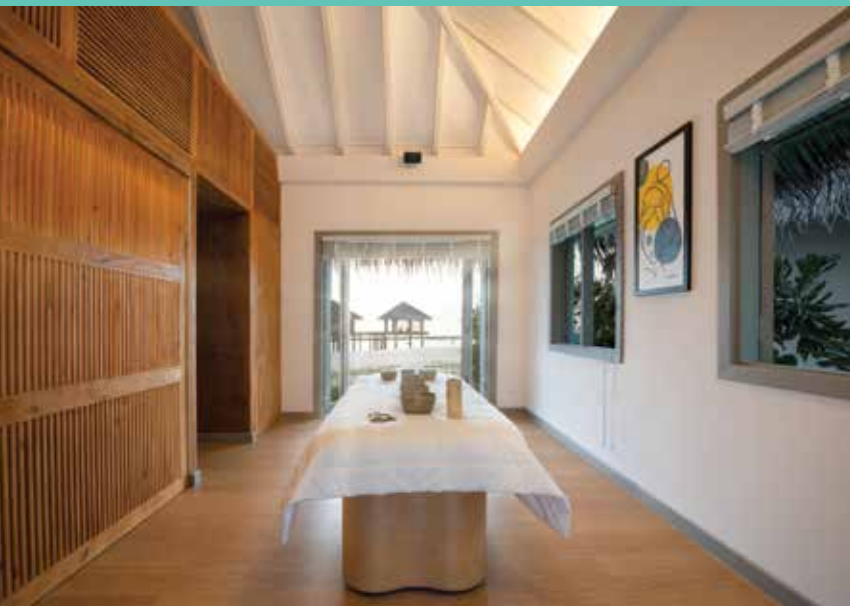
Wake up to the sound of ocean waves lapping outside your window. Stroll out of your bedroom and glide straight into the water. Spend all day doing whatever you like, whenever you like. It's all included, so you can relax in island life. Cora Cora Maldives, an excellent property outfitted with all the modern elements is a go-to place to rejuvenate yourselves with family and friends. The awe-inspiring ambience can take your heart to another level. The cooperative staff is always at your service, from luxury spaces to breath-taking exteriors; from spa to sauna bath; from contemporary to happy meals; from a gorgeous pool to unending entertainment. You won't miss any premium amenities to enjoy and relax. It proves to be a 'Feast for the eyes' for its ever-so-welcoming ambience. The guests can enjoy the sound of ocean waves lapping outside the window. Rediscover the fun of freedom at Cora Cora Maldives!

Make shore you have a memorable holiday

The private island is packed with bold experiences you'll treasure for a lifetime. You're free to explore the heritage, hit the water and zone out in the spa. A peek into the past and heaps of watersports are all one can do hands-on, so you can take your pick without a care in the world. Have the luxury of experiencing the bliss of a little me-time inclusive yoga classes. They are the history makers for their unique Museum of Island Heritage – Dutch Onion® showcases findings from the island dating back nearly a millennium.

Live life king size

Frolic in the sea, just steps from your bedroom. Flop on your deck's sun lounger and feel the sun lift your spirits as you catch up on downtime. Run yourself a massive bubble bath and have a splash in the tub. Offering an array of natural-beauty villas at Cora Cora Maldives, they help you rediscover the joy of life unlimited. Flop onto your king-sized bed in the beach villa, and the only sounds you'll hear are birds flitting between the palm trees above the thatched roof. Catch sunrise with coffee on the deck, then play all day on the beach below. A plethora of other categories of villas such as beach pool villas, beach pool suites and lagoon pool villas offer you to chill in the private pool with the beach at your feet and sea breezes in your hair. Being the ultimate choice for





“ Kick off your shoes, let down your hair and soak up the sea air. Your mood will lift as soon as your feet hit our private island’s white-sand shores

wannabe mermaids and mermen with the seductive sound of the sea and the non-stop soundtrack to your stay. These villas are no less than a heavenly stay. Hedges of fragrant shrubs and tropical flowers ensure total privacy, so one can relish the freedom of hopping between the pool and deck. The freedom to unwind with gorgeous ocean or garden views from every room - that’s the joy of these sprawling suites, with one bedroom and a separate living room. Beach bunnies of all ages will adore these villas. Fabulously fun for couples and young families.

Each villa is created with comfort in mind and set between the tropical vegetation and sparkling waters of the Indian Ocean. The Beach Villas are positioned on a sugar-soft, white, sand beach offering a mesmerizing view and the Lagoon Villas offer a truly romantic experience perched above the crystal waters.

Carpe diem carpe adventure

As you fly in, the allure of the sparkling sea is utterly irresistible. You can swim in it to your heart’s content, of course, but they’ll help you go further. Grab a board, snorkel or kayak, hit the water and feel the freedom of a world without boundaries. Stop by the Watersports Centre, then hop straight out into the bath-warm sea. Pop on a mask and some flippers, and plunge into the extraordinary underworld of our House Reef. Glide across the water with the sun on your face on a stand-up paddleboard or kayak. Or go further, faster, wilder with a spot of windsurfing. For a blast of unbridled energy, jet-skiing, waterskiing, wakeboarding and knee-boarding are all available, including scuba diving and motorboat trips.

Romanticizing culture

The island has been welcoming visitors for more than 900 years. Step this way to peek into a time when the island bustled and hustled with travellers who stopped by for a different reason. Ships sailed the Spice Routes, and our atoll was the ideal spot to stop, do a little trading, restock and wait for the weather and winds to turn in their favour. In the centre of the island, explore the outdoor site, where ancient memorials back from 500 years can be seen, and perhaps the most extraordinary find on the island - two temple tanks thought to be around 900 years old. Finally, a 120-year-old traditional Maldivian house, with displays of traditional island life in the 1900s, gives a sense of what it might be like to live on Maamigili- island year round.

Detox inside out

The freedom to play, move or just chill out. There could be nothing better than taking care of yourself. Moksha® Spa and Wellbeing Center is the place at the resort to ease your body with great services. Worked up a thirst? A range of nutritious vegan Moksha® Cuisine, wellness cocktails, smoothies and energy will nourish you from the inside out. Desperate to unwind? They help you distress and feel good all over with our signature spa rituals. Enter the tranquil space of one of our seven treatment rooms - four overwater, three on the island, with a mix of couples’ and singles’ spaces.

Savour everything with love

Beautiful, flavourful and with indulgent choices, spoil yourself for a wide range of dining experiences. A team of more than 80 food and drink specialists ensure that your dining experiences are world-class. With four restaurants, and two bars, one of which is a café and ice cream stop. Acquapazza® adds the glamour of an Italian beach club with a welcoming Maldivian vibe. Recline under a beach umbrella and grab a seat at a table on the deck as you choose from the delicious portions of pasta, risotto, seafood, meat and vegetable-based main dishes. The flavours of the ancient Spice Route plus timeless comfort-food favourites in Tazaa®, the all-day indoor-outdoor sunset-view dining venue. Experience the sizzling energy of an Asian street market at the exciting dinner restaurant, Ginger Moon®. Platters and bowls of vibrant vegetables, tender meats and zingy herbs are prepared in front of you in the open kitchen and made to order just as you like. Romance the night away in this seductive Japanese restaurant, Teien®. Keep it casual at the sushi counter, where you’ll be served delectable seafood.



THE RESURGENCE OF REGIONAL SOJOURNS

“INBOUND TOURISM –WHAT LIES AHEAD”

This year, IATO is travelling to the multicultural city of Lucknow popular for a seamless blend of the medieval and modern, welcoming the delegates from the travel fraternity with open arms. The city with delectable delicacies and rich architecture is primed to host a plethora of tour operators alongside other stakeholders rendering a valuable platform for them to amplify travel business in the country. IATO's president, Rajiv Mehra, sees a silver lining in exploring the theme of 'INBOUND TOURISM – What Lies Ahead'. The 37th convention will aid the industry in realising the tourism potential of the northern states of India. The convention will bring the strong cluster of Indian tourism together including senior officials from the Ministry of Tourism, and tourism and hospitality professionals. In addition, having the government already broadening the travel horizon of northern states including Uttar Pradesh building with both traditional and niche tourism products, TravelScapes gathers what the industry stalwart has to say about the spark of the growing dominant slice of the nation

By Aanchal Sachdeva





“The industry is looking up to businesses leaving Covid behind and at the IATO Convention, the setting is apt with the theme of ‘INBOUND TOURISM – What Lies Ahead’”

As the president of IATO, what are the significant benchmarks you have set to accomplish with IATO's 37th Convention?

During deliberations at the convention, I would like to fructify certain significant benchmarks.

- Announcement of physical road shows in target countries under the leadership of the Ministry of Tourism.
- Reduction in airfares by reducing taxes on ATF by the center and the State Governments;
- Discussion on the restoration of e-Tourist Visa for international travellers from the countries such as the UK, Canada, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain etc.
- Validity of 5 lakh free tourist visa to be extended till March 2024.
- The participating states kindly consider giving space to tour operators outside the state as a part of their team going for the road shows as these tour operators also promote the states of India.
- To continue SEIS for the Tour Operators in the forthcoming Foreign Trade Policy 2022-27.

What is the theme planned for this year's convention?

The theme for our 37th Annual Convention is 'INBOUND TOURISM – What Lies Ahead'.

The previous IATO Convention drew a great amount of traction in the tourism industry, what is your agenda for the organization of the IATO Convention this year?

The agenda is to focus on the theme and seek viable inputs from the Ministry of Tourism, participating states and key players in the private sector comprising leading tour operators and hotel chains. The networking luncheons and dinners would stimulate the required interaction.

In your opinion, will the city of Lucknow and the state of Uttar Pradesh experience a boost in tourism with the convention?

With the inaugural address by the Honourable Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, a strong band of 700 plus tour operators at the convention deliberating and participating in the key business and State Presentations, a session on Uttar Pradesh, culminating in the post-convention tours at the strategic tourist sites of Uttar Pradesh catering to onsite marketing of the destinations of Uttar Pradesh, the city of Lucknow and the state of Uttar Pradesh would certainly experience a boost in tourism with the convention.

As IATO is the common medium between the decision-makers and the industry, are we looking forward to any initiatives taken by the government in support of the association? What are your expectations from the government in terms of tourism

facilitation?

The participation of the Ministry of Tourism, the Government of India and the State Governments are in itself huge support to IATO. Their inputs at the deliberations and informal networking also add that requisite meaningful angle. The expectations from the government in terms of tourism facilitation have already been outlined.

What are the changes you are expecting in the tourism industry with this year's convention? What opportunities will the convention offer to the delegates of the travel and tourism sector?

The Industry is looking up to businesses leaving Covid behind and at the IATO Convention, the setting is apt with the theme of the convention. The Convention will offer opportunities to the delegates in the form of a well-appointed inaugural, crafted Business Sessions, and a Special Session by UP Tourism and State Presentations. The participation by the policymakers and the stalwarts from the private sector would offer ample opportunities and input for the delegates.

Are there any panel discussions and sessions planned?

Yes, there will be a Business Session in key areas of tourism in the format of a Panel Discussion, Presentation will be made by the Participating States and there would be a special session on Uttar Pradesh Tourism.

Tracking Cultural Tourism in India



Deepotsav - The Lamp Fest in Ayodhya

Breaking its own record, Ayodhya city bagged the Guinness World record yet again for the 'largest display of oil lamps' by lighting more than 15.76 lakh earthen lamps at Ram ki Paidi during the last day of the Deepotsav celebrations. Witnessing the festival of lights in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya city tops the bucket list of pilgrims and cultural enthusiasts alike who are in search of a marvelous experience of celebrations combined with deep devotion.



Holi in the Holy land of Barsana

Holi being the festival of colours is celebrated across Northern India with great pomp and show as gulaal is smeared and blown in the air. People in Brij Bhoomi have their own means of marking the grandeur of the festival. In Barsana, the village of Radha Rani with a temple dedicated to her on top of the Brahmagiri Hills mark the initiation of the Holi festivity on a sweet note, as Bundi Laddoos of bright yellow colour is playfully thrown at each other in the temple premises.



Hornbill Festival in Nagaland

The Hornbill Festival, one of the largest celebrations of Nagaland is annually celebrated in the state to honour the indigenous warrior tribes. The festival provides with an unbeatable opportunity to visit and experience the uniqueness of the Naga tribe and spend some time with the locals. The festival is packed with enchanting medleys that immortalize love stories, folk tunes and gospel songs to be cherished. The festival is named after Hornbill, the signature bird species in the state.



Vallam Kali – Boating in Keralite backwaters

India's very own boat race is different from others, celebrated with not just sportsmanship but as an ode to the gods. Vallam Kali, the boat racing religious ritual ropes in the devotees and spirited young men to participate in the group boating championship by the people in the race to honour the gods. The activity is a part of annual Onam celebrations in the state of Kerala, also known to be God's own country. The festival's rich history adorns it with the sentiment of the people of the land.

As the festivities adorned and gushed Indian landscape, the prospect of cultural tourism took a major leap to attract tourists from across the world. With the relaxation of pandemic norms and hurdles, the tourism industry is on its way to heal and grow with a mine of tourism prospects. As the travel fraternity turns new leaf, cultural tourism stands out as an immersive experience for travel enthusiasts around the world. To begin with, Indians come forward with gusto to celebrate diverse cultures...

By Tavishi

Soaring high with kites in Jaipur

The kite flying festival in India falls on January 14 every year observing the arrival of spring and the transition of the sun into the Capricorn sign (also known as Makar Rashi and celebrated on Makar Sankranti). Makar Sankranti is considered as the most hyped harvest festival in India as it commemorates Goddess Sankranti's triumph over the evil demon Sankarasur. The riotous celebration of flying kite adorns the sky with vibrant hues and cheerful calls of victory.



In the abode of Himalayas- The Hemis festival

Marking the birth of Guru Padmasambhava Cham Dance and other traditional dances are performed in Hemis Monastery on the beats of drums, cymbal and other authentic Tibetan music instruments. On both days, giant thangkas (Buddhist paintings) are unfurled for the public. Every 12th year, the largest thangka in Ladakh is unfurled in Hemis on the first day of the festival attracting visitors from across the world.



The Mystic Mysore Dusshera

The 10-day festival is witnessed during Navratri in the state of Karnataka during which the entire city gets drenched in the religious aura. It is a cultural extravaganza drawing visitors from around the world in large numbers. As per mythology, Goddess Chamundeshwari defeated the demon Mahishasura which gave the city the name Mysuru. The most significant highlight of Mysuru Dasara remains to be Jambu Savari or the elephant procession.



