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Editor's Letter

March, once dreaded for its looming exams in school, now beckons with the allure of adventure and discovery. As we navigate the complexities of adult life, we find ourselves facing new tests each day, learning and growing with every challenge.

Travel has always been my refuge, even in the midst of exam stress, when the promise of exploring somewhere new offered solace, even if it was just a visit to relatives nestled in the hills. That sense of anticipation still lingers, albeit now intertwined with the responsibilities of adulthood.

This month began with a symphony of experiences in Singapore, where every moment was an adventure, and every encounter a lesson in the art of discovery. From the bustling streets to the tranquil gardens, I soaked in the essence of this vibrant city, enriching my understanding of its culture and traditions.

Barely pausing for breath, I embarked on a journey to Berlin, where the world's largest trade exhibition, ITB, awaited. My passion for exhibitions is no secret to those who follow Travel Turtle, and ITB did not disappoint. Surrounded by innovators and industry leaders, I absorbed knowledge like a sponge, fueling my passion for travel and hospitality.

Returning home to Delhi, I'm greeted by a riot of colors as bougainvillea blooms in shades of yellow and pink, infusing the air with a sense of optimism and vitality. In the embrace of my beloved city, I'm reminded of the incredible diversity that defines our nation and shapes our collective identity.

In this edition of Travel Turtle, we embark on journeys to destinations near and far, from the cultural wonders of Sharjah to the timeless beauty of Urbino and the exotic allure of Bali. Through immersive experiences and insightful interviews, we invite you to join us on a voyage of discovery, where every page turn brings new insights and inspiration.

Do share your feedback at bharti@travelturtle.world.

Happy Reading!

Bharti Sharma

Bharti Sharma
Editor

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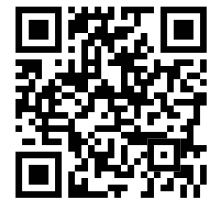
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Heavens Portfolio Group announces strategic expansion into Middle East

Heavens Portfolio, the leading Asia-based hotel representation company, is further solidifying its strategic growth with an acquisition and expansion into Dubai. This move marks a significant milestone in the company's global growth strategy and reinforces its commitment to offer a comprehensive and integrated service offering to its clients. Dubai will be the Heavens Portfolio Group's 16th office and its first outside of Asia.



One Above boosts presence in Bangalore

During March, One Above, a prominent Global DMC, expanded its presence in the dynamic Bangalore market through three successive events. Rahim Aslam, Founder and Director of One Above, underscored Bangalore's importance as a hub for adventurers seeking fresh experiences. These events underscored One Above's dedication to the Bangalore market.

Saudi Tourism Authority hosts 4-city networking events for Indian travel trade

Beginning the year with massive inbound numbers from last year and encouraging growth projections, Saudi tourism is racing ahead on its remarkable journey. Saudi aims to make India its top source market targeting 7.5 million visitors within the next seven years.



TAFI hosts bi-monthly meeting in New Delhi

The Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) Northern India Chapter has organized its Bi-Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, 20th March 2024 at The Park, New Delhi with aimed to fostering collaboration and innovation within the travel industry. Meeting was started by Mr Dinesh Kumar, Chapter Secretary – first of all agenda items were passed unanimously and Mr Khushvinder Sarna, Chapter Chairman, presented the Chapter Report, the event was well attended by more than 95 Members from of the Chapter were present in the meeting to discuss key initiatives, industry trends, and strategies to navigate the evolving landscape of travel and tourism.



Red Dot Representations to represent The Serendipity Experiences, Sri Lanka's DMC

Red Dot Representations, India's fast-growing destination representation major, announced yet another feather to its cap with the acquisition of the representation mandate for Serendipity, a well-known luxury destination management company in Sri Lanka. The development signifies a momentous step forward for both organizations as they venture into providing the growing Indian and global luxury traveller market by providing them with bespoke luxury travel experiences in the ancient island destination.



FLY91 commences commercial operations

FLY91, the latest entrant in the country's aviation sector, today commenced its commercial operations with its first flight taking off for Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru. The flight departed from Goa's Manohar International Airport at 07.55 am. The regional airline also operated its maiden flight to Sindhudurg from Bengaluru on the same day.

This is India's decade as global destination for investments and travel: VFS Global

India has a vibrant and diverse economy, a large young population and a rich cultural heritage which make it attractive for investors and visitors, according to the CEO of the world's largest visa outsourcing company. Zubin Karkaria, founder and CEO of VFS Global, said India is undergoing a rapid economic and social transformation.



MyBhutan expands its horizon with strategic partnerships with BRANDit

BRANDit, a leading marketing and PR representative for tourism boards and luxury hotels, announces its partnership with MyBhutan, a boutique destination management company based in Bhutan. This partnership marks a significant step in meeting the needs of Indian travellers, with MyBhutan offering unparalleled cultural experiences in the heart of the Himalayas.



