

It's time to experience the spectacular beauty of a 7-lake trek dotted with meadows, magnificent hills, flowing rivers, dense forests and picturesque valleys.



Who wants to know a secret... 'being in a good mood is paramount to write good content.' One can figure out your mood just by going through your content. However, there's a condition; you need to be a regular reader. Well, I'll admit to the fact that not everybody is as blessed as I am, my frequent travels assist in reducing my chances of being in a foul mood.

I am always oozing with excitement while penning down this note as I have to reminisce through a month of flashbacks to tell you, our readers all the happenings of the month. Honestly, that's a moment of gratification for me. Talking about gratitude, I and the entire team of Travel Turtle were super thrilled to win the 'Best Travel Trade Publication Award' consecutively for the second year at the 37th IATO Annual Convention in Lucknow. The last two years have been nothing less than a roller coaster ride, but the amount of acceptance, admiration and prioritisation that we have received is unfathomable. This is what makes us stronger, in terms of our vision, content and designs. Keep showering this affection and your feedback so we serve the industry in the most relevant and impactful manner possible.

The IATO convention was a grand affair, which allowed us to taste the flavours of Lucknow while savouring the flavours of the travel industry. So many discussions on some of the most relevant topics will certainly help the industry to reflect on itself. I love when we have cruises in the magazine, especially when it's our indigenous cruise Cordelia! Not to forget, the exotic properties such as The Residence Maldives and Teardrop Hotels are waiting to be discovered by you.

We sincerely trust that you will have as much pleasure reading this edition of Travel Turtle as we enjoyed compiling this for you, our dear readers. Do share your feedback at bharti@travelturtle.world.

Happy Reading!

Bharti Sharma Editor







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Travel Tutte Team

Publisher: Harish Chandra Uniyal

Editor: Bharti Sharma

Executive Director: Sudipta Saha

Bureau Chief (West): Naina Nath

Bureau Head (North-East):

Karaminder Singh Dhillon

Feature Writer: Tripti Jain

Contributing Editors:

Saloni Bhatia

Sharmistha Shadukhan

Misbaah Mansuri

Shrinidhi Hande

Marketing: Tejas Sharma

Art Director: Pankti Anjaria

Rajas More

Legal Consultant: Aditya Singh

Photographer: Abhishek

Circulation: Pradeep Kumar

Accounts: Dinesh Kumar

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Printed and Published by: Harish Chandra on behalf of Trouvaille Media & Communications Private Limited; Printed at Shree Ram Print O Pac, D 10/5 (Basement) Okhla Industrial Area Phase II, New Delhi 110020; Published at Plot No.1, 311, Vardhman Sunrise Plaza, Vasundhara Enclave, Delhi 110096.

Editor: Bharti Sharma





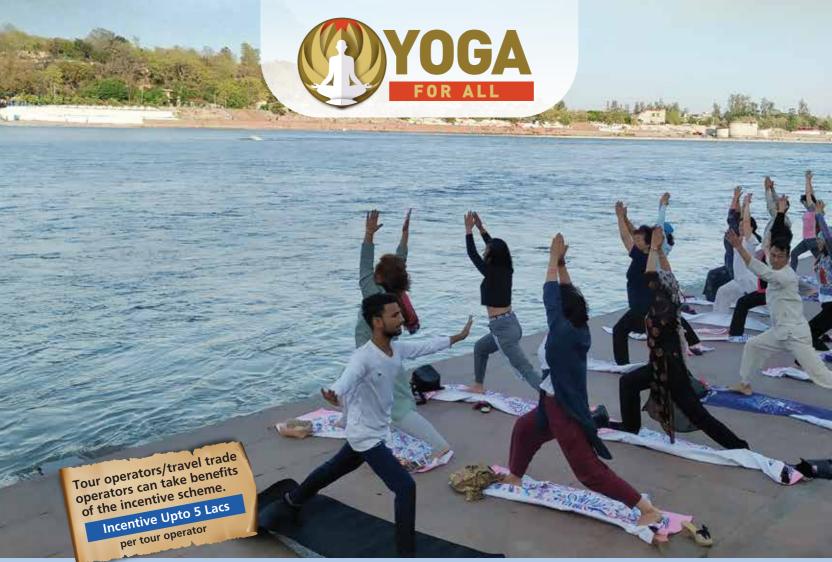
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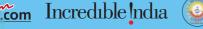






For more details













Visa on Arrival resumes starting December 23, 2022, offering plenty of opportunity to visit Qatar post FIFA World Cup

Qatar's Visa on Arrival policies will be reinstated, replacing Hayya card requirements. Visitors from more than 95 nationalities can enjoy Visa on Arrival and explore the burst of new attractions that have opened in the lead up to the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™. With its distinctive combination of cool weather, pristine beaches and authentic warm Arabian hospitality, Qatar's visitors and residents can continue to experience the unique, family-friendly atmosphere that made this year's tournament so special and memorable.

From the exquisite cuisines and culture on offer in Souq Waqif and Katara Cultural Village, to soaking up the sights of the Doha Port and Corniche, some of the tournament's most recognisable hotspots are still open and ready to welcome guests from around the world.

Commenting on the latest travel rules, Haya Al-Noami, Head of Promotions Sector at Qatar Tourism, said: "Looking back at the end of a truly remarkable month of celebrations, we are so proud to have hosted some of the year's most memorable moments. We are confident that Qatar's iconic attractions, warmth and openness, and infectious enthusiasm will continue to draw in visitors and residents toward the end of the year and into the next."





IndiGo commenced flights between Kochi and Raipur via Goa

IndiGo, India's leading carrier, has commenced a new flight between Goa-Raipur while resuming its flight from Kochi to Goa, effective January 7, 2023. These flights are aimed at strengthening domestic connectivity and offering customers with increased flight options, to India's favourite beach destinations.

Mr. Vinay Malhotra, Head Global Sales, IndiGo said, "As part of our mission to enhance accessibility, we have resumed flight operations between Kochi-Goa and introduced first frequency between Goa-Raipur. We are hopeful that many customers will benefit with the introduction of these connections, especially during the peak season for beach destinations. We will continue to offer new options and stay true to our promise of courteous, hassle-free, on-time and affordable travel experience."

Kochi, also known as Cochin, is one of Kerala's most well-known cities. Popularly regarded as the Queen of the Arabian Sea, the city also has one of the world's finest natural harbours and was the centre of the global spice trade for many centuries. Fort Kochi, Hill Palace, Santa Cruz Cathedral Basilica, Mattancherry Palace, and Kochi's backwaters are just a few of the notable tourist attractions that make Kochi famous.

Arches will implement updated pilot timed entry system in 2023

Arches National Park will implement an updated timed entry system pilot in 2023. Based on feedback received from the public, stakeholders, and local community members, visitors to Arches in 2023 will have additional flexibilities to enter the park, including the ability to purchase entrance fees or annual passes in advance and to access the park without a reservation during extended hours.

"During the 2022 pilot at Arches, timed entry tickets helped pace visitation into the park, lessen congestion, and enhance visitor experiences. This year, Arches will use another timed entry pilot to test operational improvements, which should provide more opportunities for access while protecting Arches' extraordinary landscape," said Arches National Park Superintendent Patricia Trap.

From April 1 to October 31, 2023, visitors will need to secure a timed entry reservation in advance to enter the park between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. Visitors can book reservations on a first-come first-served basis on Recreation.gov beginning at 8 a.m. MST on January 10, 2023. Reservations will be released three months in advance in monthly blocks. For example, on January 10, reservations will open for April 1 through April 30. On February 1, reservations will open for the month of May and any remaining reservations that have not been booked for April.



With 1000 delegates, Turkiye hosts one of the biggest and most successful MICE groups from India

Turkiye hosted one of the largest MICE groups from India in November 2022, welcoming around 1000 participants. Thomas Cook (India) Limited was the official travel partner for the MICE group from India. This 6-day trip covered Turkiye's two most popular and exotic cities Istanbul and Antalya, where the guests were hosted for three days each.

Meera Charnalia, Sr. Vice President and Head, MICE, Thomas Cook (India) Limited said, "Post reopening of borders and easing of protocols, Turkiye is re-emerging strongly as a top MICE destination for our corporates in India. I am delighted that we were quick to deliver with a mega group of almost 1000 delegates for a 6-day program across Istanbul and Antalya. Our MICE Products Team handpicked vibrant experiences for their team bonding activities, including the high adrenalin rush of canyoning, rafting and ziplining across Europe's longest (1960 metres) and World's highest (410 metres). Exceptional and diverse elements were woven into the tour from vintage car drives, Miniaturk - one of the world's largest miniature parks and the Rahmi M. Koç Museum and an exclusive Bosphorus dinner cruise. Turkiye offers distinctive appeal, with its unique position at the confluence of both Asian and European culture-history. Turkiye also offers exceptional experiences for MICE travellers such as hot air ballooning in Cappadocia and extensive gastronomy, in addition to its impressive MICE infrastructure."







IRCTC's offers exclusive discounts on its Buddhist Circuit Tourist Train Package

IRCTC, the state-owned biggest travel and tourism company in the country is all set to start the Buddhist Circuit Special Tourist Train tour package with the beginning of New Year. This special tourist train has been one of the flagship products of the company and has earned many accolades for the company in the travel and tourism world.

IRCTC is offering this special all-inclusive Buddhist Circuit Tour of 7 Nights/8 Days from Delhi Safdarjung covering the various important destinations associated with the life of Lord Buddha such as Bodhgaya, Nalanda (Rajgir), Varanasi (Sarnath), Lumbini, Kushinagar and Shravasti while the tour ends with a spectacular visit to the World-famous Taj Mahal, which is also one of the seven wonders of the world.

IRCTC is offering this special tour on its exquisite fully air-conditioned deluxe tourist train comprising of 12 state-of-the-art ergonomically designed brand new LHB coaches equipped with modern amenities and facilities. The passengers have an option of travelling on specially designed AC-I coaches or AC-II coaches as per their choice.

The AC I coaches, besides being cozy and spacious cabins and coupes, have been fitted with in-room amenities like individual lockers for tourists. The train also has spacious AC-II Tier coaches which have

been modified to have only spacious and comfortable cabins with separate sitting area. Besides, the train has 2 aesthetically designed dining cars with capacity of passengers each to dine together. The train has a fully equipped kitchen car which serves an array of specialty international and local cuisines for the on-board guests.

For the first two departures of this special tour package, IRCTC is offering exclusive discounts for the domestic tourists and overseas Indian guests including NRIs, PIOs and OICs. IRCTC is offering a discount of 20% on the package. The 7 Nights/8 Days package under promo offer starts from Rs 73,051/- per person on twin sharing basis.



Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Festival announced for 25th March 2023

Coffee lovers, both locally and internationally, can mark Saturday, March 25, 2023 on their calendars as the date when the highly anticipated Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Festival will make its grand return.

The sixth staging of the annual event was launched on 9th January 2023 at Devon House, in Kingston, and is set to take place at its traditional home – Newcastle, St. Andrew.

For this year, patrons can expect to be treated to the usual abundance of food, coffee and culture, as well as a roster of activities that include a farmers' day/festival marketplace, a barista competition, coffee panel discussions, and a mixologist competition to create signature Jamaica coffee cocktails.

In addition, there will be a month-long celebration of the Jamaica Blue Mountain coffee, as well as visits to the attractions along the Blue Mountains, the promotion of coffee farm tours and a showcase of the cafes along the Jamaica Blue Mountain culinary trail.



One Above Global DMC opens a new branch in Chennai

After positioning itself in travel markets in major parts of India and becoming a name that is recognized for its accountability and dedication, One Above Global DMC has expanded its journey of success by opening a new branch in Chennai on 14 December 2022. The aspiration is the same, offering travel products at affordable rates along with flawless services. It is planning to grow its business on an all-India level and its Chennai office is one of the attempts for the same. The inauguration was graced by many travel agents followed by a Thanksgiving networking dinner to all the potential partners.

As per Rahim Aslam, Director and Founder of the company, "our branch office in Chennai will ensure that our customers going for International holidays will not face any kind of difficulty and we shall be able to provide them value for money vacation. On receiving so many holiday queries from Chennai on a daily basis, opening a branch office was essential for us."





'Ace Connect' to offer integrated sales, marketing and business development services in India

'Ace Connect', a professional consulting company was recently founded by Alpa Jani, with a vision to offer destinations, hotels and tourism products, a sustainable presence, visibility, and growth in the Indian market. Ace Connect provides an edge in understanding the travel trade fraternity and enables to strategically link them to the right channel partners. The company commits to deliver excellence through integrity, trust, leadership, and innovation. It aims to help the hospitality, travel and tourism industry and its partners grow, by offering a whole gamut of services and solutions complying with their expectations, and working towards

meeting their objectives, targets, and goals. Covering a span of 22 years of well-spread experience in the tourism industry and serving reputed organisations such as South African Tourism, South African Airways and Thomas Cook, Alpa Jani is equipped with an in-depth perspective of the travel field and has gained immense respect for her work and contribution to the industry. Commenting on the launch, Alpa Jani, CEO & Founder, Ace Connect says, "Reliability, domain experience and

Ace Connect says, "Reliability, domain experience and repute are key factors for forging new partnerships. We at Ace Connect will work as an extended valued advisor and partner on an operating model that's designed to evolve and reflect the accelerated pace at which the sales and marketing landscape is moving in India."

IRIS Reps appointed as the official Indian Sales Representative of Berjaya Hotels & Resorts

IRIS Reps has been appointed as the official Indian Sales Representative for The Taaras Beach & Spa Resort, Redang Island and Berjaya Tioman Resort, Tioman Island by Berjaya Hotels & Resorts. Both resorts are located on the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. The collaboration will focus on building further awareness, expansion of their sales channels and encouraging more travellers to head to Redang Island and Tioman Island in 2023.

Alefiya Singh, The Founder and Director, IRIS Reps added, "We are glad to be on board and hope to leverage our strong market presence in travel and hospitality, to help both island resorts to achieve their marketing and sales goals. "We can't wait to welcome Indian travel trade to rediscover these two tropical paradises. We guarantee you it's going to be a fresh and exciting holiday experience with us.