Cheering the Holy Chariot

Known as Chariot Festival this is one of the most awaited festival of India. The celebration of this day starts much earlier that comprises the construction and decoration of the Raths or Chariot by numerous devotees and volunteers. The three chariots which are highlights of the entire Yatra are pulled by strings. The Rath Yatra entices devotees and tourists to witness the grand celebration filled with cultural performances.



“REDISCOVER YOURSELF”

with TUI’s tailor-made tours



TUI, a German tourism operator group shelters strong tour operators, travel agencies and online portals, airlines, hotels, cruise liners and a wide range of incoming agencies in various holiday destinations around the globe. TravelScapes in a conversation with **Jordi Cerdo, Chief Strategy Officer, TUI MM** draws both a global and local view on the travel market. He speaks on how they are enabling seamless and connected journey of explorers providing services in the destination via reps in addition to the TUI Digital Assistant

By *Aanchal Sachdeva*

What added value do you offer to your customers?

Our services start from the moment a client arrives in the country, right through until they depart. In addition to top accommodation and transportation, our focus is on experiences, including one or half day excursions, activities, and attraction tickets, as well as multi-day tours. We deliver value through our exceptionally high-quality service delivery, our range of truly unique and meaningful excursions - many of which are custom crafted for specific clients, and state of the art technology that is enhancing the distribution, personalisation and delivery of experiences.

What innovations are you bringing on the table in order to provide the best products in the market?

Our “Storybooks with a twist” series of immersive tours see guests visit a destination in a way inspired by bestselling novels, such as ‘White Mughals’ or ‘Into Thin Air’. Our “Rediscover Yourself” tailor-made trips help clients disconnect digitally and focus on themselves and their travel experiences, such as village visits and Himalayan retreats, while the ‘PureQuest Trails’ offer adventure, including driving experiences and hikes to less travelled regions with expert guides.

How crucial do you think the wealth of experience is for your team?

How are you working in this direction?

The combination of our local teams’ knowledge, the experience of our suppliers and the wealth of expertise within the wider TUI Group is unrivalled. Product development, customer service, digital innovation, strategy, sustainability, health and safety, contracting – we have access to local and international experts to cover every area. In India specifically, we work with an ever growing number of the best suppliers and local experts, all of which complement our own knowledge. At an international and global level, we collaborate with our TUI colleagues to understand customer insights and best practices from across the world.

How have you nurtured your relationship with the travel fraternity post pandemic?

We have all been through two very tough years. Communication is key and we continually engage in open discussions with our industry partners and colleagues. A lot of this has been done virtually, but with the ever-increasing number of events and sales trips we are excited about reconnecting in person on a regular basis.

“Our services start from the moment a client arrives in the country, right through until they depart

How do you think you’re making a difference in the travel industry? What is your USP amongst other travel entities?

Travellers are seeking meaningful experiences – those that include interaction with local communities, support small businesses or projects, and are carried out in an environmentally and culturally responsible way. We already have a successful track record in developing these experiences, but have strengthened our focus in this area, helping us make a difference in the travel industry, and differentiating us from other businesses.

Our other USP is technology. As part of the TUI Group, we can leverage some of the latest innovations in travel technology, both in-house developed and through collaborations with some of the world’s leading travel tech startups. This enables us to offer more convenience and efficiency for our partners and customers

– connected trips, contactless payments, simple search and booking of experiences, to name just a few of the benefits.

What strategies have you formulated post-pandemic to manage crisis resulting in operational success in terms of inbound tourism?

We have built a large portfolio of clients from varied source markets to diversify risk. The pandemic also spurred us to reevaluate the key areas of our business, resulting in a leaner and more agile organisation with a stronger focus on the key areas that will deliver sustainable long term business growth. Combined with the support of great partners and suppliers, overseas and within our destinations, and the backing of TUI Group, and you have very strong foundations for success.

What are the wide range of products and services you provide?

GERMAN NATIONAL TOURIST OFFICE ORGANISES INDIA WEEK 2022 WITH GERMAN PARTNERS IN MUMBAI AND DELHI

The German National Tourist Board (GNTB) is Germany's national tourism organisation. It works on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action to represent Germany as a tourist destination and is funded by the Ministry in accordance with a decision taken by the German Bundestag. Working closely with the German travel industry and private-sector partners and trade associations, the GNTB develops strategies and marketing campaigns to promote Germany's positive image abroad as a tourist destination and to encourage tourists to visit the country.

Germany, the diverse travel destination, launched its Autumn/Winter campaign, encouraging travellers to visit, explore, and experience its sustainable and diverse culture. From unspoilt landscapes to authentic cuisine, urban attractions to historical locales, Germany is the ultimate European destination to travel sustainably. The 'Feel Good' campaign encompasses a plethora of guiding tips highlighting the country's eco initiatives providing conscious travellers with adequate tools and information on reducing their carbon footprint while touring different regions. With the German Environment Agency having set the goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 65 per cent by 2030, and complete neutrality by 2045, the German National Tourism Board is consistently supporting this goal through various ongoing initiatives with one of them being the 'Feel Good' Campaign.

"Germany will continue to position itself as one of the Indian's all-time favourite destinations with easy accessibility and



valuable tourism experiences that can cater to all travel desires. For Indian market, we will focus on creating awareness and offering eco-friendly and sustainable 'things to do to promote Germany as a responsible and sustainable tourism destination', said **Romit Theophilus, Director the German National Tourist Office, India.**

The GNTB has a three-pronged recovery strategy for overcoming the challenges of the restart after the COVID-19 pandemic:

Raising awareness of the Destination Germany brand and enhancing the brand profile with a focus on sustainability and climate change mitigation; supporting the travel industry, which is dominated by small and medium-sized businesses, through relationship management and the sharing of knowledge; and developing evidence-based action plans on the basis of targeted market research and ongoing analysis of changing customer demand respectively.



IATO writes to PM for restoring e-Tourist Visas

With the Hospitality sector rebounding but similar rebound seems to be eluding the inbound industry. There are multiple reasons for it like high airfares, restriction on travel and above all difficulty in procuring the visas. In this regard, IATO has made numerous representations and sent letters to the Tourism Home Affairs and External Affairs Ministry requesting them for restoration of E-Visa for UK, Canada and other source markets as maximum foreign tourists travel to India from these countries.

"Having failed to evoke



Rajiv Mehra

any response from these ministries, we have written to the PM, hoping for a quick resolution" says IATO President Rajiv Mehra.

IATO is receiving feedback that if the situation does

not improve, foreign tour operators will stop selling India tour packages. Due to non-availability of E-Tourist Visa for UK, Canada and other source markets, we as a country are losing huge business as tourists from these countries are opting for alternative destinations. If this situation continues it will be a big loss for the inbound tourism business and the entire season may be lost, causing further loss of foreign exchange earnings and loss of employment as one foreign tourist coming to India creates nine jobs directly or indirectly.

TAAI discusses challenges faced by Travel Trade with VFS

TAAI's President Jyoti Mayal urged VFS to form transparent policies and create better opportunities for TAAI members by adopting better implementation. TAAI joined hands with VFS to organise an interactive session for members of the Northern region including Punjab, Chandigarh, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand chapters on December 15, 2021. The meeting was initiated by Punjab Chairman Rtn. Gurjeet Singh Sekhon under the leadership of the President Jyoti Mayal and witnessed active participation of Devesh Kumar Agarwal, Chairman – Visa and Allied Services Council, Neeraj Malhotra, Chairman – Northern region; Syed Mohammad Akhlaq, Chairman, UPUK; Harraj Singh Sidhu, Chairman, Chandigarh.

The objective was to listen, understand, and



Jyoti Mayal

seek VFS support to address the challenges faced by the travel trade fraternity. With the world opening in a phase-wise manner and wooing travellers, it is imperative to discuss how TAAI members and VFS may facilitate the smooth issuance of visas with the support of foreign missions.

P P Khanna re-elected as the President of ADTOI unopposed

P P Khanna is re-elected unopposed as the President of ADTOI for the third time. With a total tally of 162 votes against Rajeev Sobti, Rajat Sawhney became the new Senior Vice President of Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI). Ashish Chander Sehgal won the



P P Khanna

elections for Vice President post with 138 total votes, beating Rajesh Arya.

The office bearers who were elected include Dalip Gupta as General Manager, Manoj Varshney as Joint Secretary and Ved Khanna as Treasurer. The association still has two positions vacant for EC members in the committee.



MICE Show Asia 2022 organised in October

MICE Show Asia 2022 is a three-day conference and exhibition for the meetings industry in Asia Pacific (APAC) that aims to redefine industry practices and identify new trends that will shape the future of MICE. The fourth edition of the premier MICE Show in Asia returns as an in-person event held at Marina Bay Sands from, October 19 – 21, 2022. The event is co-located with ITB Asia and Travel Tech Asia and will be organised by Messe Berlin, Singapore.

Across the three days, more than 30 exhibitors from Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVB), MICE buyer organisations, destinations, MICE tech companies and start-ups will showcase their products and services.

"MICE Show Asia 2022 will bring together industry suppliers, meetings & events professionals and emerging MICE innovators to connect and build the future of MICE. With the industry's revival and positive signs, this event is a must-attend for the meetings industry in APAC to get the latest insights and strategies and capture the immense growth of the Asia MICE market", said Katrina Leung, Managing Director of Messe Berlin (Singapore), the organiser of MICE Show Asia, Travel Tech Asia and ITB Asia.

Traditional in-person meetings were paused in 2020, but innovation flourished out of necessity. Now is the time for venue providers to use those lessons learnt over the past years to rebuild MICE even stronger. The Venue Providers' Talks, titled "The New Meeting Space" on Day 1, 19 October, 2 – 3 p.m., will feature Gilles Cretallaz, COO, Dusit International, Arun Madhok, CEO, Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre, Chua Wee Phong, Chief Executive (Venues), Constellar and James Fong, CEO, Jewel Changi Airport, who will share on how venue providers are building safe, secure, and thoughtful meeting space and experience for planners and suppliers.

Travel trade in talks with visa facilitators to support the industry: TAAI

Talking on the visa delays and increasing wait time to get appointments, the president of TAAI, Jyoti Mayal said that ambiguity around visas is becoming a major hurdle for travelling a trip to the USA, Europe, and Canada. TAAI had many meetings and discussions with missions and visa facilitators such as VFS global and BLS International to work towards smooth visa processing. Speaking on industry platform, Jyoti Mayal said that “Visa dates for submission of Schengen, USA, and Canada are not available for tourists as well as business travellers for a month or a year too. Not only to get Schengen appointment date, but also

the revert time in processing visas is making travellers very anxious. Post-Covid this would have been the best way to rebound tourism quickly for all the countries. This attitude shows that not only politically are we best on cooperation understanding but also, they are insensitive to the crisis-driven industry. We have witnessed the holiday season go in vain, wedding celebration being cancelled, business travellers, and business travellers further being burdened with huge losses by not being able to attend paid conferences and committed appointments” she added. There is no specific visa processing timeline for the USA, Canada, and Europe.



ATM 2023 signs partnership with IHG Hotels & Resorts

Arabian Travel Market (ATM), the leading travel and tourism event for inbound and outbound tourism professionals throughout the Middle East, has signed an agreement with IHG Hotels & Resorts, to become its Official Hotel Partner for ATM 2023, which takes place at the Dubai World Trade Centre between 1-4 May.

IHG, the leading International hospitality group will officially accommodate almost 200 leading international media and key industry buyers from the UK, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Israel, Turkey, India, the GCC, US, Egypt and South Africa.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director, Arabian Travel Market, said: “Arabian Travel Market is committed to the Middle East, which has some of the most ambitious and exciting development plans anywhere in the world. This partnership with IHG presents an ideal opportunity to align one of the region’s leading hospitality groups with our unrivaled event platform.”

The theme of next year’s ATM showcase is “Working Towards Net Zero” and RX (Reed Exhibitions) the organiser of ATM, will celebrate its 30th annual event by unveiling a dedicated sustainability pledge, not only to make the ATM 2023 event more sustainable, but to announce 30 long term goals, as ATM works towards Net Zero in line with the RX Global pledge.

Singapore Tourism Board collaborates with Walt Disney company

Disney is one of the most active and largest global entertainment companies in the region with diversified businesses in film, consumer products, publishing, mobile content, television and family entertainment. Singapore Tourism board and Walt Disney Company Southeast Asia to form multi-year collaboration to enhance tourism in the country.

Lionel Yeo, Chief Executive, Singapore Tourism Board said, “We are delighted to collaborate with Disney to create a range of exciting activations, adding vibrancy to our existing events calendar and attracting visitors

from the Southeast Asia region and beyond. The multi-year activations will profile our attractions and precincts in Singapore, beginning with Gardens by the Bay for the Star Wars festival held in May. Our collaboration with Disney will also offer plentiful opportunities for local event organisers and SMEs to grow their businesses and enhance their capabilities in world class branded entertainment events.”

“Everything we do at Disney is about connecting with our fans and families with our world class storytelling and beloved characters. A first-of-its-kind



with a national tourism body in Southeast Asia, this multi-year collaboration with the Singapore Tourism Board provides more exciting opportunities and unique experiences for us to take

the Disney brand of storytelling closer to our Singapore fans as well as visitors from the region,” said Rob Gilby, Managing Director, The Walt Disney Company Southeast Asia.



IATA: World Passenger Symposium in Bahrain

The International Air Transport Association to commence World Passenger Symposium in Bahrain under the theme: "Unlocking Value Creation by Putting the Customer First". The symposium will combine the former Digital and Data and Retailing Symposium, the Global Airport and Passenger Symposium and the Accessibility Symposium into a single event.

In addition to plenary sessions, three knowledge tracks will address the end to-end customer journey –from shopping and purchasing an air travel product to arriving at the destination. Each discrete step in the travel process will be addressed from customer and provider perspectives.



ITB Asia returns as Asia's Largest Travel Trade Show

ITB Asia 2022 begins with its 15th edition of Travel Trade Show at the Sands Expo and Convention Center, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore, co-located with MICE Show Asia and Travel Tech Asia. The show will be led by over 180 industry speakers sharing insights on key trends and how to stay competitive under the theme "Go Big & Go Forward: Travel Industry on the Road to Recovery and Growth".

Reflecting renewed confidence in MICE events, ITB Asia 2022 has attracted over 80 National and Regional Tourism Organisations. The conference programme specifically curated support to the travel industry and also held discussions on topics critical to the future of MICE, corporate travel, leisure travel and travel technology.

flydubai and the Argentine Football Association announce regional partnership

flydubai and the Argentine Football Association announced regional partnership to collaborate on marketing and branding opportunities across their channels for the next four months. The valuable asset for both the brands include the Argentina men's national football team players and special activations with the team during their training camp stay in the UAE's capital, Abu Dhabi.