Taiwan to ramp up investment in India with new Information Centre in Mumbai

The Taiwan Tourism Administration (TTA) recently unveiled its new Taiwan Tourism Information Centre (TTIC) in Mumbai, an event that saw attendance from notable personalities from the travel industry. Trust H. J. Lin, the Deputy Director General of TTA, expressed his admiration for India, describing it as a country of immense beauty and potential for Taiwan's inbound tourism sector.



Fortune Hotels inks a new alliance in Palampur, Himachal Pradesh

Fortune Hotels, a member of ITC's hotel group, announced the inking of its latest alliance – Fortune Park Palampur in Himachal Pradesh. Set in the picturesque landscape of Palampur, also known as the tea capital of northwest India, this brownfield project promises to redefine comfort in one of the most enchanting destinations in the country.



Madhya Pradesh Tourism signs landmark MoU with MakeMyTrip & redBus

In a significant move to boost tourism in Madhya Pradesh, the Department of Tourism, Madhya Pradesh, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MakeMyTrip and redBus. This strategic partnership aims to foster sustainable tourism development and promote Madhya Pradesh as a premier tourist destination.



FICCI & UP Tourism announces Uttar Pradesh travel mart

Government of Uttar Pradesh's Department of Tourism in association with FICCI announced the 6th Edition of UP Travel Mart from the 25th to the 29th of April 2024 in Gorakhpur (UP). A Curtain Raiser including a joint Press Conference was organised at The Taj Mahal Hotel in Lucknow on 12th March which was addressed by the Minister of Tourism & Culture of Uttar Pradesh Mr Jaiveer Singh, Principal Secretary & DG Tourism-GoUP Mr Mukesh Kumar Meshram, Director of Tourism Mr Prakhar Mishra and the Chair of FICCI's Tourism Committee Mr Prateek Hira.



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PET TOURISM

A Tail-wagging Adventure

A captivating trend has been gaining momentum within the realm of travel – pet tourism. Departing from the conventional practice of leaving four-legged companions behind, an increasing number of pet owners are opting to include their beloved pets in their voyages. This burgeoning segment not only underscores the profound bond between humans and their pets but also presents promising prospects for businesses and travellers alike.

- Bharti Sharma



Pet tourism encompasses a diverse array of activities and services tailored to accommodate travellers accompanied by their pets. From pet-friendly accommodations and attractions to specialised transportation services, the scope of pet tourism is expanding at a remarkable pace. According to the American Pet Products Association (APPA), pet travel expenditures in the United States reached an astounding \$8.5 billion in 2020, indicative of the substantial market potential within this segment.

Pets not just restricted to morning walks

Statistics offer a vivid portrayal of the burgeoning pet tourism industry. A survey conducted by

TripAdvisor revealed that 53 per cent of pet owners travel with their pets, with dogs emerging as the most common travel companions. Furthermore, the survey found that 44 per cent of pet owners are willing to pay a premium for pet-friendly accommodations, underscoring the demand for travel services that cater to furry friends.

The Growing Infrastructure of Pet-Friendly Travel

Pet tourism is facilitated by a plethora of pet-friendly amenities and services offered by businesses across the travel industry. From hotels and resorts that warmly welcome pets to airlines and trains that allow pets to journey alongside

their owners, the infrastructure for pet-friendly travel continues to evolve and expand. Additionally, pet-specific attractions and activities, such as dog-friendly beaches and hiking trails, provide ample opportunities for pet owners to forge unforgettable memories with their furry companions.

Paws and Passport

Embarking on a pet-friendly adventure requires more than just packing a leash and a bowl. For pet owners venturing into the realm of pet tourism, meticulous planning and careful consideration are essential. From finding accommodations that roll out the welcome mat for furry guests to understanding the intricacies of

pet-friendly transportation, there are several key insights and guidelines to keep in mind. First and foremost, pet-friendly accommodations serve as the foundation of a successful journey. Utilise global resources like BringFido and PetsWelcome to locate hotels, vacation rentals, and campgrounds that embrace pets with open arms. Additionally, familiarise yourself with the pet policies of airlines, trains, and other modes of transportation to ensure a smooth journey for you and your furry companion. Delve into the realm of pet-friendly attractions and activities at your destination, prioritising the health and safety of your pet throughout your travels. By exemplifying etiquette and





respect in public spaces, you can create a harmonious experience for both your pet and fellow travelers, ensuring that every adventure is filled with tail wags and cherished memories.