Berjaya Tioman Resort is a tropical paradise in Tioman Island with miles of palm-fringed beach and clear water sand surrounding misty mountains. This pristine island is home to a myriad of marine life and is also regarded as one of the finest dive destinations in Malaysia. Stay with us to experience an idyllic beach vacation in Tioman.





The hidden voice of travellers-Pectealional Tourism



LIVE WIRE

When we think about vacations or a holiday, the first thing that pops into our heads is either mountains or beaches. People often go for conventional tours with a package that involves different activities and an overall The experience. recreational tourism was coined when tourists and travellers started looking for something more than just visiting a place. They wanted a trip that would be an experience in itself. The provision of services across a wide variety of tourism kinds that aim at preventive rehabilitation is recreational tourism, which is a complex sort of tourism

There are many ways to rebuild a person's physical, mental, and physiological strength; as a result, the planning of this kind of tourism has a multifunctional character and includes leisure and entertainment, educational, and sporting activities to meet the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of the individuals who are trying to rejuvenate themselves.

Recreation is a leisure activity, where leisure is defined as free time. Human biology and psychology both depend on the "desire to do something for recreation." Activities that are classified as "recreational" are frequently performed for amusement, pleasure, or enjoyment.

Recreation of self!

Recreation refers to any activity engaged during free time that is not highly committed (overtime, second job, home study and various maintenance jobs around the house). Leisure activities include both those done outside of the home, such as sports, as well as those done inside the home, including reading and television. watching distinction between tourism and recreation can be quite difficult to draw. It also doesn't matter as much when discussing numbers. Understanding that

endeavours to preserve the environment and use it as sustainably as possible is crucial. Both have locals and visitors as their main target audiences.

One of the main goals of tourism is to provide opportunities for people to relax and renew their bodies and minds. Recreational travel has become a widespread phenomenon as a result of peoples' greater financial well-being, paid time off from advancements work. transportation and production. and consumers' increased purchasing power. Active recreation, the development of well-being, the restoration of one's working ability, and the preservation and improvement of one's health services as their driving forces to reduce civilizational stress. It featured a range of tourist activities, such





Facilitating Recreation Facilities built in many areas around the world can be utilised and benefited by both groups, the ones looking for adventure and the ones opting for recreation. The categories 'tourism', 'recreation', and 'leisure' are difficult to define because they are all related ideas. But each of them must meet a certain set of requirements. Leisure time includes free time, recreation is leisure time activities, and tourism is short-term travel. A lot of places around the world are offering experiences that go beyond travel and focus on the overall upliftment of a person. Tourists today understand the value of making the most of their trip time. Participating actively in a leisure activity or attending a

sport or cultural event as a

recreational activities are also determined and considered. The practice of cultural tourism is a wonderful illustration Examples include touring religious sites, folk art museums, and castles. this perspective, gastronomy is also crucial. Travellers who engage in recreational activities generally considered tourists. They are free to take advantage of the leisure options provided by the local environment, whether it be natural or artificial.

Tourism and Economy

The direct and indirect effects of tourism on the economy are both presents. When goods like lodging and entertainment, food and beverage services, and retail possibilities are sold, direct economic effects are generated. Through their spending in or close to a certain tourism area,

locals, tourists, businesses, and different levels of government, all directly impact the tourism industry. The fact that they take place within a nation's boundaries and are carried out by "residents and non-residents for business and pleasure purposes" is an important element of the direct economic impacts of tourism.

Sociocultural effects on Tourism

The desire to explore a different cultural context in its natural environment is a unique component of tourism. Even though cultural tourism offers chances for comprehension and education, there are negative effects that follow. In addition to

LIVE WIRE

the amount of tourism, social interactions between guests and hosts also play a role. The commodification of culture, the demonstrative effect, and the acculturation of a different culture are the three main consequences at the local level. The perception of people differ in every way and once you come across different personalities, it becomes hard to interpret each other's thought processes. Tourism can be a tricky thing for the mind and your social behaviour.

Environment affects tourism

Ecosystems including forests, high alpine, wilderness, lakes and rivers, coastlines and marine environments, as well as rural settlements and seaside suitable resorts, are

ecotourism, nature tourism. wildlife tourism, and adventure tourism. People's travel destinations are getting farther away from the few remaining pristine and natural places on the earth as a result of their demand for more real and experiences. An improvement in environmental stewardship consciousness could result from this. The adverse effect may destroy the exact experience that people are looking for. Some effects are immediate and long-term, immediate and distant from the tourist site, and there are both direct and indirect effects.

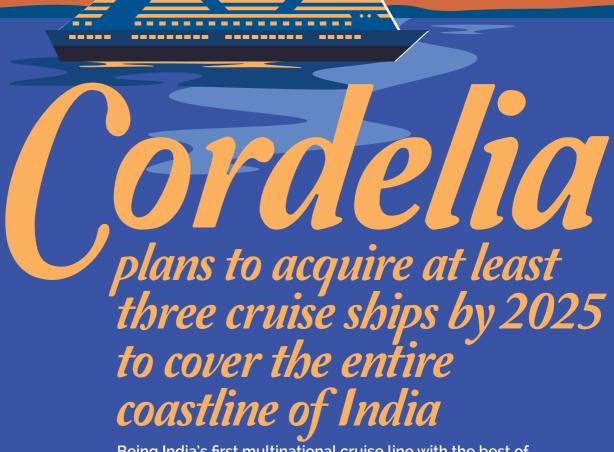
Health is imperative!

The impact of tourism on residents' health can be both favourable and bad. The density of visitor arrivals, traffic jams, crowding, crime rate, and other stressful variables all have detrimental short-term

consequences. Additionally, inbound tourism contributes to the transmission of diseases like SARS, MERS, COVID-19, and others that move from person to person. Recently, this has resulted in travel bans, aircraft cancellations, border closures, and other restrictions. Additionally, it is common for tourists and inhabitants to contract sexually transmitted illnesses. Another unfavourable effect of tourism growth is the increase in traffic accidents, which occur because tourists are unfamiliar with local laws, driving customs, and road conditions. Additionally, crash rates involving alcohol are much higher for visitors.

Tourism is being affected by several aspects, creating a window for recreational tourism which is the future and the voice of travellers all around the world. Everyone is looking offbeat something and unconventional to do. recreational tourism offers





Being India's first multinational cruise line with the best of everything, Cordelia is set to offer a host of amenities, food options, and entertainment, giving a whole new experience and dimension to cruising, that will leave guests, especially first-timers satisfied and eager for more. As an experience provider, Cordelia wants to make a difference, and create an unforgettable cruise experience for travellers. Jurgen Bailom, President & CEO, Waterways Leisure, Cordelia Cruises talks to Travel Turtle and shares the unparalleled services the guests should look forward to.

- Bharti Sharma



helm, he was very clear that he wanted to serve India an experience like never before and yet retain a local flavour of travel. They embarked on this journey during the pandemic and sailed through it all to get Cordelia Cruises to become India's favourite cruise destination. Reminiscing the humble yet blockbuster beginnings, Jurgen shares, "It was definitely not an easy ride, but with a team like ours, dedicated solely to serving all guests with nothing but the best, we say it has been a joyful experience at large. What we know for sure is that a and compassionate mindful understanding of customer behaviour lies at the top when it comes to making a mark in the Indian tourism and hospitality industry."

A whole new
experience of travel and
hospitality unlocking
with cruising

The testimonials by Cordelia's guests and the services they provide speak for themselves. "Our guests come for a luxurious hospitality experience. Since its launch, we have witnessed a significant increase in customers. Other than just sailings, we've had

Jurgen Bailom

bookings for weddings and corporate meetings as well with an overall increase across all sectors," shares Jurgen.

According to him, the Indian guests come to experience luxurious hospitality, to enjoy holidays that are far from the ordinary and have an element of curiosity and uniqueness to them. He shares, "Families, youngsters, travellers, etcetera, everyone wants to be on the move, explore and do so in style. First-time cruisers are usually curious and aspire to experience the stay on the sea rather than just watching it from the hotel windows or seashore. The need to have something as magnificent as we have on land is what brings a lot of customers on board. The concept of a unique experience is something that makes people inquisitive and wants to try it. It's a whole new experience of travel and hospitality that we unlock with cruising.



With international travel still being a challenge, Cordelia Cruises offers the perfect amalgamation of international-level unique travel experiences with the Indian touch. Jurgen tells, "With respect to our tour operations and agents we mainly want to assist and encourage them and also educate them on how to reach out to the end consumers for the new cruising experience. The focus is to let the operators and agents also know how to position the brand-new experience for the Indian market. There are no passport issues, no visa issues, no international flights, no difficult paperwork, only a great opportunity to get on the cruise and enjoy the experience. We'd like to inform tour operators and agents through sales and marketing activities about our luxurious hospitality and other varied Indianized experiences on boardsuch as exquisite dining options and interesting extravagant shows."

Witnessed a significant increase in customers

Cordelia is already looking at exploring major parts of the country and beyond. "We are extremely grateful to have received phenomenal response from our Indian guests till now. We have flourishingly completed 100+ sailings along both the east and the west coast of India, have covered 7 ports in total including Kochi, Goa, Lakshadweep, Mumbai. Visakhapatnam, and Chennai, and have done more than 300 shows while serving over one lakh guests on The Empress. We are nothing but excited to see where this journey takes us. With great demand and customer satisfaction, the coming years definitely look great and we are planning to launch more ships in the coming years," shares Jurgen.

Talking about growth and marketing strategy, Jurgen believes OTA and overall digital marketing are the pulse. Cordelia Cruises is in fact one of India's only hospitality and travel businesses which has experienced over 50 per cent of bookings from its website. He further adds, "A dynamic, 360-degree programm<u>e</u> communication essential. We think on our toes and are ready to adapt and evolve daily with our strategy. We also feel that social media plays a significant role when it comes to speaking of marketing strategies at Cordelia Cruises in promoting the cruising experience in India. We do rely heavily on our B2B partners to promote, educate and raise awareness about domestic cruising in India.

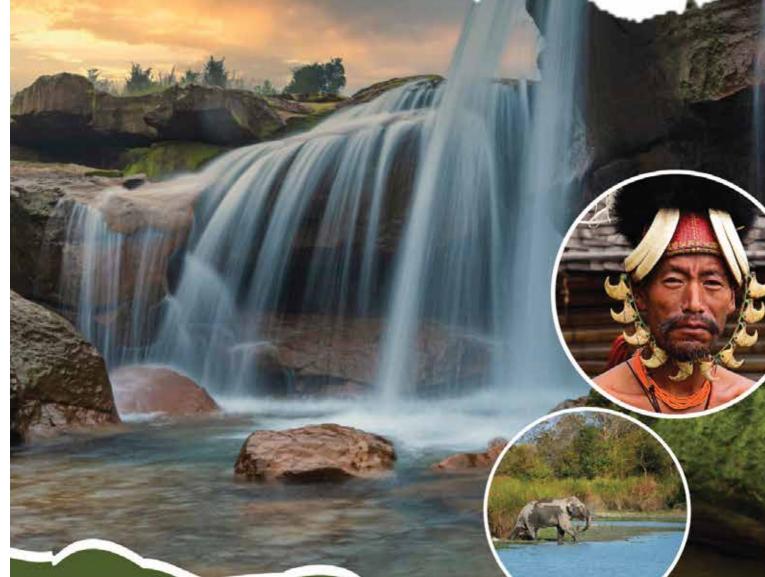


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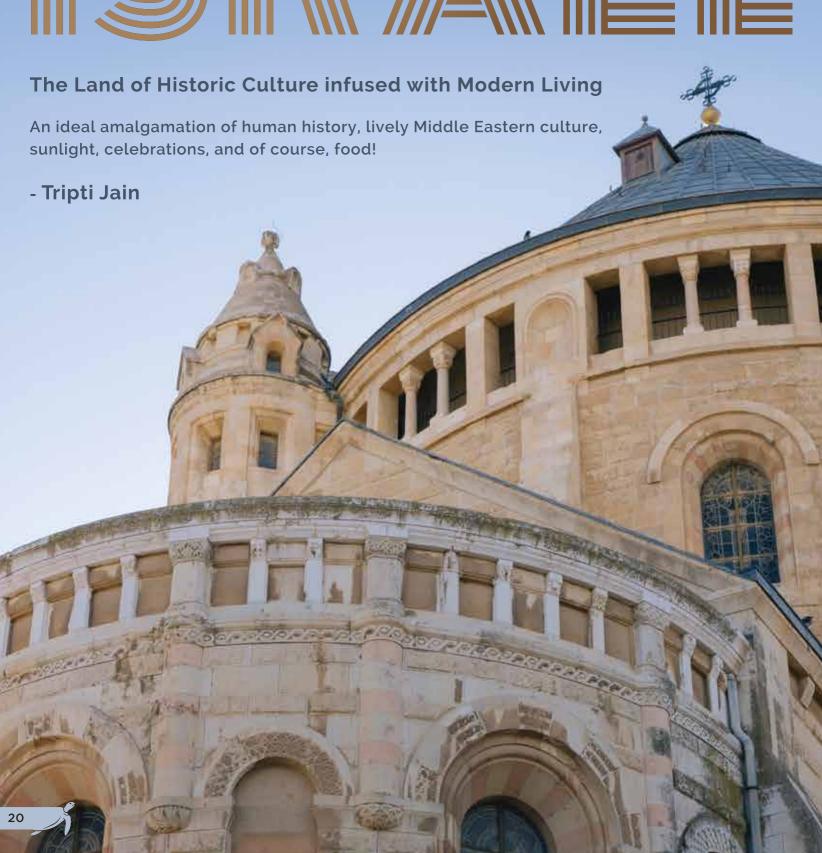
Guwahati Shillong

Cherrapunjee

Kaziranga National Park

Kohima





OFFSHORE BINOCULLARS

Israel - A little nation, which is situated where Asia, Europe, and Africa converge, on the south-eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea has a rich history and was once regarded as the geographic centre of the globe. Israel offers all of it, including icy waterfalls, enormous deserts, ruins dating back thousands of years, and famous modern art. A country which manages to cram a lot of magnificent scenery into its little area, from the wave-lashed beaches of Tel Aviv to the rocky peaks of Masada and the mirror-like expanse of the salty Dead Sea. There are plenty of things for travellers to explore - the diverse joys of the vibrant cities and the sun-drenched wilderness.

