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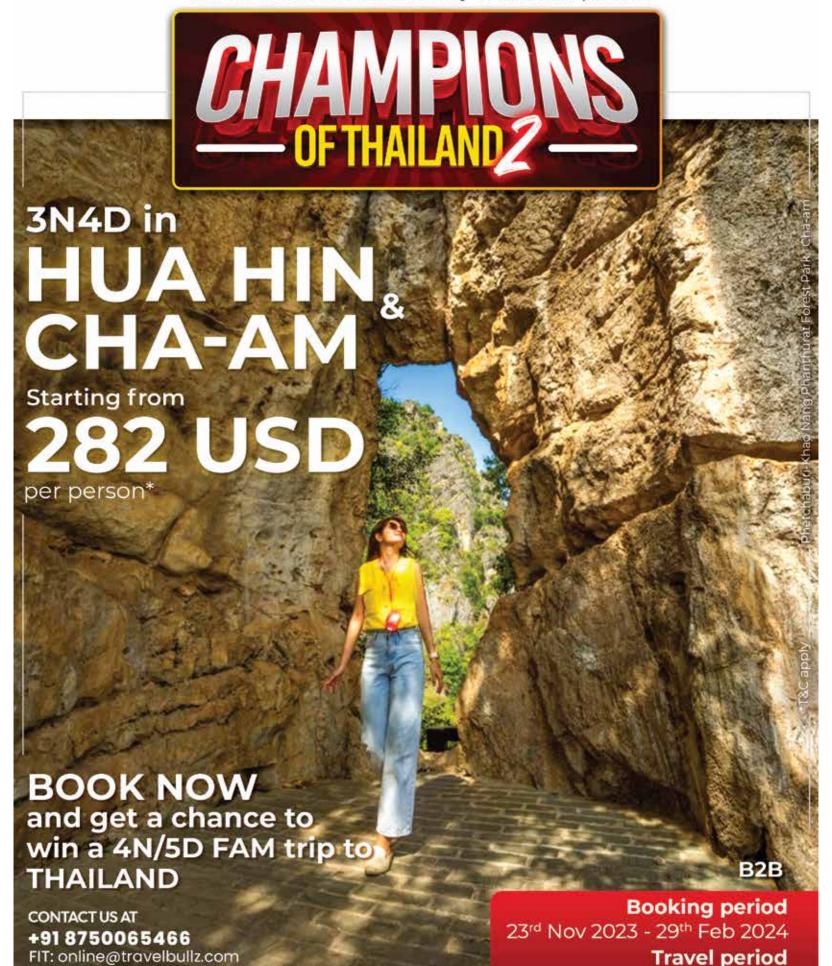
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The allure of firsts is undeniable, much like the inaugural month of the year - January. It is a time when resolutions are made, and endeavours to achieve them span the entire year. Personally, my list of desired destinations and experiences expands annually, If you are perusing this note, I'm confident that, like me, you share a profound love for travel and similar interests. Without delving into philosophical musings, I want to emphasis that travel has a transformative power like no other. It awakens your senses and broadens your horizons. Exposure to different cultures and landscapes is an invaluable enrichment.

The first issue of 2024 is as invigorating as the new year itself. From a feature on the gem of Morocco to an exploration of the heart of India—Madhya Pradesh, the diversity showcased is bound to captivate you. The cover story this month is not a critique but a thoughtful reflection from a stakeholder and citizen of India, urging to place our country prominently on the world tourism map. Just as India stands at the forefront in various other sectors such as IT, Space, and Manufacturing, it's time for tourism to take centre stage.

As we step into the year with hope and abundant opportunities, let's seize the chances before us. A unified approach and collective effort are essential as we contribute to the growth of the industry. We hope you derive as much enjoyment from reading this magazine as we did in curating its content.

Do share your feedback at bharti@travelturtle.world.

Happy New Year!

Bharti Sharma







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Editor: Bharti Sharma





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COMMUNIQUÉ

VFS Global appointed to deliver UK Government visa and passport services

VFS Global, which has been a trusted partner for the UK Government since 2003, has won the global contract for overseas UK visa and Citizenship services. This award is the latest in a long line of wins for the world's leading visa, passport and citizen services provider. During 2024, VFS Global will deploy 240 Visa and Citizenship Application Service (VCAS) Centres for the UK in 142 countries across Africa & Middle East, the Americas, Australasia & Europe, China & Taiwan, and Asia & Asia Pacific regions. These centres will accept all categories of visa applications as well as UK passport applications in some locations. Combined, these new centres are estimated to process 3.8 million applicants every year.



Jandec Travel JSC emerges as the go-to travel companion for global explorers

Jandec Travel JSC prides itself on offering top-notch tours, expert guides, and impeccable event management services. The company ensures every traveller experiences Vietnam's charm in its entirety, from the vibrant streets of Hanoi to the awe-inspiring Halong Bay—a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site. The expertly designed tours focus on delivering indigenous experiences that allow you to deeply connect with Vietnam's rich heritage. Whether it's exploring the well-preserved ancient architecture of Hoi An or taking part in vibrant lantern festivals, you'll have the opportunity to truly embrace the unique traditions and customs of Vietnam.

Accor continues its expansion in Southern India

Accor, a world-leading hospitality Group boasting more than 1,000 properties located across the Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific, is pleased to announce its latest addition to the Mercure portfolio in India. Developed in collaboration with Compass Enterprise Private Limited, led by Dr Ganni Bhaskara Rao, the property is strategically located on the city's main 100 feet road.

ETAA North India organises Business Coaching Session

The ETAA North India committee organised yet another successful Business Coaching Session by Action Coach at The Lalit, New Delhi. With the event packed to capacity, almost 50 members attended the event. The session began at 10 am with a welcome note from the Committee members followed by Business Coaches Mr Abhimanyu Yadav, Mr Indranil Mukherjee and Mr Ratish Pandey giving an excellent presentation and very valuable inputs to enhance profitability, effectively conduct business with defined road maps and plans for business growth. The exhaustive and interactive session lasted a bit over three hours that was keenly attended by top directors and CEO's of Travel companies.





COMMUNIQUÉ

Cheval Blanc unveils its new opening in the Sevchelles for autumn 2024

Cheval Blanc continues its international development with the opening of Cheval Blanc Seychelles in the heart of the Indian Ocean in autumn 2024. Along the southwestern coast of Mahé Island, Anse Intendance Beach offers a sweeping, pristine setting that will soon be home to the sixth Cheval Blanc Maison.



from Mumbai

Vistara, India's finest full-service carrier and a joint venture of Tata Group and Singapore Airlines will boost international connectivity London Heathrow, from 4 times weekly to daily flights, starting 1st flight between Mumbai and Singapore from 1st February 2024, using its A321neo aircraft. Vistara also operates daily flights between Delhi and London Heathrow and flies daily to Singapore



The US filing has no impact on the EbixCash businesses

filing serves as a strategic move aimed at securing the exit from Chapter 11. Importantly, this filing bears no impact on the day-to-day operations of EbixCash. The customers, suppliers, and partners, assuring on-going developments in the US.



IATO expresses gratitude to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Bureau of Immigration

express its sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Bureau of Immigration for streamlining entry of Tourists from Taiwan visiting Sikkim entering through Rango Check Post, Mr Rajiv Mehra. President. Indian Association of Tour Operators (JATO) apprised that Taiwanese Nationals visiting Sikkim were facing problems to enter as Sikkim Permit which was being issued by INDIA-TAIPEI ASSOCIATION, Taipei is not being accepted by the FRO at Rango Checkpost.



COMMUNIQUÉ

TAT welcomes Air India's inaugural Delhi-Phuket flight

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) hosted a special airport ceremony to welcome Air India's inaugural flight from Delhi to Phuket. The maiden Flight Al378, landing at 07.10 hours, was welcomed with a water cannon salute as it taxied to its gate where arriving passengers were then greeted by officials and figures as well as Thai traditional dance.



TBO.COM signs deal to acquire online business of Jumbo Tours Group, Spain

TBO Tek Limited (TBO) announced that its wholly owned subsidiary, Tek Travels DMCC, has acquired 100 per cent shareholding of Jumbonline Accommodations & Services S.L.U., which has been demerged as an online business from Jumbo Tours Group. With this acquisition, TBO intends to further increase its presence in Europe. Jumbo Tours Group is one of the biggest international tourism operators offering a range of services and products to tourism operators and travel agencies worldwide. The Jumbonline business distributes an extensive range of products for wholesalers and tour operators all on one single platform.



Singapore Tourism Board collaborates with Ananya Panday to throw a spotlight on Singapore

The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) has partnered with Bollywood actress Ananya Panday to showcase unique and surprising experiences that can only be 'Made in Singapore.' Audiences will soon be able to watch Ananya in a 4-episode vlog series that promises to unveil a new, exciting and fun side of Singapore that will entice them to travel to the city. The series will shed fresh light on the city where ordinary experiences are made extra-ordinary in much unexpected ways.





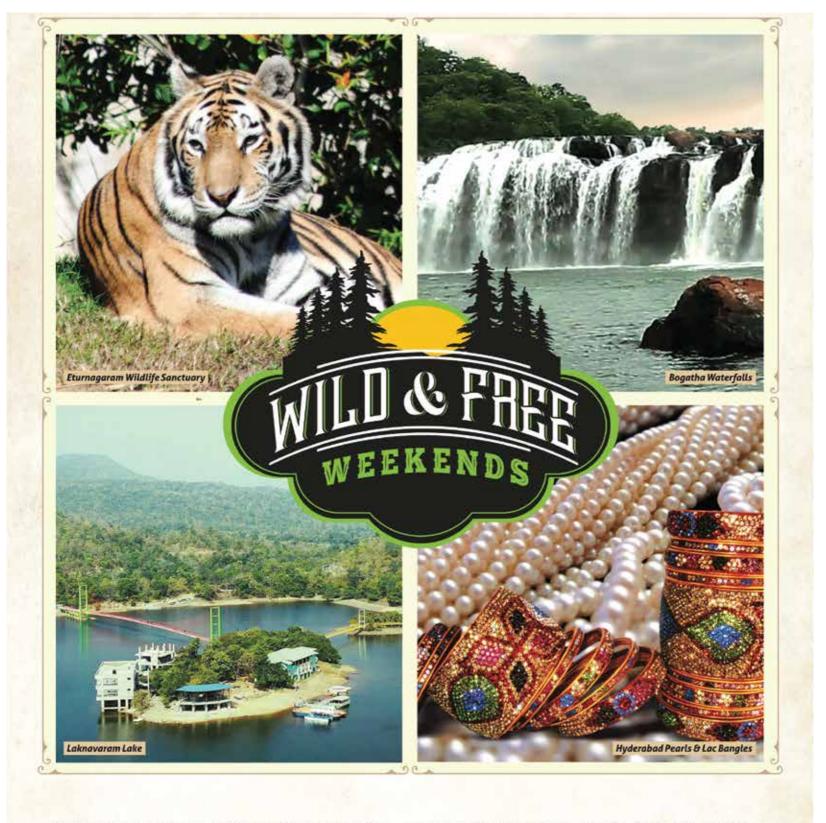
Kavya Resort & Spa in Nagarkot, Kathmandu appoints 'Wanderlust Marketing' as their India representative

A Luxury Resort in Nagarkot, nestled in the lap of the Himalayas, Kavya Resort & Spa embodies the union of exquisiteness, class and luxury through its charming ambience and sublime views. Seamlessly marrying Nepalese tradition with modern sophistication tucked in a sleepy village of Nagarkot, Kavya is an ideal vacation amidst snow-draped peaks with beaming sunrise on freezing mornings – an exceptional experience to leave you spellbound. Amid rugged mountains and idyllic ravines, Kavya Resort & Spa is set on a peaceful site affording magnificent views. Re-think luxury and witness warm hospitality at Kavya, with panoramic trails and breath-taking butterflies clasped by the wildflower-strewn Kathmandu Valley.



BWH Hotels focused on expanding World Hotels in India

BWH Hotels, a prominent global player in the hospitality industry recognised for its unwavering dedication to exceptional service and unparalleled guest experiences, is thrilled to announce a strategic move that marks a significant milestone in its journey. Harnessing the power of Sorrel Hospitality, the master franchisee for the region, BWH Hotels is set to expand its footprint in the vibrant South Asian market, with a focused initiative to strengthen the presence of World Hotels in India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.



Find what the locals call the 'Niagra of Telangana' after a gentle trek through the hills. Hunt for tree fossils in a forest filled with nature's wonders. Shoot some incredible pictures at a lake with islands, boating and a stunning suspension bridge. Or indulge yourself with the rich white pearls of Charminar and lac bangles from Lad Bazaar. It is all here waiting to be discovered over your next weekend. Book now, to discover Telangana like never before.







FOLLOWING

Dekho Apna Desh,

IT IS NOW TIME FOR THE WORLD TO EXPLORE INDIA

The resounding success of the "Dekho Apna Desh" campaign is ingrained in the collective consciousness of every Indian, a testament to the adept execution by the honourable Prime Minister and the government machinery. It is now crucial to embark on a global campaign for India, leveraging the lessons learned from "Dekho Apna Desh" to showcase the nation's diverse attractions and allure international travellers to experience the richness of India's cultural tapestry and scenic beauty.

- Bharti Sharma



"Dekho Apna Desh" campaign's impact was palpable as it inspired a nationwide commitment, compelling every Indian to take a solemn oath to explore the uncharted territories within the country. This surge in domestic tourism resulted in commendable growth destinations and hotels across India. However, in the current landscape, the spotlight must shift towards prioritising inbound tourism as well. In the fiercely competitive world of travel, a well-crafted global marketing campaign can be the catalyst for transforming a nation or a tourist destination into a sought-after haven for tourism. Let's find out through a comparative study to discern the essential components that India needs in its tourism marketing strategy in 2024

At a time when India's tourism sector was grappling with dwindling occupancy rates, Shri Amitabh Kant spearheaded a remarkable turnaround. Under his leadership, the 'Incredible India' campaign was launched in 2002, a comprehensive marketing effort that showcased India's diverse and captivating experiences. This multi-pronged campaign leveraged television, print media, and international partnerships to directly reach consumers worldwide. The results were astounding, with a surge in tourist arrivals that breathed new life into India's tourism sector. The strategic vision demonstrated that effective marketing could stimulate the creation of new tourism infrastructure. This resulted in the development of airports, hotels, and related services, further making India a global tourist destination.

from around 1 million before the campaign's launch to 3.5 million within one and a half to two years, leading to tourism revival in India.

Time to turn 'we wish' into 'we have'

In recent years, India seems to have taken a step back from aggressive global marketing campaigns, and the repercussions are visible in the tourism sector. While the pandemic has certainly played a role, other countries have adapted and continued their promotional efforts. For instance, friendliness of the locals, countries like Thailand, Australia, creating a strong and memorable and Japan have maintained robust brand image. campaigns to keep their Japan, through its "Visit Japan" potential travellers.

consistently invested in marketing attracted diverse activities, leveraging social media contributing significantly to the The tourist influx in India increased platforms, influencers, and country's tourism industry.

strategic partnerships. As a result, the country has remained a top destination for tourists, even during challenging times. The visa-free policies have also further enhanced the numbers.