The Varied Landscape in India

Traveling with pets in India presents a mixed bag of ease and difficulty. While there's a growing availability of pet-friendly accommodations, particularly in urban areas and tourist destinations, navigating public transportation with pets can be challenging due to inconsistent policies and limited options. Cultural attitudes towards pets also vary across regions, influencing the overall experience for pet owners.

Additionally, regulatory hurdles, such as varying vaccination requirements and quarantine regulations, add complexity to pet travel logistics. Despite these challenges, with thorough research, careful planning, and flexibility, pet owners can still enjoy enriching travel experiences with their furry companions in India.

Unleashing the potential

Pet tourism represents a flourishing niche within the travel industry, fueled by the growing desire of pet owners to include their furry companions in their travel experiences. With an increasing number of pet-friendly amenities and services available, traveling with pets has become more

seamless and gratifying than ever before. By embracing the principles of responsible pet ownership and conscientious travel, pet owners can create lasting memories with their beloved pets while exploring new destinations and embarking on exciting adventures. So, pack your bags, leash up your furry friend, and embark on a pet-friendly odyssey that is sure to leave a lasting imprint on your hearts.





WHERE THE BEST *Embrace Brilliance*

Swosti Chilika Resort is one of the best landmarks from the Swosti Group of Hotels & Resorts, providing the same amenities and extravagance that the SWOSTI brand represents. The resort delivers unforgettable experiences near the beautiful Chilika Lake. Surrounded by lush green plantations and incomparable peacefulness, Swosti Chilika Resort offers over 78 well-made rooms and many luxurious amenities to allow guests to soak in and experience the magical vistas in all their splendor. The property also boasts of three multi-cuisine restaurants, a bar, a spa and a coffee shop. Guests can enjoy adventure activities like boating and jet-skiing etc, that add to their overall experience.