Commenting on the partnership, Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer at flydubai, said: "We are honoured to be the regional partner for the Argentine Football Association and the Argentina national team. flydubai is committed to



connecting people, it is what we do, bridging the distance and removing boundaries. This partnership celebrates these core values which we share with football."

For the upcoming football tournament in Qatar, flydubai will operate up to 30 daily Match Day Shuttle

flights between Dubai and Doha. These Match Day Shuttle flights are offered in partnership with Qatar Airways and will provide football fans with convenient travel options to the football matches that will take place from November 21 to December 18, 2022.



Payment through UPI for hassle free visits to Europe

Indian travellers will be able to make payments via UPI, as the NPCI International Payments Ltd entered into a partnership with European payment services facilitator Worldline. NIPL is the global arm of the National Payments Corporation of India which will partner with services of Worldline's QR code-based mechanism. It will allow merchants' Point-of-Sale systems in Europe to accept UPI payments from Indians using their cellphones.

Ritesh Shukla, CEO of NIPL said, "The partnership will provide the company an opportunity with a good coverage of the European markets as well as an advanced and universally applicable solution. The rollout of acceptance of UPI-powered apps and RuPay cards across Europe is important to us, as we expect increased mobility of Indians in the continent in the coming years. We believe this partnership will empower

Indian consumers to continue using their preferred payment modes as they travel across Europe."

Indian customers will also be able to use their RuPay debit or credit cards to make payments in Europe with an eased approach. Currently, Indian customers pay through international card networks when they travel overseas. The UPI transactions were positioned at 38.74 billion and the value was USD 954.58 billion in 2021.

CRUISING EMERGES AS TOP 'FAMILY TRAVEL TREND' FOR INDIANS IN 2023: NCL REPORTS

Family travel goals have an all-new meaning as Indian families are seeking to make up for the lost time with new and exciting experiences to strengthen their bond and enjoy each other's company. The importance of close community and family bond has proved to be vital for maintaining a sense of wellbeing among Indians, according to a recent survey conducted by Hansa Research on behalf of Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL), innovator in global cruise travel.

The top travel trends that emerged from the August 2022 study reported that 8 in 10 urban Indian families who are planning to travel internationally are considering a cruise holiday in the next 12 months; 79% of Indians want to vacation with their families and 89% believe it is very important to spend quality time with family for an overall sense of wellbeing.

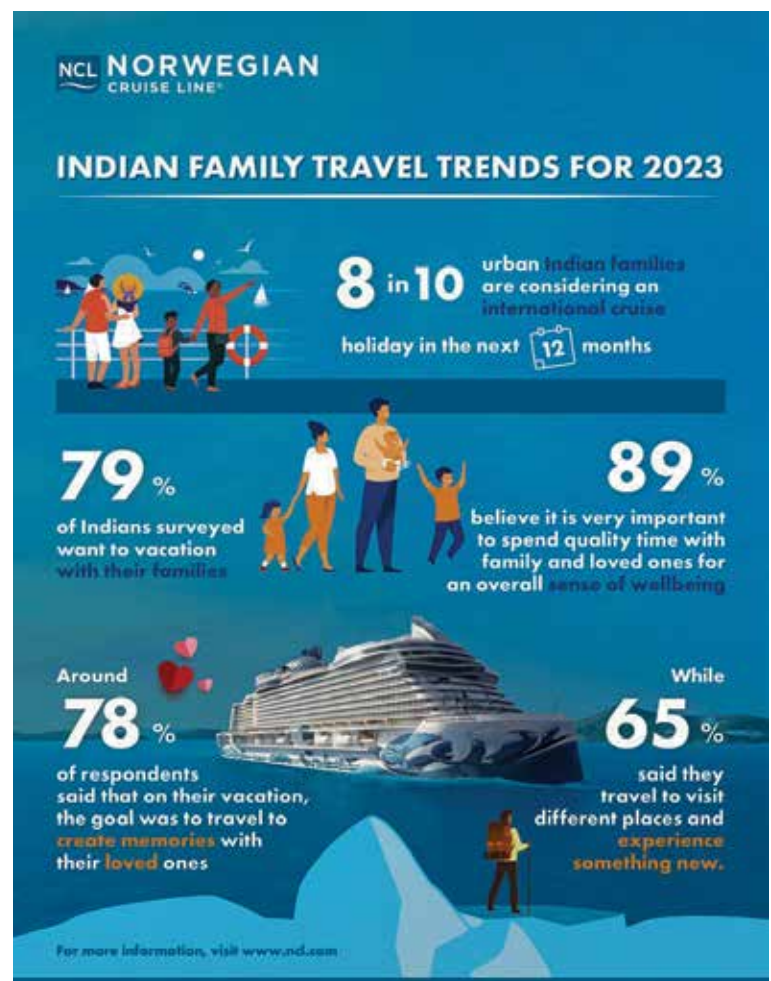
Around 78% of respondents said that their vacation goal was to travel to create memories with their loved ones, while 65% said they travel to visit different places and experience something new. Families, particularly those with younger children under 15 years of age, believe that kid-friendly holiday options and dining choices are very important when considering holiday choices.

The study further added that when travelling with family, 69% of Indian travellers said value and inclusive pricing was a very important consideration while 61% feel that easy access to attractions and activities was important.

Cruise holidays are on the top of mind for Indian families seeking to reconnect since cruising offers the ultimate opportunity to travel together. They can easily visit multiple destinations while unpacking just once, and cruising caters to many different types of travellers with varied entertainment, dining and accommodation options.

"It's really exciting to see such a significant number of Indian travellers have shown a desire to take a cruise vacation so that they can spend quality time with their loved ones," said Manoj Singh, Country Head India at NCL. "The thrill of exploring multiple destinations in one vacation with ease has led to families fulfilling their travel goals at sea. With NCL's world class onboard offerings, port-rich itineraries to almost 400 of the world's most sought-after destinations and inclusive pricing, families of all shapes and sizes will experience the holiday of a lifetime," he further added.

NCL offers the ultimate way for Indian travellers to make up for lost



Courtesy: NCL



time and reconnect with loved ones with port-rich itineraries that allow them to immerse themselves in each destination and a fleet of innovative ships that offer an incredibly vast array of choice to suit families. From an onboard racetrack to Broadway entertainment, fine dining and casual fare, as well as multiple accommodation options and unique event spaces that are ideal for milestone moments amongst larger, multi-generational families. Families can enjoy breakfast on their own private balcony, an à la carte fine dining experience or a quick snack on the go.

NCL's Free at Sea inclusive fare package provides peace of mind without fear of bill-shock, including bonus offers such as open-bar, specialty dining, wi-fi package and shore excursion credit in the fare. A voyage with NCL really is the ultimate way for Indian travellers to make up for lost time and reconnect with loved ones.

Trippin' with Tripjack

FOR TRIPJACK, CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IS OF PRIME IMPORTANCE

Rising up to the hurdles posed by pandemic in the past years, Tripjack is consistently heading forward with one aim in mind. In conversation with **Amit Parkar, Business Head of MICE, Tripjack** and **Kiran Vinchhi, COO, Corporate and MICE, Tripjack** we came closer to the highlights of the upcoming year as MICE business registers recovery in the industry

By Tavishi



“The recovery of businesses has already started and MICE is recovering well, in fact faster than leisure travel

How do you foresee the recovery in the post-pandemic industry?

The recovery of businesses has already started and MICE is recovering well, in fact, faster than Leisure Travel. There was a lull for the last 2 years since the Covid onset, however, most of the corporates have their travel budgets yet to be utilized, hence the demand has shot up rapidly.

How does Tripjack plan to carve its niche in the MICE market?

At Tripjack, we have a strong portfolio of travel product offerings, MICE becomes a natural extension of our service portfolio. Hence, we couldn't have got a better opportunity to set up our MICE vertical. Precision, consistency, and excellence will be Tripjack's MICE forte. The company derives its strength from the

Management who are driving this new vertical and supporting it to success. The MICE team onboard is also a great mix of experienced professionals who also happen to be our core strength.

What according to you is the key to success in the MICE business?

Keeping the customer experience at the heart of everything we do right from contracting to service delivery is the key to success for any MICE project. Complementing the same, having strong supplier relationships also holds a bearing on the successful outcome of any project.

Headquartered in Mumbai, how to plan the expansion of the MICE vertical in India?

The expansion plan includes the hiring of

the sales force across the major MICE source markets in India. While initially the contracting and the operations will be managed centrally from Mumbai, our eventual goal is to set up MICE operations across the other important hubs in the country.

In the post-Covid era, do you see a shift in MICE travel trends wherein domestic travel is being preferred over international travel?

If we review last year's trend, due to varied travel restrictions, MICE movements were restricted to domestic destinations. However, in the last quarter or so, with Covid norms being relaxed across the globe, the demand for international travel has picked up considerably. Dubai, Thailand, Singapore, Australia and Baku are hot favourites as of now while Turkey and Europe are being explored by Corporates for Q4 of the financial year.

What are the strategies Tripjack is aiming to adopt to strengthen its relationship with the travel fraternity?

At TripJack, we have a large agent network that has existing ties with many corporates. Our strategy will be to provide our travel partners with a strong backend team for MICE. Our agents have relationships in these corporates but are unable to capitalize on the opportunity to do MICE because of the large setup and investment it requires. Hence, by bringing in our support as a product offering, we will be able to empower them with the right set of team and tools to bring more business.

How does Indian domestic connectivity influence the tourism industry? Are we heading in the right direction?

I believe we are getting there. With the strong Infra push we are seeing now, especially with the upgrade of the railways, record-breaking speed to boost the road connectivity, port developments under the Sagarmala project and so on, we should be able to dish out a world-class experience for our inbound travellers in the times to come.



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PUSHING THE ENVELOPE FOR RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

A. Krishna Mohan, Managing Director of Southern Travels gives his valuable insights on the promising future of Travel and Tourism. With a visible upswing in sustainable sojourns and a revolution in technology, the future of travel seems safe and hopeful. Travellers apparently are detaching with the devices inclining toward experiential solo-cations. Seeking solitude in the endemic times has become the topmost priority for tourists afflicted with hodophilia. He elucidates how tourism has enormous potential to help transform travel and tourism's façade following eco-tourism practices alongside drawing plentiful tourism inbound

By Aanchal Sachdeva

Implementation of new technology in the tourism industry

Technology is one of the most significant catalysts in the growth of the travel and tourism industry. Over the years, the application of technology in the travel sector evolved exponentially. These days, robotic technology has also revolutionised the travel sector with robots now used for concierge-like roles such as greeting guests when they arrive or providing them with valuable information. Also, there has been the introduction of technologies like contactless payment, virtual reality, AI Chatbots, Internet of Things (IoT), recognition technology, augmented reality and more.

Tourism in the upcoming years

Components of sustainable Tourism in the coming years

Tourism has massive potential to contribute to India's ambition to meet the targets set for sustainable goals in the upcoming years. Tourism's role in the country's sustainable growth mostly encircles three sustainable development goals (SDGs) – 8, 12 and 14, which advocate sustainable economic growth, ensure sustainable production and consumption patterns, inclusivity and the sustainable use of our oceans and marine resources, respectively. To successfully meet the targets there should be a clear implementation outline, adequate financing, and investment in technology, better infrastructure and qualified human resources.

Travellers' preference: Urban Tourism or Cultural Heritage

Usually, domestic tourists enjoy urban tourism more but foreigners take more interest in exploring cultures and visiting heritage sites.

Solo-cation as a growing trend

These days around 50 per cent of hodophiles travel solo at least once a year and the trend is expected to amp up further in near future mostly because of women travellers and adventure seekers. Self-development and unique experiences being the key aspects of solo travel, travellers are increasingly preferring to travel alone mostly to seek relaxation and solitude, and in pursuit of better connectivity with nature.

Travel and Tourism facade in approaching years

The travel and tourism industry has grown exponentially in the past decade and in the upcoming times, tourism will evolve further with the fast-paced use of technological advancements and changing customer expectations. With technology providing ways to enhance customer experience, travellers are expected to be more empowered with more choices and control. Also, personalization will become more important and connectivity will become commoditized. Application of advanced technology like virtual reality and augmented reality will become seamless with offline channels.

Government's contribution towards promoting Indian Tourism

The government has been introducing several reforms in its policies to promote the tourism industry, especially post the pandemic. The



With technology providing ways to enhance customer experience, travellers are expected to be more empowered with more choices and control

Tourism Ministry has been drafting policies to support new tourism products like the development and promotion of caravans and caravan camping parks. Last year the ministry announced that soon there will be an international-level infrastructure in Kargil of Ladakh to boost adventure tourism and winter sports. Further, to boost domestic tourism, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has introduced a scheme called All India Tourist Vehicles Authorization and Permit Rules, 2021. The Finance Minister in 2021, announced relief packages for tourism, which include financial support for travel and tourism stakeholders (TTS) and registered tourist guides, free tourist visas to 5 lakh tourists and approval to release service exports from the India scheme (SEIS).

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Even before or after the pandemic, it is a “level of comfort” that most Indian tourists feel when visiting Thailand

India- A prominent source market for Thailand

Be it before or after the pandemic, it is the “level of comfort” that most Indian tourists feel when visiting Thailand.

“Level of comfort” is a combination of “Thai Hospitality” that we always welcome our Indian friends and guests with, convenience to travel with the close proximity of 2.5 hours flights from Kolkata to 3.5 hours flights from Mumbai you could reach Bangkok easily with many connecting flights. Thailand is now offering easy entry formality that Indian can apply for a visa on arrival. And a variety of tourist experiences Thailand can offer to everyone’s needs at a value for money.

Strong points of attraction in Thailand and the shared footfalls

Since Thailand gradually opened the country after the pandemic, we have witnessed many segments visiting Thailand including families, millennials, and incentives to special interest groups/ niche segments such as Weddings and Honeymoons, Golf, and Wellness Travel.

Phuket has become one of the most visited destinations by Indians when visiting Thailand. This is due to the direct flights as well as support to sell Phuket by travel agents and promoting and cooperation from Phuket travel and tourism businesses.

Some of the attractions in Phuket that I would like to recommend are:

1. In Phuket Old Town, tourists could stroll and appreciate those colourful architectural old buildings as well as enjoy local cruises and café. It is one of the best places for Instagram. During the weekend there will be a market to buy local products and handicrafts.
2. Waterparks, there are a number of nice waterparks to bring the kid back to himself such as Andamanda, Blue Tree and Splash Jungle.
3. Sunset Cruise, is the best way to relax and chill out with your friends or family.