Australia, with its Nothing Like Australia" campaign, continues to captivate global audiences. The campaign focuses on highlighting unique experiences, landscapes, and the

destinations in the minds of campaign, emphasises the blend of traditional culture Thailand, for example, has modernity. This approach has tourists

LIVE WIRE

Here we 'stand'

In contrast to the active promotional strategies of other nations, India seems to be lagging. The absence of a comprehensive global marketing campaign has resulted in a decline in foreign tourist arrivals, especially in the post-pandemic era. India's current share in global tourism receipts stands at around 1.8 per cent, significantly lower than its potential given the country's cultural wealth and geographical diversity.

What stakeholders want?

Digital Presence Enhancement: Invest in a robust online presence through engaging websites, social media platforms, and virtual reality experiences. Leverage influencers and content creators to amplify the reach.

Strategic Partnerships: Collaborate

with international travel agencies, airlines, and hospitality providers to create attractive packages and incentives for tourists.

Crisis Communication Plan: Develop a comprehensive crisis communication plan to address concerns and uncertainties, showcasing India as a safe and secure destination for travellers. Cultural and Adventure Tourism Promotion: Highlight lesser-known cultural gems and adventure tourism opportunities to diversify the tourist experience beyond mainstream attractions.

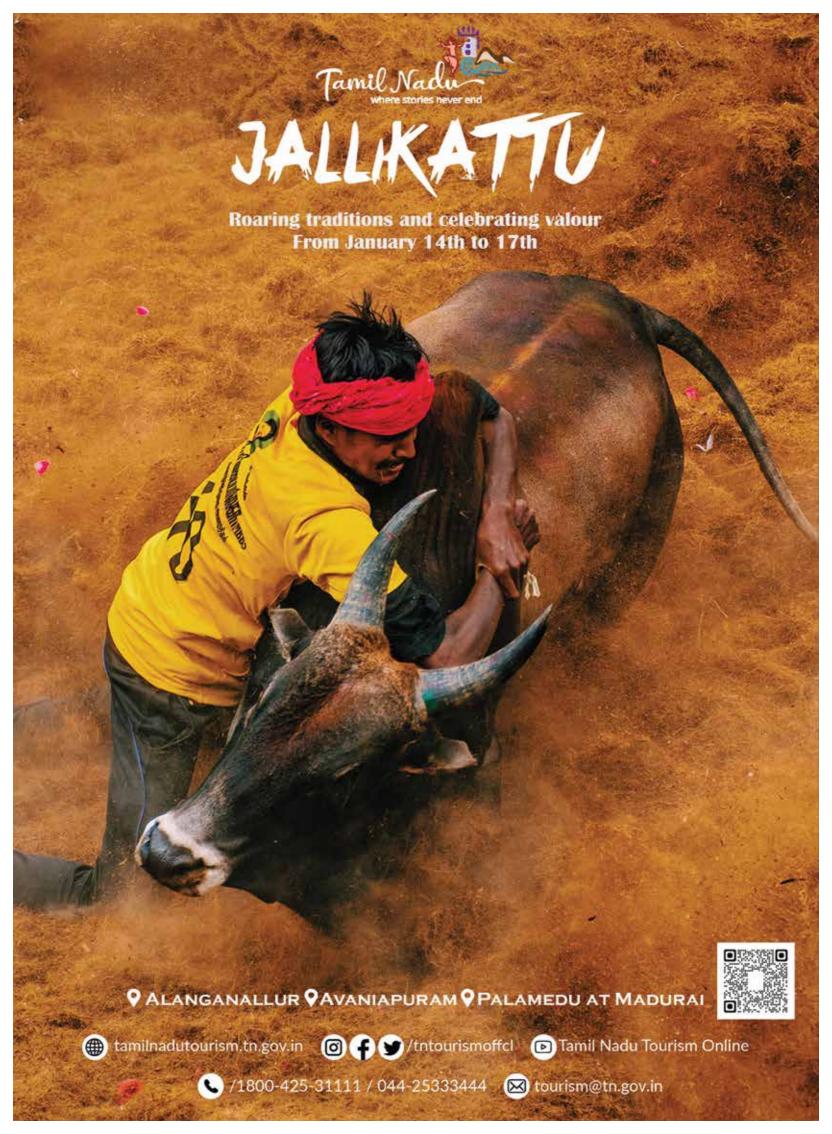
Sustainable Tourism Practices:
Emphasise eco-friendly and sustainable tourism practices, aligning with the growing global trend towards responsible travel.

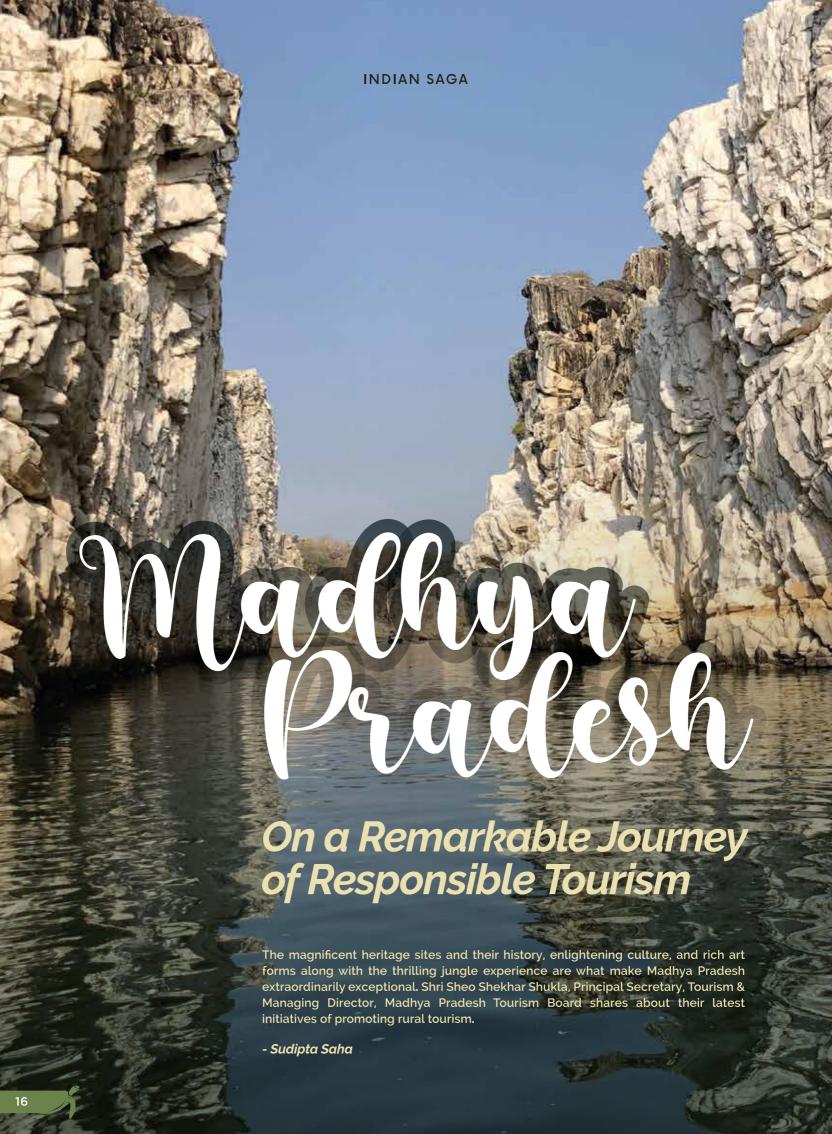
Time to go 360 from 180

Going 360 with the marketing campaign involves adopting a

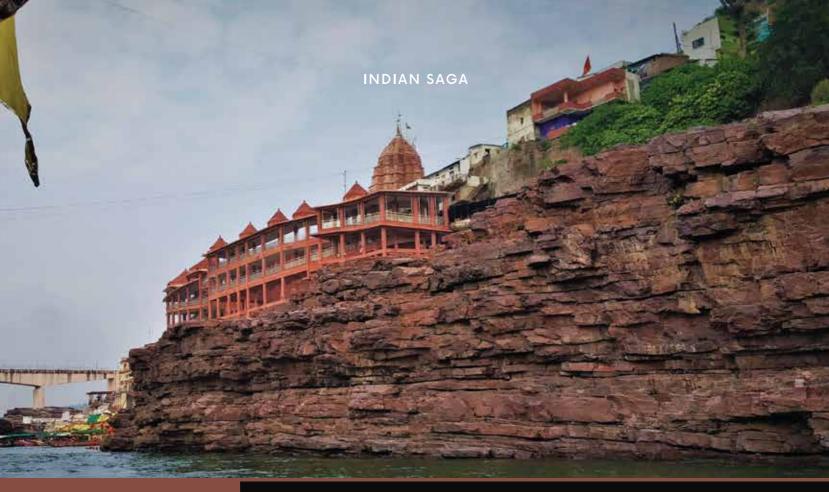
holistic approach that integrates traditional advertising, digital marketing, experiential events, and strategic partnerships. This comprehensive strategy ensures that the destination is consistently present in the minds of potential travellers across various touchpoints. In conclusion, the launch of a global marketing campaign is not just desirable but imperative for India's tourism industry to regain momentum. Learning from the success of past campaigns like "Incredible India" and benchmarking against nations actively promoting their tourism, India needs to invest in a multifaceted marketing strategy. By embracing a 360-degree approach, India can reposition itself as a top global tourist destination and harness the economic benefits that an influx of international visitors brings.









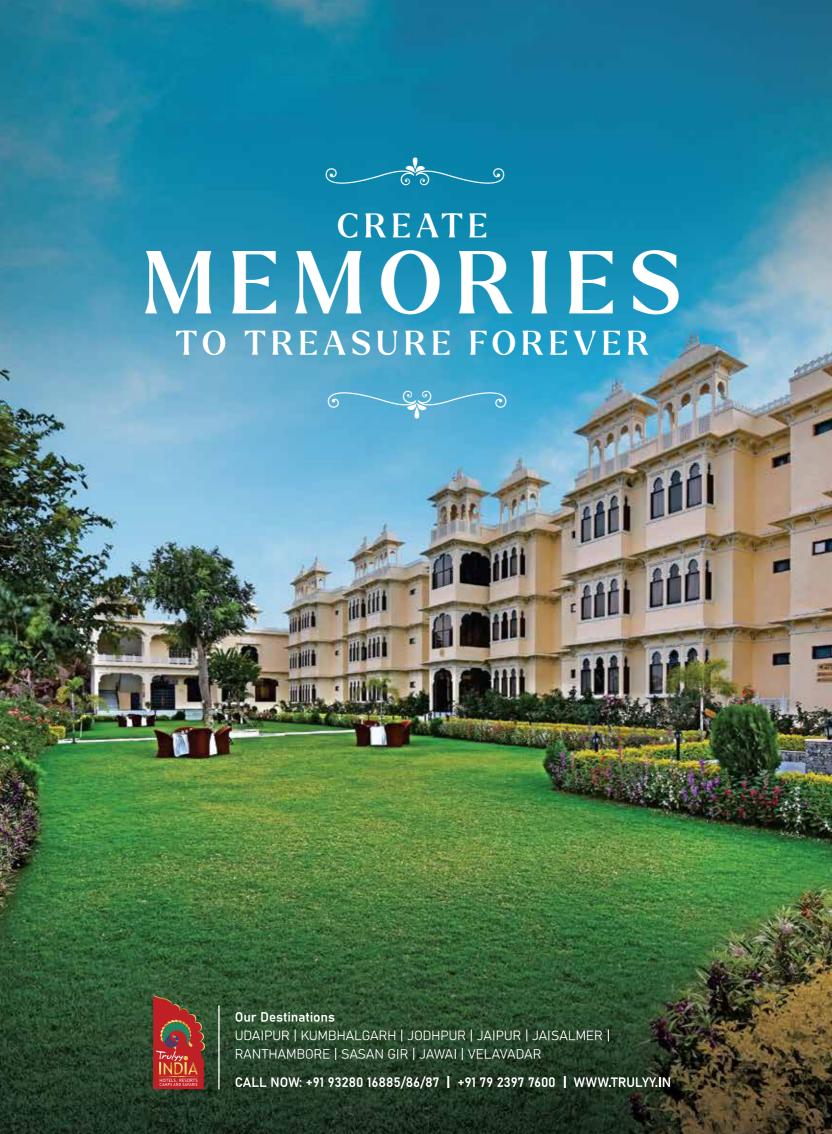


sanitation, health, and cleanliness and at the same time retaining the vernacular character of the mud houses, local architecture and several products around rural life. It offers a bespoke experience while contributing to the empowerment of community rejuvenating yourself and leading the most sustainable life."

Committed to offering extraordinary MICE facilities

Madhya Pradesh has an abundance of experiences making it a hotspot destination for Indian international travellers. The century-old history, the topography, the rich culture, and warm hospitable people have been luring all genres of travellers. Madhya Pradesh has already shown its progress in MICE by organising the most number of G20 meetings in Indore, Bhopal and Khajuraho. "Similarly, we have proudly hosted Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in January 2023 in Indore, where more than 3500 participants visited the site. We have showcased our strengths for business. Madhya Pradesh is a state which allows combining business with pleasure which gives you a lot of energy. It is a call from Madhya Pradesh to all the corporates to come to MP and do your corporate meetings; we will facilitate everything and make this experience unforgettable. We have got the best of the infrastructure and destination weddings are picking up rapidly in the state. With improved infrastructure, amenities and a friendly atmosphere, Madhya Pradesh is a preferred destination for all occasions," explains Shri Sheo Shekhar Shukla.