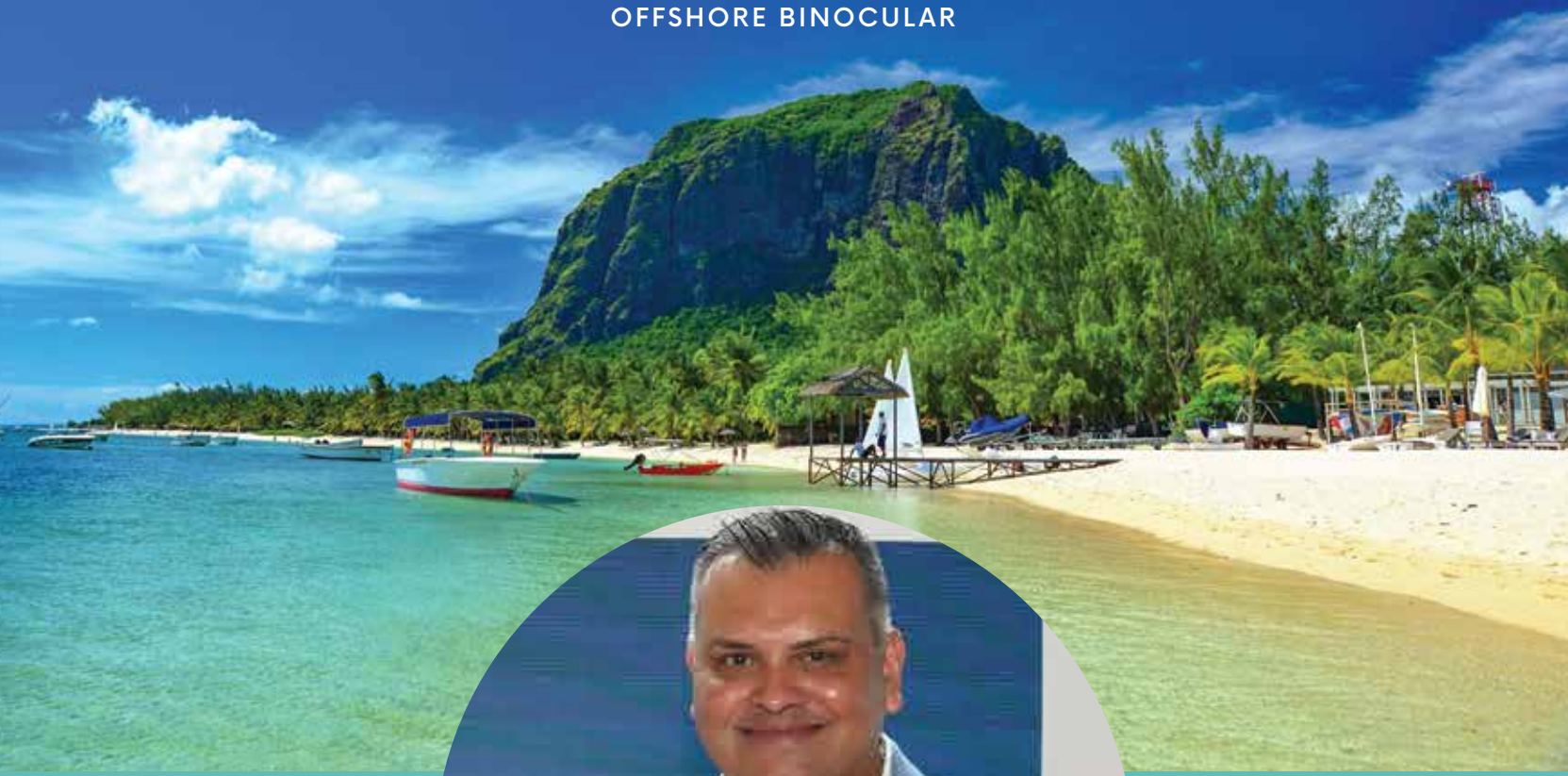
Mauritius

A paradise of diversity

In the heart of the Indian Ocean lies a gem. With its breath-taking landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and warm hospitality, Mauritius has emerged as a top destination for travellers seeking an unforgettable experience. Arvind Bundhun, Director, Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority shares the future plans for the Indian market.

- *Tripti Jain*





Arvind Bundhun

In recent years, the island nation has set its sights on India, recognising the immense potential of this vibrant market. They want Indians to be on a journey to explore the allure of Mauritius and the all the wonderful things the destination has to offer. Mauritius stands as a symbol to the power of cultural exchange and hospitality, welcoming visitors from across the globe with open arms.

Bridging cultures

Mauritius' historical connection with India dates back centuries to the arrival of Indian indentured labourers during the colonial era. Today, this shared heritage is celebrated through various cultural festivals and traditions, such as Diwali, Eid, and the Ganesh Chaturthi. Indian visitors often find comfort in familiar customs and traditions while experiencing the unique charm of Mauritius.

Mauritius boasts a unique blend of cultures, with influences from India, Africa, Europe, and beyond. This cultural mosaic creates an atmosphere of diversity and inclusivity, resonating strongly with Indian visitors. From vibrant festivals to mouth-watering cuisine, Mauritius offers a glimpse into its multicultural tapestry. Arvind

highlights this aspect and shares, "Our historic ties with India have fostered a deep understanding and appreciation of Indian culture among Mauritians, making it a home away from home for Indian travellers."

Connecting in different ways

One of Mauritius' greatest advantages for the Indian market is its proximity, just a five-hour flight away. With increased airline capacity and new flight routes, accessibility has never been easier. "Connectivity plays a crucial role in enticing Indian travellers. By expanding flight options and establishing direct routes, we aim to make Mauritius a convenient and sought-after destination for Indian tourists," shares Arvind.

The recent addition of flights from key Indian cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai has further strengthened Mauritius' connectivity with India. This enhanced accessibility opens up a world of opportunities for Indian travellers seeking a tropical getaway. Whether it's a romantic retreat, family vacation, or adventure-filled escape, Mauritius offers endless possibilities within a short flying distance from India.



Diversity in the island country

Beyond its pristine beaches, Mauritius offers a myriad of experiences waiting to be explored. From adrenaline-pumping water sports to serene nature trails, there is something for every type of traveller. Bundhun emphasises the importance of immersive experiences and explains, "We aim to showcase Mauritius as more than just a beach destination. Our diverse offerings appeal to adventure seekers, nature enthusiasts, and culture lovers alike, ensuring a memorable stay for Indian visitors." Adventure enthusiasts can indulge in a plethora of activities, including snorkelling, scuba diving, zip-lining, and quad biking. Nature lovers can explore the island's lush rainforests, cascading waterfalls, and wildlife sanctuaries teeming with exotic flora and fauna. Meanwhile, culture aficionados can immerse

themselves in the island's rich history through visits to museums, temples, and colonial-era landmarks.

Right foot forward

While Mauritius sees promising growth in Indian tourism, it also faces challenges, particularly in light of global events impacting travel trends. Arvind shares, "We acknowledge the fluctuations in visitor numbers from certain source markets. However, we remain proactive in our approach, focusing on collaborative efforts with tour operators and implementing targeted marketing campaigns to sustain demand."

Travel restrictions, health concerns, and economic uncertainties have significantly impacted international travel patterns, leading to fluctuations in tourist arrivals. However, Mauritius has responded swiftly with stringent health and safety measures, ensuring a safe and

seamless travel experience for visitors.

Embracing the future

As Mauritius looks ahead, it remains committed to fostering strong partnerships and innovative strategies to enhance its appeal to Indian travellers. "We believe in the potential of the Indian market. Through continued collaboration and investment in digital marketing initiatives, we are confident in our ability to position Mauritius as a premier destination for Indian tourists," he adds.