Israel has a remarkably distinctive landscape, mountains, green pastures, and even snow can be found in the northern part of the nation. The enormous Negev Desert is in the south which is only a few hours away. Camping is a well-liked pastime, especially around the Sea of Galilee, which is Israel's main water source in addition to being a significant historical tourist site.

Reaching Israel

Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV), which handles hundreds of daily flights, is Israel's primary international airport. Located between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, it is convenient to book an airport shuttle to take you wherever you need to go once you arrive at the airport. Once you get there you would wonder where to stay that will allow you to visit the whole country. The good news is that Israel is quite small, making day visits from Tel Aviv and Jerusalem a cakewalk. Hotels are available in both cities for every price range, and day tours depart from both cities. Israel is home to some of the most significant religious sites for Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

Dipping a toe in Jerusalem!

The Old City in Jerusalem's core





may only be a one-kilometre square, yet it is a miniature representation of holiness. Travellers from Israel and other countries, as well as Jews, Christians, and Muslims, worship in its four unique quarters to view these revered religious sites. Jerusalem is a must-see destination whether it is your first, second, or twentieth trip to Israel. With so much to see, a guided tour is the best way to appreciate Jerusalem.

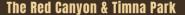
Masada Fortress & the Dead Sea

One of Israel's most important

archaeological sites is Masada. It is a historic stronghold from Israel's Herodian era that is home to the ruins of King Herod's palace. The fact that you can combine a visit to Masada with a journey to the Dead Sea, which Masada overlooks, makes it well worth seeing on any trip to Israel.

lowest spot on Earth, is by far the most amazing natural attraction in Israel. You must see the little sea, which is known for its exfoliating beaches and offers the most authentic spa treatment in the world. Israel is

located on the Mediterranean Sea and has a long coastline with beach towns from Ashkelon in the south to Nahariya in the north, with Tel Aviv, the most well-known beach city, in the centre. Israel's train line connects all of these places, making it simple to tour the shore.



20 minutes from the well-known Red Sea resort of Eliat, The Red Canyon has a Mars-like vibe to it as you zigzag along a route carved through swirling rock. Red, white, and even yellow are all illuminated when the sun shines. It accommodates all varieties of hikers with a variety of pathways.

Timna Park is a barren, picturesque, must-visit location in the stunning Negev Desert. The fascination is due to more than just stunning appearance; it also stems from the abundant local history. The world's first copper mine is located here, along with the relics of ancient Egyptian smelting furnaces. The most spectacular natural feature is perhaps the artistic sandstone columns known as Solomon's Pillars, which are frozen-in-time drips of volcanic magma issuing from the cliffs. You can enjoy breath-taking stargazing and camp out.

Live like the Israelis

The majority of Israelis are kind and outgoing, and they enjoy



OFFSHORE BINOCULLARS

hosting guests and tourists. During your visit, don't be shocked if a local starts a discussion with you or even offers to visit their kibbutz! You should blend in with the community, or zorem as they say in Israel.

In Israel, military duty is required, therefore if you encounter troops in uniform on the streets, don't be scared. Despite what the media has said, travelling to Israel is generally fairly safe. People are very particular about maintaining a healthy work-life balance. During the Jewish Sabbath (Shabbat), which lasts from Friday night to Saturday night, the majority of Israelis, whether religious or not, slow down and spend the day relaxing. During Shabbat, almost all businesses and public transit are closed.

Foodie paradise!

food well-seasoned, and overflowing with flavour, much like the cuisines of the rest of the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Everyone who visits this region leaves with a full stomach, despite a differences in the food from the rest of the world (feta is also known as Bulgarian cheese). You'll find shawarma easier than burgers; and if you're desperate for an iced coffee in the Israeli heat, make sure to ask for a cold coffee! Hummus is by far the most popular food in Israel. Even entire eateries are devoted to serving the meal, where hot, toppings and an endless supply of fluffy pita. There are many different types of food available in this multicultural nation, even if many of us would want to live off of hummus alone.

Israel exports wine in large quantities, and there are plenty of wineries throughout the nation. Israeli restaurants, pubs, and grocery stores carry bottles



at all price ranges. Take advantage of the area on your trip to Israel by going to a winery! Israel is one of the most vegan-friendly nations in the world, earning the moniker "Vegan Nation," and many first-time visitors are startled to learn this. Jewish eating customs have led to many restaurants here solely serving meat or dairy, while both types of eateries frequently provide a variety of vegan options. An excellent Israel travel tip for vegetarians is to exclusively dine at dairy establishments; this way, you'll never have to inquire as to whether there is meat in your meal.



- · The only nation in the world that produces postage stamps using kosher adhesive is Israel.
- · Of all the countries in the world, Israel boasts the most museums per person.
- · At the Motorola Israel R&D Center, Israeli engineers created the first cell phone technology, which served as the model for modern smartphones.
- No other country in the world has more orchestras per capita than Israel. It is rumoured that classical music listening increases IQ, which would help to explain Israel's dominance in several intellectual sectors.
- · Israel has the highest rate of new businesses per person (hence its nickname The Start-Up Nation). Regarding the availability of venture financing, it ranks third worldwide.





Indian- Israel relationship has grown in scope, strength, and visibility

At first glance the Israeli Ambassador to India, His Excellency Mr. Naor Gilon, comes across as an easy-going person, and he probably is exactly that. But a brief interlude with him reveals that he also has a sharp mind, a clear vision, and a good grasp of what's going on in the world around us. From discovering new places and cuisines, to meeting diverse people, he has several interests. He shared his thoughts and views on diverse subjects with Travel Turtle.

- By Inder Raj Ahluwalia

The India-Israel relationship has gone from strength to strength. What do you feel is the core reason for this successful relationship?

There is a background to this strong relationship between the two countries. Israel and India have always been natural partners and close friends. The people-to-people connection between our nations is deeply rooted in mutual admiration and respect for each other. Over the past thirty years, since the establishment of full diplomatic relations in 1992, this relationship has grown in scope, strength, and visibility. I am confident that our partnership and friendship will continue to grow and expand in the future.

In your opinion, how important is tourism in this growing relationship? Do you see the tourism industry growing between the two countries?

Tourism is one of the vital aspects of our growing partnership with India. In fact, Israel has become a new and exciting tourist destination for many Indians in recent times. There are many reasons why people are attracted to Israel. The country has something to offer everyone. For some, it is the fascinating contrast between

the ancient and the modern. For others, it's the rich, illustrious history, culture and food. One can spend days on end just exploring museums and art galleries. For nature - lovers, there are many beaches, lakes, waterfalls and streams. A significant boost to tourism is the fact that there is now more air connectivity between the two countries. There are 3 direct weekly flights from Delhi to Tel Aviv. This has made travelling to Israel easier for Indian tourists.

Which two destinations in Israel would you single out for special mention?

The fact is that there are more than two destinations that I would like to mention. Israel has a lot to offer. I strongly recommend first-time travellers to visit the Old City of Jerusalem, the Dead Sea and the Baha'i Gardens in Haifa. Visitors should also explore Ramon Crater, the Negev Desert, and the vibrant city of Tel Aviv.

What is the importance of culture and heritage in today's world?

Both are very important. In fact, Israel and India are two ancient civilizations with close cultural links and historical ties. Although formal relations between the two countries are only 30 years



H.E. Naor Gilon

special affinity between our ancient civilizations. The real strength of our relationship is these strong ties between our peoples, which are rooted in history, and have evolved and grown, as we have grown.

Your stay in India must have revealed several facets. What have you liked most about the country?

I fell in love with India from the first moment I landed here. I found that Israel has many friends in India. There is much love, admiration and strong friendship between the people of both countries. Like Israel, India is also a culturally-rich country that is welcoming to all. We also have many similarities when it comes to our festivals.

Do you feel there is scope for India and Israel to jointly

play a role in creating a better world?

The Indo-Israeli relations have been successful thanks to a strong woven cooperation between our ecosystems of government, business and academia. The more bridges we can build between our countries and their two ecosystems, the more we will enrich each other to benefit not only one another, but the entire world as well.

On a personal note, what are your hobbies and interests?

I like to travel to new places, meet new people and get to know their cultures and local cuisines. Ever since I arrived in India, I have been lucky to explore some tourist places and that has been an amazing experience for me.



The magical 7-lake Trek in Arunachal Pradesh

Lush green terrains, with chirping birds greeting you every morning and the evenings, are dimly lit with a starry sky. An adventure that keeps you on your toes and takes you through the hidden gems of the Himalayas. The Seven Lake Trek, as the name suggests, will lead you to seven mesmerizingly magnificent high-altitude lakes tucked away in the secret dens of hills near the Himalayan region of India. It is located in Anini of Dibang Valley in Arunachal Pradesh. This trek will take you up to an elevation of approximately 4000 metres into the glaciers that feed these lakes and rivers that flow below all year long, beginning in wide valleys covered in a rich green carpet of tall grasses and ferns. The best time to visit is in the spring or summer and see entire valleys covered in wildflowers. The trek is for experienced trekkers and is a lifetime experience.

Let's get started

The travellers will have to hike uphill or downhill on treacherous Emudu hunting trails, the excursion is best suited for experienced hikers. As they show you the area's history and uncommon flora and fauna, knowledgeable guides with experience and a hunting background will be with you at all times.

The spectacular view of the lush green Mishmee hills will be a breather and a must-stop gaze. As you hike up the mountain ridge through the grassland, at the midway point of the climb, there will be a rest area with a stunning view of the mountains. A lengthy trek

through slushy, dreary, and foggy rainforests will take you to the valley. The sound of nature and insects will be a continuous companion throughout the stroll. In the highlands, with erratic weather, the journey will be easy with the help of gradual inclines, sloping hills, and stunning scenery along the way. You will be greeted by the bliss of the Mishmee highlands after nearly an hour of arduous climbing.

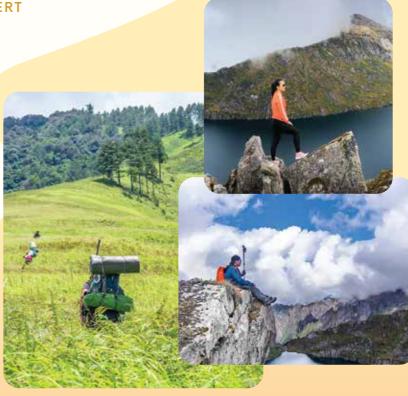
Kahmu-ya Lake

It is the perfect view and the area near the lake is full of flowers, smallyellow, purple, and white. The landscape around the lake is stunning and teeming with tiny yellow, purple, and white flowers. The journey to this lake is perilous, with many ascents and descents. The first of the seven lakes is Lake Kahmu-yu. As you make your way toward the lake, the landscape gradually transforms from sloppy woodlands to the Rocky Mountains which needs to be climbed with utmost precision. You will have to take a moment to appreciate the beauty of the lake, which is bordered by beautiful flowers and a gushing small water stream.

Emuh-ya Lake

This walk will be easier than the previous ones, with modest slopes, rolling hills, and breath-taking views along the way. You can camp near the second lake, which has a tiny crystal-clear flowing stream, a gushing waterfall, and the protection of the surrounding mountains.





One of the Himalayas' best-kept secrets is the 7-lake trek in the beautiful valley surrounded by deep blue sky and coniferous trees leading your way.

Koyombo Wayu Lake

The lake is at a 30 minutes distance and is the smallest of all. This is a pleasant hike over hilly terrain at an elevation of 13,500 feet above sea level. The dense mane of vegetation diminishes as you start moving up the hill, leaving ample pockets of green.

Dini Lake

The magnificence of the world's most beautiful and largest alpine lake cannot be portrayed in a few images. After a few steep hills, the flora will begin to fade away, leaving only barren terrain with stony slopes. A turquoise Alpine lake preserved in time between two grey granite cliffs is the stuff of dreams. Untamed nature with spectacular scenery is a must to be added to core memory. The blue Alpine lakes are set against stunning grey mountains, like something out of a fairy tale.

Che-ne Lake

This lake is said to be mystical, and many local hunters say that they have

seen it glowing at midnight. Make a point to stop and breathe in the fresh air here, you'll be enlightened.

HUHU Lakes

The two Huhu Lakes mark the end of our Seven Lakes trip. Lakes Six and Seven are extremely near to one another. Lake Six flows from one mountain's crater down onto another, making Lake Seven. The tiring trek is definitely worth the mind-numbing view.

The Anini 7 Lakes Trek is a difficult trek through the dense forests and alpine highlands of Upper Dibang Valley, Flora and fauna that will make you want to permanently camp out. A memory that will be etched in your brain for the rest of your life.





Oman Air, the national air carrier for the Sultanate of Oman, operates out of Muscat International Airport. Along with flying domestic and international passenger aircraft, Oman Air also flies regional air taxis and charter flights. India is one of the top source markets for the destination of Oman and it contributes to a major part of overall network traffic for Oman Air. We interacted with Sunil V A, Country Manager (India) - Oman Air, to understand how the national airline of Oman is actively focusing on promoting its home destination for business, leisure, and events.

- Naina Nath

REBUILDING BETTER

Due to the pandemic, the aviation industry took a rather hard hit, having to suspend most of its network routes. Oman Air has resumed up to 80 per cent of its operations of what downsized. previously reopening phase-wise starting from early 2022 increasing gradually and steadily. During the last 6 months of 2022, Oman Air has resumed a new route every month, ramping up its operations and getting back to normalcy. They hope to continue to add new routes and build back, better than ever before.

FOCUSING ON THE KEY MARKETS

Oman is the home base for the airline and is hence the number one source market. India of course comes in second with 8 cities operating currently and a plan for further expansion. The airline has a large presence in Saudi Arabia, which is the third largest market. Europe contributes largely with its traditional

routes. Oman Air has a strong presence in the central part of the from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, to the far-eastern regions like Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia. At present, Oman Air is flying to and from 8 different cities within India. The airline plans to ramp up its operations in the country by re-introducina additional 3 destinations (Trivandrum, Jaipur, and Lucknow) to its current network by this summer. Speaking on a global scale, as of today, Oman Air operates 51 destinations across its network with the recent addition of Moscow in Russia and Phuket in Thailand being re-introduced. The next destination to be added will be Trabzon in Turkey, making it the 2nd destination for the country after Istanbul.