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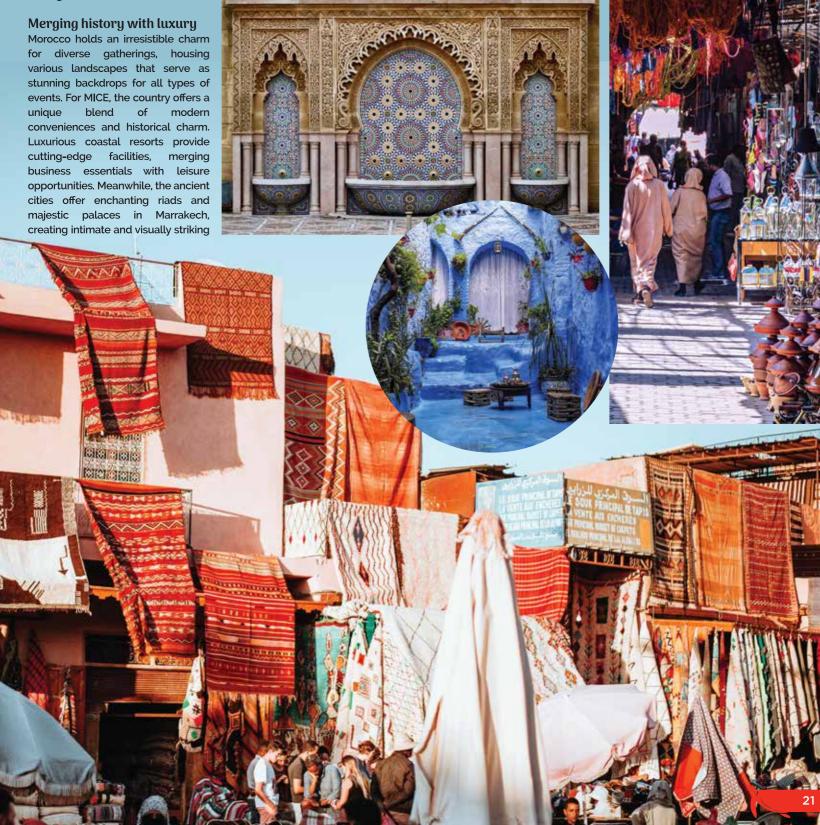
The longstanding historical ties between India and Morocco have fostered a wonderful cultural exchange. Both countries have shared trade routes for centuries, connecting them in ways that continue to influence their cultures today. The vibrant colours and beautiful art in Morocco often feel familiar to Indian tourists, making it an inviting destination.

settings perfect for weddings and exclusive celebrations. The blend of contemporary amenities and historic elegance ensures that events in Morocco are not just memorable but also infused with the country's cultural richness, providing attendees with an ambience that captivates the senses.

Fly to Morocco

embassy or consulate in India. between India and Morocco, offering connecting flights via prominent transit hubs such as Dubai, Istanbul,

and Doha. Airlines such as Emirates, Indian tourists planning a Moroccan Qatar Airways, and Turkish Airlines getaway must secure a tourist visa, operate regular routes, providing obtainable through the Moroccan convenient options for travellers embarking on a Moroccan adventure. Multiple airlines facilitate travel For travel agents and tour operators Indian assisting tourists. understanding the visa process and flight connections is crucial in planning their Moroccan visit.



The taste of two worlds

As travellers delve into Morocco's diverse cuisine, they'll find familiar tastes in select restaurants catering to Indian preferences, especially in vibrant urban cities such as Casablanca and Marrakech. The country's culinary scene offers an assortment of flavourful dishes, such as the fragrant Tagine, the light and fluffy couscous; and the savoury and aromatic pastillas. The availability of Indian cuisine alongside authentic 'Moroccan fare' creates a delightful fusion, allowing visitors to savour both local specialities and the comforting flavours that recall memories of home

Vibrant festivals and culture

Morocco hosts a diverse range of festivals and events that enchant Indian tourists seeking cultural experiences. Events such as the Fes Festival of World Sacred Music and the Marrakech International Film Festival showcase global talent, drawing audiences with a variety of artistic expressions. The Mawazine World Rhythms Festival stands out for its celebration of music and the country's cultural diversity, offering Indian visitors a chance to deeply engage with Morocco's rich culture.

Indulgence and wellness

For families, Morocco presents a wealth of activities, from camel rides for youngsters in the desert to engaging workshops showcasing local craftsmanship. Discerning travellers seeking luxury can indulge in lavish accommodations, from lavish resorts to intimate boutique hotels, ensuring an indulgent and exclusive experience. Wellness enthusiasts seeking rejuvenation can experience Moroccan spas and retreats, enjoying traditional hammam rituals and holistic therapies amidst serene landscapes. These options cater to the pursuit of relaxation and revitalisation, appealing to Indian tourists seeking wellness-centered experiences.



Experiences that await Indian travellers in Morocco

- 1. Exploring Markets: Discover Marrakech's bustling markets, a variety of vibrant hubs offering spices, crafts, and lively street performances eg. Jemaa el-Fnaa Square.
- 2. Savour Moroccan Flavours: Indulge in the diverse and delicious Moroccan cuisine, from Mechoui to Pastilla. Restaurants in major cities also cater to Indian tastes.
- 3. Architectural Wonders: Admire Morocco's stunning architecture, blending Islamic and Moorish styles seen in landmarks such as Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca and Madrasa Bou Inania in Fez.
- 4. Sahara Adventure: Experience the natural beauty of the Sahara Desert with camel rides and nights under starlit skies.
- 5. Cultural Immersion: Engage in local traditions such as the hammam spa ritual and enjoy Berber music performances, offering glimpses into Morocco's rich heritage.



Morocco's timeless crafts and colours

Artisans in Morocco skilfully craft pottery, showcasing intricate designs and vibrant colours. This craftsmanship, steeped in tradition, spans across various forms, including leatherwork and carpets. In Fez, the art of leather dyeing is presented beautifully, while Marrakech's bustling souks display masterpieces of metalwork and ceramics. Each creation reflects a unique blend of history and artistry, representing Morocco's rich cultural heritage.

The ideal time to travel

The optimal time to visit Morocco depends on individual weather preferences. Spring (March to May) and Autumn (September to November) offer mild temperatures conducive to exploration. Summers can be extremely hot inland but relatively cooler along the coast. Winter (December to February) brings chilly nights but presents a quieter ambience and the opportunity to witness snow-capped mountains in the Atlas range.

Morocco's Eco-tourism wealth

eco-tourism initiatives aimed at preserving its natural landscapes and supporting local communities. The country advocates for responsible tourism by encouraging eco-friendly accommodations that minimise environmental impact. Efforts extend to conserving delicate ecosystems such as the Sahara Desert and Atlas Mountains. Travellers engage in eco-conscious activities such as hiking, contributing to wildlife conservation efforts, and immersing themselves in traditional Berber villages, nurturing a deeper connection with Morocco's diverse landscapes while promoting sustainability.



A RECORD-BREAKING 2023 FOR

MOROCCO'S TOURISM

The year 2023 was an exciting and fruitful year for Morocco's Tourism landscape. By the end of November, the country had welcomed 13.3 million visitors, surpassing pre-pandemic figures.

- Naina Nath

Morocco's allure as a destination is composed of a collage of unique characteristics. Projections indicate an estimated achievement of around 14.5 million visitors for the year, marking entire а record-breaking 12.5 per cent increase over the 2019 figures for the destination.

A cultural melting pot

Serving as a cultural crossroads, Morocco's history spans several civilizations-Phoenician, Roman, African, and Arabic-embraced by the inclusive spirit of the Moroccan amazing culture. With a legacy dating back to the ninth century, Morocco proudly upholds the mantle as one of the world's oldest nations, its monarchy standing as the second oldest ruling monarchy globally. The country's cultural richness is tangible, housing over monuments and safeguarding nine **UNESCO** World Heritage sites.

Ambitious global objective

The leading tourism market for

Morocco is presently France, followed by Spain and the United Kingdom. However, in a strategic pivot toward future expansion, the Moroccan National Tourism Office (MNTO) is actively exploring India as a crucial market. Despite the relatively modest numbers in the Indian market, the MNTO is making a substantial investment in India's potential. This strategic decision resonates with their ambitious global objective of hosting 26 million visitors in Morocco by 2026. The MNTO is optimistic that incorporating India into its strategic growth initiatives will significantly contribute to meeting this target.

An odyssey of imperial cities

Exploring the essence of Morocco is best experienced through an extensive journey spanning at least one full week, immersing one in the captivating imperial cities. Starting from Casablanca and journeying through Rabat, Meknes, and Fes, ending in Marrakech, offers a experiences. Marrakech, renowned for its cultural treasures, also features exceptional nightlife, adding vibrancy to the city's allure. Tracing the travel route to India Indians interested in visiting Morocco can access the e-visa, which is independent of other visa availabilities such as Schengen or the US. Currently, direct flights to Morocco aren't available, but concerted efforts are underway by the tourism board to rectify this. Anticipated developments in 2024 bring hope for positive news on

Morocco's vision for Indian travellers

The MNTO's primary goals involve positioning Morocco as a top preference for Indian tourists by 2030 and aiming to welcome a minimum of 1 lakh visitors by 2027. In their initial year in India (2024), the objective is to lay the groundwork for effective tourism promotion: enhancing destination accessibility. bolstering awareness among trade partners, and launching engaging activities for the public.

Empowering by educating

To improve accessibility for Indian tourists the promotional strategies to be implemented include multiple approaches. They plan on initiating a direct flight partnership with an airline specifically catering to Indian travellers. Alongside this, there's a concerted effort to partnerships with a wide range of tour operators, aiming significantly amplify the visibility of Morocco's offerings within the Indian market.

Traditional tourism source

Fluctuations in oil prices have the potential to significantly influence the cost dynamics of flight tickets and overall travel expenses. This impact is particularly pertinent in traditional tourism source markets Western Europe, where preferences lean toward shorter and medium-haul trips, possibly aligning with changes in pricing structures. In contrast, emerging source markets like India may experience a milder impact.



Queensland

The land of picturesque sunsets

In a world yearning for new adventures and cultural exchanges, the region emerges as a destination that transcends boundaries, offering an enriching tapestry of experiences.

Stirling Hinchliffe, Tourism Minister, Queensland and Patricia O'Callaghan, CEO, Tourism & Events Queensland share the connection they have with the Indian travellers.

- Tripti Jain



creating a place in the hearts of Indian travellers. From the iconic Great Barrier Reef to the pulsating cities and serene hinterlands, it offers an unparalleled landscape of adventures. The partnership between Australia and India has unlocked a world of opportunities, as both nations seek to deepen their ties through trade, tourism, and mutual respect.

Blossoming friendships
The friendship between Australia and India has paved the way for unprecedented opportunities in trade and tourism. Mr Hinchliffe, highlights, and tourism has between Australia. "The relationship between Australia and India has never been better, which is the very reason that it should be given attention. This robust alliance lays the foundation for a thriving exchange of cultures and experiences. An important focus of this delegation is exploring new opportunities to reunite family and friends and share more of our award-winning to experiences with Indian visitors."

Bustling experiences at every corner

The vast offerings of the region resonate with the diverse interests of Indian travellers. Patricia shares, "With a great lifestyle, world-class tourism destinations, unique, awe-inspiring natural attractions and Indigenous cultures, it is the favourite domestic holiday destination of Australians. Our product offers

family-friendly adventures perfect for larger groups, the attractions cater to every taste and preference."

Accessibility through collaborations

It is essential to create the right links to promote any destination, when it comes to tourism the travellers are always looking for trusted sources. The approach involves strategic marketing plans and partnerships. Mr Hinchliffe announces, Queensland-India Trade Investment Strategy recognises the many mutually beneficial opportunities for building stronger links between the two regions, particularly on Queensland's runway to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We have about 10 campaigns lined up over the next 12 months with our Additionally, partners. collaborations with entities such as Singapore Airlines and tourism bodies signal an exciting roadmap to promote the offerings and accessibility for Indian travellers."

Diversity creating opportunitiesThe depth and breadth of the destinations of the region are unparalleled. From the bustling Gold coast and vibrant Cairns to the tranquil Sunshine Coast and the enthralling Barrier Reef, each locale presents a unique flavour. Mr Hinchliffe emphasises, "Even our



Mr Stirling Hinchcliffe

OFFSHORE BINOCULAR



different beach regions offer distinct ways of living and being, ensuring every visit is a new adventure. The tourism is focused on rebuilding international aviation connections, investing in all-abilities visitor experiences and new ecotourism opportunities as the world's must-see destination of choice. We want to make it even easier for Indian visitors to share our amazing destination."

Refurbishment and enhancement

It is a canvas continuously painted with innovation and new attractions. Patricia highlights, "Development projects such as the Queens Wharf in Brisbane promise a remaking of the city centre, adding a huge array of new product. The state's commitment to refurbishment and enhancement ensures a dynamic and ever-evolving landscape for tourists." The region stands as a beacon of diversity, beckoning travellers from India and across the globe to explore its multifaceted offerings. Mr Hinchliffe shares, "Queensland can match the breadth and diversity of the Indian market because it has everything. Every place you visit offers something vastly different, ensuring a kaleidoscopic experience for every traveller."

A high-level tourism, trade and education delegation from Queensland is in India to strengthen economic and social relationships between the two regions. Building new tourism and international education opportunities is an important component of the trade mission. As the landscape evolves and new attractions emerge, the region remains an inviting canvas ready to be explored and cherished by travellers seeking unique and unforgettable experiences.







Tavel to Europe It's time to

Saffron World is a full-fledged DMC for Europe tours having our base office established in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

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VFS GEOBAL

A LEGACY OF 270 MILLION APPLICATIONS

With a focus on accessibility, security, and strategic partnerships, Prabuddha Sen, COO, South Asia, VFS Global shares that VFS aims to redefine seamless travel experiences across the globe.

- Naina Nath

At VFS Global, the unwavering commitment to security and integrity stands as the cornerstone of their operations. Through the implementation of cutting-edge technologies, they persistently strive for stringent identity verification measures. This dedication guarantees the utmost trustworthiness throughout the visa and passport application process, assuring

their clients of a secure and reliable experience.

Resilient travel and growing numbers

The travel and tourism industry in South Asia has exhibited consistent and remarkable double-digit percentage growth. This trend has been fortuitous for the industry, as evidenced by the escalating number of visa

applications. The current figures of the industry align with the anticipated growth projections. Looking towards 2024, VFS anticipates maintaining this momentum as the travel and tourism sector continues to display resilience and buoyancy. Prabuddha shares, "Since our establishment in 2001, VFS Global has successfully processed over 270 million applications. This

stands as a testament to our unwavering commitment to facilitating seamless travel experiences for individuals worldwide."

Bringing the world closer

Prabuddha shares about the expansion being done by VFS on every level and to different regions and says, "As we aim to fortify our presence in South Asia, we strategically expand our processing centres to cater to the escalating demand, especially from Tier II and Tier III cities and towns across India and the broader South Asian region."

This proactive approach aligns with VFS's commitment to providing convenient and accessible visa services to a broader population. On a global scale, VFS's reach is extensive, serving over 70 client governments through a network of 3,300 visa application centres spread across 149 countries.

Targeting 240 Visa and VCAS centres for UK

"VFS Global has been a trusted partner of the UK Government since 2003 and has secured the global contract for providing overseas UK visa and citizenship services. In 2024, VFS Global plans to deploy 240 Visa and Citizenship Application Service (VCAS) Centres for the UK across 142 countries in Africa & the Middle East, the Americas, Australasia & Europe, China & Taiwan, and the Asia & Asia Pacific regions," shares Prabuddha.

These centres will facilitate the acceptance of all categories of visa applications, along with UK passport applications in select locations. Collectively, these new centres are expected to process approximately 3.8 million applicants annually.