Thailand’s air connectivity with Indian states and the outlook further

Currently, all metro cities in India are well connected with Bangkok and Phuket.

There will also be more connectivity from Tier II cities such as Jaipur, Ahmedabad and Lucknow to Thailand very soon by the last quarter of this year and the beginning of next year.

Many cities in Thailand would like to have connecting flights with India including Krabi, Pattaya and Chiang Mai.

Plan of engagement with the travel trade fraternity in the upcoming year

We are looking at long term relation with our travel trade partners. During the last two years of difficulties during the Pandemic, our office continues to engage with the right sentiment in the travel trade. And it is also the high spirit of travel trade in India that is very dynamic which also help us to continue our good work and commitment to the market.

Communication is very important, especially two way communication.

There will be a number of travel trade activities in which we will engage and seek support from travel trade partners in India.

TAT also plan to organize FAM Trip for both travel agents and travel trade media to visit Thailand under a thematic theme for each trip which we will be working with airlines partners and hotels/resorts in Thailand.

Promotion of new and sustainable tourism initiatives being planned by TAT

TAT has been working and promoting Sustainable Tourism for the long term. As example is our “7 Greens” concept on our official tourism website.

“Responsible Tourism” would be one of our key messages and direction to promote Thailand in the Indian market for this coming year.

Ecotourism, Nature and Community Experience in Thailand will be introduced more in the Indian market, especially the millennials group.

One of our focus areas on “Responsible Tourism” is Koh Samui, Koh Phangan and Koh Tao.



THAILAND

THE HEART OF MAINLAND SOUTHEAST ASIA

WITH THE EASE IN RESTRICTIONS, THAILAND IS ALL SET TO WELCOME INDIAN TOURISTS WITH THAI HOSPITALITY

Thailand, a country that prides itself on bountiful delicacies, tropical fields and forests, sacred spaces and serene beaches has undergone tremendous changes in the last two years. As it opens its doors to tourists, the offerings seem more promising than ever. In a conversation with Vachirachai Sirisumpan, TAT Director, we have gathered insights on how Thailand is all set to become a big player on the International tourism pedestal. Pivoting to becoming a sustainable tourist attraction, the Southeast Asian country is on the way to becoming a preferred tourist destination

By Aanchal Sachdeva



With a mission to subtly blend Indian tradition and modern comfort, Amritara hotels and resorts is proud to exceed the expectations of our guests since 2008. With a team of experienced professionals, we not only connect hearts but works towards the sustainability of our environment.

In this beautiful journey of 14 years and still counting to add in your luxury experiences, with 200 new inventories and a few more properties to be launched.

Amritara stands strong with 15 properties Pan India striving towards excellence in brand equity, also focusing to fulfill our pledge of offering an unforgettable experience with each new property. Experience is something we want to set an example for travelers across the world!

Whenever it comes to experiencing the best Amritara Hotel and Resorts should be the only choice people can think of.





Mr. Sarvar Hans

Vice President - Commercial

"Experience is something we want to set an example for travelers across the world!"

Whenever it comes to experiencing the best Amritara Hotel and Resorts should be the only choice people can think of."

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 Amritara Hotels & Resorts Pvt. Ltd.

Amritara Hotels & Resorts Pvt. Ltd.

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Renowned for its stunning nature, leisure, adrenaline adventures and authentic food, Ras Al Khaimah has a lot to offer its guests for an outstanding experience. The year-round destination renders a profusion of activities for everyone. The U.A.E.'s northernmost Emirate offers a wealth of diversions between its miles of white sandy beaches and turquoise sea, majestic Hajar Mountains and magnificent desert sand dunes. An amalgamation of activities can be experienced in this little-known emirate, from eye-appealing art galleries and museums to stunning adventures

By Chandni Chopra

Cosmic Sand Dunes

Tucked away in a tiny valley and sheltered by majestic deserted mountains, RAK has plenty of one-stop shops to experience the traditional Arabian spirit. Families with a sense of adventure can participate in a series of exciting desert-centric activities exploring various breathtaking terrains in the Emirate. The sand dunes have comprehensive offerings, including the terrifying dune bashing as you tear across breathtaking landscapes in a luxury Landcruiser, dune buggy, or quad bike. You can even try your hand at sandboarding. One gets to enjoy the soire under the twinkling stars relishing great performances which include belly dance and tanoura dance. In one of the hooded tents, a woman carefully paints looping henna designs on hands and ankles, and space to smoke shisha from a bubbling hookah lights up the night one tent over.





The Beguiling Emirate



Pearling Village

Al Jazirah Al Hamra is the only remaining historical pearling village in the entire Gulf region; the rest were demolished with the discovery of oil. This is a town to the south of the city of Ras Al Khaimah in the United Arab Emirates. It is popularly known for abandoned houses and other buildings inclusive of a mosque, which are widely believed to be haunted. There is a mix of residing styles from small simple houses, courtyard homes and two-story buildings to a large courtyard house that majorly belonged to the wealthy pearl merchant. The buildings were built in a traditional manner using local materials such as coral blocks and fossilized beach rock, mangrove tree beams, date palm trunks, and layers of seashells for drainage. Some nearby attractions include; Dhayah Fort, Saqr Park, Al Hamra Marina, and Yacht Club.



Tantalize the Taste Buds

Tourists often look for places to try a delectable range of cuisines to satiate their taste buds. Ras Al Khaimah has numerous eating outlets for guests to hop and relish a series of culinary. Some of them are listed below:

UMI- A well-manicured Japanese restaurant, offering an intimate dining experience serving good Asian cuisines.

Meze- An authentic Turkish and Lebanese restaurant where the cuisine is brought to life by the ecstatic decor, and eye-appealing panoramic views at the outdoor terrace.

Basilico- Offers an amalgamation of Mediterranean and Italian in an artistic manner on the plate.

The Huddle Sports Bar- One can catch every sport going live on the screens while enjoying the delicacies along.



Seas the Beach

Ras Al Khaimah is world-famous for its glorious golden beaches jeweled with luxury eco-resorts, creeks, and mangroves. Hidden by towering dunes, Flamingo Beach is on the west coast of the United Arab Emirates. It is best appreciated at sunset when the sun disappears over the Gulf, leaving nothing but vibrant colours in its wake. This is a favorite hangout for sun worshippers, beachgoers, nature lovers and water sports enthusiasts. The warm waters and shallow shores make it the ideal beach for families and friends. Visitors should keep their eyes open for lazy camels that wander down to the shores to bathe in the waters of the Gulf. It is a spectacle to see!

Feed your soul with adrenaline rush

Jais Flight is located atop the cloud-piercing Jebel Jais mountain peak in Ras Al Khaimah, the northernmost Emirate in the UAE. If you are a thrill-seeker, you will enjoy the adrenaline-fueled experience that takes you at cascading speeds. Each participant will be fitted correctly with the right over-suit and superhero-style horizontal harness that allows you to fly 2.83 km aerodynamically at high speeds.

The Jais Sledder sits comfortably on a low-slung track. You'll reach up to 40 kilometers per hour as you hurtle down the Hajar mountain range swerving through glorious panoramas with views of the spectacular coastline. The speed seems amplified ten-fold because you are sitting so close to the ground. The fully-controllable ride takes about eight minutes to cover 1,840 exhilarating meters of hairpin curves and undulating waves.



Mystery Palace

Have spooky flicks ever sent shivers down your spine? A visit to Al Qasimi Palace in Ras Al Khaimah can give you some chills and goosebumps. Al Qasimi Palace is stunning but after the palace fell into disrepair, rumours spread that the inhabitants left the palace after mysterious occurrences there and that the palace was “haunted”. However, the grandeur of Al Qasimi Palace in Ras Al Khaimah and the mystery that surrounded it, have now led to it becoming a brand-new attraction that visitors can't wait to explore! The breathtaking building has been unoccupied for many years and houses fascinating interiors such as chandeliers, artifacts and paintings of Islamic, Moroccan, and Persian heritage. The palace has only recently opened to the public and holds a sense of mystery.



Cultural Kaleidoscope

Ras Al Khaimah has a plethora of art galleries with breathtaking talent from the locals and people around the globe. These museums and galleries unite community and visitors together showcasing a diverse range of art and cultural experiences. You will come across paintings, sculptures, photography, film and more. These are the perfect places to immerse yourself in rich Arab culture. UAE promises you to discover gorgeous art and have incredible cultural experiences, thanks to the country's numerous art galleries and museums.

CLEARTRIP RENEWS ITS DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT WITH INTERGLOBE TECHNOLOGY QUOTIENT TO STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND THE PARTNERSHIP



Cleartrip, one of India's leading online travel agencies (OTA) has signed an agreement with Travelport's distributor for India, InterGlobe Technology Quotient (ITQ), for the use of Travelport's Travel Commerce Platform.

With its industry-first offerings such as 'CT Flexmax, CT Flex, and CT Upgrade', Cleartrip has a clear vision to disrupt the OTA market and is one of the country's fastest-growing online travel agencies.

Under the agreement, Cleartrip will make use of Travelport's avant-garde platform to provide enhanced services to its larger customer base. ITQ, which is the official distributor of Travelport in India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bhutan, will ensure Cleartrip gets access to its massive travel content featuring real-time access to nearly 400 airlines.

"As travel recuperates around the world, it is an exciting time to form new associations. Cleartrip is a celebrated name in the industry

and we are delighted to have partnered with them. We hope for a strong and mutually beneficial association," said Sandeep Dwivedi, Chief Operating Officer, ITQ.

"This partnership with Cleartrip will provide us with new and exciting opportunities to work closely on their strategic business expansion," said Mark Meehan, Global Vice President and Managing Director for Global Operators at Travelport, "I am delighted to see our shared vision for modern travel retailing continue to bring a wealth of cutting-edge advantages for both our customers and our industry, thus enabling us to further transform the travel ecosystem."

Speaking on the partnership, Ayyappan Rajagopal, CEO at Cleartrip, said, "With a busy travel period ahead of us, we are excited to partner with InterGlobe Technology Quotient for the use of their advanced solutions to provide enhanced services to



its customer base. This is a key strategic partnership for us that will help us gain competitive advantage and offer a superior

value proposition, and also play a significant role in the exponential growth journey Cleartrip has embarked on."



Lemon Tree announces second property in Visakhapatnam

Lemon Tree Hotels Limited announced the opening of Keys Lite by Lemon Tree Hotels, Sreekanya, Visakhapatnam. This is the second property of the group in the city, strategically located near Gajuwaka, in the Southwest of Visakhapatnam.

The hotel features 44 well-appointed rooms and suites with aesthetically-designed interiors and modern amenities and facilities for the utmost comfort of guests. This hotel also features a well-appointed venue for functions, business meetings, conferences and private events. Keys Lite by Lemon Tree Hotels, Sreekanya, Vishakhapatnam caters to both business travellers and tourists.

The closest railway station is the Vishakhapatnam Junction Railway Station at an approximate distance of 15 km and the closest airport is the Vishakhapatnam Airport which is approximately 7.3 km away. The hotel is strategically located around the city's prime tourist attractions - Rama Krishna Beach, NS Kurusura Submarine Museum, Natural View Point, Kailasagiri and other places of tourist interest.

Signum Hotels enters management agreement with 360Stays

Signum Hotels announced management agreement with London-based 360Stays. Under this agreement, Signum Hotels will manage all 325 serviced residences operated by 360Stays across 39 locations in the UK.

London-based 360Stays offer an unbeatable range of serviced accommodation in the UK ranging from Studio apartments to large 6-bedroom residences. Under the management agreement, Signum will operate all 360Stays properties, across the UK, re-branded as '360Stays by Signum'. The management agreement came into effect from October 1, 2022.

Mehul Sharma, Founder & CEO - Signum Hotels & Resorts said, "I am quite thrilled by this alliance. This will further



strengthen Signum's vision of expanding in key global markets. The Company will continue to expand across the UK, India, Canada, and Dubai."

Sameer Arya, CEO - 360 Stays said "We are elated to sign Signum Hotels as our managing partner. This collaboration will help us tap into the lucrative Indian traveller market and further strengthen our visibility."

Katara Hospitality expands with Fairmont Tazi Palace

Katara Hospitality based in Qatar has strengthened its partnership with Accor, with the opening of the new Fairmont Tazi Palace Tangier in the Northern region of Morocco.

The new luxury hotel will consolidate the long-standing partnership between the two groups, with Katara Hospitality already owning several landmark hotels managed by Accor. It is set to open in the fourth quarter of 2022.

Ali Bin Ahmed Al Kuwari, Chairman of Katara Hospitality, said, "Our investment in restoring Tazi Palace in Tangier aligns with Katara Hospitality's strategic plans for international expansion, being our second venture in North Africa. By committing to this agreement, our primary goal is to support the development of the local community, while sharing our expertise in the hospitality field and investing into creating a strong partnership and lasting value."

Andrew Humphries, Acting CEO of Katara Hospitality, commented, "We are confident the ethos of the Fairmont brand is a strategic fit as it is important that we have an operator which understands and respects the heritage of this wonderful hotel, ensuring it occupies its rightful position in the local and global market-places when it opens later this year. The resort will emerge as a relaxing urban escape that is a true celebration of rich Moroccan culture and history."



IHCL announces opening of Sawai Man Mahal in Jaipur

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) announced the opening of Sawai Man Mahal in Jaipur. The heritage palace set in Rambagh Palace, pays tribute to Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II, the last ruler of the princely state of Jaipur.

Puneet Chhatwal, MD and CEO, IHCL said, "We are delighted with the addition of Sawai Man Mahal to IHCL's magnificent collection of royal palaces. IHCL is proud to have showcased India's glorious past with some of the country's most celebrated palaces that date back to the pre-independence era. This also marks a significant milestone in completing 50 years of managing the legendary "Jewel of Jaipur", the Rambagh Palace. We remain grateful to Maharaj Jai Singh and Maharaj Vijit Singh for having reposed their trust in us and look forward to continuing this association." tenhance the region's tremendous tourism potential."

ITC Hotels signs Welcomhotel Jabalpur

ITC Hotels announced the signing of Welcomhotel, Jabalpur under a management contract with A.R.V. Hotels Private Limited. It will offer 124 rooms, more than 15,000 sq. ft. of banquet space, two restaurants, a swimming pool, a spa and a fitness centre. Designed for those who demand more to make the most of their stay, this property is curated with immersive experiences that enrich both business and leisure journeys.