THE INTRODUCTION OF 'SUPER-SAVING' PRODUCTS

Oman Air has introduced pocket-friendly options to meet the evolving needs of its passengers.

The 'Super Saver' is a brand-new category of Economy Class fare which is competitively priced, making them the perfect option for budget-conscious travellers. The product is designed for those who travel light and allows its passengers to opt for a no check-in baggage policy which significantly reduces the ticket cost. Most business travellers prefer the No-baggage option, as they take short day trips within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and due to that, this product is attracting great success!

TAKING AN ACTIVE STEP IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF TOURISM IN DESTINATION OMAN

Currently, Oman Air is focusing on how to push Oman as a holiday destination within India in 2023. They are focused on achieving pre-Covid 2019 numbers and are working closely with the Ministry of Tourism of India to see how they can promote Oman as a wedding and MICE destination. The present-day focus is to attract the large-scale destination



AEROPHILE

wedding market and also to reach out to major MICE operators in the country to hold events and offer incentives in Oman. The key focus is to promote Oman as a destination for leisure, events, weddings, and business.

Oman Air is promoting the destination as a stopover and is the preferred airline of key operators for leisure trips to Europe adding Oman as a stop-off for many travellers. The summer looks very promising for the said category as bookings have already started coming in. Globally, many leading tour operators have launched products based on Oman as a stopover destination. The idea for 2023 is to promote the destination and increase awareness of the country, as they gear up to welcome the world and encourage them to visit.

THE OUTCOME OF THE QATAR FIFA WORLD CUP

India also saw a great number of passengers who travelled and lived in Oman during the Football World Cup. It was truly an astounding success for GCC, as it was one of the largest international events to ever be held. It complemented the GCC nations in a big way and the associated airlines as everyone has participated in making it a great success. "We had a large number of guests staying in Oman and taking a shuttle to Qatar. We also saw quite a few football fans in Oman, visiting the fan zones set up across Muscat,' shares Sunil.

LOOKING AHEAD TO A BRIGHT FUTURE

Things are looking up for Oman and its national airline in 2023. Whether its large scale weddings or leisure holidays, they are already close to pre-Covid figures, which is definitely a win! In terms of passenger numbers, Oman Air is still behind however when it comes to revenue, they have recovered and hit the 2019 figures. This is due to the fairs being stable throughout, as there is heavy demand but capacity is still not up to the mark. Hence, the game for 2023 will be average fares that remain steady with capacity gradually building up. Overall, 2023 is expected to be similar to 2019 in terms of passenger numbers, and by the end of the year, it should stabilize and we will see more people traveling.

JOINING HANDS AS AN INDUSTRY

Oman Air is keen to increase capacity in India looking at the overwhelming support and demand that they have seen over the last few months. He shares, "If we continue to give clear messages to our passengers, educate them, and keep them

up-to-date and aware of what they can expect, it will ensure their readiness to manage their travel seamlessly and be prepared in case of any sudden change in process or procedures while traveling. This would help gain confidence in our passengers to trust us and to trust 'travel'."

OMAN AIR RANKS 'MOST PUNCTUAL AIRLINE' IN MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA FOR 2022

Oman Air has been awarded the top rank for punctuality in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region. As per the results of the 2022 On-Time Performance Review by global aviation analytics leader, Cirium, the airline's on-time arrivals stood at 91.38 per cent. Oman Air has set several benchmarks for quality, comfort and hospitality in the last year, earning itself many titles, like the 2023 Five-Star Major Airline rating by the Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX), among others. In order to meet the demands of a rapidly shifting market, the airline has made increasing investments in its products and services.







THE RESIDENCE MALDIVES ticks all the boxes for a divine Maldivian escape



HOTELLIGENCE

It's a tropical ocean-hugging hideaway where people can indulge their body and soul with unprocessed healing properties only nature can provide. The Residence Maldives is blissfully nestled amidst the natural enchantment of the Maldives, creating a sense of exotic escape with all the creature comforts. property keeps environment natural with simple and elegant additions, which is the best way to highlight the remarkable landscape.

Tailor-made experiences

The inspirational backdrop, intuitive service, infinite connections and a distinctive mix of once-in-a-lifetime experiences make it an extraordinary destination for couples, families, and groups searching for paradise. Talking about elevating guests' experience at Residence, Meenakshi shares, "At The Residence Maldives at Dhigurah and Falhumaafushi, we committed to offering responsible luxury that can enrich every quest's experience. What helps us shape our brand's appeal is a keen observation of the feedback we receive and analysis of not just the demographics, but also the psychographics of our guests. Take, for example, the Indian buffet option made by chefs from India that we introduced in the Dining Room at the Dhigurah property. We tailored our menu to our guests' preferences, and it was a huge success."



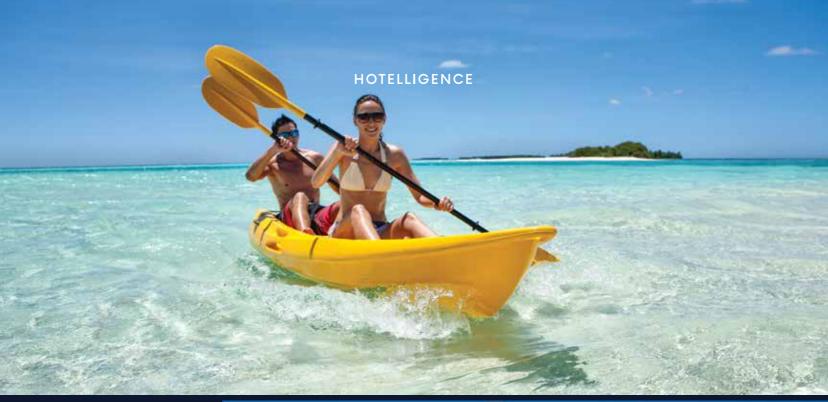
and it was a ringe success.

Proliferating the aesthetic balancing

The Maldives is a dream destination for many thanks to its beautiful islands and the mesmerising marine ecosystem. It also has a colourful culture that travellers can witness and experience while interacting with the people of the Maldives. Sharing such evolving experiences, Meenakshi shares, "As travel evolves into a way to connect with local communities, more guests are looking for regional experiences, be it cuisine, culture, or rituals. It is, therefore, essential for hotels to tap into discerning travellers' need for meaningful travel and offer a peek into the destination through regional cuisine, culture, and rituals."

He further adds, "With our Earth Basket programme, we not only provide our guests with a taste of local flavours but also an opportunity to learn traditional Maldivian cooking. All the produce used in our kitchen and spas is sourced from our on-property herb and kitchen gardens. We offer our guests a tour of these gardens followed by a tasting session with fresh herb-infused beverages. The guests are invited to pick farm fresh produce, which the chefs use to prepare a delicious and healthy meal. During the cook-out session, the chefs also share tips on Maldivian cuisine. The three-course meal includes Maldivian preparations such as kopify salad, fried roshi curry, freshly baked reef fish, sweet addu ambo, and coconut-based mocktails. At the Kids Club, our staff members help children learn to play the traditional bodu beru drums and dhivehi as well as local crafts such as leaf weaving.





Zen with luxury

Today people seek out brands that project their values through their actions. In industries such as tourism and hospitality, The Residence Maldives offers a full range of luxury experiences, so the guests can always feel welcomed privileged. Talking particularly about Indian market, Meenakshi asserts, "India has been one of the main source markets for us. Our efforts have been paying off as our Indian guests thoroughly enjoy the beautiful setting and luxurious amenities. Indian families, too, have shown a strong preference for our properties, thanks to a wide array of activities that can be enjoyed by every age group, as well as designated areas and trained staff to take care of kids. We have been witnessing a steady growth in demand from India over the years."

The Bleisure bling

Loaded with extensive features, offerings, location, and brand value have resulted in a positive response from the Indian market both in terms of business prospects as well as customer feedback. Sharing an outlook for this year, Meenakshi shares, "We are looking forward to a promising year, even as we keenly follow the global economic situation. Our strategy is to grow steadily in various segments, such multigenerational family vacations, wellness, and MICE. We also plan to work on our strategy around bleisure travel, which is poised to be the buzzword this year."



















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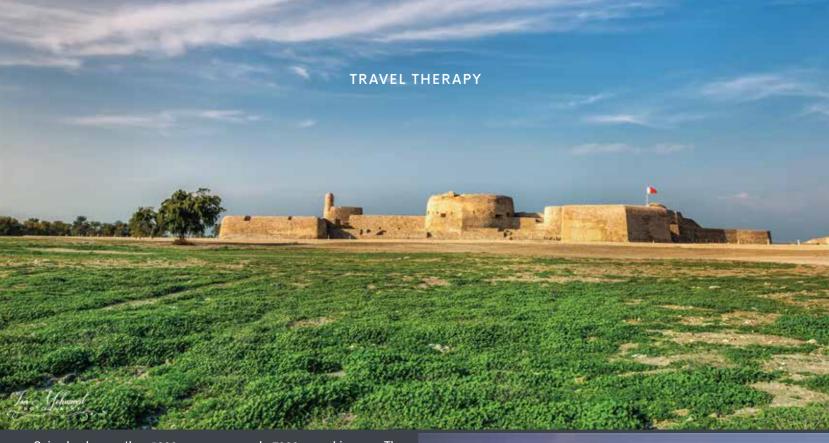
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Going back more than 5000 years, Bahrain was once the home to Dilmun, Tylos, and Awal Today, civilisations. this multicultural destination is leaving everyone spellbound with its majestic appearance, and if you have an appetite to discover something unique then Bahrain makes a perfect holidaying destination. From being the locus of the Gulf's pearling past to being the home of the Dilmun Empire, or its fascinating history and culture, the admiring beautiful Al Fateh Grand Mosque to its rich culture, Bahrain offers an array of exhilarating experiences.

Exploration begins...

An exotic destination in the Arabian Gulf comprising 33 islands, Bahrain is a ma<u>rvellous</u> destination. A beautiful land, a land where the past and the present thrive alongside. The name 'Bahrain' translates to the 'two seas' in Arabic and, its strategic position has made it one of the most significant trading hubs and routes for the pearl-diving industry. Nestled in the Persian Gulf, Bahrain is brimmed with a myriad of attractions to explore the forts, mosques, castles, souks, and museums are a delight to every traveller.

While in Bahrain, start your day by visiting the grand Al Fateh Mosque, the largest worship place in Bahrain that can accommodate approximately

around 7000 worshippers. The beautiful ornamented walls with Kufic calligraphy will leave you mesmerised, the mosque is an architectural marvel. Crowned with a large fibreglass dome, the construction of the mosque started in 1984 and was operational in 1987. The floors are made from Italian marble, the striking chandelier is from Austria, the teak wood is from India, the lamps around the mosque are from France, and the carpet is from Ireland. It has become an iconic tourist attraction. It is also the site of Bahrain's National Library, which houses over 50,000 volumes of books in English and Arabic.

Bahrain is endowed with stunning places to visit; the Bahrain Fort also known as Qal'at al Bahrain built over 180,000 sq ft is one of the incredible structures that reflects the deep-rooted history of Bahrain. The fort was excavated and the archaeological dig revealed various tools and artefacts; Dilmun stamp seals, fishing tools, and pots used for cooking and transport of food from Oman and Mesopotamia. The heritage site comprises of four elements - the tell, an ancient sea tower, a sea channel and palm grooves. During sunset, the striking skyline and view of the fort are breathtaking and astonishing. A visit to the Bahrain Fort is a must as it brings you closer to its vibrant past, and it also reveals that the fort was used for residential, public, commercial, religious and military purposes.



TRAVEL THERAPY

The most interesting way to know more about Bahrain is to visit the Bahrain National Museum. The way the museum is preserving the nation's culture and history is commendable. The museum houses nine main halls and classifies the accumulated heritage of the Kingdom of Bahrain into six different sections. As you pass through the halls, you will come across the 4,000-year-old history of the kingdom. The ground floor depicts the archaeological finds of ancient Dilmun, the Hall of Graves and Bahrain's customs and traditions, whereas the first floor showcases documents and manuscripts, the period of Tylos and Islam and the traditional way of trades and crafts.

One of the most striking experiences is a boat ride in Bahrain Bay; the bumpy ride takes you on a tour where you can witness the most striking Bahrain skyline and gleaming skyscrapers. The trip is fascinating as it brings you closer to the marvellous architecture that represents the artistic aspects of Bahrain.

Feel the thrill

Bahrain makes a perfect holiday destination for family, solo travel as well as adventure seekers. The adventure side of Bahrain is full of thrilling experiences, so if you desire to take the wheel yourself, you are at the right place. Bahrain entered the world of Formula One in 2004 by inaugurating the Bahrain International Circuit, it can accommodate approximately 70,000 people. The BIC is an exciting place; it allows visitors to take an exhilarating ride on its state-of-the-art karting track. So, while in Bahrain, do not miss the opportunity to test drive the race car on the F1 track.

Well, there is more to experience in Bahrain; feel yourself amid the tallest wind tunnel in the world, with an overall height of 12 meters, constructed with tempered glass. If you desire to enjoy this life-changing experience, Gravity Indoor Skydiving is simply meant and designed for you. Feel yourself flying against gravity and enjoy the moment. Isn't it electrifying?





There is more to experience

While in Bahrain, explore its streets, the mosques, the museums, the malls, the restaurants and the skyscrapers. Take a walk through the narrow lanes and explore the traditional houses of Bahrain Muharraq is the former capital of Bahrain which houses the old traditional houses that have been restored: these houses are known for their Islamic architecture. The Old Houses of Muharraq is a splendid place to learn more about Bahrain's architecture and its pearling history. It is a cultural heritage site inscribed out of the 3 UNESCO World Heritage sites in the country. The Muhharraq old houses are the houses of wealthy merchants during that era. Many of these houses have now been restored and converted into museums, libraries, auditoriums etc to showcase the pearling story tourists.