VFS Global: The unstoppable force

VFS is not stopping; they are taking additional steps to bring the visa application process even closer to Beyond geographical expansion, VFS is making significant investments in enhancing the overall customer journey. Ensuring security and integrity remains a paramount focus for VFS Global. They are committed employing state-of-the-art technologies to maintain rigorous identity verification measures, guaranteeing the credibility of the visa and passport application procedures. The comprehensive underscores Global's dedication to innovation, customer satisfaction, and the sustained success of their role as a trusted partner in global mobility. "In 2024, VFS Global will expand its presence by launching application centres in an additional 84 countries. This extension underlines our dedication to offering accessible and efficient visa services on a global scale," Shares Prabuddha.

Embracing Al

rapidly evolving technological landscape, there's recognition of the transformative influence of Artificial Intelligence on daily life technological interactions. Al's impact extends beyond technology, reshaping industries operate and individuals engage information, marking a pivotal shift in the way we perceive and interact with the world.

"We are developing a robust and comprehensive AI strategy, acknowledging its multifaceted advantages. Our goal is to establish ourselves as leaders

and pioneers in strategically integrating Artificial intelligence," he adds.

Accessibility for seasonal demand

VFS Global's advanced IT systems proficiently manage high volumes of visa applications without delays. Dedicated support teams promptly address any technical issues during operational hours. To enhance the customer experience, their intuitive websites and chatbot services provide swift access to relevant information. Additionally, they have bolstered capacity at Visa Application Centres to accommodate seasonal demand.

Prabuddha shares, "Our holistic approach ensures efficiency and customer satisfaction, further solidifying VFS Global's leadership in providing hassle-free and accessible visa services worldwide. At VFS Global, our commitment lies in delivering seamless experiences."

Vision for 2024

VFS Global's strategic partnerships with hotels in key locations, including India, UAE, and the USA, enable them to establish premium application centres on these premises. This initiative is pivotal in extending their services to cities that currently lack a Visa Application Centre 2.

Their commitment to adaptability is evident as they continually assess the situation and determine the feasibility of offering services based on the demand from these centres. Prabuddha concludes and says, "As we look ahead to 2024, we are excited to explore numerous more strategic partnerships that will resonate with our mission of delivering convenient and premium visa services across the world."





Availing memories like never before!

Hospitality, at its core, is more than providing a place to stay; it's about crafting experiences that linger in the heart and mind. Sandipan Bose, General Manager, Mementos Udaipur shares the grandeur of the maiden property under the new brand 'Mementos by ITC Hotels.'

-Tripti Jain



Amidst the bustling landscape of hotels and resorts, Mementos emerges as a haven where time transcends its ordinary pace, and each visit transforms into a treasury of unforgettable memories. Mementos isn't a brand—it's a curator of timeless memories. The property's commitment to offering an escape from the ordinary while embracing the extraordinary defines its essence. As Mementos expands its footprint, the brand's focus remains steadfast: 'Crafting moments that transcend transient travel experiences.' With Sandipan, we unravel the ethos, distinctive approach, and the future of this brand at the pinnacle of exceptional hospitality.

Memories beyond spaces

Beyond its physical walls and luxurious amenities, Mementos embodies an idea—a philosophy rooted in the creation of a vacation that believes in a lasting effect. Talking more along the same lines, Sandipan shares, "Our objective is to transport our guests into a realm where they not only unwind but forge enduring experiences. It's a new take from conventional hospitality; it's an invitation to immerse oneself in moments that endure far beyond checkout."

The design and ambience of Mementos is signature to foster an atmosphere of tranquillity, allowing guests to embrace every moment

fully. They don't just sell stays; they keystone of any establishment. sell an escape, a refuge from the mundane. This philosophy permeates every aspect, from the serene landscapes to personalised service, ensuring that each guest departs with a trove of cherished memories. The idea is to create an atmosphere where you can connect with your loved ones and spend time creating memories.

Aspirations with exclusivity

Mementos swiftly found its footing by positioning itself as an oasis amidst the various standards of hotel experiences. Engaging with the right kind of audience is the Sandipan shares, "We appeal to a diverse clientele seeking a retreat from the ordinary that caters to a spectrum of people, corporate entities seeking solace amid business endeavours to government organisations pursuit of a serene haven," shares Sandipan.

The essence of the property lies in the delicate balance struck exclusivity between accessibility. Mementos doesn't confine itself to a niche; it embraces a niche within its diverse appeal, a place where every guest finds a unique experience tailored to their aspirations.



HOTELLIGENCE

Balancing between wedding season and travellers

Weddings hold a significant place in Mementos' portfolio, yet the brand's exclusive identity remains within its ideology to avail memories. While explaining more about the art of storytelling through weddings and says, "Every wedding at Mementos is a unique narrative. The brand is sought after for its ability to transcend the label of a wedding venue and instead craft an unparalleled wedding experience."

Mementos orchestrate weddings of opulence while preserving its identity as an exclusive retreat. The focus isn't solely on hosting weddings; it's about orchestrating moments that become cherished chapters in the lives of those who choose this one-of-a-kind place for their special day.

The Heart of Mementos

Nestled within a sprawling 500-acre property lies a tapestry of experiences waiting to be discovered and explored by travellers. "We offer not just activities but gateways to immerse oneself in nature's embrace. From cycling trails meandering through lush landscapes to wildlife safaris that evoke a sense of adventure, each activity is meticulously designed to offer an immersive stay," says Sandipan.

The commitment to curating experiences extends beyond physical activities. Mementos invest in training its staff to capture





moments—an art in itself. He adds, "We believe that every photo taken here is a memento—a memory frozen in time. This attention to detail ensures that every guest departs not just with memories but tangible reminders of their stay."

Unparalleled stories

Mementos' marketing ethos centres around authentic storytelling. "Our guests become our most compelling advocates. Tales of guests returning with loved ones and orchestrating grand events based on their prior experiences serve as powerful feedback, transcending any marketing strategy," shares Sandipan.

The brand recognises the unparalleled impact of genuine narratives. Each guest's story becomes a part of Mementos' tapestry, contributing to the allure that attracts newcomers seeking an escape crafted from real, heartfelt experiences.

In a world where hospitality intersects emotions, Mementos stands tall. With every stay, the brand doesn't merely sell rooms; it sells experiences that weave a string of cherished moments destined to last a lifetime. The journey isn't confined to a physical location; it's an odyssey of experiences, etching indelible memories that endure far beyond the visit. Mementos is more than a destination; it's a sanctuary—a realm where time pauses, and memories are forever crafted.









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As we embark on the journey into the year 2024, the landscape of outbound tourism is poised for remarkable transformations. Industry leaders Riaz Munshi, President and Shravan Bhalla, Vice President, OTOAI provide their valuable insights, and share the importance of collaboration, and innovation.

-Tripti Jain



shifting traveller ground-breaking preferences, technological innovations, and global socio-economic changes, the travel industry is undergoing a profound evolution. The travel industry is witnessing a surge in demand for personalised and experiential travel, with travellers seeking unique and off-the-beaten-path destinations. The integration of artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and virtual reality technologies is enhancing the travel planning process, offering more immersive experiences before departure. Sustainable and eco-friendly travel practices are gaining prominence, reflecting a growing awareness of environmental impact. Additionally, the industry is adapting to the evolving nature of work, with an increasing number of individuals opting for 'bleisure' travel, combining business trips with leisure activities.

Technological is the king!
The dawn of this year brings with in a wave of technological advancements that are redefining the very essence of travel experiences. Virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and block chain technologies have seamlessly integrated into travel services,

personalised providing experiences for everyone. Travellers are now able to virtually explore destinations, plan itineraries with AI assistance, and enjoy a streamlined, contactless

journey. These technological strides not only enhance the convenience of travel but also open up new horizons for discovery. Riaz acknowledges this shift and shares, "The integration of technology is not just about convenience; it's about creating memorable and seamless travel experiences. Embracing

emerging technologies will be pivotal in staying relevant and competitive in the evolving travel

Reducing carbon footprint becomes essential

In the wake of growing environmental concerns, 2024 marks a pivotal moment where sustainable tourism takes centre stage. Travellers are now more conscientious about their ecological footprint, prioritising destinations and services that align with eco-friendly practices. This shift is not only driven by conscious consumer choices but also by the commitment of the travel industry to commitment of the travel industry to minimise its impact on environment. `"The emphasis on

PUBLIC EYE



sustainable tourism is not just a trend but a responsibility," shares Shravan. He also adds, "Travel operators must play a proactive role in promoting destinations and practices that contribute to the well-being of our planet."

Rise of experiential destinations In 2024, travellers are seeking more than just passive sightseeing; they crave unique and immersive experiences. The traditional tourist spots are being overshadowed by off-the-beaten-path destinations that offer cultural immersion programs, adventure tourism, and authentic encounters. This trend not only satisfies the wanderlust of travellers but also supports local communities in lesser-known regions.

Riaz highlights this shifts and shares, "Diversification in the traveller demographic is an exciting opportunity for the industry. By understanding and catering to the specific needs of different traveller segments, we can ensure that the travel experience is inclusive and enriching for everyone."

Diversification of travellersThe demographics of outbound

The demographics of outbound tourists are undergoing a significant transformation. In 2024, there is a noticeable increase in solo travellers, family groups, and older individuals exploring the world. This diversification is reshaping the industry, influencing the development of tailored services and accommodation options to meet the varied needs of a broad spectrum of travellers.

As Shravan shares, "As we navigate the challenges of the post-pandemic era, collaboration and adaptability will be the key. The travel industry's future success lies in our ability to innovate, prioritise safety, and provide meaningful experiences that resonate with the diverse preferences of today's travellers."

Navigating through the journey
While the travel industry is
experiencing a revival in 2024, the
shadows of the recent global
pandemic still linger. Stringent
health and safety measures,
vaccination passports, and other
pandemic-related

protocols continue to influence the way people travel. The industry is adapting to these challenges, fostering resilience and implementing innovative solutions to ensure a safe and enjoyable travel experience.

Riaz emphasises, "The travel industry has demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of adversity.

As we step into 2024, it is crucial for industry players to collaborate and innovate; ensuring that outbound tourism not only recovers but thrives."

The outbound tourism landscape in 2024 is a dynamic amalgamation of technological advancements, sustainability initiatives, unique travel experiences, demographic shifts, and post-pandemic adaptations. And a commitment to sustainable and inclusive travel practices. As we step into the future, the outbound tourism industry is poised to not only recover from the challenges of the past but to emerge stronger, more resilient, and ready to offer travellers unparalleled experiences across the globe.





Once an enclave for artists seeking inspiration, I'm meandering through a retreat which captivating has undergone a graceful transformation, its essence now delicately divided between the timeless stone castle and the charming village buildings. As I follow cobblestone paths, a magical world unfolds, where each room is a unique masterpiece, most adorned with vistas that conjure the limitless sea. Inside the ancient walls, stone weaves stories across floors, walls, and ceilings, a silent narrator of history.

DISNEY PARADISE

In the year 1953, a visionary named Robert Wolf fell under the spell of Château de La Chèvre d'Or, and with an artist's heart, he transformed it into a realm of gastronomic delight. Local legends whisper that the great Walt Disney himself implored Wolf to acquire a collection of village houses, weaving them into a tapestry of hotel rooms, a touch of enchantment that later inspired Disney's Magic Kingdom. Today, this venerable establishment stands as a symbol of Relais and Châteaux, gracing the world with 43 meticulously curated rooms and suites, including the coveted celebrity Panorama suite.

Stepping onto the steeply terraced property is like ascending to a realm where myths and reality intertwine. We are greeted by statues of mythical beasts and timeless figures guard this celestial haven, which has welcomed luminaries like President Obama and U2's iconic Bono. The heart of this enchanted castle is its staff, under the

stewardship of the remarkable General Manager, Thierry Naidu. His warm spirit and effervescent charm create an atmosphere where every guest feels not like a visitor, but like an old friend.

TIMELESS AMBIENCE

Each room, a sanctuary of opulence, tells a story of unparalleled luxury. Provençal charm marries contemporary elegance, with stone fireplaces and regal furnishings contributing to the castle's timeless ambiance. We love the marble-clad bathrooms, imbued with the fragrant potions of Fragonard, boast whirlpool baths that offer a glimpse of heaven. The Presidential Suite, where a sun-kissed sundeck cradles a heated infinity pool and a whispering whirlpool that shares secrets with the

sea is spectacular to say the least. For an awe-inspiring view that seems to flirt with the edge of the sea, the ultimate choice lies within the deluxe rooms and suites. Nestled within this charming haven, all rooms are unique, ensconced in the cosy stone mason's de village clustered around the castle. The more modest rooms offer peeks into the medieval village or the serene terraced gardens.

As you step inside, the décor reveals a spectrum of styles, from the understated Provençal elegance to a hushed contemporary allure. Stone fireplaces and parquet floors coexist harmoniously with ancient doors, graced by the gentle presence of pale orchids, period cabinets, and designer armchairs. It's a blend of tradition and modernity that enriches the senses and captivates the soul.









TRAVEL THERAPY

Welcome to Hanoi, the proud capital of a proud upwardly-mobile nation. Welcome to the heart of Vietnam!

My city sojourn started off at Temple of Literature, a prominent national shrine. The main temple is awesome. Multiple Buddha images preside over the interior with its red wood ceiling, lamps and designs. Another courtyard fronts the temple for the 'royals', with a majestic Buddha image.

The mood was serene despite the hordes of tourists. I believe every tourist in Hanoi was here that morning, but there was order amid the chaos.

Twenty minutes later I was at the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, which one may call the 'Rajghat of Hanoi'. Scrupulously clean and landscaped, vast and serene, the complex isn't just a tourist site, but a symbol of Vietnamese national pride.

A huge enclosed area flanks the impressive, elevated gray structure. Bamboo shoots, trees, and potted plants are delicately positioned alongside. Just behind, a small pagoda houses a shrine.

The afternoon was well rounded-off with a rickshaw ride, a superb way to see the sights and imbibe local flavour, of which Hanoi has plenty. We leisurely cycled past a mix of new and old buildings, small parks, and side streets merging with busy, arterial ones.

The next morning involved an early wake-up call, but it was worth it. A two-hour drive deposited me at Ha Long Bay, a beautiful site, and one of Vietnam's undoubted tourist highlights.



TRAVEL THERAPY

I'd opted for 'Ambassador Cruise', one of the leading names in the business. Welcoming me was Waseem Ahmed, the company's affable Operations Manager, and thirty seconds after boarding, I found myself seated in the dining room whose large bay windows revealed local secrets.

The top-deck beckoned, and I obliged. It turned out to be one heck of a place, with the proverbial bar, stage, tables, music, dancing, and sterling views.

We sailed lazily past dozens of majestic limestone islets in Ha Long Bay and Bai Tu Long Bay. Our boat docked at a spot flanked on right and left by islets protruding out of the blue sea. It was eerie, but serenely beautiful. Little boats chugged around like floating playthings.