Anil Chadha, Divisional Chief Executive, ITC Hotels said, "Welcomhotels are on a high growth trajectory, both in business and leisure destinations. We are excited to bring the Welcomhotel brand from the ITC Hotels group to Madhya Pradesh. Jabalpur offers a healthy



mix of commercial, trading, government and leisure-oriented business opportunities and has become a key administrative and business center for the State. The significant meeting and banquet space backed by ITC Hotels renowned strength in food and beverage and hospitality service will impart Welcomhotel Jabalpur an edge in the market."

The Anam, Vietnam selects BRANDit as its India representative

Vietnamese hospitality firm The Anam has tied up with tourism and hospitality representation company Brandit, as its in-market representative. The Indian firm's primary responsibilities include contributing towards positioning and showcasing the properties' undeniable charms and increasing their visibility in the travel and hospitality industry.

"We are pleased to have Brandit on board to help us establish a strong foundation for The Anam in India. With their track record, they have demonstrated an in-depth understanding of travellers' preferences and sensibilities. Our joint efforts will enable us to gain greater visibility and penetrate the vast and diverse Indian market.

The brand is confident that it can capitalise on this opportunity to elevate the Indian traveller's experience with the highest standard of hospitality that we can offer," says Martin Koerner, Group Commercial Director of The Anam.

"India has become one of the most important markets for tourism in Vietnam. In recent years, more and more Indians have chosen Vietnam as a preferred travel destination. To capitalise on the growing popularity of Vietnam, we need to identify and strengthen our business relationships with the Indian travel trade community. We are hoping to have a fruitful working relationship with Brandit," says Laurent Myter, Group General Manager, The Anam.



Stotrak Hospitality introduces family driven stays

Stotrak hospitality announced Family Diwali experiences at its locations in Mussoorie, Rishikesh, Dehradun and Rajasthan. With the current pleasant weather as an additional incentive family values and celebrating some quality time while travelling with one's family is the focus of the chain. Stotrak Hospitality offers all its guests and patrons an opportunity to celebrate the grand festival with hassle-free travel and various remarkable unique stay options across the country at premium locations and affordable pricing. Thus, there was something for everyone.

Manish Goyal, Founder, of Stotrak Hospitality said "The best part is that you get a long weekend as the October 24, 2022 is Monday. This makes it

a great occasion to experience the glory and might of this grand festival from some key locations across the country".

The amazing experiences included a family stay at Sukoon, Dakpathar, and Dehradun which is a premium and highly considerable stay option by Stotrak including "The Farm stay in Dakpathar, Sukoon Retreat." This was an option available for the family/groups who would like to experience the open spaces, Riverwalk, and an indoor heated room topped with food made from vegetables grown in garden, away from the hustle and bustle of the city, with personalised Diwali experience from Stotrak hospitality at Queen of Hills Mussoorie, a deal worth considering for weekend getaway.



Meghalaya CM inaugurates state's 1st Five Star Hotel

Meghalaya got its first five-star hotel Vivanta Meghalaya, Shillong inaugurated in the state capital city. The property is owned by the Meghalaya Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) and leased out for a period of 33 years to be operated by the Indian Hotel Company Limited (IHCL). Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, who inaugurated the hotel, said the work for the hotel had been going on since 1986 and could be completed only after a strong push was given by the current government. He congratulated and thanked all the stakeholders for completing the project despite the COVID-



induced disruptions. The Chief Minister also said that the Vivanta Meghalaya, Shillong along with the upcoming hotel Courtyard by Marriott will give a huge boost to high-value tourism in the State. This model will be further replicated to transform Meghalaya, a preferred destination for ecotourism.

Haritha Villas + Spa participates in Sri Lanka Roadshow

To penetrate the India market, Haritha Villas + Spa participated in a three-city roadshow hosted by Sri Lanka Tourism which was held in Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad from September 26 to 30, 2022. More than 50 local travel agencies and hotels participated in the event to restore confidence amongst trade partners and customers in the India market and to promote Sri Lanka once again as a preferred holiday destination. At the roadshow, Thanuja Weerasinghe, Sales & Marketing Manager, represented

Haritha Villas + Spa, in an effort to build strong relationships with the Indian travel community and promote Haritha Villas + Spa as an upmarket luxury boutique Resort catering to the affluent traveller and simultaneously to attract more Indian inbound visitors to Sri Lanka. The roadshow was an ideal place to engage with the audience for imparting knowledge about the brand, making them aware about what they are missing and, more importantly, educating them about the reality of the travel situation in Sri Lanka.



Concept Hospitality augments its presence in Mahabaleshwar

Concept Hospitality Pvt Ltd (CHPL) announced the opening of Valley View Beacon Resort, Mahabaleshwar. This is the company's 6th resort in a leisure destination in Maharashtra and the 21st operational hotel in the state.

Valley View Beacon Resort is a smart, efficient resort centrally located in the market area of Mahabaleshwar. The resort offers captivating views of the lush greenery, with tastefully appointed rooms, a great dining spot known for its thalis, an indoor temperature-controlled swimming pool & spa and a range of other amenities and facilities. The hotel offers 77 well-furnished rooms in three categories. Each room is well-appointed with all modern facilities and amenities, making it an ideal accommodation option for business and leisure travelers. The hotel also offers a pure vegetarian restaurant, banqueting space and Spa



therapy with a level of comfort and style.

Commenting on the rebranding of the hotel, the CEO of CHPL, Suhail Kannampilly said, "We have become one of the largest hospitality players in Maharashtra. Valley View Resort has been a landmark in this hill station and in its new avatar as a Beacon resort, will now provide our brand of services and experiences to our guests. With this new addition, we now have resorts operating in the popular hill destinations of Mahabaleshwar, Panchgani, Lonavala, Igatpuri and Dapoli in the State".

Jumeirah Gulf of Bahrain Resort welcomes guests

Jumeirah Group expands with the unveiling of a captivating new resort in the Middle East – Jumeirah Gulf of Bahrain Resort and Spa.

Resting majestically on the unexplored, pristine beaches of Bahrain's West Coast, the resort delivers a secluded oasis away from the hustle of the city. Guests will experience a luxury getaway with stunning ocean views, lush greenery and meandering waterways invoking a sense of well-being and inspiration at the unique resort.

Thomas B. Meier, Interim Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer of Jumeirah Group said, "With the unveiling of our new property in Bahrain, Jumeirah Group is set to diversify the growing hospitality landscape

in the Kingdom. As the darling brand of Dubai, Jumeirah will bring its considerable expertise and success to our neighbouring Gulf state, creating exceptional moments that deliver our promise of Stay Different. From its unique location on the pristine beachfront, Jumeirah Gulf of Bahrain Resort and Spa will provide unparalleled Arabian hospitality with a focus on wellbeing, inviting guests to immerse themselves in the stunning surroundings and embrace a different pace of life. With a passion for destination dining, Jumeirah Group will also bring its renowned signature dining know-how to the hotel, giving guests and residents of Bahrain an unrivalled choice of culinary experiences."

Sarovar Hotels opens its 100th hotel in Pondicherry

Sarovar Hotels Pvt. Ltd. proudly announced the historic milestone of opening its 100th hotel in India with the opening of Lagoon Sarovar Premiere, Pondicherry.

A pioneer in Mid-Market segment with more than 27 years in operation, Sarovar Hotels is a leading hospitality chain in the country with presence in more than 67 destinations across India and Africa from Business to Leisure; Hills to Backwaters; Pilgrim to Heritage and Mountains to Beaches.

Paradise Island, a unique icon of Pondicherry is adjacent to Lagoon Sarovar Premiere resort. To celebrate your special moments or host business meets, the resort offers 5000 Sq. ft. lawn by the backwaters. The resort is also equipped with an activity area to play snooker, board games, outdoor live chess and offer a whole lot of delightful water activities from



Scuba Diving to Snorkeling; Kayaking to Surfing; and Boating to Paddle Boarding at Paradise Island. It houses a separate kid's play zone.

Commenting on the development, Anil Madhok, Executive Chairman, Sarovar Hotels said, "2022 is a milestone year for us as we open our 100th hotel. This hotel holds a special place in our portfolio of hotels. Our vision 27 years ago was to make hospitality accessible in every part of the country. Our future vision is to strengthen our strong presence in tier 2 and tier 3 cities."



Marriott expects 14 new properties in Asia Pacific

Marriott International announced that it is expected to open 14 additional luxury properties in Asia Pacific by the end of 2023. The planned additions highlight the strategic growth of Marriott International's luxury hotel portfolio in the region, where it currently operates 156 luxury properties.

Across 13 countries and regions in Asia Pacific, Marriott International's portfolio of luxury brands continues to create bespoke experiences for today's luxury travellers in popular cities including Tokyo and Melbourne and is ready to bring these experiences to emerging

destinations such as Jeju and Jiuzhaigou. The hospitality group has anticipated four new hotels across the region. Following the openings of JW Marriott Bengaluru Prestige Golfshire Resort & Spa and JW Marriott Hotel Changsha earlier this year, JW Marriott Khao Lak Resort Suites will welcome guests by the end of 2022. Expected to also open in 2022, JW Marriott Jeju Resort & Spa aims to cater to mindful travellers who visit South Korea's popular holiday island with its stunning UNESCO World Natural Heritage sites. Slated to open in 2023 are JW Marriott Goa Vagator and JW Marriott Hotel Xi'an.

Global Destinations introduces 'Wanderlust Marketing'

Global Destinations introduced its luxury representation vertical 'Wanderlust Marketing' with a special focus on luxurious and captivating travel brands and experiences.

Alongside, the company announced the onboarding of their premier partner The Nanee, an 18-room bespoke boutique oasis in Bhaktapur, Nepal.

The beautiful property is anticipated to welcome travellers in December this year.

"Experiential Luxury travel from India has grown leaps and bounds and continues to be on a rise. The stagnancy of the pandemic has set the pace for many travellers to look for unique and distinguished experiences.



The emergence of experiential luxury travel is one of the outcomes of the pandemic, where Indian travellers now look to engage in luxurious at the same time immersive, meaningful, and sustainable travel. With the launch of Wanderlust Marketing, we are glad to be able to cater to this growing niche traveller segment," said Pranav Kapadia, Director of Global Destinations.

Preferred Hotels & Resorts welcomes 14 new properties

Preferred Hotels and Resorts expands its portfolio as the world's largest independent hotel brand by welcoming fourteen new member properties across the globe between July 1 and September 30, 2022. Within the United States, Preferred Hotels and Resorts welcomed Salamander Washington DC, a former Mandarin Oriental property that offers 373 rooms and suites with views of the Potomac River. The hotel will undergo a renovation while remaining open to update the property. Other properties in the U.S. include Fulton Lane Inn in Charleston; Pendry Washington DC, The Wharf; and Aurora, Colorado's The Benson Hotel & Faculty Club.

In South America, the Pinares Panorama Suites Spa and Convention Center, located in Cordoba, Argentina, is another new member. This eco-retreat is the only one in the country to offer a private nature reserve for guests. It features 100 rooms, a health club and much more.

Four member properties were added in Europe, too. Five additional properties were added to Preferred's portfolio across the Middle East and Asia, including the Serry Beach Resort in Hurghada, Egypt. Other member properties include The Claridges Nabha Residence in Mussoorie, India; Dusit Thani Laguna Singapore; and The Hotel Higashiyama by Kyoto Tokyu Hotel in Kyoto, Japan.



Larisa Hotels & Resorts expands its footprint in Goa

After a fantastic response to its Morjim property, Larisa Hotels and Resorts is opening another property in Goa. Larisa Ashwem is 2.5 acres of gorgeous Goa greenery and simple elegance and promises the perfect blend of nature and luxury. The beautiful Ashwem property in picturesque North Goa is situated in the heart of a lush-green landscape and promises a gloriously laid-back experience in indulgently spacious surroundings.

Larisa Ashwem is targeting a mix of the young and the old, between the ages of 18 and 60, all of them discerning and well-travelled. And among the amenities, they offer a multi-cuisine restaurant and a generously sized pool with a bar. Besides, there's plenty of room to roam and get lost in! With its picture-postcard natural beauty, the idyllic Ashwem beach is just 10-minutes walk away from the sea.





Santosh Agarwal, Chairman of Summit Hotels displays an amiable silhouette of Hospitality

The responsible gentleman

The glorious chapter of Summit Hotels and Resorts when written in stone tablets of history, the name of Santosh Agarwal would be etched with golden brocade because what Summit is today, is because of the great guidance of Agarwal who still is a mainstay, a chairman of the brand that flourishes in introducing people to an Incredible Himalayan Hospitality.

Timeline

Before the making of history, the start of the career of Agarwal highlights the humble beginning. He worked in the Tea Industry of Terai region in the district of Jalpaiguri. After spending some memorable years in the tea plantation sector he started his first project in 1992 with Hotel Mount Embassy in Siliguri, thus announcing his arrival in the hospitality industry. At present, the Mount Hotels have four properties and the responsibility to take care of the guest's needs are being seamlessly carried by his younger son Sachin Mitruka.

A father before a hotelier

Around the same time, all his kids were in school but the responsibility of professionalism and family affair was handled brilliantly by him along with his wife. In 2005, Sumit Mitruka his eldest son went to London to pursue MBA from London Metropolitan University while his younger son took care of Mount Embassy. When Sumit came back after completing his education that's when a new journey began in the life of the Mitruka Family.

The inception of Summit Hotels and Resorts

Under his great guidance, Sumit Mitruka started a new venture and thus Summit Hotels and Resorts came into being with its first hotel Summit Ttrakshang Residency Hotel.

Spa in Gangtok.

Subsequently, Summit Newa Regency and Spa in Pelling was next to make its presence felt in a touristic Gangtok, and then onwards the footprints travelled the distance of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Lachung, Lachen, Assam, Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh.

At present Summit Hotels and Resorts have 22 magnificent properties sprawled in distinct Himalayan belts of India. The inspiring figure of Santosh Agarwal and his larger-than-life persona has been a main



source of stimulus to synthesize what Summit as a brand wishes to materialize in the course of time.

Big Boss for all reason

Big Boss as fondly called by all out of love and respect as a chairman is a mesmerizing character his vast knowledge and experience guides the Department of Human Resource Department besides that the procurement of stores (purchase) is absolutely channelized by him because he is the best the organization has to understand the needs.

A legit legend of the world of hospitality

Today when the travellers praise the service of Summit Hotels and Resorts and Mount Hotels one must acknowledge the fact that it is due to an unfathomable and uncompromising approach of Big Boss that made things possible. We wish him long life and anticipate his knowledge to continue steering the ship because his presence is sufficient enough to see us through the walks of difficulties of life in professional and personal careers.