Another more interesting place specially designed for kids and children, and nature lovers is the Al Areen Wildlife Park & Reserve,

a natural reserve and zoo that accommodates varieties of species and is an apt place for travellers interested in flora and fauna. The best way to experience any destination is to walk around and explore every nook and corner. Block 338 is an appealing pedestrian quarter chock-full of art galleries, restaurants and much more. Block 338 is one of the most happening places in Bahrain; it is highly recommended to visit and explore the traditional Bahraini food or enjoy a fancy meal at any appealing restaurant. This is also an area for art lovers; the streets are painted in vibrant colours, which indeed is pleasing.

In the middle of nowhere

Surrounded by water, there are many beaches and islands in Bahrain and one of the impressive islands is Jarada Island. Situated about 15 nautical miles from the main island of Bahrain, Jarada is an extraordinary experience. A place full of serenity in the

middle of the sea, Jarada Island appears during low tide and disappears once high tide arrives. This is a hidden gem in Bahrain and it allows visitors to relax on the beach, tan, swim, snorkel or simply chill. This secluded paradise is the perfect place to unwind and relax, so make sure to visit this island and enjoy the serenity.

The mysterious

survivor The iconic 'Tree of Life' is one of the top attractions in Bahrain. Also referred to as Shajarat-al-Hayat, it is a 400 years old tree, and its ability to thrive with no obvious source of water makes it popular. The tree is wide, and the branches grow downwards towards the ground. Despite being located in the Arabian Desert, the tree is covered with green leaves and is approximately 9.75 meters tall and a lone tree standing in the desert. It is a natural wonder that this magnificent mature 32-foot tall mesquite tree, stands by itself on top of a 25-foot hill. The tree's source of water remains a

mystery. This desert wonder is a magnet for all those who fall in love with Bahrain because it is stated that anyone who touches this tree will return to Bahrain.

The ultimate

shopping experienceUndoubtedly Bahrain offers a superlative shopping experience, from high-end shopping malls to traditional sougs that will attract the entire passer-by. Find the vibes of Indian shopping streets at Little India; the street here sells varieties of Indian products, traditional spices and gold and is famous for the 200-year-old Krishna Temple. Sip a cup of tea (chai), walk along the narrow alleys, and taste some Falafel. If you are planning to buy gold, the Bahrain Gold Souk is known for selling traditional and contemporary gold ornaments. Home to myriad gold shops, various options of carats and designs are available here. Manama Souq in the north of Manama is a traditional Arab market that sells everything from clothing to jewellery, spices, electronics, etc.





Inter Continental Tryiningh Resort An Exceptional Escapade

There's nothing quite like a trip to Fujairah to bring you back to nature. Rugged mountains cascade into the gulf's crystal waters, making Fujairah a popular destination for nature-lovers and adventurers. There are loads of excellent things to do in Fujairah. In a bid to discover its stand-in-amazement vistas and look-at-that diving that makes the emirate so attractive, we recently set off for a stay at InterContinental Fujairah and still cannot get over our experience.

- Misbaah Mansuri

HEADS IN BEDS





On arrival, we were greeted by the exceptionally polite and gracious staff who ensured that our check-in was a breeze. Unlike other hotels in the area, the InterContinental Fujairah Resort consists of 291 rooms dispersed among low-rise Arabic-style village buildings. We loved our suite that mimicked the adjacent sea: white duvets topped with blue-green blankets and furniture, sandy-hued. All rooms have balconies for admiring the views lending it modern yet serene feel, perfect for a beachfront getaway in the UAE.

Furthermore all rooms have Bose sound systems, as well as alarm clocks with iPhone chargers. Lights and air-conditioning are controlled from the bedside. Deluxe suite bathrooms have sliding glass windows over the tub that look out into the room (and onto the view). The Club Lounge has its own infinity pool, and other activities abound—croquet, paddle ball, tennis, and yoga, among others.

From Arabic specialities to super seafood, we definitely

recommend the themed buffets at the award-winning NAMA Global Dining Restaurant, where there's a different cuisine every night of the week. Our favourite has to be our meal at DRIFT, right by the beach that offered a dreamy backdrop with some flavor bomb of dishes from the ravishing truffle risotto to the creamy perfection that was the burrata and the world-renowned Dibba Oysters, each tantalizing teasing our taste-buds.

the incredible Eocchaire Spa, the only spa in the region to offer a hammam, our therapists kneaded our muscles into mush and we emerged ready to take on the world. We followed up the spa sojourn with a visit to the gorgeous beach for our water sport adventures. The hotel also offers the perfect backdrop for weddings and other events and is able to pull off a memorable celebration with a bespoke package under the stars or on the beach or even a private barbecue under the stars and around a beach fire with your closest friend. Take it from us, the destination one is what whimsical beachy holidays are made of!



How was 2022 for Intercontinental - Fujairah?

2022 was excellent for us because we've done very well financially, and from a perspective of guest experience too it has been interesting because there's been a shift in the market segmentation as the world has opened up again, and so it has been extremely successful from both aspects.

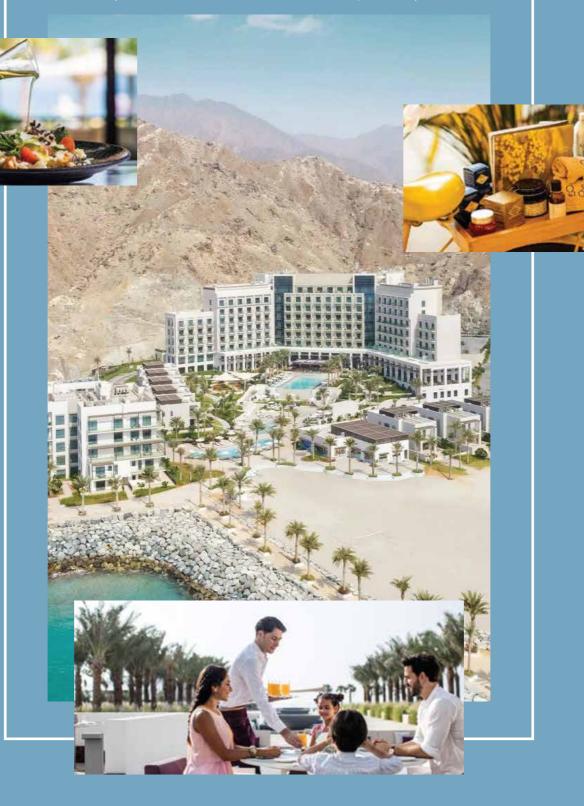
As a GM, what will your approach, strategy and leadership style be like for the property?

I think as a team over here we've acquired the leadership culture to create empowerment and let people operate to their strengths. As a leader, I'm not into micromanagement, and I don't think any of my team are, either. The teams are allowed to just be themselves and make heartfelt and genuine connections with guests. The reason a lot of guests come back is because of team members. And that that is testament to the fact that everyone is playing to their strengths which is my approach as leader, to bring out the best in them.



If you were a guest at the property, what would your 24 hour itinerary look like?

I would have a nice lazy breakfast and then head to one of the pools to just chill and then have a nice lunch by the pool followed by a treatment at the spa. I would also definitely try the Victorian high tea at Club Intercontinental followed by the seafood dinner at Drift to round off the perfect day!



MISBRUCK An alpine edge

The abundance and proximity of nature and the grandeur of its high mountains are enhanced by the ever-present contrast between ancient traditions and the vitality of a modern city.

- Inder Raj Ahluwalia



TRAVEL THERAPY

For once, I wasn't 'camera-shy'.

The odds were heavily stacked against that happening. And with good reason! Framed behind me was the most beautiful background imaginable. Mountains with jagged peaks glistening in fresh snow, gradually tapering down to brownish granite, which in turn gave way to thick forest. "Make the most of it" I told myself, thrusting my chest manfully out. It was a magic moment, and like most magic moments, it had literally flashed by.

To say that Innsbruck is one of Austria's prides and joys is to state the obvious. The result is that curious combination and character that can make a destination a memorable and heady experience. Well, that's Innsbruck for you.

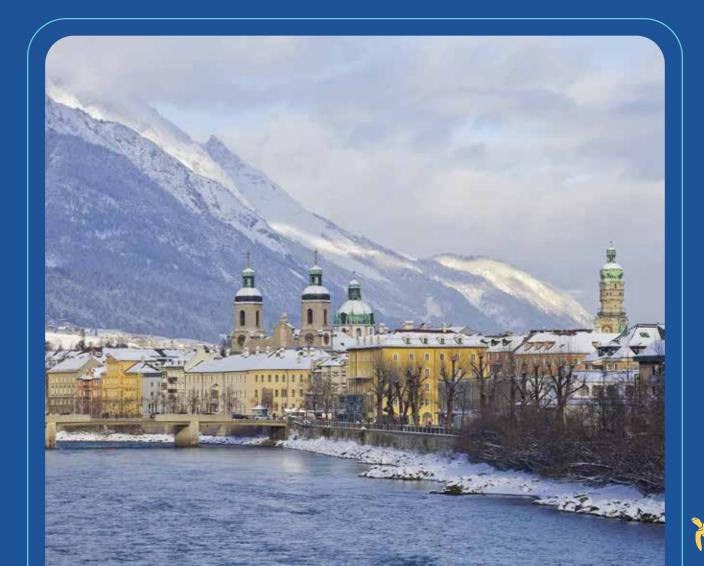
Presenting a scenic panorama of

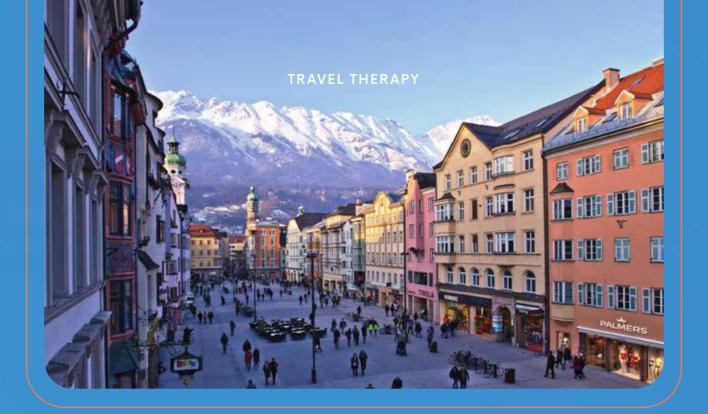
snow, the Alps lie literally at your doorstep. The snow apart, one reaps the benefit of a bracing climate and a wealth of sports, most of which, alas, were wasted on me. If you've got the time and inclination - and it's always worth creating the time - one can go climbing, walk the mountains, mountain-bike, or paraglide. Six attractive and popular ski regions, some 53 lifts, 112 km of pistes, over 9 km of high-altitude cross-country tracks, two ski passes, and fun parks explain why Innsbruck was twice chosen to host the Winter Olympics. Carefully built up over the years, the infrastructure belongs to the top drawer.

But it isn't just about nature's bounties. Snow and mountains apart, culture is the other great local attraction. Consider the background. It took 800 years for the city's character to evolve, with a vivid history containing

great names like Maria Theresia and Maximilian 1. Eight centuries separate the completion of the first bridge over the Inn at 'Ynsprugg,' and today's skyline. The Habsburgs loved Innsbruck and made the town their royal seat, and several distinguished artists visited, leaving behind a rich cultural legacy, highly sought after by the millions of annual visitors to the region.

If you think this is a mere mountain town, think again. There's plenty going. Visitors can savour the charms of Tyrolean folk evenings, brass bands, baroque operas, and traditional lederhosen and dinner jackets. The famed opera - second only to Vienna's - features notable and exciting performances, performances shows and characterize the nightlife. There's more activity, by way of the Festival of Early Music, the new arts cycle christened





'Innsbruck Summer', the Summer Dance Festival, and the International Ambras Castle Concerts.

I don't know who mooted the idea, but I found myself exploring the town on foot, which turned out to be a delightful exercise. The town represents a cross-culture of sorts. A breadth of Southern Europe appears in the form of stylish churches, red roofs, crafted architecture and cascades of light. A must-see is the romantic, Renaissance-style Ambras Castle with its world-renowned portrait gallery that mirrors some 550 years of

Austrian and European history. Showing an entire royal lifestyle, especially reflecting the Habsburg's approach to marriage and power, are some 250 paintings that include the works of Titian, Van Dyck, Lucas, and Rubens.

This may come as a surprise, but this is museum country too. You can take your pick of some 18 in town, focusing on classical, modern and popular art. Prominent among them are the Kaiserliche Hofburg (Imperial Court Palace), the Museum of Tyrolean Folk Art, Maximilianeum, the Hofkirche (Court Church), and the Bell Museum.

My brisk walk meant I had covered a lot of the town in an hour, and now I found myself at the favourite local spot. Built in 1420, the celebrated Golden Roof - the former residence of the Tyrolean princes, - attracts tourists like mountain flowers attract bees. And who can complain! No one did that morning as we jostled for space in the courtyard below the roof. Maximilian 1 added a loggia over an oriel window and covered it with over 2,000 fire-gilt copper tiles. The relief depicts Maximilian 1 with his two wives, the court jester, chancellor, and the coat of arms.

Sporting grand architecture is the Imperial Court Palace, built by Archduke Siegmund the Rich and Emperor Maximilian 1 in late Gothic style, and converted by Empress Maria Theresia, is a must-visit site. And it is worthwhile getting up-front with the Giant Panoramic Painting, a work in oil covering 1,000 square

TRAVEL THERAPY

metres of canvas, reflecting a different art form in its depiction of the 1809 Battle of Bergisel.

This has been a university town since 1669, and today the Leopold Franzens University attracts students from the world over, and is also hot on tourists' itineraries. While leisure tourists descend here in droves, conferences constitute another popular business segment for the town, with the local convention centre ranked among Europe's best.

Dwarfed by a snowy massif, the equivalent of what can be called the main street was as crowded as they come, thanks partly to the sunshine that bathed everything and everybody with a balmy glow. It was shopping time, and knowing myself, I'd allowed myself half an hour. It sufficed. A key-chain and a tiepin, and I was done. But serious shoppers will find every conceivable designer-label around.