I took an excursion to Titov Island, dominated by a crescent moon-shaped beach on turquoise water. Then embarked on a more 'hands on' trip aboard a bamboo boat, to Luan Cave, a unique marvel of nature, featuring a self-contained lake inside a closed arch-shaped mountain!

It had been a memorable outing, and now it was over, and time to move on and take a flight to another beautiful site.

Nha Trang is a hidden gem. The tone was set by Hotel Potique Nha



Trang, whose Mediterranean-type decor and sumptuous food made it a joy in itself.

The dinner in Ambassador Club, that followed, provided more happiness in the form of seafood good enough to die for. Talk about lobsters, prawns, and pickled vegetables, and you're talking my language. The largest dining-entertainment complex in Nha Trang, it sprawls along a long beach. The sea fronting you, the staff tempting you, and the seafood killing you! It's what life is meant to be.

The next day started with a divine touch. Ponagar Temple, dedicated to Shiva, sits on a low hill and is ancient, sombre, and dignified. The main temple is surrounded by a stone courtyard and flanked by smaller structures. The temples' facades are comprised solely of old bricks, with a few stone idols perched on the exterior walls.

The serenity apart, there are also 360 degree sea and city views. The experience was as sublime as it was virtuous.

All this merited a treat, and it came in the form of lunch at Sailing Club. The views were the thing. 60 feet from a raging sea, with a lovely beach in-between, for a moment even I forgot about the food. A reminder came in the form of fried prawns, chicken, balti mutton, salad and potato samosas.



TRAVEL THERAPY

The next item on my schedule was delightful. Arguably the shortest speed-boat ride of my life provided a longish treat. Vinpearl Nha Trang, a popular amusement park, has a distinctly refreshing ambience. I tried things I could never have imagined myself doing. Bumped a few cars in the ring, saw sound and lights shows, sipped a strong coffee in the rain, and generally 'hanged about'.

The next morning saw me on another flight that got me to Ho Chi Minh City. From the airport we sort of played naughty, and went straight for lunch to an Indian eatery called Mama Masala. To

enhance our guilt, the South Indian flavoured food was delicious. So much for hard work!

The city has a different look and feel from Hanoi. The general look is one I'd term as the 'elegance of openness'. My hotel, Paragon, being located in the downtown afforded perfect the opportunity to unravel local charms.

So it was time to shake a leg and head out for a little neighbourhood sightseeing gig. Squares, trees, and gardens vie for space. A park-enclosed statue of Ho Chi Minh called for a photo stop, and the 150 years-old, iconic, grand

Hotel' beckoned for coffee-break. (Coffee is about all I could afford here).

I stopped by at Independence Palace, now functioning only as a tourist site. There are several rooms and function areas - the Cabinet Room; the elegant, regal-looking Banquet Hall; the grand President's Office; the informal and easy Domestic Reception Room. An information booth furnishes relevant information about the institution.

Been to a post office lately? Well, try the main one here. Housed in a large barrack-like enclosure with a

and inviting 'Continental Saigon circular roof, the once full-time post office today doubles up as a small market and refreshment centre, and has assumed a unique status as a tourist spot.

> An absolute must-visit local site is the War Remnants Museum. The place was buzzing with activity when I stopped by. With large archives of documented information material, aided by modern audio and video screens, the museum narrates the story of the long war, and the American presence in the country. For visitors it is a strong reference point of the past, but for the Vietnamese, it provides poignant nostalgia.







The relaunch of the Champions of Thailand campaign in Dec 2023 attests to its resounding success and the thrill among travel agents in North and East India is palpable. In the first edition of Champions of Thailand the travel agents experienced the wonders of Thailand and brought back stories for their potential clients. The success of the first edition clearly struck a chord between the two countries, resulting in the launch of the second edition of Champions of Thailand.

WALK THROUGH THAILAND Highlighting destinations such as Bangkok, Phuket, Krabi, Chiang Mai, and more, the Champions of Thailand 2 campaign encapsulates the diversity Thailand offers. "Each destination holds its unique charm, be it the bustling streets of Bangkok or the serene landscapes of Krabi. Our aim is to showcase this diversity Indian travellers," shares Siriges-a-nong Trirattanasongpol. The synergy between TAT and TravelBullz in the Champions of Thailand 2 campaign signifies not just a promotional endeavour but a commitment to fostering a deeper bond between India and Thailand. "Through this campaign, we aim to create not just awareness but lasting impressions that compel travellers to explore and relish the splendour of Thailand," she adds.

GLORIOUS FEATHER IN THE CAP!

The previous edition of Champions of Thailand witnessed a triumph that resonated deeply with over 20 top sellers from India's leading travel agencies and tour operators. Siriges-a-nong Trirattanasongpol shares, "The response by the Indian travellers and the travel industry was beyond our expectations. It showcased the growing interest in Thailand's niche offerings among Indian travellers and we realised that the Indian traveller is well informed and ready to explore unique experiences."

EXPLORING DIFFERENT ZONES

This iteration of the campaign strategically targets the North and East India travel agents, aiming to capture market share and promote diverse Thai holidays and experiences. "Our goal is to not just attract visitors but to curate experiences that resonate with the preferences of these regions," shares KD.



SKY IS THE LIMIT

Expectations run high for the relaunched campaign, with both TAT and TravelBullz anticipating a surge in demand and bookings. Talking about the expectations from the second edition of Champions of Thailand, KD shares, "We foresee a notable increase in travel inquiries and bookings. The objective is clear: to elevate Thailand as a prime holiday destination for the Indian market,"

RECOGNITION AND REWARDS

The campaign's incentive structure, the Rewards & Recognition Program hosted by TAT and TravelBullz, serves as a catalyst for active participation. "We want to reward the efforts of agents who actively promote Thailand. The Fam trips serve as an acknowledgment of their contributions," he adds.

With the chance to win a 4-night all-inclusive Fam trip to Thailand, hosted by TAT and TravelBullz, a minimum of 5 lucky winners will have the opportunity to explore the wonders of Thailand. This campaign promises an enticing experience for the fortunate agents who secure their spot in this exciting opportunity to discover Thailand's beauty and culture first-hand.

Champions of Thailand 2 stand as a testament to the power of collaboration within the travel industry. The focus lies in the growth while shaping unforgettable experiences for wanderlust-filled souls seeking the wonders of Thailand.











In the dynamic landscape of international tourism, Singapore has emerged as a preferred destination for Indian travellers, and much credit for this success goes to GB Srithar, the former Regional Director, IMESA region, Singapore Tourism Board (STB). As he concludes his seven and a half years of impactful leadership, a new chapter has begun with Markus Tan taking the helm. The remarkable journey and achievements under Srithar's tenure were exceptional. Markus Tan, with his extensive years of experience, brings in a set of goals as he steps into this pivotal role.

Partner friendships are

here to stay
A recurring theme throughout
Srithar's tenure was the emphasis on deepening connections and partner friendships. From extending hands in partnership to standing united during the challenging times of the past years, Srithar always advocated the importance of collaborations. He enlightens us and shares, "The theme for STB for the next leg is 'Deepening Connections." Connections, Achieving Together, which encapsulates the idea that stronger connections yield mutually beneficial results. This approach has not only strengthened ties with the travel trade but has also positioned Singapore as a destination of choice for Indian tourists."

Acing the game

Singapore's tourism thrived with record-breaking numbers in the year 2023, while recording a substantial increase in Indian arrivals month on month. Srithar proudly mentions, "As of November 2023, Singapore welcomed 977,500 Indian visitors, with the anticipation of crossing the one million mark by the year-end, securing India as the fourth-largest source market."

Winner campaigns

The importance of engaging the Indian audience creatively has always been the top priority for STB. Collaborative projects with platforms such as Tripoto and MX Player brought Singapore closer to the hearts and minds of Indian travellers. The unique web series 'On My Own' targeted solo women travellers, while the interactive TV series 'Lost and Found' on the OTT platform marked a pioneering move by the STB. Collaborations with LBB showcased Singapore-made products, strengthening the country's image as an exciting shopping destination.

The obsession with tasteRecognising the shared love for culinary experiences between Singaporeans and Indians, the STB launched the 'Taste Obsession' campaign. Srithar, along with his team, orchestrates a series of

activities under this theme, such as collaborating with renowned food brands such as Sewell Company to bring the taste of Singapore to Indian audiences. This culinary exploration aimed to further entice Indian tourists to explore Singapore through their taste buds.

Triumphant MICE landscape

Meetings and Incentives (MICE) played a significant role in Singapore's tourism success, with India standing out as one of the top source markets. Despite the challenges posed by intense competition, the STB's Business Events in Singapore and the Inspire program attracted large MICE groups. Srithar proudly concluded the year with a robust number, showcasing resilience and attractiveness of Singapore as a MICE destination.

New leadership in the house

As Srithar passes the baton to Markus Tan, the current Regional Director, the transition is marked by excitement and optimism. Tan brings a wealth of experience, having served in various capacities, including four years as Area Director in China and eight years as Regional Director for

His recent role as the director for Singapore Pavilion Representation in World Expo Osaka further adds to his robust background. Tan shares his excitement about

joining the Indian market, "India is a new home for me, and I am eager to contribute to the continued success of Singapore's tourism. I have witnessed the depth of friendship and resilience in the Indian market, and I am keen to build on the strong foundation laid by Srithar."

Future collaborative endeavours

Tan has taken charge from 1st January 2024; he envisions a future where collaboration, innovation, and understanding of the diverse Indian market will be paramount. His recent tours across various Indian cities, orchestrated by the STB team, have provided insights into the intricacies and unique practices of each state. Tan expressed his commitment to building on Srithar's success and further strengthening Singapore's ties with India.

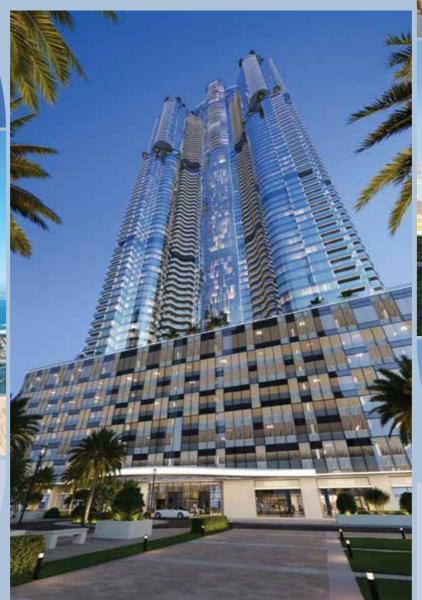
GB Srithar's tenure as the Regional Director for the Singapore Tourism Board has been marked by innovation, collaboration, and resilience. The remarkable achievements in 2023 set the stage for Markus Tan to lead Singapore's tourism to new heights. As the baton is passed, the collaboration between the outgoing and incoming leaders exemplifies the deepening connections between Singapore and India, ensuring a promising future for tourism between the two nations.

Blissful rendezvous with Al Habtoor City's hospitality

Experience the charm of Al Habtoor City, where luxury effortlessly blends with Dubai's diverse hospitality scene. Discover the unique offerings within its trio of distinctive hotels,

tailored for the discerning travellers of the Indian market.

- Naina Nath







HOTELLIGENCE

Al Habtoor City features three distinct hotels, each designed to meet various traveller preferences. Habtoor Palace, set amidst lush gardens, offers opulent comfort and a regal ambience. Hilton Dubai Al Habtoor City caters to families, providing vibrant surroundings, cascading pools, and diverse dining experiences. Meanwhile, V Hotel Dubai appeals to modern tastes its tech-infused accommodations and lively rooftop entertainment. Each hotel promises a unique experience, perfectly positioned to enhance any Dubai getaway.

Dubai's hospitality scene

Al Habtoor City offers a total of 1,594 rooms across its three distinct sections in the Dubai story, each crafted to meet specific preferences. Habtoor Palace Dubai offers 234 guest rooms, including 52 suites. Hilton Dubai Al Habtoor City offers 1,004 guest rooms, with 142 suites available and V Hotel Dubai, Curio Collection by Hilton offers 356 guest rooms, encompassing 76 suites.

Vibrant flavours and culinary

Al Habtoor City doesn't just offer a typical culinary journey; it's a vibrant spice trail for your taste buds. At Hilton Dubai's The Market, experience your bustling bazaar with sizzling samosas and chaats that embody India's essence. For a blend of French sophistication with an Indian touch, head to Habtoor Palace's BQ French kitchen. Here, relish lamb Rogan Josh in saffron clouds, a symphony for refined palates. Explore lively Boulevard, where gems such as Sirali await. Turkish delights meet Indian flavours with kebabs and aromatic curries that create a delightful sensation.

Even within the elegant Habtoor Palace, the World Cut Steakhouse puts a spin on American classics, infusing them with Indian spices for a global feast fit for discerning tastes. From fiery street eats to fine dining fusion, we cater to every Indian craving. Just tell us your desire, and we'll orchestrate your Dubai escape, seasoned with the warmth and vibrancy of India.

For family and friends

Beyond providing accommodation, Al Habtoor City offers a tapestry of experiences intricately woven to captivate guests of all ages. La Perle's captivating aquatic performances engage audiences from varied backgrounds, while the Kid's Club creates an environment tailored for younger guests to explore and enjoy. For those seeking relaxation, Silk Spa at Habtoor Palace offers a serene haven, providing indulgent treatments to rejuvenate both mind and body

The appeal of its location extends beyond the property. Positioned adjacent to Downtown Dubai and amidst iconic landmarks like the Burj Khalifa, guests are immersed in a variety of cultural experiences. From the tranquil beauty of Jumeirah Beach to the lively energy of the souks, Al Habtoor City's proximity offers seamless access to Dubai's diverse charm.

Timeless elegance

Al Habtoor City breaks free from ordinary event spaces, offering a dynamic canvas to craft unforgettable MICE experiences. Across its trio of distinct hotels, a symphony of tailored spaces awaits. Habtoor Palace embodies timeless elegance in its stunning ballroom, while V Hotel's 'Amazing Room' adjusts effortlessly to suit diverse moods. Additionally, Hilton's Al Joud Ballroom exudes traditional majesty.

Step beyond the norm to network beneath starlit skies along the bustling Boulevard or bask in Dubai's sunlight at our open-air venues. With an impressive line-up of over 30 restaurants presenting diverse culinary adventures and 31 meeting rooms, ranging from intimate boardrooms to expansive conference halls, Al Habtoor City caters to a spectrum of visions. With over 7,000 sqm of space, this canvas enthusiastically anticipates unique stories.

Tailored spaces for celebrations

Al Habtoor City represents more than a collection of hotels; it stands as an institution of hospitality deeply ingrained in Dubai's history, committed to transforming guests' dreams into reality. At Habtoor Palace, quests experience timeless elegance within the grand ballroom, while the elegantly appointed Habtoor Palace Ballroom sets the stage for vibrant Sangeet ceremonies, perfectly suited for pre-wedding gatherings. Additionally, three signature breakout rooms offer settings, intimate ideal ceremonies of Mehendi or Chura. At V Hotel, the versatile 'Amazing Room' adapts to match various moods, featuring shimmering walls and a colossal LED screen that adds vibrant hues to Mehndi celebrations, At Hilton Dubai, The Al Joud ballroom accommodates up to a thousand quests, boasting soaring ceilings ideal for grand Sangeet events.