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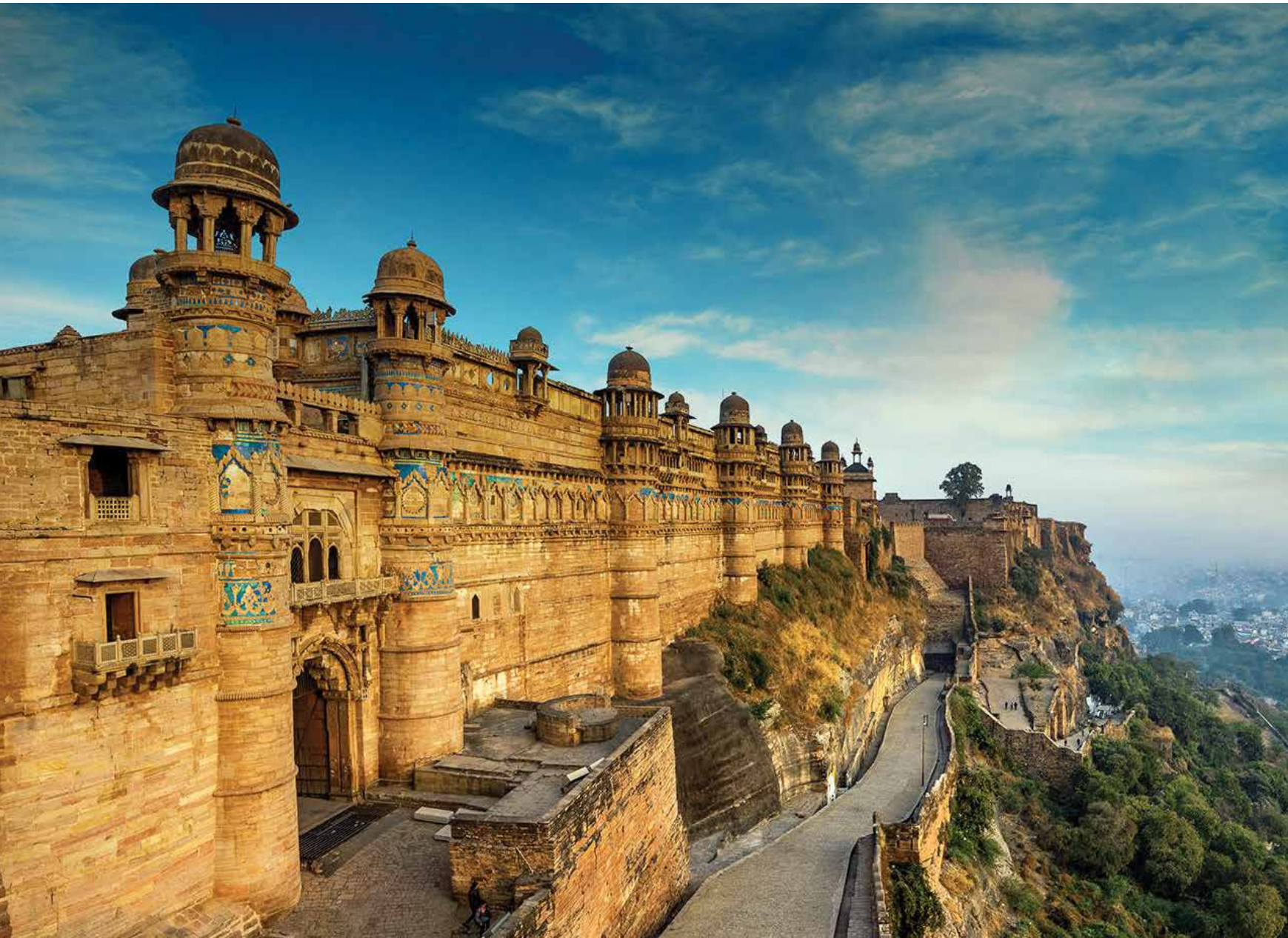
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Madhya Pradesh

THE HEART OF INCREDIBLE INDIA

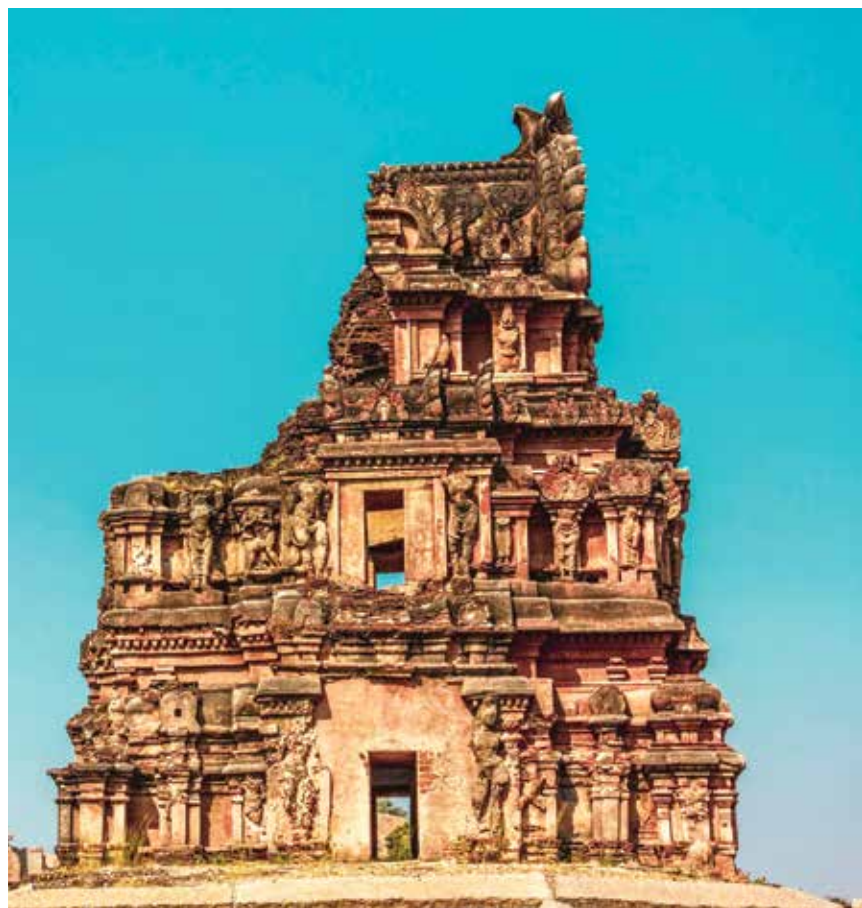
Madhya Pradesh inculcates a diverse different range of traditions and cultures. The state is a cauldron that incessantly connects the various aspects of its multi-dimensional culture and still upholds a beautifully amalgamated heritage that retains its distinctive zeal. It is home to people professing all the major religions of India, who dwell in perfect harmony and amity. Apart from them, numerous colourful tribes add on to the vibrant cultural collage of the state. People belonging to numerous religions and ethnic backgrounds reflect the concept of Indian secularism and contribute to the animated cultural effervescence of the state. The culture of Madhya Pradesh is a harmonious amalgamation of Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Jains, Christians and Sikhs

By Chandni Chopra



The Unmissable Heritage Tour

Experiencing rich ancient history and taking a heritage tour in Madhya Pradesh is no less than an enriching experience. Iconic heritage sites of Madhya Pradesh such as Khajuraho, Bhimbetka, Sanchi, etc are studded like gems around the state. Tour the 30000 years old cave paintings in Udayagiri, the 2500-year-old Grand Buddhist Stupa in Sanchi, and the historical city of Gwalior will take you down the lane of past chapters. Brimming with the prehistoric era, the state has incredible historical monuments to explore. The stunning architecture of the heritage sites is quite enchanting for photographers who visit all over the globe.



Delve Into Temple Tours

Conferred with sacred shrines of holy cities like Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh is popular as a religious place in India. According to mythology, Lord Shiva resides in the holy town of Ujjain in the form of the jyotirlinga named Mahakaleshwar which holds immense significance in the Hindu religion. This beautiful temple on the bank of Rudrasagar Lake is considered one of the 18 maha Shakti Peethas scattered around the country. Besides these, there is a list of a few other temples that can be added to the tour. So if you're spiritually inclined and seeking a tour to reconnect with God then Madhya Pradesh is a must-visit place for you.





Enjoy The Delectable Local Cuisines

Every trip needs some calories to have an exciting experience. Being in the center of India, the dishes of Madhya Pradesh are influenced by the neighbouring states. However, the heart of India brings the best of nature and diversity of cultures on a platter which is served with the warmth of hospitality. Don't miss to tantalize your taste buds with the light-on-stomach Indori Poha which is a signature recipe of the state. Khasta Kachoris, Dal moth, Chakki ki Shak, Bhopali Gosht Korma, Seekh Kebabs, Keema, Korma, Shammi Kebabs, Daal Bafla, etc are some of the dishes that are worth trying. Sweet delicacies such as Malpua, Jalebi, Lavang Lata, Mawa Bati, Faluda, Shrikhand, etc will leave you drooling. The delightful culinary experience adds joy as one can carry the essence of a place.



Discover The Extravaganza Of Events and Festivals

The wide spectrum of events and festivals of Madhya Pradesh carries hues of Indian diversity. The vibrant landscape hosts some of the most exciting festivals worth witnessing. Khajuraho Festival - the magnificent display of many art forms, a dip in the holy Shipra River during Ujjain Kumbhmela, spectacular celebration of culture in Malwa Utsav, Lokrang fest by Adivasi Lok Kala Academy, Tansen Samaroh, Pachmarhi Utsav, the list is never-ending. The irresistible charm of these festivals is an integral part of Indian diversity and make sure you attend these amazing festivals on your tour to Madhya Pradesh.



Binge Shopping At Famous Bazaars

Drenched in rich culture and art, Madhya Pradesh is a hub of Indian handicrafts and handloom. From delicate Zardozi sarees to exquisite Mulberry silk, beautiful Chanderi to finest Tussar Silk, intricate beadwork to exquisite Mandana and Pithora paintings, there are an array of vibrant things to buy from Madhya Pradesh. Whether you are looking for handlooms or well-crafted souvenirs, there are so many things that you can partake in from the local bazaars in the towns of Madhya Pradesh. It is also famous for Thewa jewellery which is about 400-year-old art. Leather toys, traditional batik prints, and bamboo lathis are some of the signature crafts of the artisans of the state. Sarafa Bazaar and Chappan Dukaan in Indore are must-visit places if shopping is on your agenda.

Mastercard launches 'Sri Lanka with Love' Campaign

As the situation in Sri Lanka continues to improve, Mastercard launched 'Sri Lanka with Love', a campaign to encourage Indian tourists to explore a plethora of unforgettable experiences offered by the island nation. As part of the campaign, Mastercard collaborated with over 50 merchant partners such as hotels, resorts, restaurants and tour operators to promote Sri Lanka as a preferred destination for Indian tourists. Mastercard cardholders planning to visit Sri Lanka can explore the entire suite of benefits on Mastercard's Priceless Specials website.

Harin Fernando, Minister of Tourism, Sri Lanka, said "The mix of unique experiences, cultural and geographical proximity and affordability make Sri Lanka one of the most preferred international tourism destinations for Indian travellers. On top of this, Mastercard's 'Sri Lanka with Love' campaign will provide even greater value to Indian tourists for their spending during their trip. We are confident that this partnership will go a long way towards re-establishing Sri Lanka's credibility as a safe and affordable tourism destination."



US adds transatlantic flights for travel

US carriers add more transatlantic flights for quenching thirst for travel. US airlines are responding to consumers emboldened by a more powerful US dollar and more flexible work arrangements that allow them to work from wherever they want, extending the travel season into the fall, industry officials said. The world's most lucrative travel market, Transatlantic accounted 11 percent to 17 percent of travel revenues at big three US carriers- Delta, United, and American Airlines in 2019.

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"For Americans going to Europe, its getting bargain with currencies" Delta's Chief Executive Ed Bastian said. United and Delta generate more revenue from the increased demand for international travel because of their stronger global footprints, said Guido Petrelli, CEO Marlin Investor.



Qatar Tourism reveals new attractions, hotels, and resorts for FWC 2022

Qatar Tourism unveils new tourism attractions, hotels and resorts that will be open for fans to enjoy FIFA World Cup 2022 in the month of November. This unprecedented year of development represents a major milestone in Qatar's emergence as a tourist destination, with the country seeking to welcome six million visitors a year by 2030. People of the world will get to experience unique offerings in arts, culture, sports, and adventure, catering to family and business visitors, rooted in Service Excellence.

Chief Operating Officer of Qatar Tourism, Berthold Trenkel, said: "2022 has been an extraordinary year in Qatar with so many major new hotel and tourism openings. From shopping malls to beach clubs, museums to theme parks, there are now activities and experiences in Qatar for every type of traveller, from every nation, and to suit every budget. With more than one million fans expected to visit for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™, we're proud to be able to offer a true breadth of experiences and entertainment beyond our stadiums, fan festivals and matches."



Saudi Arabia and Airbus negotiate to increase jets

Saudi Arabia is in advanced negotiations to order almost 40 A350 jets from Europe's Airbus (AIR.PA) as part of strategic efforts to launch a new airline and challenge heavyweight carriers in the Gulf.

PIF has been negotiating to buy some 75 jets and another source said the kingdom was leaning toward the Boeing 787. The airline may also need narrow-body jets. Neither Airbus nor Boeing had any comment. PIF did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Any commercial deal must still win political approval and also depends on complex engine negotiations. The choice of supplier is widely seen as politically charged as the Saudi gathering takes place amid deepening tensions between Washington and Riyadh.



The FII is a showcase for Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's Vision 2030 plan to wean the economy off oil by creating new industries that also generate jobs for millions of Saudis and to lure foreign capital and talent.

US President Joe Biden has vowed 'consequences' for US-Saudi ties over an OPEC+ decision to cut oil output targets, which Riyadh defended as serving market stability.

Thai Embassy renews pan-India visa application processing with VFS Global

The Thailand government renewed its pan-India visa processing mandate with VFS Global, an outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. VFS Global will cater to travellers from India across visa categories through visa application centres and drop off centres as per the jurisdiction of the Royal Thai Embassy in Delhi and the Royal Thai Consulate Generals in Chennai, Kolkata, and Mumbai.

VFS Global's relationship with the Government of Thailand dates to nearly two decades. The company has processed more than 2 million Thai visa applications since 2005.