In recent years, Mauritius has embraced digital transformation as a key driver of tourism promotion. From engaging social media campaigns to interactive virtual tours, Mauritius leverages digital platforms to showcase its beauty and allure to Indian

audiences. Additionally, strategic partnerships with leading travel agencies, online travel portals, and influencers help amplify Mauritius' visibility and reach within the Indian market.

It is more than just an island; it is a melting pot of cultures, experiences, and possibilities. They invite Indian travellers to discover the magic of Mauritius and create memories that will last a lifetime. With its unwavering commitment to excellence and innovation, Mauritius is poised to write the next chapter in its storied history as a paradise of possibilities for travellers worldwide. As Indian tourists continue to seek new horizons and unforgettable experiences, Mauritius remains a beacon of beauty, adventure, and cultural richness awaiting exploration.





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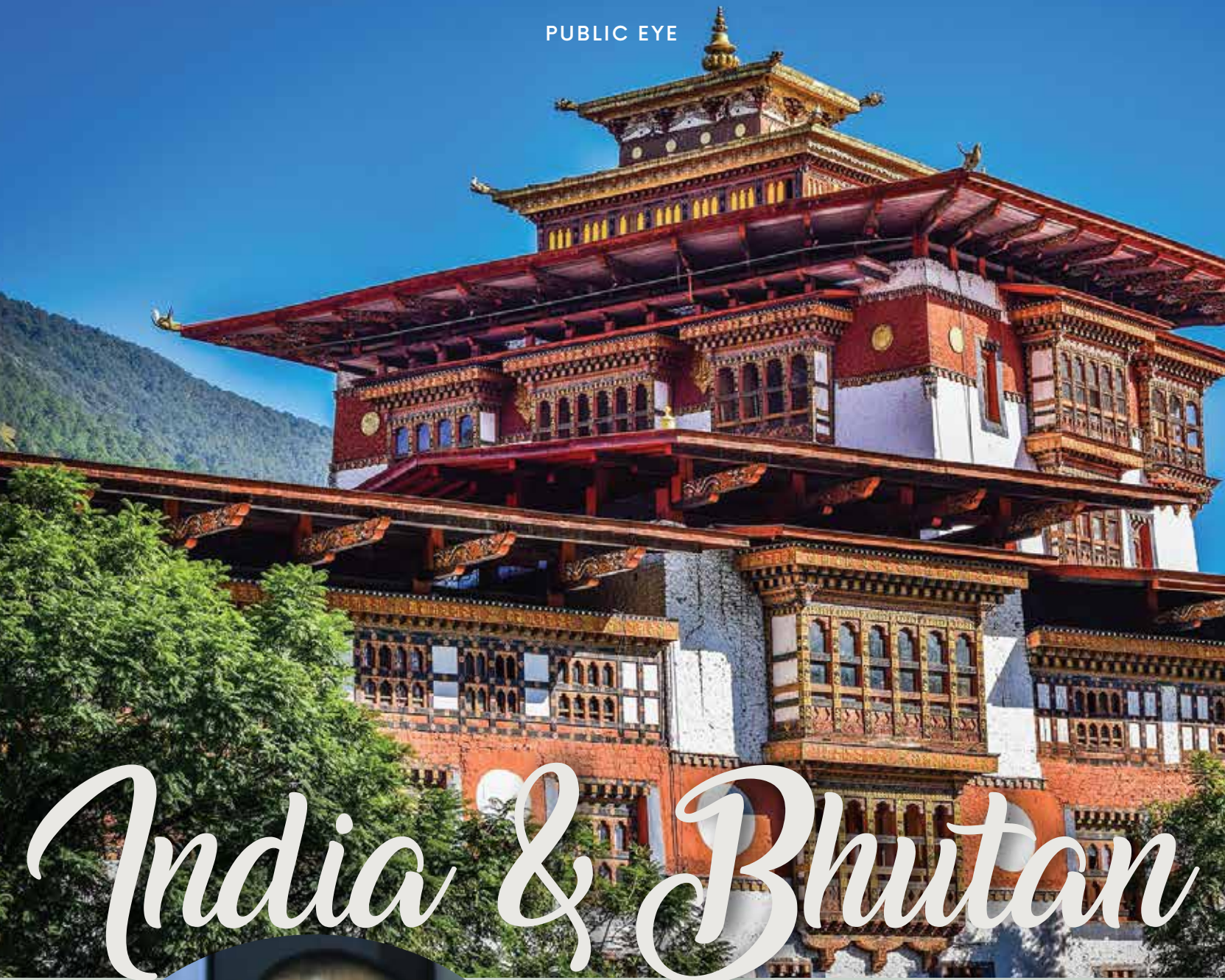
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India & Bhutan



A VISION FOR SHARED PROSPERITY

The dynamic relationship between India and Bhutan has long been characterised by mutual respect, cultural affinity, and strategic cooperation. *Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bhutan, HE DASHO TSHERING TOBGAY* shares a vision to strengthen tourism ties between the two countries.