Al Habtoor City has proudly hosted numerous Indian weddings, some of which have received prestigious awards. The dedicated team combines local expertise with world-class service, ensuring every ritual resonates with perfection.

Partnerships fuelling engagement

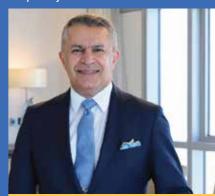
The marketing strategy and engagement within India revolves around three primary strategies. FAM trips and journalist invitations, tailoring bespoke experiences for top travel writers and influencers, showcase their unique offerings. These experiences aim to garner advocacy for their brand within the Secondly, Indian market. participation in major travel exhibitions and being actively involved in major industry events. Thirdly, strategic partnerships with Indian celebrities give them an edge. Hosting prominent figures allows first-hand experiences of their luxury stays.

Community living at stylish apartments

When it comes to residences, Al Habtoor City offers an exceptional array of living spaces. Al Habtoor Tower—it's not just a building; it's a gateway to a life steeped in luxury. Sixteen Sky Villas perch at the city's edge, each a private palace boasting 360-degree vistas that would rival an eagle's view. Infinity pools shimmer like liquid

diamonds on your terrace, inviting you to soak in the city's magic. Picture rooftop barbecues under a canopy of stars, your private cinema screening the latest blockbusters, or simply observing the world unfold from your sky-high perch. The dedicated staff caters to your every whim, ensuring this isn't just a home; it's an experience woven with threads of lavishness and breath-taking allure.

They look forward to forging robust partnerships, sharing insights, and combining their strengths to tap into India's vibrant market. They plan to elevate the travel experience for Indian guests and contribute to the flourishing ties between India and Dubai in the hospitality sector.



Mr Saeid Heidari

"brawing from my extensive experience in Mumbai and bubai, I've personally witnessed the vibrant synergy between India and Dubai within the travel sector. Leveraging this unique insight. I extend a warm invitation to our Indian travel trade partners for close collaboration, unlocking the full potential of this relationship. At Hilton Dubai Al Habtoor City. V Hotel Dubai, and Habtoor Palace Bubai, our commitment lies in delivering an unparalleled luxury experience. seamlessly blending Dubai's modern allure with the familiar comforts cherished by Indian travellers."

- Mr Saeid Heidari, The Complex, GM, Al Habtoor City.



Privé is a true embodiment of grandeur and luxury, redefining airport experiences on unprecedented scale. As India's finest airport lounge, it boasts a spacious seating capacity of 550 covers, ensuring ample space and comfort for our esteemed guests. Introduction of Encalm Privé at Delhi International Airport's Terminal 3 has created a new category of airport hospitality services which is focused on premium business travellers that value luxury and superior experiences.

Ideology behind Encalm Prive

Spanning an impressive 30,000 sq. ft. and seating over 550, Encalm Privé redefines grandeur and elevates airport lounges to new heights. Meticulously crafted to ensure the epitome of airport hospitality, every aspect of the lounge caters to the needs of discerning travellers looking for finest quality service. Privé's dedication to personalisation is reflected in every facet of its design. The lounge transcends the conventional role of an airport space, offering a myriad of tailored experiences. The design incorporates elements inspired by local Indian culture; ensuring travellers feel a connection with the destination.

As said, elegance finds its expression through the use of high-quality materials, a tasteful colour palette, and upscale furnishings. Every element has been carefully curated to provide not just comfort, but an experience that exudes luxury.

Featuring a business centre, dedicated library, and kids' play area, Encalm Privé caters to travellers of all ages without compromising exclusivity. Behind the scenes, the base kitchen at Encalm Privé orchestrates a culinary masterpiece. From the diverse culinary delights to the meticulous attention to quality and hygiene, Privé sets a new benchmark for a gourmet experience that may captivate travellers and keep them looking for more.

Travellers can indulge in unmatched luxury with Privé's exceptional amenities, from the serene wellness zone to live cooking stations and a dedicated bar. With a strong commitment to hospitality and quality, and upcoming facilities like a spa, fitness center, sleeping pods, gaming zone, and showers on the horizon, Encalm Privé ensures an exceptional experience for all travellers.

Enhancing the travel experience Prive Encalm offers comprehensive range of services tailored to elevate the travel experience for premium business travellers. Privé is about serving the best of hospitality with Encalm's finesse and assurance of quality. With superior amenities imbibed at the core, and facilities like spa and fitness centre, sleeping pods and rooms, gaming zone and showers, scheduled to be launched soon -Encalm Privé promises an exceptional experience travellers.

Encalm Prive meets the needs of every traveller

At Encalm Prive, they understand the unique requirements of premium business travellers by offering a highly personalised and flexible approach. This becomes possible, owing to their expertise in curating the perfect airport experience for their valued travellers. They specialise in

creating a seamless and enjoyable experience for premium business travellers. Privé services prioritise convenience and comfort, allowing families to navigate the airport with ease. For business professionals, they understand the importance of efficiency and time management. Their services are designed to streamline airport formalities and provide a conducive environment for work and relaxation. By catering to the unique requirements of various traveller segments, Encalm Privé aim to enhance how they perceive travel in general.

Offering in Gourmet food

At Encalm Prive lounge, they offer a curated gourmet food experience that caters to the discerning palate of their premium business travellers. The offerings include a wide selection of gourmet dishes crafted by skilled chefs, featuring diverse cuisines and ingredients. As guests step into, they are welcomed into a world of delightful gourmet experiences that cater to even the most discerning palates. Quality and hygiene form the pillars of its Food & Beverages department, ensuring that every dining moment is an exquisite affair.

From exquisite fine dining options to customised menus based on personal preferences, they provide an array of culinary delights. For those craving bold and zesty flavours, the lounge offers a taste of Mexico with tantalising tacos, burritos, and enchiladas, while Thai curries and aromatic Tom Yum soup offer an exotic experience. The Mediterranean influence brings an array of kebabs, gyros, and baklava, while Continental dishes like succulent steaks, flavourful pastas, and refreshing salads add a touch of European elegance.

Mann Tours The pioneer in transforming luxury transport

Mann Tours creates a legacy of over four decades in changing the face of luxury transport. Amrit Mann, Director, Mann Tourist Transport Service shares the company's journey through the years.

- Tripti Jain



ever-changing Indian tourism industry, Mann Tours shines as a company that embodies . Established in 1986, Mann Tours' journey has been one of adapting to while challenges upholding principles honesty, commitment, and adaptability. remarkable highlights their approach to unwavering responsible tourism practices.

Disciplined leaders on top

The disciplined, optimistic, and proactive leadership sets the tone at Mann Tours. They believe that demand is created, not found, which propels them to continuously seek cutting-edge, tourism-friendly products and technologies. Amrit adds, "This culture of constant evolution and innovation permeates the team, fostering a spirit of excellence, discipline, and forward-thinking."

Feathers in the cap

The spirit of Mann Tours thrives on innovation. Recent investments of nearly 65 crores have added to ground-breaking projects like the 'Jet on Wheels' luxury business class coaches and the acquisition of state-of-the-art 'Toyota Coaster' vans. Additionally, boasting the largest fleet of luxury cars and SUVs in India." The company's commitment extends beyond acquisitions to rigorous training for staff and chauffeurs, ensuring an unparalleled customer experience.

Further he shares, "For over a decade, we've pioneered the logistics for IPL and ISL teams since their inception in 2012, their seamless ensurina operations. Our expertise extends beyond sports, orchestrating over 60 successful G20 events in North and East India, for their precision execution. our distinguished portfolio includes hosting and managing visits from notable dignitaries, including two visits by Mr Obama (2010, 2014), Mr Trump (2020), and the esteemed presence of Mr Biden as Vice President (2016) and President

(2023). These milestones epitomise our excellence in event coordination and VIP visits."

Bracing with technology

Technology is the bedrock of Mann Tours' operations. From being pioneers in adopting pagers in the '90s to outfitting every vehicle with GPS trackers at the technology's inception in India, the company remains at the vanguard of tech integration. Amrit shares, "Our proprietary advanced software, continually updated since 2015, streamlines operations, aiming for wider reach, instant invoicing, and comprehensive reporting."

The cornerstone of growth

Beyond innovation lies Mann Tours' commitment to sustainable growth. Introducing the latest vehicles since 1989 underscores their dedication to evolving responsibly. "To achieve a 100 per cent Euro VI vehicle fleet by 2024 and plans to integrate electric vehicles as infrastructure matures, we support responsible tourism, treating vehicles with the meticulousness akin to aircraft maintenance," he adds.

Surviving the storm

The tourism industry's vulnerability to unforeseen events emerged as a significant challenge. Amrit shares, "Through prudent expansions and refusal to take on substantial financial risks, Mann Tours not only survived but flourished, always bringing unique selling propositions (USPs) to our offerings."

Beyond their ground-breaking products and technological advancements, the company is rooted in supporting employees as family, facilitating the education of chauffeurs' children, and executing logistical marvels for global events and dignitary visits. As Mann Tours continues to innovate, inspire, and lead, it remains a guiding light in the realm of luxury travel in India, a to navigating with integrity and visionary innovation.

Weekend in the wild with waterfalls of Telangana

The most incredible wilderness: forests, waterfalls and lakes to raise your spirits and walk through the nature to explore the hidden treasures.

Our journey begins in the heart of Telangana - Hyderabad. With its rainbow-coloured palette of markets, mountains, and monuments, Hyderabad is the place where travel dreams come true. Today, we're embarking on a journey that takes us from the bustling streets of Hyderabad to the serene wilderness of Tadavi Forest and beyond.

Tadvai

Just 230 kilometres from Hyderabad, the Malabar Whistling Thrush hums as it rests on trees over 100 years old while the sun rises from afar. Drenched in the earthy petrichor, Tadvai is the centre for ecotourism and the perfect scenic retreat for a serene, calm, and quiet weekend. For people looking to make a halt, one could get a forest hut at a nominal cost of Rs.4000/-

For nature lovers, trekkers, and birders, the Environmental Education Centre (EEC) set up at the Tadvai huts is the perfect place to break the blues of the week. From learning about the flora and fauna of the wildlife sanctuary to the tribal lifestyle of the area, cultural heritage, reptile

diversity, beautiful squirrels, and massive animals, EEC at Tadvai Huts offers a comprehensive and immersive experience.

Bogatha Waterfall

Colloquially known Telangana Niagara," Bogatha Waterfalls is situated just 42 kilometres from Tadavi. Quaint and far away from the hustle and bustle of the city, this little tourist site, famous for breath-taking gushing waters that cascade over stunning rocks, is the perfect destination to sit back and rediscover the beauty and simplicities of life. Hidden amidst the dense forest, the route in itself is a truly immersive experience. One could even swiftly explore the forest and the waterfall by cycling around the lush greenery! Apart from the downrush, this abode of nature enthusiasts has trekking, jungle safaris; butterfly garden, Burma bridge, and a children's play area.

Eturnagaram Sanctuary

One of the oldest sanctuaries in the state, the Eturnagaram Wildlife

Sanctuary is situated at a distance of 50 kilometres from Bogatha Waterfall. Away from the city's incessant hustle and bustle, Eturnagaram offers warmth, and unreal proximity to the abundance of wild Spread over 806 sq. km, the sanctuary houses Indian Gour, Giant Squirrels, Sloth Bears, Indian Bison, Black Buck, Chinkara, Tigers, Four Horned Antelope, and so much more. Do remember to carry a pair of binoculars! It is bordered by the ever-beautiful Laknavaram Lake, making it the most perfectly situated and sought tourist destination.

Dayyam Vagu, as the water body is locally called, gracefully divides the sanctuary in two. After a stroll from the forest, simply dip your toes in the stream and feel the blast of freshness make its way.

Laknavaram Lake

As you bid adieu to the sanctuary, head towards the serene shores of Laknavaram Lake.

When the sun peeks through the trees at sunrise and sunset, the picture-perfect waters of

Laknavaram Lake are truly breath-taking. During the monsoon season, when raindrops fall like pearls on this body of water, the entire tourist attraction becomes even more mesmerising.

On a trip to Laknavaram, there are plenty of activities to choose from. Boating is a beloved activity that can be used to reach the islands that are not connected by the hanging bridge. The calm of the waters at dusk and dawn is an unforgettable experience. If you prefer adventure, you can go kayaking, paddle a boat if you prefer to make your own way, or relax on a motorboat through the cool waters.

Back to base

Our journey back to Hyderabad from Laknavaram is 220 kilometres long. The options for shopping in Hyderabad are endless, ranging from the contemporary malls to Laad Bazar, Begum Bazar, and Perfume Market close to the Charminar. A filling dinner would be a great way to cap off your weekend getaway!



Rewriting brand stories and creating lasting connections are the goals of Intrepid Marketing. Their campaigns push the frontiers of marketing and help businesses succeed in the ever-changing industry. They achieve this by combining bold imagination with strategic accuracy.

A journey well-travelled

Neeti's journey began with a deep passion for exploring new cultures and places from an early age, which shaped her path toward the tourism industry. In the initial stages of her career, she explored various roles within travel agencies and tour operators, gathering invaluable expertise in itinerary planning, logistics. Her professional journey also includes experiences in an airline and a luxury hotel, providing her with practical insights into the intricate workings travel operations and a comprehensive understanding of the tourism landscape.

Leading the e-commerce team of a renowned hotel chain in Singapore broadened Neeti's expertise in the rapidly evolving digital marketing sphere. Despite dedicating nearly, a decade to the IT sector, her passion for the tourism industry drew her back, leading her to venture into the representation business. Neeti shares, "My journey within the travel industry has been marked by a commitment to providing the very best to our clients, building strong partnerships, and embracing fast-paced innovation. With a customer-centric approach and a deep passion for the world of travel, I continue to drive our tourism representation company, Intrepid Marketing and Communications towards new heights of success and excellence in the dynamic and ever-evolving travel landscape."

Personal pursuits

Amid her busy professional life within the travel industry, Neeti finds solace and exploration through a range of hobbies. She shares, "I have a deep fondness for literature,

exploring both fiction and non-fiction works. Additionally, I engage in weekend dance classes, and I am currently working on improving my skills in the French language."

Impressive Rolodex

As the Director for Intrepid Marketing & Communications and AllKnown Marketers, Neeti shares insights into their extensive client portfolio, having previously collaborated with a diverse range of clients such as National Tourism Boards, Hospitality Chains, Luxury Resorts, and Boutique Hotels.