As a part of the mandate, VFS Global will roll out drop box services in tier 2 cities such as Aurangabad, Bhopal, Coimbatore, Indore, Lucknow, Mangalore, Nagpur, Nasik,



Ranchi, Thiruvananthapuram, and Vijayawada. Currently the service is available at Agra, Amritsar, Bhubaneswar, Dehradun, Guwahati, Jaipur, Jamshedpur, Ludhiana, Patna, Siliguri, and Visakhapatnam.

"The renewed win testifies VFS Global's excellence in business delivery, focus on evolving customers experience and the unwavering trust shown in us by the sovereign governments we work with," said Prabuddha Sen, COO - South Asia, VFS Global.

Turkey's tourism revenues jump 27.1% in Q3

The number of foreign visitors arriving in Turkey hiked by 55.84 per cent from a year earlier which was only 5.48 million in the month of September 2022, as per the data, continuing the strong recovery from the slump that happened because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, Turkey's tourism revenues doubled to almost USD 25 million recovering from the impact of the coronavirus. Turkish travel companies are expecting a rush of European tourists in the months ahead. Around 29.3 million tourists arrived in Türkiye from January through August, marking

a 108.5% climb from a year ago, on pace to roughly match the pre-pandemic levels of 2019, according to Culture and Tourism Ministry data.

"During the pandemic, people could not go on holiday for a long time. Now that travel restrictions have been lifted, many tourists will feel as though they have 'broken free from chains,'" a Turkish tour operator said. Additionally, the high costs of energy in Europe are also leading to an increase in reservations during the winter season, particularly for accommodation that costs less, he said.



New Hong Kong tourism ads rely on 'Honey Badger'

Hong Kong roped in the Australian former rugby star Nick "Honey Badger" Cummins to lure visitors back despite it using footage filmed before the COVID-19 pandemic when masks were not compulsory.

The city's tourism industry is returning back to normal as the pandemic border controls had left it isolated. It recorded just 76,000 arrivals in the first half of the year, down from 65 million for all of 2018. The Chinese finance hub is gearing up for what it is billing as a grand reopening in early November, to coincide with the Rugby Sevens tournament and a banking summit.

But the Hong Kong Tourism Board's latest campaign has raised eyebrows for the picture it paints of a city absent many strict pandemic curbs that - unlike in much of the world - are still in place. In three videos released on October 5, reality TV personality Cummins, renowned during his playing career for on-field aggression and colourful post-match interviews, takes in various tourist sites.

"I can't wait for Aussies to explore Hong Kong as I have," Cummins enthused in the press release announcing the ads. Hong Kong last month scrapped 2.5 years of mandatory quarantine for overseas arrivals, long after regional tourist rivals such as Singapore and Bangkok.

New self-drive tourism manual for ASEAN countries

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) issued an advisory for new self-drive tourism manual of ASEAN region's member countries as well as suggested tour routes.

Mr Yuthasak Supasorn, TAT Governor said "The self-drive tourism manual for ASEAN aims to provide self-drive tourists with everything they need to know about driving in ASEAN countries. We hope it will serve to inspire people to explore the many diverse cultures, attractions and landscapes of this fascinating region, both intra-ASEAN travellers and tourists from across the globe like Europe and America



who could, for example, combine a visit to Thailand with visits to Lao PDR., Myanmar, Cambodia, or Malaysia to be enjoyed at their own pace, along their own routes."

The guidebook collated information and ideas from ATSP-related seminars on self-driving tourism in ASEAN countries.



Japan welcomes Indian travellers

The Government of Japan announced a policy of resuming entry by individual travellers for tourism purposes from October 11. The government had released their policy to allow group tour to Japan on September 7 and have lifted entry restriction for individual tourists entering Japan.

Satoshi Seino, President, JNTO said, "The Japanese government has at last announced the resumption of individual travel for tourism purposes and visa waivers. I'm incredibly pleased to finally welcome back individual travellers after coping with the pandemic during a wait of two-and-a-half years. In response to the announcement, JNTO will be doing everything we can to provide you with the latest information on coming to Japan so that many tourists can visit and journey throughout our country. So, you can do more than take in Japan's captivating culture, history, nature, and cuisine, we are also working hard on projects for sustainable tourism, adventure travel, and luxury travel. With the relaxed travel measures, Japan is fully prepared to host these events. Along with revelling in the many ways to take in the allures across Japan, now is a time when international visitors can take advantage of shopping opportunities. with preparations to welcome back everyone. Come see the new Japan. We eagerly await your arrival!"

Thomas Cook India and SOTC Travel collaborate for expeditions in Japan

The re-opening of the destination after two years, ahead of the highly awaited Sakura Season has initiated travel demand for Japan. Thomas Cook Limited, one of India's omnichannel travel services company and SOTC Travel have launched an extensive range of ready-to-book, air-inclusive, land only and customisable holidays across Japan.

Thomas Cook and SOTC's product range extends across affordable luxury and premium holidays. Consumers can avail deals like Buy One Get One Companion Free offer and cash discounts. With a range of Japan Sakura tours, the Companies intend to target India's families, millennials, and honeymoon segments.

Tourism Australia launches Global Campaign to attract visitors

Tourism Australia announced a global campaign to attract visitors and enhance tourism in Australia through its new global campaign 'Come and Say G'day'. The campaign also introduced its new brand ambassador Ruby, a souvenir kangaroo brought to life with CGI animation to launch the campaign officially on October 19, 2022.

The short film, G'day, directed by acclaimed Australian director, Michael Gracey and produced by FINCH is an integral part of the campaign.

The next instalment of Tourism Australia's 'There's Nothing Like Australia' global brand platform will star Australian actress and Tourism Australia

Ambassador Rose Byrne, who will be the English voice of Ruby. The campaign will also be localised in non-English markets, with Japanese actress Maryjun Takahashi to be the voice of Ruby in Japan.

Tourism Australia Managing Director, Phillipa Harrison said, "The campaign will support the tourism industry as it rebuilds, by converting the pent-up demand for an Australian holiday and encouraging people to plan and book their adventure Down Under."

Tourism Australia Chief Marketing Officer, Susan Coghill said the multichannel campaign will remind travellers of Australia's iconic destinations and friendly faces.



Kenya expects nearly 1.46 million foreign tourists in 2022

Kenya predicts to receive nearly 1.46 million foreign tourists in 2022, up from 870,000 recorded in 2021 amid the post-Covid-19 economic recovery.

Najib Balala, Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife said in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, that the tourism sector revenues are expected to expand from 146 billion shillings (\$1.2 billion) posted in 2021 to \$2.19 billion this year.

"Kenya as a tourism destination is

quickly on its way to recovery as a result of value addition to tourism experiences as well as diversification of offerings," Balala added during the opening of the 12th edition of Magical Kenya Tourism Expo.

Betty Radier, CEO of the state-owned marketing body, the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB), said that the tourism expo is part of Kenya's efforts to revitalise tourism as it focuses on Africa and other emerging markets.



Travelport and Malaysia Airlines to expand the partnership further

Travelport, a global technology company that powers travel bookings for hundreds of thousands of travel suppliers worldwide and Malaysia Airlines, the national carrier of Malaysia announced that they have reached a multi-year renewal agreement that will continue to bring Malaysia Airlines' content to Travelport-connected customers worldwide. With the new expanded multi-source content agreement, Travelport customers will also be able to access the airlines' future New Distribution Capability content via Travelport plus, Travelport's next-generation travel retailing platform.

Izham Ismail, Group Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia Airlines stated, "Travelport has continued to impress us with its technical knowledge



and dedication in helping us to fulfill our business needs throughout our decades-long partnership. We are confident that Travelport+, Travelport's next-generation travel retailing platform will be our strategic partner in achieving our future business goals. Our expanded partnership is important to our long-term transformative business plan, especially with our NDC initiative implementation."

Since Malaysia's international borders officially reopened on April 1, 2022, flight bookings overall have increased and have shown an upward trajectory. This has rejuvenated the aviation industry which was hard hit by Covid-19. The expanded partnership between Travelport and Malaysia Airlines will ensure smooth and seamless airline content delivery to all Travelport-connected customers and travellers across the globe.



Oman Air shifts operations to Mopa airport in Goa

The Middle East-based carrier officially announced plans to shift flights to the new Greenfield International Airport at Mopa. The airlines broke the news to its frequent fliers that all Oman Air flights arriving and departing from Goa will operate from the new Mopa International Airport from January 1, 2023. Previously the flights were operational from Goa International Airport.

The Mopa international airport is expected to be inaugurated in December by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said a meeting would be convened shortly to plan the division of flights between Mopa and Dabolim airports. The CM said, "In case international flights move towards Mopa, then the domestic flights will arrive at Dabolim Airport."

VietJet initiates direct flights to Kazakhstan

To celebrate the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and Kazakhstan, Vietjet announced routes connecting Almaty and Nha Trang, the tourism capital in central Vietnam. The announcement ceremony took place in the presence of the Vice President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, H.E. Vo Thi Anh Xuan, leaders of the Government of Kazakhstan and senior leaders of the two countries. The routes will commence this October with 2 flights per week with a flight duration of more than 9 hours.

Speaking at the event, Chu Viet Cuong member of the Board of Directors and Vice President of Vietjet said: "With the route network connecting Kazakhstan and other regional countries with Vietnam, Vietjet believes that it will contribute to the important development of Vietnam. economic - trade - tourism system between



Vietnam and Kazakhstan and other countries in the region. The route will be operated by Vietjet using a modern wide-body A330 aircraft with the best products, services, and utilities to meet customers' needs of travelling, working, studying, visiting relatives, etc."

With a mild climate and year-round sunshine, Nha Trang has long been a favourite destination among Asian and European tourists for the tropical golden sunshine, beautiful beaches and unique culinary system of tropical Asia.

Flynas to begin daily flights between Mumbai and Riyadh

Flynas, the Saudi Arabian low-cost airline formerly known as Nas Air recently began with new direct flights to India connecting Riyadh to Mumbai, making the country's largest city the fifth destination for the airlines. The airline also announced that it would start operating new flights between Dammam and Mumbai in December 2022.

"Most of flynas' aircraft are the brand new Airbus A320neo which have the most efficient and environmentally friendly engines and the largest seat pitch of all low-cost carriers between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and India, this expansion is part of our long-term plan to become the No 1 airline between the Kingdom and India and to serve more direct routes," Stefan Magiera, flynas Chief Commercial Officer said.

Air India in talks with aircraft makers to buy planes: CFO

Air India discussed with aircraft manufacturers about buying planes as the Tata group-owned airline plans to triple the size of its fleet. The airline was in the "taxiing phase," according to Air India Chief Financial Officer Vinod Hejmadi, and it would take two years for it to take off, consolidate, and switch into growth mode. Tatas have unveiled a comprehensive transformation plan to revive the losing airline since taking over Air India in January of this year. The plan focused on five factors -- industry leadership, robust operations, commercial efficiency, industry best talent and exceptional customer experience. "In the Air India transformation journey, we are looking for, in the next five years, 30 percent market share



and we are planning to grow our aircraft fleet three times of what we currently have.

We are looking forward to ensuring that we add on capacity for growth (and) discussions (with aircraft manufacturers) are going on to acquire the fleet," Hejmadi said.

flydubai signs agreement with Smartwings to lease four Boeing 737-800

flydubai, the Dubai-based airline, announced its agreement with Smartwings, the Czech Republic-based airline, to wet lease four Next-Generation Boeing 737-800 aircraft between November 17, 2022 and January 16, 2023.

The Aircraft, Crew, Maintenance and Insurance (ACMI) agreement with Smartwings will see four-leased aircraft support flydubai's fleet of 68 Boeing 737 aircraft, enabling the carrier to add more capacity for its passengers and cater to demand for travel during the busy winter season.

Commenting on the agreement, Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer at flydubai said: "We

are pleased to confirm this new wet lease agreement with Smartwings, an IOSA (IATA Operational Safety Audit) certified company, well-experienced in ACMI agreements. Having previously worked with Smartwings, we are confident that the leasing of four additional aircraft will provide our passengers with more convenient and reliable options for travel during the winter season."

flydubai currently operates a single-fleet type of Boeing 737 aircraft that includes 32 Next-Generation Boeing 737-800, 33 Boeing 737 MAX 8 and three Boeing 737 MAX 9.



Singapore Airlines set to commence A350-900 services to Hyderabad

Singapore Airlines (SIA) announced the introduction of services of its Airbus A350-900 medium-haul wide-body aircraft from Hyderabad to Singapore every Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

"We are delighted to enhance our services to Hyderabad with our wide-body A350 aircraft. This is a significant milestone for us as it reinforces our commitment to the market, more so after SilkAir's integration with Singapore Airlines a year ago," said Sy Yen

Chen, General Manager of India for Singapore Airlines

"In line with the company's commitment to product and service excellence, the Airbus A350 medium-haul aircraft, combined with our award-winning inflight service, will provide enhanced comfort to travelers from Hyderabad. Furthermore, the introduction of a wide-body aircraft in this sector also opens up a wider range of opportunities and capabilities for SIA Cargo," he said.



Meghalaya set to start Shillong-Dhaka flight services

The Meghalaya government is mulling starting flight services between Shillong and Dhaka to boost tourism in the state. Chief minister Conrad K Sangma is in talks with the ministry of civil aviation for international air connectivity with the neighbouring countries.

Speaking to media persons here on Saturday, Sangma said there is a huge tourism potential in the state as far as Bangladesh is concerned.

"We feel that the possibility of a connectivity between Dhaka and Shillong should be explored. In fact, we have

started discussions on the same with the ministry of civil aviation. Though it is in a nascent stage, we feel that Dhaka can be a very big source of tourists for us because Shillong would be the closest hill station for Dhaka if the two are connected," the CM said.

He added that this can be done provided that the state gets the necessary infrastructure. The CM also stressed the need to get connected with the capitals of the neighbouring countries to further develop tourism. "We feel strongly about flight connectivity in keeping with all the protocols."

Civil Aviation Minister inaugurates flight between Bilaspur and Indore

Minister of Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya M. Scindia along with Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Bhupesh Baghel inaugurated a direct flight from Bilaspur to Indore, on October 3, 2022. The flight will operate between Bilaspur-Indore-Bilaspur which will operate every Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Sunday.

In his address, Minister of Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya Scindia said, "this new air connectivity will facilitate people of both the states and contribute to the economic development of the regions." The Minister further added that the Ministry is working to operationalise 200 destinations including heliports and water aerodromes by 2026. The central government is committed to take the civil aviation sector to newer heights and improve air



connectivity in every part of the country.