- Tripti Jain

PUBLIC EYE

In recent years, both nations have recognised the potential of tourism as a catalyst for economic growth and cultural exchange. Hon'ble Prime Minister's remarks indicate at the commitment to fostering cross-border partnerships that not only promote economic prosperity but also enhance the well-being of citizens on both sides.

Fostering bilateral relations

Prime Minister Tobgay reaffirmed the longstanding bonds between India and Bhutan, emphasising the importance of nurturing these ties through tourism. He shares, "India is our immediate neighbour, and we want to be your host. This sentiment reflects Bhutan's eagerness to welcome Indian tourists with open arms, leveraging tourism as a bridge to deepen bilateral cooperation and understanding."

Prioritising national happiness

Central to Bhutan's tourism ethos is the concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH), a holistic development paradigm that prioritises well-being over mere economic growth. Prime Minister Tobgay enlightens us and shares, "The overarching intent of Bhutan's Tourism policy is to enhance happiness and well-being of tourists throughout

their journey. By integrating GNH principles into its tourism strategy, Bhutan seeks to offer visitors a transformative experience that transcends material wealth."

Promoting cultural exchange

Bhutan's rich cultural heritage, characterised by vibrant traditions and breath-taking landscapes, serves as a magnet for tourists seeking authentic experiences. Prime Minister Tobgay highlights the role of tourism in preserving and sharing Bhutan's unique culture with the world, and shares, "We are custodians of a unique culture that we can share with the world. Through cultural exchanges and immersive encounters, tourists have the opportunity to delve into Bhutan's cultural tapestry, fostering mutual appreciation and respect."

Facilitating ease of travel

Recognising the importance of seamless travel facilitation, Bhutan has streamlined visa requirements for Indian tourists. Prime Minister Tobgay speaks on the same lines and explains, "For Indian tourists visiting Bhutan, there is no visa requirement, and only a travel permit is required. This simplification not only enhances the ease of travel but

also reinforces the warm hospitality extended to Indian visitors, laying the foundation for enduring tourism partnerships."

Embracing sustainable development

As custodians of pristine natural landscapes, Bhutan is committed to sustainable tourism practices that preserve its ecological treasures for future generations. Prime Minister Tobgay emphasises this imperative and shares, "We need to enhance access by air to Bhutan, and that is my responsibility. By balancing economic development with environmental stewardship, Bhutan aims to create a blueprint for sustainable tourism that harmonises with its natural splendour."

The vision outlined by Prime Minister Tobgay highlights Bhutan's unwavering commitment to fostering robust tourism ties with India. As both nations embark on this journey of collaboration and partnership, the words of Prime Minister Tobgay resonate profoundly. They plan to target 150,000 Indian tourists in the coming years. Through shared prosperity and mutual respect, India and Bhutan stand poised to unlock the transformative potential of tourism, enriching lives and forging lasting bonds of friendship.

Sabah

A GEM OF ADVENTURE AND NATURAL BEAUTY

Nestled in the heart of Southeast Asia, Sabah as a destination exudes beauty and diversity of Malaysia's tourism offerings. Julinus Jeffery Jimit, CEO, Sabah Tourism Board shares Sabah's unique attractions to the world.

- Tripti Jain





With its lush rainforests, pristine beaches, and rich cultural heritage, Sabah has become a haven for travellers seeking adventure and relaxation alike. Let's delve into the wonders of Sabah and its journey towards becoming a premier tourist destination.

Unravelling natural wonders

Sabah boasts an unparalleled array of natural wonders, from the majestic peaks of Mount Kinabalu to the bio diverse ecosystems of its rainforests. Julinus talks about the natural heritage and shares, "Sabah's natural beauty is our greatest asset. We are committed to sustainable tourism practices that protect our environment while allowing visitors to experience the wonders of nature. Through initiatives such as ecotourism and conservation efforts, Sabah aims to showcase its biodiversity while ensuring its long-term preservation."

Adventures in the heart of Borneo

For thrill-seekers and nature enthusiasts, Sabah offers a plethora of adrenaline-pumping activities. From diving in the vibrant waters of Sipadan to trekking through the dense jungles of Danum Valley, there's no shortage of adventure to be found in the destination. Julinus emphasises the importance of

promoting Sabah's adventurous spirit and shares, "Adventure tourism is a key focus for us. Sabah's rugged terrain and diverse landscapes offer endless opportunities for exploration and discovery. With its range of outdoor activities, it beckons adventurers from around the globe to experience the thrill of a lifetime."