Some of their notable clients Promotion Authority, Moroccan National Tourist Office, Board, Maldives, K Club, Ubud, JanDec Travel Vietnam, UTA (United Travel Agency), Travayage Egypt, Ajman Department Tourism Development. "We take pride in our ability to foster long-lasting relationships, enabling our clients to achieve their communication goals effectively. We continue to broaden our horizons, embracing new challenges and opportunities across an ever-expanding spectrum of industries," she adds.

On top of your game

Neeti shares her prediction on how destinations and representations will likely market themselves within India in 2024. "In the coming year, our focus for effective marketing strategies in the travel industry involves active participation in consumer campaigns, strategically expanding our clients' digital presence through social media efforts and organising multiple familiarisation trips. These trips aim to educate a broader range of trade and media partners."

Trade shows have significantly contributed to fostering the growth and success of their business, particularly in response to the evolving landscape of the travel industry. She shares, "These platforms have been instrumental,

not just in connecting with new Travel Agents but also in adapting to the dynamic changes within the travel sector."

A bag full of opportunities

According to Neeti, expected trends suggest a rise in both international and domestic travel from India. The continued growth of social media is expected to have a substantial impact, influencing travel patterns and decisions on a broader scale. This transition highlights the escalating significance of India as an important player in the global travel landscape. She adds, "From my perspective, the outlook for the travel industry in 2024 suggests that India is poised to take centre stage on the global platform, playing a pivotal role as a significant source market."

Vibrant workplace

The office culture at Intrepid thrives on collaboration and a commitment to continuous improvement from all team members. They value open communication, teamwork, and a positive work environment where everyone's contributions acknowledged and respected. The organisation operates horizontal structure and follows a approach, everyone, including management, believes that every day is a new learning experience. Their team members are instilled with a strong of responsibility commitment, alongside hybrid work modes, flexibility in timings, and, most importantly, the pursuit of a work-life balance to enhance their engagement and contribution to

Neeti shares, "I wish to formally convey that Intrepid Marketing and Communications has recently achieved a significant milestone—the acquisition of the Morocco National Tourist Office (MNTO). This momentous development fills us with pride, and we are firmly committed to dedicating our utmost efforts to this endeavour."

Tourism India Alliance

UNITING THE TOURISM ECOSYSTEM

Amidst a landscape with national and regional travel trade associations, the Tourism India Alliance (TIA) emerges an example of unity and collaboration. Jagdeep Bhagat, President, Tourism India Alliance shares insights about the organisation.

- Tripti Jain

tourism industry, the need for cohesive representation and unified efforts has long been evident. "With a vision to bring together stakeholders onto a singular platform, the TIA envisions an approach to uplift the entirety of the tourism ecosystem in the country," shares Jagdeep.

Unified approach

The TIA's primary objective lies in cities, recognising their significance in the tourism landscape. He adds, "Our mission is to ensure that every corner of India contributes to and benefits from the growth of the tourism industry."

One step ahead

A pivotal strategy for the TIA involves widening its footprint. In inception, the alliance has made strides, establishing a presence in over 35 cities. Jagdeep adds to this and shares, "The ambitious goal is to reach 150 cities by the end of 2024, thereby amplifying the voice of smaller travel agencies and underrepresented regions."

The realm of partnerships

Collaboration stands at the heart of TIA's approach. The alliance with other national associations. partnerships geared towards growth. emphasises, "Partnerships are key to unlocking the full potential of the industry. By working together, we can elevate the entire ecosystem."

Empowering through education TIA doesn't merely aim for representation but seeks to empower stakeholders through knowledge. Plans to formalise Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with regional associations highlight their commitment to education and training. "The latest interactions with suppliers to

shares Jagdeep.

Aiming for a change

What sets the TIA apart is its ethos. It operates with a individual interests, focusing on the collective welfare of the industry and the nation. Jagdeep shares, "Our aim is to benefit of all stakeholders, ensuring the industry prospers collectively. As an alliance, our core belief is that associations must serve the interests of their members, the industry stakeholders, and the country as a whole. Our relentless commitment lies in fostering an ecosystem where every participant thrives."

stands as a testament to the collaboration tourism industry. Its strategic encompassing promising picture for the future. By uniting stakeholders across regions and tiers, the TIA paves the way for a more robust and prosperous tourism landscape in India.







Splash yourself with the artistic hues of Madhya Pradesh in 2024



Get ready to inhale the cultural fragrance of Madhya Pradesh at the Khajuraho Dance Festival and the Lokrang Festival this New Year. The Madhya Pradesh government invites you to savour the multi-hued cultural canvas where heritage fuses with modernity and history is embellished with contemporary colours.

Khajuraho Dance **Festival**

20th to 26th Feb, 2024

Dexterous Dance

Brace yourself for a riveting experience at the 50th edition of the Khajuraho Dance Festival from Feb. 20 to 26. The annual event hosted by the Madhya Pradesh Culture Department is an eclectic mix of modern and classical dances staged against the backdrop of historical monuments. Feel the ancient stones come alive as the Khajuraho Dance Festival oscillates through various dance forms -Bharat Natyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi and more. Drown yourself in the cultural narrations of the artists at the Chitragupta Temple dedicated to the Sun God and the Vishvanatha Temple devoted to Lord Shiva.

More on the Menu:

Whether you are a history buff, an adventure seeker, a wildlife enthusiast or someone looking for a relaxed vacation there is a lot on



- (50 km)
- (24 km)
- Pandav Falls: Picnic Spot (32 km)
- sculptures & tribal antiques (5 km)
- Kutni Island: Serene landscape (18 km) Khajuraho Dance festival isn't just about attracts enthusiasts, connoisseurs and dance; it's a celebration of India's soul, its art, artists from every corner of the globe. its legacy.

Khajuraho Marathon

The Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board is conducting the first ever Khajuraho Marathon prior to the Khajuraho Dance Festival. The Khajuraho Marathon will commence on February 11, 2023 where participants from the age of 5 years can test themselves against more than 400 candidates. The participants will get a taste of the rich heritage of the area like Western Group of Temples, Datta Mountain and Raneh Falls.

For participation please visit www.mptourism.com

Lokrang Festival

26th to 30th Jan. 2024

Cultural Confluence

Embark on a cultural odyssey during the fiveday Lokrang Festival, where the rich tapestry of India's tribal and folk traditions takes centre awaits!

Panna National Park: Wild life exploration stage. From enthralling performing arts to classical and tribal folk dances, every Raneh Waterfalls: Natural Rejuvenation performance narrates a story deeply rooted in the cultural ethos of the region.

For two decades, Lokrang has been a beacon Adivart Tribal museum: Collection of art, of rural culture, celebrated annually from Republic Day on January 26 to its vibrant culmination on January 30. The festival

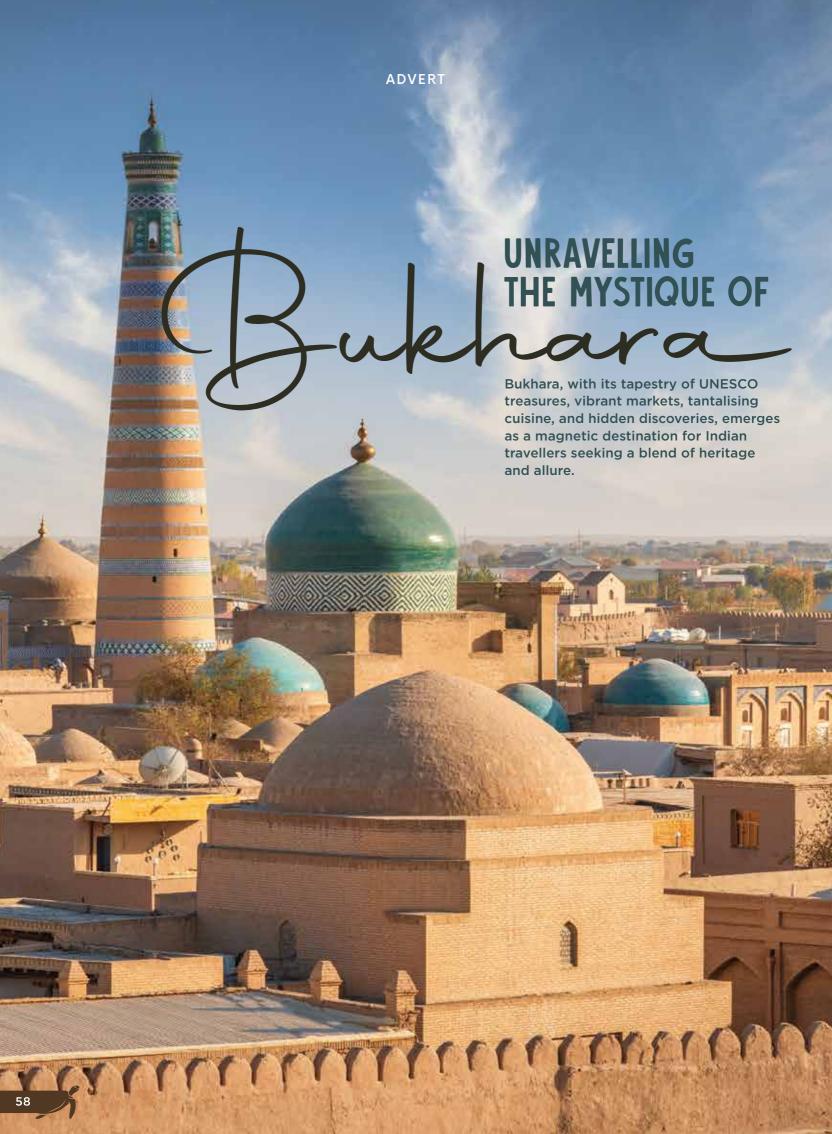


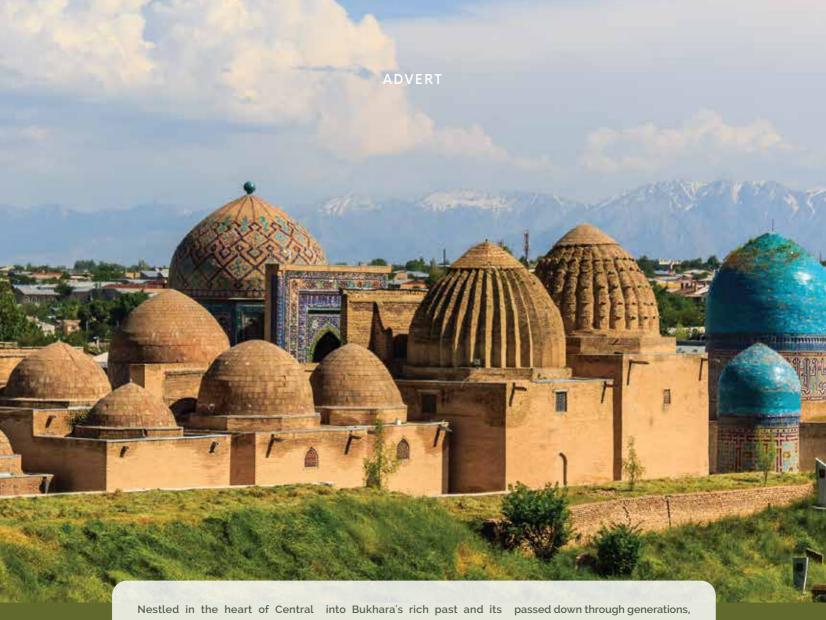
Heritage Hues

These festivals aren't just events; they are gateways to India's soul. They are an amalgamation of intricate artistry and the soul-stirring rhythms that forms the cultural backbone of Madhya Pradesh,

Join us in celebrating the cultural splendour of the state.

Embrace the magic of tradition; knitted with the beats of heritage. Madhya Pradesh





Asia, Bukhara stands as a enduring legacy. testament to the glory days of the Silk Road. Its ancient streets echo Living archives For modern explorers, especially Indian travellers seeking a blend of history and exotic allure, Bukhara emerges as an irresistible destination offering a vibrant tapestry of heritage and hospitality.

Unveiling legacy

Bukhara's UNESCO World Heritage Sites, like the imposing Ark Fortress and the majestic Kalyan Minaret, narrate tales of resilience and evolution. The Ark Fortress, a historical citadel, mirrors centuries of conquests and cultural exchange. Standing tall against the sky, the Kalyan Minaret, with its intricate tile work, whispers stories of the city's architectural grandeur and spiritual significance. These ancient marvels offer a glimpse

with the footsteps of traders, Toqi Zargaron Bazaar, a bustling scholars, and travellers who once marketplace, beckons travellers traversed this legendary route. with its vibrant ambiance. Here, the air is perfumed with the scent of Gijduvan ceramics and adorned with the vivid hues of suzani embroidery. It's a sensory extravaganza, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in the local and artistic craftsmanship traditions that have thrived for centuries. Beyond goods, the bazaar is a living archive of Bukhara's cultural heritage.

The delectable journey

No journey to Bukhara is complete without savouring its culinary delights. The Choyhona culture, invites visitors to partake in leisurely moments over fragrant teas. The tantalising aroma of Lyulya Kebab and Shurpa, traditional Bukharan recipes

tempts the taste buds and offers a delectable journey through history on a plate.

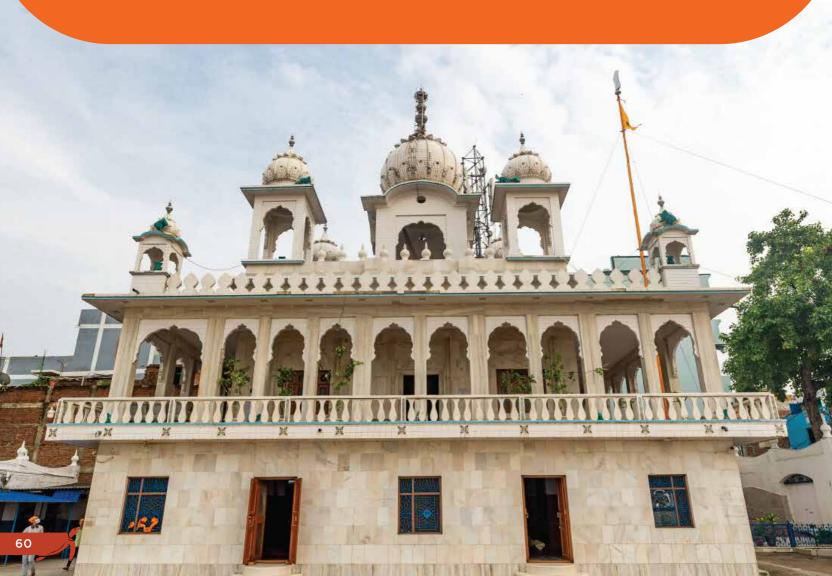
Beyond city walls

While Bukhara's heart beats within its ancient streets, venturing beyond the city walls reveals hidden gems waiting to be discovered. Restored caravanserais now serve as unique accommodations, providing a glimpse into the life of Silk Road travellers. These accommodations transport guests to a bygone era while offering modern comforts, creating an immersive experience that bridges the past with the present.