The inauguration was graced by Tulsi Silawat, Minister of Water Resources of Madhya Pradesh, Jaishing Agrawal, Minister in charge of district Bilaspur, Arun Sao, MP (LS) Bilaspur, Shankar Lalwani, MP (LS) Indore, Shailesh Pandey, MLA Bilaspur, Dharamlal Kaushik, MLA Bilha, Ramcharan Yadav, Mayor

Municipal Corporation, Bilaspur, Rashmi Ashish Singh, Parliamentary Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh. Besides, Usha Padhee, Additional Secretary Ministry of Civil Aviation, Vikramdev Dutt, CMD, AIAHL, Vineet Sood, CEO, Alliance Air, and other dignitaries from MoCA, AAI, Alliance Air, and local administration from Bilaspur, and Indore were also present.



Azerbaijan Airlines to start direct flights from Mumbai to Baku

Azerbaijan Airlines, the flag carrier of Azerbaijan commences direct flights between Baku and Mumbai in November, which will operate twice-a-week. The flight between Delhi and Baku is already operational in India. The announcement has made it possible for travellers from the Deccan region of Indian subcontinent to visit Azerbaijan directly.

Flight tickets for the same can be booked on the official website of the Airline as well as from the air carrier's ascribed agencies. The ticket price includes free baggage allowance up to 23 kg in economy class and up to 32 kg in business class with range of meals.

Akasa Air allows pets onboard

Six Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft enter PLL LOT's fleet to operate short and medium haul flights. All the aircrafts will be picked up by the carrier in October. One of them will be delivered from the Seattle factory.

"LOT is in the process of selecting a new fleet in the regional and narrow body segment. Until a supplier is selected, we are planning to source aircraft as a bridging solution – the first Embraer 175 and 190 have already joined LOT Polish Airlines' fleet and will soon be followed by the Boeing 737 MAX 8. I am very pleased to see these reliable and economical aircraft completing our single-aisle fleet." Maciej Wilk, Chief Operating Officer of LOT Polish Airlines, said.

"We are honoured and pleased to expand our long relationship with LOT by leasing the airline six modern 737 MAX 8 aircraft, in addition to the six airplanes currently on lease, doubling the size of the ALC owned portfolio to 12 aircraft at LOT. ALC has played an important role in the recent fleet modernization program of LOT since late 2017 and these six additional aircraft will support LOT's network and development strategy," said Steven F. Udvar-Házy, Executive Chairman of Air Lease Corporation.

Lot's Fleet on the increase

Turkish Airlines said it reached 80 percent load factor, carrying 6.3 million passengers during May 2022, releasing its passenger and cargo traffic results for the month.

The flag carrier increased its seat capacity offered to passengers by 12.6 percent compared to same period of 2019 due to the increasing demand despite several countries still continuing travel restrictions.

Turkish Airlines General Manager Bilal Ekşi said, "Although our sector was

almost brought to halt during pandemic, we as Turkish Airlines never stopped. We worked towards present as we knew we would be returning to our route to success even stronger. May 2022 numbers show that our goals and dreams are starting to materialize. We believe we will be meeting again above the clouds with the 6.3 million passengers who chose the privileged travel experience of Turkish Airlines during May and extend our thanks for choosing us. Now is the time to talk about good things again."



IndiGoGreen 2.0 flying responsibly: ESG Report

IndiGo released second ESG report and the first report on the Indian aviation sector aligned with the GRI Standards and SASB-reinforcing commitment to being a responsible aviation company. It achieved around 18% emissions intensity reduction target, one year ahead of schedule (target period is FY 2015-16 to FY 2022-23) and also joined the World Economic Forum's "Clean Skies for Tomorrow" initiative which aims to blend 10% SAF in all aviation fuel consumption by 2030.

Kiran Koteswar, Chief Programs Officer and Head - ESG, IndiGo said, "In a year full of opportunities, challenges, and uncertainty, providing air connectivity to everyone remained core to our business. With respect to ESG, we have embarked on a journey that is rooted in



driving change both inside and outside the organisation. The organisation was steadfast in delivering on our values as we made significant progress toward our ESG goals throughout the year. Our momentum and drive are to provide best air connectivity in domestic and international markets in a responsible manner. As such we are driving the evolution of our sector in an effort to integrate aviation with climate protection."



CSMIA becomes 100% sustainable on green energy

Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) entirely switched to green sources for its energy consumption needs, making it one of India's 100 percent sustainable airports. In line with its vision, CSMIA has prepared a roadmap to achieve "Net Zero Carbon Emission" by 2029.

Speaking on the occasion, CSMIA's spokesperson said, "We are extremely delighted to achieve this key milestone in our journey towards attaining a sustainable future for CSMIA. Quick wins do not create high level of impact on the environment, thus, CSMIA has always been determined to focus

on long-term transformations. The diligent efforts of the airport in undertaking several thoughtful initiatives have paved the way to achieve this feat. With several accolades in recognising energy usage and sustainable efforts under the belt, CSMIA over the years has been acknowledged by globally acclaimed organisations, for its efficient management of energy consumption. As CSMIA aspires to become net-zero by 2029, this landmark event further encourages us to stay committed to our efforts in enhancing the operational efficiency of the airport while operating on fully renewable energy."



Russian airline Aeroflot resume flights to Sri Lanka

Russia's flagship carrier, Aeroflot announced that it is resuming flights in Sri Lanka. Earlier, it had suspended the commercial flights to Sri Lanka after the island nation's authorities detained the airline's Airbus A330 jet on June 2.

Aeroflot reported that the departure of its SU-289 flight from Colombo to Moscow scheduled on June 2 was at first

delayed and then cancelled due to the absence of permit from Sri Lanka's aviation authorities.

"Starting from October, Aeroflot will resume regular flights to Colombo, Bangkok, and Goa. Flights will be operated on Airbus A330 aircraft," the airlines said in a statement. From October 9, the airline will resume Colombo flights, which will operate twice a week.



flydubai commences daily flights to another airport in Maldives

flydubai, the Dubai-based airline, continues to grow its operations to the island nation of Maldives with the commencement of a new daily service to Gan International Airport (GAN) from February 4, 2023.

Commenting on the outset of operations to Gan, Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer of flydubai said, "The start of our daily flights to the southern island of Gan will give our

passengers more options to travel to the beautiful Maldives. This new service will reduce the commute time whether by boat or seaplane for those staying in resorts in the southern Atolls. The Maldives continues to be one of the most popular leisure destinations for our customers from the UAE, GCC and CIS. The additional frequency to the market will further support connecting traffic from Europe as well."



ARINDAM SARKAR

APPOINTED AT: The Fern, Goregaon
TO: General Manager

Arindam Sarkar is the newly appointed General Manager of The Fern Goregaon. A seasoned professional, Sarkar aims to bring innovation, operational excellence and renewed energy to The Fern Goregaon with his fresh perspective. He has been a passionate hotelier with over 20 years of experience. He believes that hard work and discipline are the secret ingredients to success. Before joining The Fern Goregaon, Mumbai, Arindam was the General Manager at The Fern Residency, Yeshwantpur, Bangalore.



KEITH RAJAN

APPOINTED AT: Four Seasons, Mumbai
TO: Hotel Manager

A hospitality industry specialist with over 22 years of experience across different markets, Keith Rajan is appointed at the Hotel Manager of Four Seasons Mumbai. Keith will oversee the day-to-day operations of the hotel including managing its luxurious rooms, the city's favourite Asian restaurant, San: Qi, the spa, meetings and events. He started his career in hospitality as a bartender and his skills propelled his journey towards the globally-acclaimed Buddha Bar in Dubai and in Manila.



ANAND SRINIVASAN

APPOINTED AT: 2HUB
TO: Chief Commercial Officer

2HUB announces the appointment of Anand Srinivasan as its Chief Commercial Officer. Anand comes with strong experience growing disruptive companies. He was formerly the Chief Commercial Officer of Rezlive.com, responsible for driving its sales, international presence and commercial strategies. His expertise includes Sales, Business Development, International Business and Corporate Strategy. He will be responsible for scaling 2HUB into a revenue growth.



DIDIER JARDIN

APPOINTED AS: Four Seasons, Bora Bora
TO: General Manager

Didier Jardin, a hospitality veteran with the Four Seasons since 1994, joins as the resort's new General Manager. From the beaches of Santa Barbara, Bora Bora, Mauritius and Hualalai to the cityscapes of New York, Cairo and Chicago, the birthplace of his twin daughters. He is well on his way to achieving his goal of working for the property in every region where the brand operates. His open-door policy further supports his desire to be seen as just one of the team.



ABHIMANYU SINGH LODHA

APPOINTED AT: The Lodhi, Delhi

TO: General Manager
Abhimanyu Singh Lodha is appointed as the new General Manager of The Lodhi, New Delhi. He specialises in luxury hotels and resorts and has an experience of 20 years during which he was associated with various properties of The Oberoi Group across India. He has an impressive record of growing profitability, improving guest satisfaction, and increasing staff retention. His role involves to deliver the world-class experience for which it has become renowned.



PANKAJ SAXENA

APPOINTED AT: Radisson Blu Hotel, Pune
TO: General Manager

Pankaj Saxena is appointed as the General Manager at Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi. With a career spanning 24 years in hospitality, Saxena has worked at RHG hotels at distinct locations and has also been a part of Sarovar Hotels and ITC Hotels in the past. He is a Certified Leader under The Leaders Excellence Programme - 2019 at RHG Corporate Office Brussels, Belgium. He was earlier the General Manager at Radisson Blu Mumbai International Airport.



BHAVANA SHAH

APPOINTED AT: JW Marriott
TO: Director of Marketing and Corporate Communications

Global luxury hotel brand, JW Marriott is pleased to welcome Bhavana Shah as the Director of Marketing and Corporate Communications. In her new role, she will lead and oversee marketing and communication strategies designed to promote this iconic property and its services. With experience of over 16 years, Bhavana is proficient at formulating and implementing award-winning strategic communications and branding.



SATISH KUMAR

APPOINTED AT: St. Regis, Goa

TO: General Manager
St. Regis, Goa, India appoints Satish Kumar as General Manager. A well-recognised leader with over two decades of outstanding experience in luxury hospitality, Satish will be leading the task of introducing the legendary outpost to the country starting in October 2022. In his new role, he will be responsible for overseeing hotel operations and ensuring the highest standards of guest services synonymous with the St. Regis brand.



MUKTA KHANNA

APPOINTED AT: Holiday Inn Agra

TO: General Manager
Holiday Inn Agra has appointed Mukta Khanna as their new General Manager. She is a hospitality professional with an experience of 19 years across brands, she has held several significant leadership roles with some of the top brands in the country including Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Rohini and Holiday Inn Mumbai International Airport as her last assignment. She has spent 10 fulfilling years with IHG growing into the role of General Manager.

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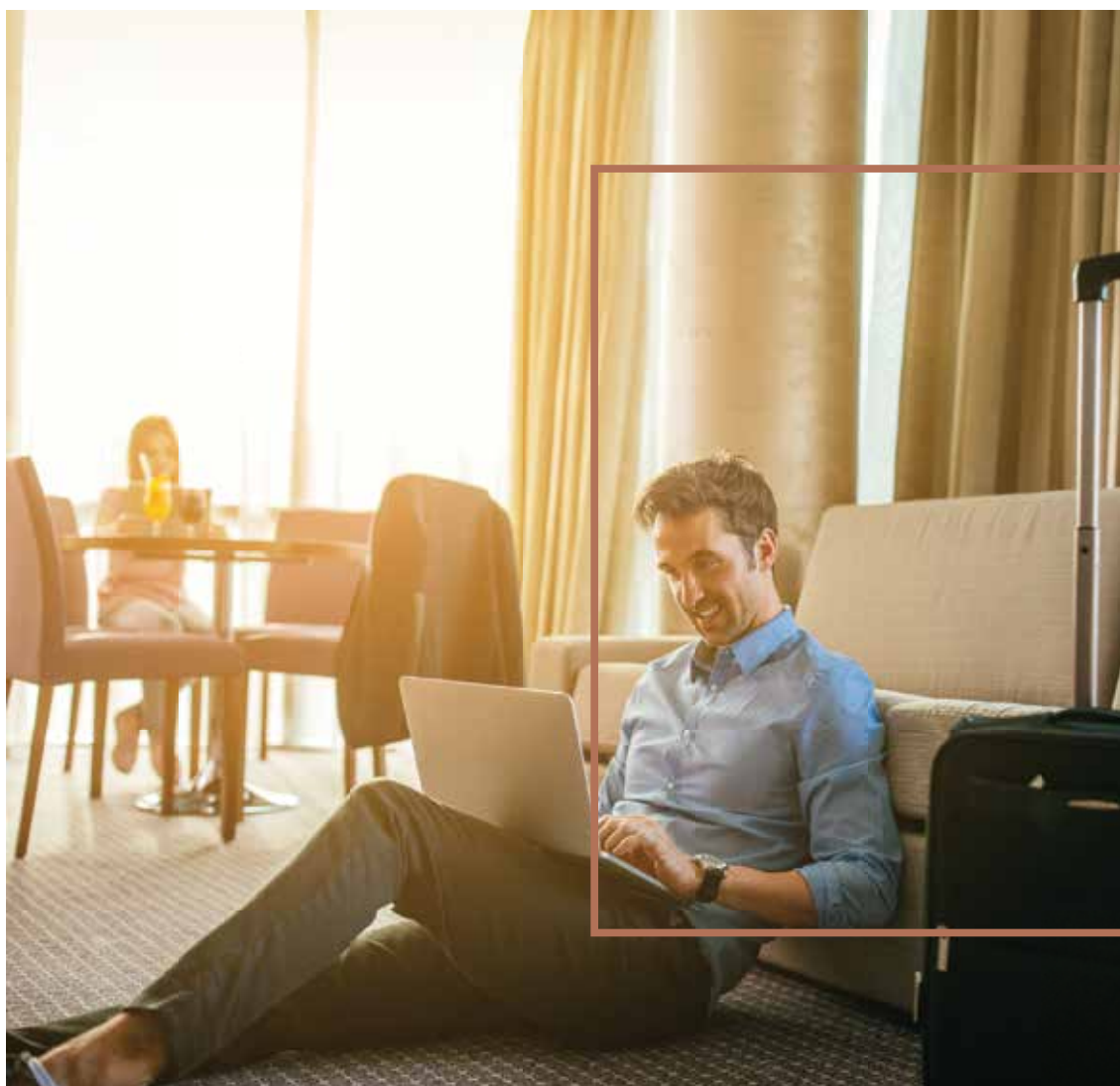
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