From its majestic mountainous backdrop to its stately medieval buildings, from its delectable cuisine to its fashionable boutique-shopping, Innsbruck charms, ensnares and seduces. And it allows one a sense of space and freedom, and the chance to just 'chill'.

I did, and would like to do it again...!



Christine Mukharji, Senior Representative, ANTO India, is upbeat about the regularly growing tourist traffic to Austria from India.

She feels Austria has several positive attributes. The Alpine country lies where Eastern and Western Europe meet. It is for its gorgeous famous mountain landscape and picturesque buildings, which are the legacy of its Imperial past. Travelling in Austria can, therefore, also mean travelling the mountain roads and crossing numerous mountain passes to enter small charming villages and impressive cities like Innsbruck.

Backing all this is the fact that Austria is a safe country.

Fact File

Innsbruck is best approached via Vienna, Austria's main gateway. Austrian Airlines operates direct flights from Delhi to Vienna. From Vienna, Innsbruck is some five hours by train across beautiful country.

City accommodation comes in the form of deluxe hotels, standard hotels, and budget establishments and camping sites

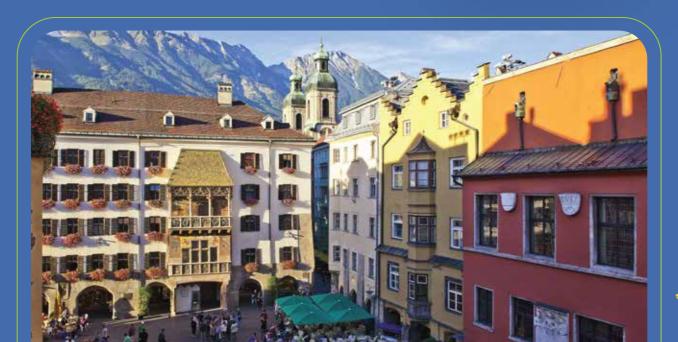
There is a wide and varied choice of cuisine, including Indian.

The city is a year- round tourist destination, with summer visitors concentrating on nature and mountain trekking, and winter traffic focused on assorted snow sports.



About the author

Inder Raj Ahluwalia is a world-renowned international travel journalist & author. His professional profile features awards from several European and Asian countries, among others.





Delve into the Evolution of Tourism with changing times!

The Future of Inbound Tourism at the 37th IATO Annual Convention – Tourism in India is growing by leaps and bounds.

- Tripti Jain

IATO as an organisation has been working towards creating a difference in the Tourism Industry for more than three decades now, and it continues to get people under one roof and explore what's in store for Inbound Tourism. This year IATO travellers to the city of Nawabs, in the State of Uttar Pradesh, which is potent in culture, religion and diversity with ethnicity. The three-day-long convention was a gleaming success with power-packed interactive sessions, a Travel mart with many state participation, awards, and of course the presence of the Honourable Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath at the closing day.

Tourism - The beacon of hope!

The theme of the convention – Inbound Tourism – What Lies Ahead was the topic of discussion and all the sessions revolved around the same. Ravi Gosain, Vice President IATO & Chairman welcomed the honourable Tourism Ministers from all over the states along with fellow delegates and media and opened the evening of the first day and celebrated the tourism industry and kick-started the

37th IATO Convention. Shri Rajiv Mehra, President - of IATO addressed the audience by welcoming and extending a special thanks to Arvind Singh, Secretary Minister, and Tourism Government of India. He also added, "The increasing tourism post-pandemic and how Indian tourism has bounced back, especially in the state of Uttar Pradesh where there is a huge influx of domestic tourism is commendable. The importance of bringing Ayodhya on the map for spiritual tourism is a priority. Shri. Arvind Singh, Secretary (Tourism), Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India appreciated and acknowledged the efforts of IATO and Uttar Pradesh tourism by drawing light towards the opportunities that the tourism industry has created in India, especially the rural areas. He also spoke about new and improved policies that are being undertaken by the Government of India. The struggles faced by the tourism industry during and post-pandemic and how it has been revived and is back with a bang. Especially the boost in domestic tourism. The first day of the convention was an introduction to delegates from

different states and how every state of India has something distinct to offer. The day ended with a cultural programme and evening presentation followed by an elaborate dinner at the Centrum Hotel, Lucknow, where the three-day convention took place.







The future of Inbound Tourism

Day 2 of the Convention opened with great vigour and enthusiasm because it was the day for interactive and path-breaking discussions where the main theme of the convention was pondered upon by eminent dignitaries and delegates from all over the country. The speakers for the first session 'Inbound Tourism - What Lies Ahead, contributed their inputs on the topic by raising questions regarding the future of inbound tourism and what are the major issues that are being faced by the industry as a whole. Shri Rakesh Kumar Verma - Additional Secretary (Tourism), Min. of Tourism, Govt. of India pointed out the issues of funds post-pandemic and the major steps that are being taken to revive the market. Different financial aspects related to the travel industry were discussed, and solutions and suggestions were given by the speakers.

Shri Sheo Shekhar Shukla, Principal Secretary, Tourism, & MD, MP Tourism Board said, MDA policies along with the idea of moving beyond the golden triangle and venture towards promoting other eminent areas should be considered. Another big question is the promotion of inbound tourism globally, along with the need for Application base travel assistance." The discussion on the relaunch of the Incredible India website and new schemes and targets for overseas promotions was а bia breakthrough. A lot of these measures are already in place and will start soon. Subsidies to deliver parking facilities, public amenities, and other recreational facilities like yoga, nature retreats etc. Police harassment is something which constructs smooth travel to different parts of India which need to be checked. By the enhancement of the budget in every sector we are heading in the right direction. The session concluded with the thought of creating and propagating policies that will help everyone in the travel industry.

Uttar Pradesh and its treasures

Coming back to the state Uttar Pradesh, there was a special session on Uttar Pradesh, where Shri Mukesh Kumar Meshram, Principal Secretary & DG Tourism, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh spoke about how Uttar Pradesh is the new rising star of Tourism with upcoming 3 major circuits. He said, "Eco Tourism is playing an extremely important role keeping in mind sustainability and growth. The Government is promoting different circuits along with Special tourism promotion avenues for tour operators. Uttar Pradesh is a hub for Pilgrimage sites. To all the tour operators present in the audience, every tour operator is our brand ambassador." He also highlighted the tagline of Uttar Pradesh tourism – 'Uttar Pradesh nahi dekha to India nahi dekha.' He shed light on Uttar Pradesh being one of the biggest spiritual tourism destinations with 4 million and counting tourists visiting Kashi every year. He highlighted the spiritual aspect of UP tourism by also talking about the 6 major Buddhist destinations - Sarnath being the very first on the list.













Need of the hour

It is important to understand that tourism is the next best thing for India to make a mark on the world which can be reached by conjoining tourism marketing and how we can connect all of it to the ambassadors of tourism. Homa Mistry, CEO, Trail Blazer Tours pointed out, "A challenge that is being faced by the tour operators is the multiple rate structure for special dates around festivals. Online rates are cheaper than the rates offered to tour operators. New credit policies need to be in place while gradually reaching Normalcy in the industry."

Maharaj Kumar Sahib Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar of Udaipur, CMD, HRH Group of Hotels threw some light and said, "Heritage Tourism is very eminent to the Indian

Travel Industry. The 50 years the long relationship between Tata and the House of Mewar is a standing example of the potential Heritage tourism has in India. As Indians, we don't talk about our product that much which is a major problem globally. We can offer the rest of the world some amazing gems and some beautiful properties which need to be promoted and taken forward. The relationship relationship The between heritage hotels and tour operators is like the connection between concrete and iron. Heritage properties in India are going to grow massively."

Proper restoration of heritage properties takes a lot of time and heritage properties are all the rage in the coming few years. Creating circuits around different parts of India where there are standing heritage properties should be initiated. Sustainable Tourism is an initiative that needs to be paid special attention to. Travel creates a very large carbon footprint which needs to be taken care of and worked upon. The ESG platform - Pathya has been initiated which takes care of sustainability. Mr Vikramjit Singh, President- Sales – Lemon Tree Hotels spoke about an initiative which was started in 2007 by Lemon tree has gone beyond sustainability and is working with differently-abled people and creating jobs for them. A livelihood for the ones that face challenges in reaching out for jobs. They have 12 per cent staff with differently-abled individuals actively working in hotels. The need for apt Tourism Marketing was a question that came up now and then. Adventure and nature tourism before the pandemic was a 6 billion industry and is expected to reach trillions post-pandemic. Safe destinations are being promoted on social media by the government. Digital campaigns are in process and soon we'll see a digitally marketed tourism industry. We need to be a part of the ideation.



Unexplored New Ideas

The third day of the convention was a rise and shine for everyone as it started with The IATO run for Responsible Tourism, where everything was organised everything keeping in mind the importance of sustainability. An initiative that marked a grand win. Speaking of sustainability the first session of the third day revolved around responsible and sustainable tourism and how India is evolving as a country. The one thing that the industry needs to do as a whole is a move from the traditional ways. A relationship needs to be built with the brands for innovation and connecting with the people. Numerous examples were brought to light in the second session of the day where famous brands have taken a leap and gone beyond the conventional ways of marketing. The day was concluded by coining four major terms - product enhancement, diversification, use of technology and marketing strategies. Indian Tourism market has to move beyond the conventional means and grab the thousands of opportunities that knock on the door every day. The need to strike a balance of creative synergy between the old and new is all the industry should work and think about. As an industry Tourism needs to keep changing.

Crowning moment

The highlight of the final day of the convention was the presence of the Honourable Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath, where he mentioned the importance of spiritual tourism and how Uttar Pradesh is a state with an abundance of it. Uttar Pradesh has hidden treasures that have the potential of being tourist spots including eco-tourism. The investment policies have made the process of digitalisation simpler, reducing manual interference.

The three-day-long convention ended with awards for the persistent and best in the industry followed by a grand closing ceremony. The 37th IATO convention came to Uttar Pradesh with a promise to be a trailblazer, and so it was.

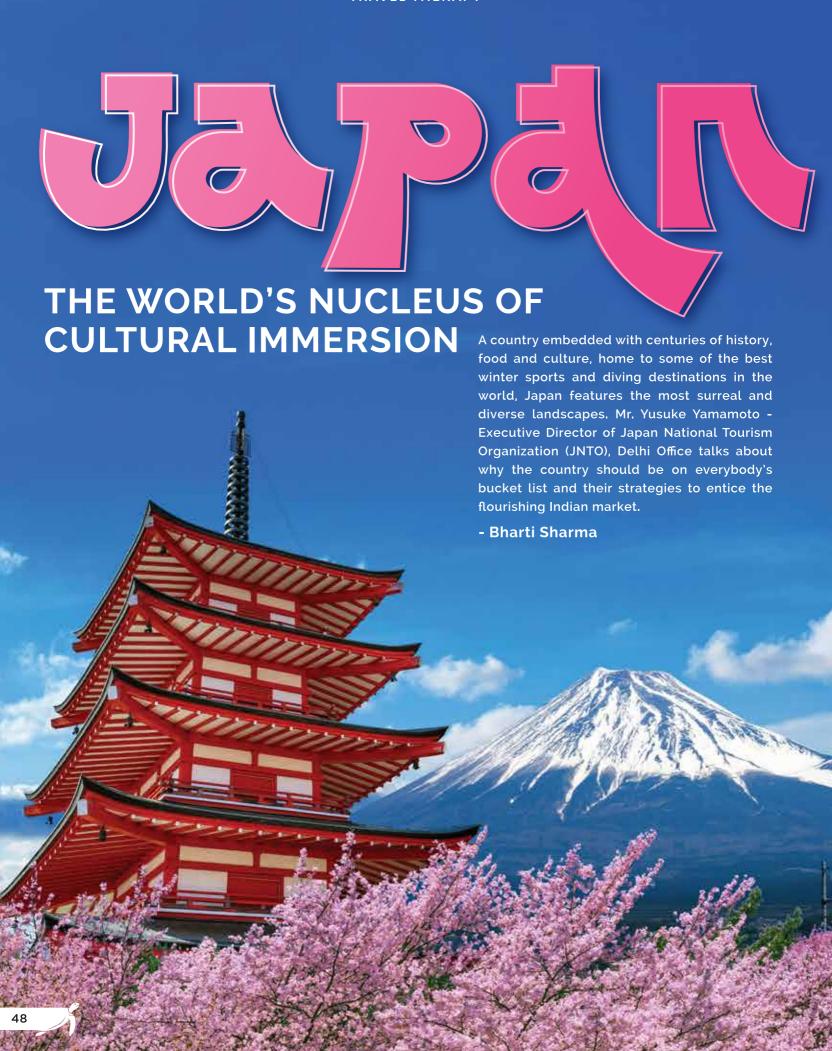


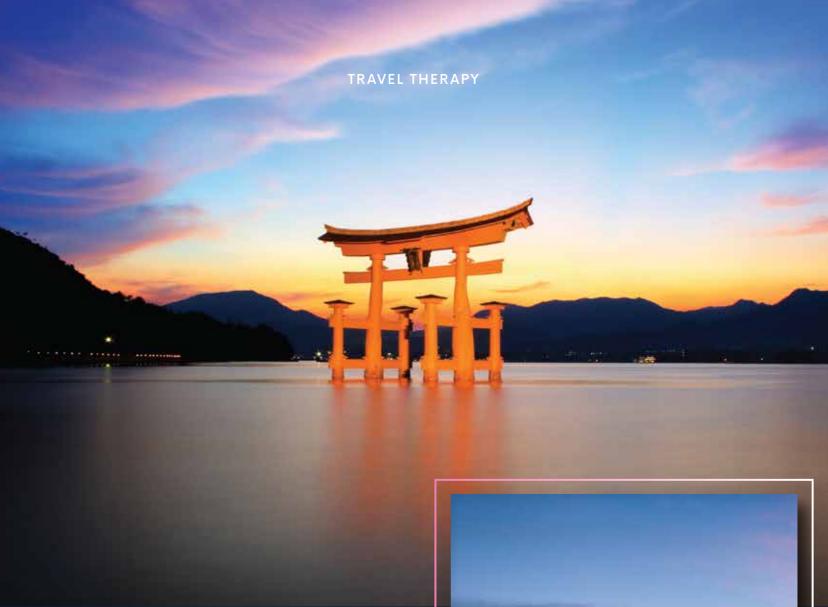










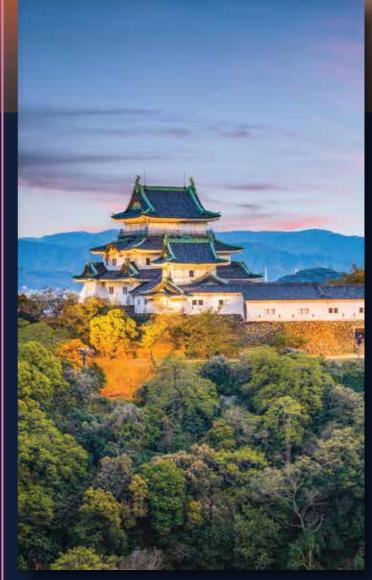


From the wilderness of Hokkaido to the white pristine beaches of Okinawa, Japan's nature is incredibly diverse. The blessed with an interesting cultural blend of Eastern traditions and Western modernity that is visible to the naked eye throughout the land.