Bukhara's ability to seamlessly weave history with the modern exploration, world invites promising unforgettable an cantered around tea houses, journey through time along the fabled Silk Road. For those eager to delve into a realm where the past meets the present, Bukhara stands as an enchanting answer waiting to be explored.

EXPLORING PIOUS SIKH CIRCUIT

The Sikh circuit in Bihar, embellished with its sacred Gurudwaras, serves as a testimony to the spiritual heritage of Sikhism in the state. Celebrating the 357th Guruparv from 15th to 17th January, the Gurudwaras will be decked up.



The Sikh circuit in Bihar, nestled amidst the rich historical tapestry of India, holds a profound significance for Sikh devotees worldwide. Bihar is a state where spirituality is a part of the people and blends beautifully with the cities

Takht Sri Harmandir Jr. Patna Sahib

Takht Sri Harmandir Ji, revered as one of the five Takhats by the Sikh community, holds profound historical significance. Once an opulent mansion transformed into a Dharamsala by Salis Rai Jouri under Guru Nanak's influence, it became the birthplace of Guru Gobind Singh on December 22, 1666. Guru Gobind Singh, a warrior and philosopher, continued the legacy of his predecessors by fostering unity and formalising Sikh identity. This sacred site encapsulates the enduring spirit and history of Sikhism, inspiring generations with its rich narrative.



Gurdwara Handi Sahib, Danapur

Handi Sahib, a Gurdwara dedicated to Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, emanates from a poignant journey in 1728. Bala Preetam Ji, accompanied by Mata Gujri and their family, travelled from Patna Sahib to Anandpur Sahib. In Danapur, Mata Jasni's devotion shone as she served Khichdi to Guru Ji and the congregation. Following his instructions, transformed into a Dharamshala, and Handi Sahib stands today as a testament to Mata Jasni's unwavering faith and Guru Ji's symbolising communal love and service.

Gurdwara Guru Ka Bagh

The Gurdwara stands as a tribute to Guru Tegh Bahadur's

visits to Patna in the 17th century. Nawab Rahim Baksh and Karim Baksh warmly received the Guru in their gardens, marking significant moments in Sikh history. After extensive travels, Guru Tegh Bahadur returned to Patna around 1670 A.D., reuniting with his family in the same gardens. Travellers can easily reach the Gurdwara via Jay Prakash Narayan International Airport, Patna Railway Station, or by road using bus and taxi services.

Gurdwara Bal Lila, Maini Sangat

The shrine near Takhat Sri Harmandir Ji Patna Sahib, at the former residence of Raja Faateh Chand Maim, holds a poignant history. Raja Faateh Chand and Rani Maini, childless, embraced young Gobind Rai as their own. Rani Maini, upon Gobind Rai's departure, erected a Gurdwara, perpetuating the tradition of serving chole and poori.

Gurdwara Chaeha Phaggu Mal, Sasaram Town

Gurdwara Chacha Phaggu Mal, situated at the former Masand's house, stands as a sacred site for the Sikh community. The main hall, adorned with high ceilings and a mid-height gallery, houses three copies of the revered Guru Granth Sahib beneath a white marble pavilion.



Gurdwara Pahila Bari Aka Gurdwara. Gai Ghat

Gurdwara Gai Ghat, popularly known as a tribute to Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Patna, showcases relics of historical and cultural importance to the Sikh community. Believed to have been used by Mardana and Mata Gujri, these artefacts connect the Gurus to Patna's heritage. Plan your visit to explore the Sikh history in this serene location.



Gurdwara Nanak Kund, Rajgir Bihar

Rajgir, known as the 'Home of Kings,' holds sacred significance for Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs alike. During Guru Nanak's visit, he engaged in profound discussions with monks, emphasising devotion to one God. Faced with the challenge of scarce drinking water, Guru Nanak guided the digging of Nanak Kund, a spot where water miraculously gushed forth. A Gurdwara now stands at this site, commemorating the event and serving as a revered historical landmark in Rajgir.



The historical Gurdwara in Lakshmipur Panchayat, Barari Block, Katihar District, holds significance as Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib stayed there during his 1670 AD journey from Assam to Patna. Originally Kant Nagar, the village embraced Sikhism under Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib's influence. The Gurdwara preserves ancient scripts, religious documents, and a volume of Guru Granth Sahib, making it a site for Sikhs, drawing visitors for its historical and religious importance.



Gurdwara Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji in Gaya, located on the banks of the Phalgu River, is a revered pilgrimage site. Visited by Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur, it emphasises the significance of individual actions for the departed soul. Similar to Gurdwara Chacha Phaggu Mal in Sasaram, it stands as a testament to Sikh heritage and spiritual teachings.

Sikh circuit in Bihar continues to be a beacon of spiritual enlightenment, drawing devotees from across the globe to experience the essence of Sikh faith and history in its purest form.



A CULTURAL RENDEZVOUS THROUGH THE FESTIVALS OF THE COLOR OF THE COLOR



Let's explore the mélange of festivals that paint Tamil Nadu's cultural canvas while travelling through the state with every passing kilometre.

The vibrant state of Tamil Nadu is known for its lively festivals and rich cultural legacy. Travellers from all over the world are drawn to the State to experience and rejoice in its festivals, which are steeped in culture, spirituality, and artistic expression. The festivals provide an ideal window into the State's rich cultural heritage, centuries-old customs, and the remarkable daily lives of its citizens.

Pongal

In Tamil Nadu, Pongal is the most widely celebrated and important harvest festival. Pongal is a festival to thank the Sun, Mother Nature and the various farm animals that help to contribute to a bountiful harvest. It is celebrated over four days during the beginning of the Tamil month called Thai. The festival is named after the ceremonial 'Pongal', which means 'to boil, overflow' and refers to the traditional dish prepared from the new harvest of rice boiled in milk with jaggery offered to Surya. Jallikattu sport in Alanganallur and other games such as cattle races, sugar cane breaking, and a competition of the best Pongal kolam (rangoli) using rice flour are usually seen during this festival.

ADVERT



Thaipusam

Thaipusam is observed on the full moon day of the Thai coinciding with the Pusam star according to the Tamil calendar. On this day devotees have a greater sense of intimacy and closeness to God. Thaipusam is celebrated Chennai, in Coimbatore and Palani in grandeur includes and ritualistic practices of Kavadi Aattam, a ceremonial act of sacrifice carrying a physical burden as a means of balancing a spiritual debt.



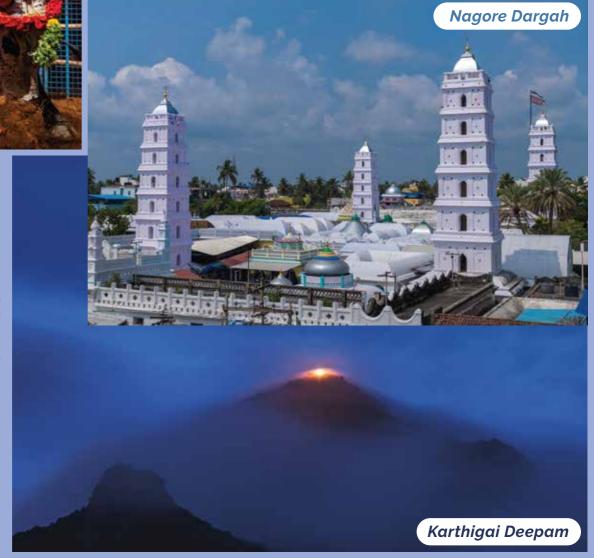
Chithirai Festival

The Madurai Chithirai Festival commemorates the heavenly marriage of Goddess Meenakshi, who is thought to be Lord Vishnu's sister, and Lord Sunderswarar, also known as Lord Shiva. The festival, which is celebrated at the start of April, or the Tamil month of Chithirai, is also known as Chithirai Thiruvizha, Meenakshi Thirukalyanam, or Meenakshi Kalyanam. The 15-day festival draws millions of people to witness the hoisting of a flag Yetram). Kalalzhagar, astride the golden horse, and a chariot procession is led through the streets of Madurai, carrying the newly married couple. This spectacle is a delight for both the locals and tourists alike.

Karthigai Deepam

Jallikattu

The Karthigai Mahadeepam, a illuminates the Arunachaleswarar Temple as the auspicious month Karthika begins. The Arunachaleswarar Temple represents eternal devotion and spiritual vitality, nestled against the picturesque landscape of Tiruvannamalai. This festival of lights involves kindling lights almost anywhere to put an end to darkness. The three days of celebration witness the lighting of earthen lamps that people use to decorate their homes and temples. One must not miss out on the grand occasion occurring on the hills of Tiruvannamalai lighting Mahadeepam.) The magnificence of Arunachaleswarar Temple during Karthigai Mahadeepam celebrations is a perfect treat for travellers.



Chithirai Festival



ADVERT



Kanduri Festival

Every year, for 14 days, people celebrate the saint Shahul Hamid's or Urs death anniversary. Pilgrims participate in the customs and ceremonies held at Nagor Dargha in Nagapattinum (Santhanakoodu). This inclusive celebration unites people of all faiths. The festival's main attractions include mesmerizing fireworks display and a vibrant chariot procession.

Velankanni feast

The Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health Velankanni, Nagapattinam district, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The annual feast of Our Lady of Good Health is a 10-day festival, observed from 29th August to 8th September. The basilica lights up with a vibrant array of colours during the feast. People of all faiths visit the shrine to witness this luminous spectacle.

Athi Varadhar Festival

Once every 40 years, the grand Athi Varadhar Utsav marks a spectacular event in the State. The Varadharaja Perumal Temple in Kancheepuram, home to the 2000-year-old deity Varathar, becomes the focal point of this age-old festival. The celebration revolves around the remarkable ceremony that commemorates the reappearance of Lord Athi Varathar' on this special occasion. During these 48 days, devotees from across the world embark on a pilgrimage to seek the blessings of Lord Athi Varathar.

Navratri Golu

While the nine-day Navaratri festival is celebrated widely throughout India, Tamil Nadu adds charm and beauty to the celebration. To honour the three goddesses, Durga, Saraswati, and Lakshmi, people in the State decorate their homes. The festival starts during September October Vijayadashami marks conclusion. Gods and goddesses are sculpted by devotees into statues along with miniatures. These dolls are displayed in homes and temples on an elevated platform known as a golu, which is fashioned like little stairs

From the harvest celebrations to the elaborate and colourful festivities during the Tamil New Year, anyone who plans a trip to Tamil Nadu has the opportunity to indulge in the charms of the State, creating memories for a lifetime.

















EVENT AFFAIR



IslandLife and W Maldives organise a roadshow in Delhi

Leading DMC for Maldives in India IslandLife organises a roadshow for W Maldives, where all the important travel agents had the opportunity to understand more about the beautiful Maldives property. W Maldives is a hotspot for travellers and with its variety of ocean villas; it brings in an edging vacation for the visitors. The roadshow was a great success and informative at the same time. The representatives from the property enlightened everyone with the grand Rolodex of activities and entertainment at W Maldives.

Taiwan Film Festival makes an exceptional return

Taiwan was the buzz of the city, as New Delhi played host to a vibrant popular PVR Priya Cinema, located at one of the city's most visited hangout Covid-induced three-year break, the Festival this year was organised at a much greater scale and scope than last year.





ExpoInn Suites and Convention held an exclusive Chairman's dinner

Expolnn Suites and Convention organised an exclusive dinner party in the presence of Rakesh Kumar, Chairman, IEML along with dignitaries from the travel and trade industry. The evening revolved around reliving the grandeur of the Chairman's dinner. The prestigious evening unfolded in a symphony of elegance, fine dining, and refined ambience.

Ark Islands organises a roadshow with Atmosphere Hotels

Ark Islands and Atmosphere Hotels came together to organise a roadshow in Jaipur, where they invited all the important travel agents from the city for an evening of interaction and mingling. The roadshow witnessed an intriguing amount of people looking forward to the Indian portfolio of Atmosphere Hotels and understand the kind of audience for them.



a Fern Funky Fridaze

The industry leaders came together for an evening of mingling and conversations with The Fern Hotels & Resorts in Delhi. The yearly shenanigans by the team at Fern Hotels are always an evening of sharing experiences and a yearly roundup. The Fern Hotels & Resorts managed by Concept Hospitality Pvt Ltd, with over 100+ hotels & resorts and 6000+ rooms currently operational under management or opening shortly across over 85 locations in India and internationally, under The Fern, The Fern Residency, The Fern Habitat, Zinc Journey by The Fern, Beacon Hotels and a selection of independently branded hotels.



APPOINTMENTS



Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality

FAITH announces the appointment of Mr Puneet Chhatwal as it's Chairman. He takes over from Mr Nakul Anand who will no longer be a member of the HAI Executive Committee since his retirement, thereby relinquishing his position at FAITH. Mr Chhatwal takes over with immediate effect. Mr Rajiv Mehra, Honorary Secretary, FAITH announced this effect.

Marriott International, Chandigarh

Dimpy Wason has joined the Market Director of Revenue Strategy for Punjab and Chandigarh's Marriott International managed properties. From Starwood Hotels to Fairmont Hotel and Hyatt, his' 18 years of professional journey encompasses pivotal roles in diverse international brands, including Goa and the Belagavi market for Marriott International. Wason's proficiency assures elevated revenue strategies for the region.





Maldives Marketing & PR Corporation

Fathimath Thaufeeq was announced as the newly appointed Managing Director of Maldives Marketing & PR Corporation. With a Masters in Business Administration from the University of West England, Fathimath Thaufeeq brings a plethora of experience to her current position. She has held important roles like HR & Admin Manager at Jalboot Maldives and Procurement and Administration Manager at WAMCO, in addition to her prior role as vice-president of the Party's Addu Meedhoo constituency.

SKIL Travel

India's leading end-to-end corporate travel solutions provider, SKIL Travel, has recently promoted Trishal Rao to Chief Sales Officer. Currently working as the Director of SKIL Travel, Trishal plays a phenomenal leadership role and exudes strong business strategies that have helped SKIL Travel to flourish in the growing travel trade market. A seasoned executive known for driving businesses to success, Trishal possesses sharp analytical acumen that he has developed over the years through his diverse exposure in the dynamic hospitality sector. He has previously been a part of hospitality brands of repute like Oakwood and Hyatt which have aided in shaping up his strategic business development and execution.





SNORKELING

Great for families or first-timers, snorkeling is an ideal way to enjoy the warm Maldivian waters and spectacular marine life.

THE ECO ESCAPE

See ya, stress. Hello, wellness.
Welcome to your 5-night wellness
extravaganza in paradise. We'll be
filling your days with yoga, massages,
and soothing activities to relax,
restore, and rejuvenate your mind
and body.

FISHING

No experience brings you closer to Maldivian culture than fishing, a vital economic and social island activity. With one of the world's most diverse aquatic ecosystems, you can enjoy fishing like a local.



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