Embracing cultural diversity

Sabah's cultural tapestry is as diverse as its natural landscape, with a rich heritage shaped by indigenous tribes and centuries of trade and migration. Julinus highlights the significance of celebrating Sabah's cultural diversity and shares, "Our cultural heritage is a source of pride and identity for the people of Sabah. Through cultural tourism initiatives, we aim to showcase the traditions and customs of our diverse communities. From vibrant festivals to immersive homestay experiences, Sabah invites visitors to immerse themselves in its rich tapestry of cultures."

Sustainable tourism for future generations

As global awareness of environmental conservation grows, Sabah is leading the way in sustainable tourism practices. Julinus emphasises the importance of responsible tourism and explains, "Sustainable tourism is not just about protecting our

natural resources—it's about ensuring the well-being of our communities and preserving our cultural heritage for future generations. Through initiatives such as community-based tourism and eco-friendly accommodations, Sabah is paving the way towards a more sustainable and equitable tourism industry."

Navigating the road ahead

Despite the challenges posed by global events, Sabah remains steadfast in its commitment to promoting tourism and preserving its natural and cultural heritage. With the support of the stakeholders and the unwavering spirit of the people, they will emerge stronger than ever. As the destination looks towards recovery and revitalisation, the spirit of hospitality and warmth that defines the region continues to shine bright."

Sabah stands as a shining example of Malaysia's rich and diverse tourism offerings. With its breath-taking natural beauty, thrilling adventures, and vibrant cultural heritage, Sabah captivates the hearts and minds of travellers from around the world. Sabah is more than just a destination—it's an experience. As Sabah continues to evolve and adapt to the changing landscape of global tourism, its spirit of resilience and hospitality remains as enduring as ever.



Julinus Jeffery Jimit



Discovering beyond just words UZBEKISTAN



In the heart of the historic Silk Road, Uzbekistan stands as a beacon of cultural heritage and natural beauty. **Ahror Valijdanov**, Director of The Silk Road, The Republic of Uzbekistan shares how the country has positioned itself as a must-visit destination, offering diverse experiences for every traveller.

- Tripti Jain

In recent years, this Central Asian gem has witnessed a remarkable surge in tourism, with travellers from across the globe, particularly from India, flocking to explore its rich tapestry of history, architecture, and landscapes.

Monumental shift of preferences

As the ancient Silk Road once connected distant civilizations, today, Uzbekistan finds itself linked to the vibrant market of India. Ahror Valijdanov highlights the significance of the Indian market and shares, "We are witnessing a monumental shift in tourist preferences, with India emerging as a pivotal source of visitors. The numbers speak volumes, with a tripling of Indian tourists in the past few years, reaching an impressive 45,000 visitors annually. We anticipate further exponential growth, with projections aiming for 100,000 Indian tourists in the near future."

Thinking beyond cultural tourism

While cultural tourism remains Uzbekistan's hallmark, the nation is embracing diversification to cater to evolving traveller preferences. Ahror Valijdanov emphasises, "We recognise the importance of offering varied experiences beyond cultural

attractions. Initiatives to promote MICE events and wedding tourism have gained momentum, attracting a new wave of travellers seeking unique experiences. This strategic pivot aligns with Uzbekistan's commitment to providing enriching experiences for every visitor."

Diminishing barriers

Uzbekistan acknowledges the importance of effective communication in enhancing the tourist experience. Ahror Valijdanov highlights the nation's proactive approach, stating, "We have invested in training and certifying guides proficient in various languages, including English, to ensure seamless interactions with tourists. This commitment to linguistic diversity reflects Uzbekistan's dedication to welcoming travellers from around the globe with open arms, fostering meaningful cultural exchanges."

Cultivating excellence

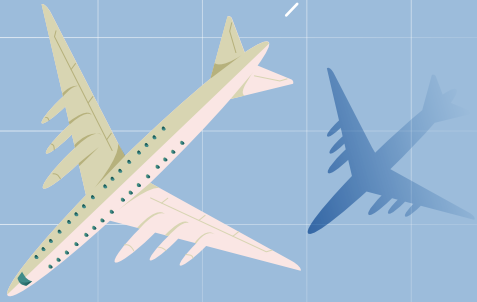
Recognising the pivotal role of skilled professionals in sustaining tourism growth, Uzbekistan has prioritised investment in tourism education. Ahror Valijdanov proudly announces, "We have established the International University of Tourism and Cultural

Heritage, Silk Road, to nurture the next generation of tourism professionals. Through such initiatives, we aim to elevate industry standards and foster innovation, ensuring a world-class experience for visitors."