Quintessential India market

In 2019, Japan received 175,896 visitors from India following which, with an intent to increase the numbers, the JNTO Delhi office held three city seminars in Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai after the opening of Japanese borders for Indian FIT tourists on October 11th 2022. The travel trade community ensured that the increasing demand is adequately met. The seminar served to inform travel trade partners about the new travel

regulations and share more insights on Japan. Talking about the objective of the seminar, Yamamoto shares, "The three-city tour was executed to interact with the potential travel agents and to make them acquainted with the products. 3 DMCs from Japan, accompanied by senior delegates from Japan Airlines and All Nippon Airways presented the destination along with JNTO. We addressed queries concerning the latest travel rules and new attractions in Japan. In January, we've invited some hotels, tourism facilitators and DMCs, which will be coming for our roadshows that are scheduled in Mumbai and Bengaluru. The networking session allowed agents to gain an in-depth understanding of the latest Japanese attractions."



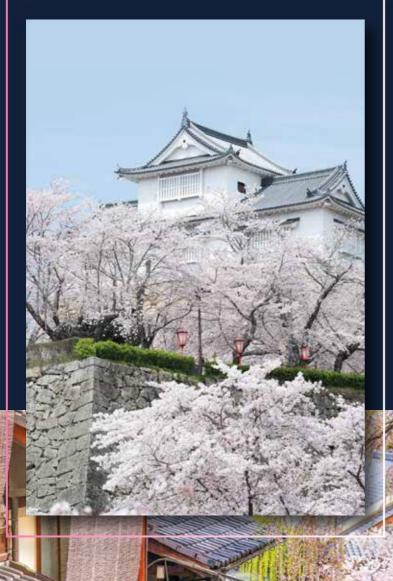
TRAVEL THERAPY

Focus on the Golden Route

The rugged mountains, rocky coastlines, pristine white beaches, bamboo forests and some of the world's most beautiful waterfalls are only the tip of an iceberg when it comes to natural marvels of Japan that can be enjoyed all year round. Japan is an extremely versatile destination and with so much to offer, it's important to create itineraries that showcase the best of Japan. Sharing how JNTO is positioning the destination in the Indian market, Yamamoto tells, "90 per cent of leisure travellers visiting from India are first-timers, thus we intend to showcase the must-visit destinations and must-do activities. Golden route ie Tokyo, Japan, Osaka and Hiroshima is popular amongst first-time travellers. The average stay of Indians in Japan is 7-10 days. Though Japan is known for its flavoursome delicacies, one can also visit the famous Indian restaurants in Japan, serving the most authentic tastes of India.



TRAVEL THERAPY



The campaign successfully emphasises upon varied vegetarian options which are easily available at close to 2100+ Indian restaurants spread across Japan."

Flavours of Japan

Japan is a year-round destination and it's imperative to educate travellers globally about the experience stupefying events and festivals, visit temples and castles, theme parks or enjoy the hot springs. If you're one for the beaches, Japan is home to some of the most alluring beaches. Travellers can also choose from options that Japan has to offer and explore their adventurous trait. Whether you're passionate about sports, an art lover, a nature enthusiast, a history buff, a foodie, or just looking to relax

on a beach, the possibilities for your Japan excursion are infinite.

Focus on incentives

Japan is a country that excels at bringing nature, technology and thread and creating a travellers paradise. Before the pandemic, Japan had 75 per cent of visitors from East Asian countries such as China, HongKong, Korea and Taiwan. Yamamoto shares, "We established our India office in 2015 and there has been a steady growth since then. Families and segments we're targeting. Apart segment is significant for us. We float an incentive newsletter every month to the potential audience which educates them about the new and upcoming MICE facilities in the region."



Teardrop Hotels Located in spectacular loca

For authentic Sri Lankan holidays

Teardrop Island offers a scenic atmosphere blended with charismatic experience, a collection of stylish, self-driven hotels that prides itself on contemporising centuries-old heritage buildings and vintage tea bungalows. Henry Fitch, Chief Executive Officer, Teardrop Hotels talks about the experiences that Teardrop offers to its guests.

Sudipta Saha

Located in spectacular locations across Sri Lanka, Teardrop Hotels is known for its exotic history and heritage. Each of their properties is unique and is a combination of mesmerizing authentic experiences. India has been a significant market for Sri Lanka and with the recovery of the nation's tourism, Teardrop Hotels are focusing on the Indian market. Adding to it, Henry Fitch says, "The crisis in Sri Lanka did impact the tourism sector and there has really been a publicity showcasing that things have developed in and around Sri normal and tourism is flourishing like earlier." He further says, "We have started looking into the Indian market just before COVID in order to expand our reach. Historically, our major markets are the United Kingdom, Europe, Australia, the United States, Western Europe and a little bit of India. About three years, we felt that we really need to strengthen our presence in the Indian market, and wanted to encourage Indians to come and experience the beauty that Sri Lanka has to offer. It's the biggest market by arrivals into Sri Lanka, it just wasn't coming to our type of hotels a few years reason we gradually wanted to develop the same."





Emotional intelligence is the key

The dynamics of the destination and the way people use to travel have changed. An upsurge in demand for high-end boutique hotels can be witnessed. Each property of Teardrop is defined by its atmospheric destination and offers an array of offering to its guests. "We are a small brand with seven properties across Sri Lanka with 70 bedrooms. There no such feeling of competition; all the hospitality brands are actually putting in their effort to drive tourism in Sri Lanka. One of the things which have come up is the tourism alliance, its collection of hoteliers and tour operators who will work together for the upliftment of the tourism

industry and will encourage women empowerment by setting up job opportunities for women," adds Henry Fitch.

Customised experiences that suit the Indian clientele

Looking at the increase in demand and with an aim to offer unique experiences to its guests, Teardrop Hotels focuses on a specific segment of travellers. In regards to the Indian market, the focus is to establish Teardrop Hotels as a luxury boutique brand with a focus on sustainability and known as a brand that actually has community development plans. Sharing on the same, Henry Fitch mentions, "We are focusing on niche travellers, travellers who

are more into a specific segment such as those interested in art and architecture, landscape design, heritage; it's high-end travellers who are looking to explore the destination and what's around in the local communities. We do organise close-door events, family and gatherings, smaller weddings; out of all our properties our largest venue can cater to 250 pax. We intend to bring in a few hotels on the south coast, and we definitely are planning to add keys in 2023."

Tailor-made personal and engaging experiences

Henry Fitch is passionate about restoring old heritage building and transforming it into picturesque spaces adorned with fascinating architecture offers a captivating that experience. "The development of the brand, the expansion of the property, renovating of the property is actually exciting building a property on a piece of land," says Henry Fitch. He further adds, "We have maintained the authenticity of the property through the building-the actual architecture; the interiors are contemporary with the touch of history of the building. The space is modern yet traditional; guests can enjoy a garden tour, boat trip, Sri Lankan cookery demonstration, we organise a local tour with a guide, and we offer several kinds of activities depending upon the quests."







Island Life has earned an upright exclusivity in the travel industry with its bouquet of offerings to meet the towering demands, Sanket Mishra and Puneet Gera, Associate Directors, Island Life with their articulate planning and vision have set a new horizon and with each passing day it seems to be adding a new portfolio resulting in even bigger results.

- Bharti Sharma

A DMC for the Maldives with us. Thus, the entire focus is on offices in Maldives, Mumbai, Gurugram and Malaysia, Island Life offers the best-in-class services along with competitive rates for more than 100 resorts and over 50 city hotels.

Flipping the script

In order to ensure a smooth working experience, Island Life provides adequate assistance to its partners throughout the process. The travel trade has always been a priority for them, thus they ensure to bestow upon the sector the most personalised **Evolution is imperative** services right from discovery and bookings to authentic experiences. "We value the trust our agents/subagents exhibit in

providing the best, hassle-free experience to our partners. At Island Life, we function as a team and that's the reason we're currently named one of the top DMCs. We always look at every query as a prospect and prioritise relations and volume over profit. The personalised and experience uniform attention that we dedicate to every partner makes Island Life their first choice when they do Maldives," mentions Sanket.

Island Life has been recognised as the Top producer for the Maldives from the Indian Market. Along with this, they have

several accolades in the kitty, including the top producer award from properties such as Centara, Adaaran, Marriott, etc. They target with a focused approach, concentrating their energy on regular engagement activities with the trade through sales call programs, product updates and educational training keeping them abreast with the latest information and protocols. Talking about how Island Life plans to engage with the trade in future, Puneet adds, "We have been organising road shows and participating in major tradeshows throughout the year. This year, Island Life will be showcasing its products at OTM, SATTE, TTM, TTF, ITB Asia and all

MMPRC road shows. We believe in product-focused marketing, for us marketing the destination along with the product has worked exceptionally well, so that would be our focus for this year as well. The focus will be to penetrate further into tier II and tier III cities through direct sales calls and road shows."





The 'one and only' for Maldives

With persistant changes within the travel industry, this DMC makes sure to offer the best-customized b2b services focusing on more than 150+ Maldives Resorts. Reminiscing such moments, Sanket tells, "From a humble beginning of three people in our office to a 40-seater office in Jan 2023 the journey has been exhilarating. We are constantly hiring and looking at expansion opportunities to cater to more business. Covid was a blessing in disguise for us. Maldives was, for long the only operational destination during covid. Our focus on a particular destination helped us reach production of 30K+ room nights over a span of 1 year. We are very well known amongst tier I cities and hold more than 30 per cent market share of b2c agents. Looking at

numbers, we have managed 80 per cent to 100 per cent growth y-o-y since 2020. We are presently targeting 45K+ room nights until December 2023. Contracting and focusing on the high-end luxury travel segment, MICE and weddings are also in our POA for 2023."

The third eye of the clients

Run by experienced travel industry professionals, Island Life is noted for regional innovative, expertise, and competitive, and highly personalised travel services. "I believe we are growing every day every minute, learning from each other. From the CEO to the sales executive, every member of team island life is well-equipped to handle operations across all processes. Our team works tirelessly throughout the clock and is just a call away for any assistance. Being one of the few offline DMCs for our destination, we plan to stay as it is and create a monopoly in giving the most personalised experience and the guest best concludes Puneet.







At this festival MPTB has introduced activities like heritage walk, nature visits, e-cycle tour, and soft adventure sports by catering to the needs of all types of tourist

Located in the Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh, the UNESCO site of 'Khajuraho Group of Monuments' is famous for its Nagara-Style architecture and graceful sculptures of nayikas and deities

The temples of Khajuraho are India's unique gift to the world, representing life in every form and moods that has been captured in stone, testifying not only to the craftsman's artistry but also to the extraordinary breadth of vision of the Chandela Rajputs under whose rule the temples were

conceived and constructed. The
Khajuraho temples were built in
the short

span of a hundred years, from 950-1050 AD in a truly inspired burst of creativity. Of the 85 original temples, 22 have survived till today to constitute one of the world's great artistic wonders.

Every year in February, tourists witness Khajuraho Dance Festival in Khajuraho. This grand cultural extravaganza is a stunning blend of art and architecture. One gets to experience a wonderful symphony of mesmerising classical dance performances being performed by renowned artists coming from different cities and towns in India.

This mega festival is a spirited celebration of classical dance forms, art, and culture wherein renowned exponents of Indian classical and folk dances are performed throughout the week. Apart from the graceful dance performances, there are also other highlights that can be enjoyed simultaneously.

Activities and events like art exhibitions, panel discussions, interactive sessions, adventure sports, village tours and much more keep tourists

entertained throughout. The choice is yours to opt from a wide range of multidimensional activities.

Khajuraho dance festival is not only a festival of dances; it has been transformed into a wholesome festival of dance, literature, fine arts and everything. The celebration of art has been all along linked with the tourism in Madhya Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board (MPTB) has taken several initiatives to publicize and engage the tourists during the week of the festival.

At this festival MPTB has introduced activities like heritage walk, nature visits, e-cycle tour, and soft adventure sports by catering to the needs of all types of tourist. Be it a dance enthusiast or an adventure lover.

Screening of movies, documentaries, along experimental cinema of famous artists are also displayed to help viewers understand the dynamics of arts, music, literature, vocals, dance instrumental music, and various art forms.

One can also indulge in mouth-watering Bundeli recipes. Enjoy the widespread dishes and feel the goodness of Bundeli food.

Tourists, who visited Khajuraho and Panna during the dance festival, can also explore these activities



Camping: at Bear Valley Camp - Village Jhinna, District Panna: Luxury Tent (Swiss Tent also available for 15 person), Alpine tent for 18 persons, Team Games, Stargazing Trek to the hill of Panna, Bonfire, Night Jungle Safari, Live Music, Boat Safari

Village Tour: Old Khajuraho Village Tour: Start from Jawari Temple end in Brahama Temple, Demonstraion of Old Panchayat System, Durga Mandir

E-Bike Tour: Visit of Khajuraho – Western group of Temples- Gol Market- Chaturbhuj Temple- Vaman Temple- Archaeological Museum

Segway Tour: Sunrisetour to Datla Pahad (2hours), Sundet tour to Dalta Pahad (2 hours),

Khajuraho by night — A joy ride (1.5 hours), Farm tour (2 hours), Trail Joy Ride (15 mins)

Water Sports: Speed Boat, Banana Ride, Shikara Boat, Raft Boat in Kutni Water Body and rafting in Ken River

A visit to Panna

If you are mulling to explore Khajuraho, do not forget to visit Panna National Park, situated just 32 km away and a mere 30-minute drive from Khajuraho. The jungles harbour many species of wildlife. The tiger can be glimpsed here, with other rare species such as the leopard, wolf and gharial.



Things to do in Panna

Explore wellness tourism at Kairali Ayurgram, Jeep Safari in Panna National park to explore wildlife in MP

Places to visit in and around Khajuraho

Adivart Museum, Dhubela Museum, Kandariya Mahadeo temple, Chaunsath Yogini temple, Chitragupta Temple, Vishwanath Temple, Lakshmana Temple, Lakshmana Temple, Matangeswara Temple, Parsvanath Temple, Ghantai Temple, Adhinath Temple, Duladeo Temple, Chaturbhuj Temple, Sound & Light Show, State Museum of Tribal and Folk Arts, Adivart Tribal and Folk Art Museum, Dhubela Museum

Places to visit in and around Panna

Wildlife, Fort of Ajaygarh, Mahamati Prannathji Mandir, Pandav falls, National Museum, Panna Diamond Mines

Plan a trip to this picturesque destination in Madhya Pradesh and be a part of the Khajuraho Dance Festival where all these multi-dimensional segments are waiting for you to explore.

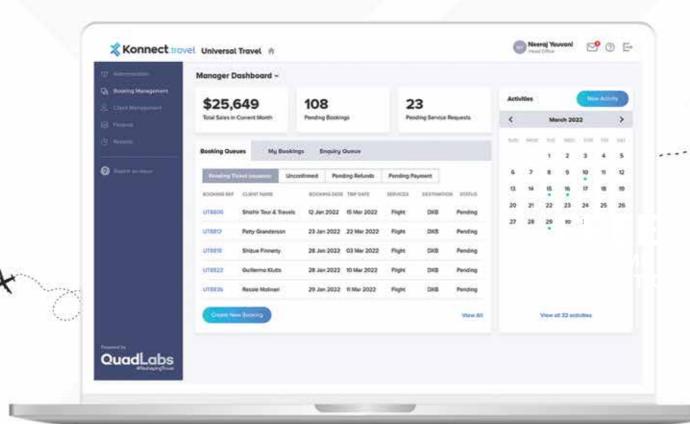


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WTTC and Trip.com Group global traveller report reveals shift towards sustainable travel

Major new report by World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and Trip.com Group, together with Deloitte, reveals a heightened appetite for sustainable tourism amongst consumers, with 69 per cent of travellers actively seeking sustainable travel options.

In this follow-up report, WTTC joined forces again with leading global travel service provider, Trip.com Group and its major consumer brands Trip.com, Ctrip and Skyscanner, with additional data sourced from Deloitte, to analyse the trends that shaped the Travel & Tourism sector last year and will continue to do so over 2023.

The report, "A world in motion: shifting consumer travel trends in 2022 and beyond", shows that sustainability is a key element of the travel agenda, with travellers eager to reduce their carbon footprint and support sustainable tourism.

According to a survey included in the report, three quarters of travellers are considering travelling more sustainably in the future and nearly 60 per cent have chosen more sustainable travel options in the last couple of years.

Another survey also found that around three quarters of high-end travellers are willing to pay extra to make their trips more sustainable.

Last year, following more than two years of travel disruption, travellers made clear their wanderlust is very much alive, with a 109 per cent increase of international overnight arrivals, compared to 2021.

According to the report, last year consumers were willing to stretch their budget for their holiday plans, with 86per cent travellers planning spending the same amount or more on international travel than in 20193, with U.S. tourists leading the list as big spenders. But 2023 is looking even better in terms of travellers spend. Despite concerns about inflation and the cost-of-living crisis around the world, nearly a third (31 per cent) of travellers said they intend to spend more on international travel this year than in 2022.

Additionally, according to Deloitte's Global State of the

Consumer Tracker', last year more than half (53per cent) of global consumers surveyed during the summer said they plan to stay in a hotel over the following three months4.

Julia Simpson, WTTC President & CEO said, "The demand for travel is now stronger than ever and our report shows that this year we will see a significant bounce back. 2023 is set to be a very strong year for Travel & Tourism,"

"Sustainability is top of travellers' agenda, and consumers highlight the value they put on protecting nature and travelling responsibly."

Jane Sun, Trip.com Group CEO said, "Travel & Tourism is a powerful force in driving the global economy, creating jobs, stimulating economic growth, and lifting communities out of poverty."

"The Asia-Pacific Region, with its rapidly growing middle-class and dynamic economies, is well-positioned to capitalise on the growth of the industry and take its place as a leader in the global tourism economy."

"I'm optimistic about the positive momentum for the global resumption and growth of travel in 2023, primarily driven by mainland Chinese consumers, which will help accelerate worldwide recovery and development."



Other findings revealed in the report include

- global consumers surveyed 2022 sun and sea package holiday sales are estimated during the summer said they to be up 75 per cent compared to the previous year
 - Last year during the summer, international arrivals in European sun and beach destinations were just 15 per cent below 2019 levels
 - According to WTTC's recent 'Cities Economic Impact Research', in 2022 visits to major cities are expected to see a 58 per cent year-on-year increase, less than 14 per cent below 2019 levels
 - Luxury holidays will prove particularly popular, with sales of luxury hotels expected to reach \$92 billion by 2025 (compared to \$76 billion in 2019)
 - In a survey, nearly 60 per cent of travellers said they were either already paying to offset their carbon emissions or considering it if the price was right





41% of travellers said they intended to spend more in 2023



31% of travellers said they intend to spend more on international travel in 2023



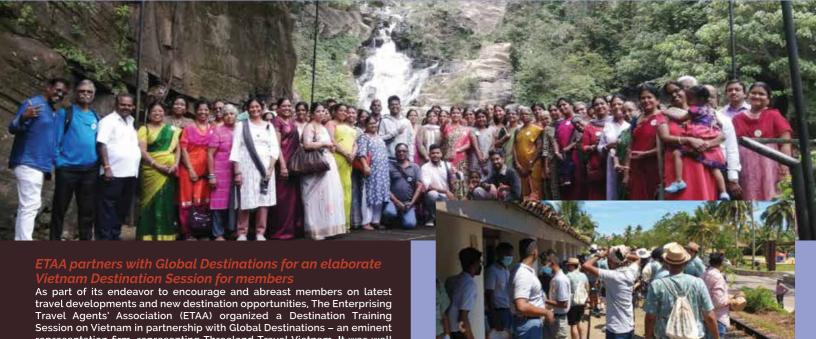
53% of global consumers surveyed said they plan to stay in a hotel over the following three months - Deloitte's 'Global State of the Consumer Tracker.'



Since the launch of the CHOOOSE carbon offsetting option on Trip.com, uptake has grown at an average of 33% each month.



84.5% of carbon offset bookings were for international flights.



representation firm, representing Threeland Travel Vietnam. It was well attended by the members across Mumbai.

Moving forward in the post pandemic era with a strong intent to restructure, expand and strengthen its national presence the ETAA Board Meeting was held on the 26th November 2022 chaired by the Founder President & Chairman Emeritus who has decided to devote more time for ETAA in its Silver Jubilee year 2023-24. The Board Meeting called for some important appointments. They appointed two new chapter chairmen; Jeevan Hendre Western region and Saurab Tuteja Northern regions respectively. Kaushik Banerjee and Princy K D continue as chairmen for Eastern and Southern regions. The board has also appointed Abhijeet Khadilkar, former National General Secretary and Dipti Thakoor, former Joint National Secretary as additional Directors. Mr. Khadilkar to look after membership services while Mrs. Thakoor will be responsible for sponsorship and events in coordination with core teams from each Chapter covering East, West, North & West India. "We are re-grouping in the post-pandemic scenario and trying to take ETAA forward in our silver jubilee year," said Carl Dantas, Founder President & Chairman Emeritus, ETAA. "ETAA will celebrate 2023-24 as its silver jubilee year. To mark its 25th year, the association will organize two conventions-domestic and International". Mr. Jagat Mehta, President, ETAA, highlighted, "This time around we have selected a training program for Vietnam as it is fast emerging and one of the leading destinations from India. Besides this the country is tourist friendly and also offers value for money to travellers". We will be doing similar programs for Vietnam in other Regions in association with Global Destinations.

Walkers Tours conducts quality upgrade training

Walkers Tours, a leading and the oldest Destination Management Company (DMC) from Sri Lanka recently conducted quality upgrade training for chauffeurs.

The training, was held with the aim of maintaining top notch quality standards to boost tourism. About 35 CGs took part in the First Aid Training at JKH auditorium as well.

Nalaka Amaratunga, the Chief Executive Officer of Walkers Tours stated, "Touring Sri Lanka is easy when you leave all the arrangements to Walkers Tours. Our guides and chauffeurs have an impressive knowledge of all aspects of this incredible country".

Walkers even organized a chauffeur cricket tournament for the first time in Sri Lanka's travel industry to motivate chauffeurs.

Walkers Tours has always even been found taking initiatives on Rethinking Tourism: From Crisis to Transformation. But The World Tourism Day 2022 made them rethink that they want to pursue tourism while being responsible for the environment and how to initiate the change in their systems. They welcome us to explore Sri Lanka with them to experience responsible travel.



EVENT AFFAIR

The Embassy of Peru and Promperu India hosts a 'Bespoke Experiences' Networking Evening In Chennai

The Embassy of PERU and Promotion Agency of Peru for Trade, Tourism, and Investments, PROMPERU in India, hosted an exclusive 'Bespoke Experience' networking tourism event in Chennai. This informative networking session, was attended by the top trade partners in the city, in a bid to strengthen ties with the leading travel agents from Chennai and to give them a glimpse of the bespoke experiences that Peru has to offer.

In recent times, there has been an increased demand for travel to Peru from India. To keep abreast with the growing demand, PromPeru India and the Embassy of Peru aims to intensify their efforts in Tier I & II cities in India through focused trade relationship-building exercises. The promotional agency targets to increase the visibility of the destination by working closely with the Indian travel trade to further roll out and promote enticing and innovative itineraries for Peru.

Luis Cabello, Trade and Tourism Counsellor, PromPeru India, said, "India's outbound tourism has been rapidly increasing, and to tap into this demand, especially with younger generations seeking off-beat experiences, we aim to target the Indian travel trade to further strengthen our visibility in the market. We are also happy to announce that India has quickly become one of the top three Asian source markets of passengers to Peru. PromPeru's continuous engagements with the Indian travel trade signifies the importance of India as a growth market for Peru on a global scale. We strongly believe that the market holds huge potential which is yet to be explored, and via our sales and marketing efforts we hope to reinforce our position."



APPOINTMENTS



The Westin Rishikesh Resort & Spa

The Westin Rishikesh Resort & Spa, the first Westin branded property in the Himalayas, has announced the appointment of Rohit Chhokar as Director of Sales and Marketing. With over 14 years of expertise in innovating and implementing strategies in the hospitality industry, Rohit will be focusing on optimizing the resort's revenue performance as well as establishing the brand's positioning of being the most versatile and preferred resort in the Himalayas.

With the new position, Rohit will be instrumental in implementing strategies to enhance the brand reputation by driving innovative campaigns. Being a seasoned sales leader, he will spearhead business plans to deliver profitability and continue the successful growth trajectory for the hotel brand. Rohit is synonymous with being result oriented, with an analytical and passionate approach to marketing, sales, and revenue management.

Anantara Bangkok Siam Hotel

Minor Hotels (MH), a hotel owner, operator and investor, currently with a portfolio of 530 hotels and resorts in 56 countries across Asia Pacific, the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Africa and the Indian Ocean, has announced the appointment of Martin Zarybnicky as General Manager of Anantara Siam Bangkok Hotel as of January 2023. Zarybnicky joins Anantara Siam Bangkok Hotel from his previous role as Complex General Manager with two hotels under his remit – InterContinental Bangkok and Holiday Inn Bangkok, where he focused on IHG's flagship masterplan renovation, repositioning the hotel and F&B destination bars and restaurants and mentored the next generation of hospitality leaders.

The Czech national began his hospitality career in 1994 before gaining extensive knowledge of the European and Middle Eastern markets over nearly three decades. In 2006, Martin took on his first Hotel Manager role at the Hilton Waterfalls Resort Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. The following year, he relocated to Russia to be Hotel Operations Manager at Holiday Inn Sokolniki, and thereafter held several General Manager roles for IHG in St. Petersburg and Moscow.





The Travel Corporation

An adept professional with over 16 years of experience in the tourism sector, Sreemoyee Mitra has been appointed as the Assistant Director of Sales North & East India at The Travel Corporation. She has proven her mettle in business development, operations and commercial achievements for companies like Club7 Holidays, Cox & Kings and Europamundo Vacations. In each of her previous roles she has contributed immensely towards creating incredible achievements for the organizations and will now oversee business development strategies for The Travel Corporation brands in North & East India.

Radisson Hotels Group

Radisson Hotels Group is pleased to announce the appointment of Namit Vijh as Cluster General Manager for Rajasthan and Agra. As part of his new role, Namit will be responsible for a bigger portfolio comprising of Radisson Blu Jaipur, Radisson Jodhpur, Radisson Nathdwara, Radisson Udaipur, Radisson Agra and Country Inn & Suites by Radisson Kota in addition to Radisson Gurugram Udyog Vihar.

Namit has been with Radisson Hotels Group for over 3 years as General Manager - Radisson Gurugram, Udyog Vihar where he contributed immensely to the hotel profitability and soaring the hotel ratings on TripAdvisor. With a degree in Hospitality Management from IHM Chandigarh, Namit has an experience spanning more than 15 years with leading hotel brands such as The Oberoi Group, The Imperial, Hyatt Hotels, The Leela Palace Hotels Resorts and Marriott International.





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