Forging a shared future

Uzbekistan's journey towards tourism excellence is marked by robust international collaborations. Ahror Valijdanov shares, "We cherish our warm relations with India and other nations, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation. Participation in international exhibitions and events highlights the country's commitment to global engagement and cultural exchange. Through collaborative efforts, we envision a future where tourism serves as a bridge connecting nations and cultures." Uzbekistan's tourism journey is emblematic of resilience, innovation, and boundless potential. As the nation continues to unlock new horizons in tourism, it invites travellers from every corner of the globe to embark on a journey of discovery. With a rich tapestry of experiences waiting, Uzbekistan beckons adventurers to traverse its historic pathways, forging connections that transcend borders and unite hearts.

AEROPHILE

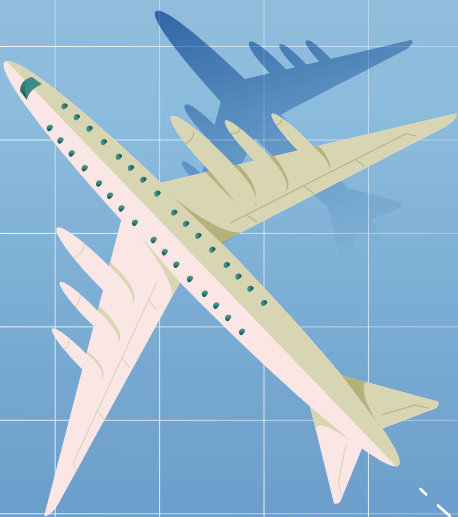


AEROPRIME

Navigating the skies!

In the dynamic landscape of aviation, Aeroprime Group stands as a stalwart, shaping the trajectory of airlines' global reach. Abhishek Goyal, Executive Director, Aeroprime shares about Aeroprime's strategic focus towards direct distribution, connectivity and the commitment to excellence.

- Tripti Jain



AEROPHILE



Abhishek Goyal

PIONEERS OF ENHANCED VISIBILITY

With AeroPrime at the helm, the future of airline distribution and connectivity shines bright. The group, led by Abhishek Goyal, has positioned itself at the forefront of direct distribution connectivity for airlines worldwide. As he shares, "We are the leaders in the direct distribution connectivity for airlines. By leveraging advanced technology and fostering strategic partnerships, we facilitate seamless integration between airlines and various distribution channels, ensuring enhanced visibility and accessibility for travellers."

GLOBAL FOOTPRINT IN THE MAKING!

The group has embarked on an ambitious journey to establish

itself as a global GSA brand. With the opening of offices in key international markets such as the UK, and plans for expansion into regions such as the UAE and Southeast Asia, it is poised for exponential growth. Abhishek shares, "We are very excited about expanding our global footprint and forging new partnerships. Our aim is to take the brand global and fulfil the customer service curve."

EXTENDED ROLODEX

The group boasts a diverse portfolio, representing prominent airlines including Vietnam Airlines, Salaam Air, Turkmenistan Airlines, and Uzbekistan Airways, among others. Abhishek highlights the importance of strategic partnerships, stating, "We handle almost 10 plus airlines, and we are always on the lookout for new partnerships to enhance our portfolio. Through strategic alliances, we ensure a comprehensive coverage and unparalleled service offerings for our clientele."

FACILITATING MARKETS WITH THE RIGHT PRODUCT

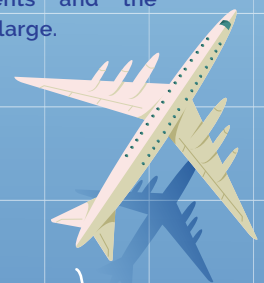
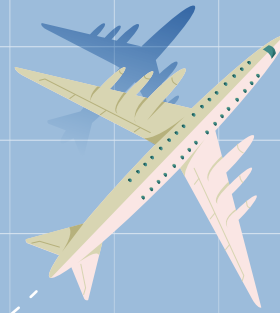
In recent years, they have witnessed a surge in interest from international airlines seeking to tap into the burgeoning Indian market. Abhishek attributes this trend to various factors, including shifts in demand from other regions and regulatory

developments. Speaking on the same lines he mentions, "There's a major interest in the Indian market, with airlines increasingly focusing on expansion. Our expertise in navigating regulatory of landscapes and facilitating market entry positions acts as a plus point for airlines eyeing growth in India."

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TRANSFORMING WORLD

At AeroPrime Group, innovation is at the core of operations. Abhishek shares about the company's commitment to leveraging technology and adopting forward-thinking strategies to stay ahead of the curve. He mentions, "We rely heavily on technology and aim to streamline as well as innovate the traditional GSA model. Furthermore, sustainability remains a key focus, with AeroPrime championing initiatives to minimise environmental impact and promote responsible aviation practices."

AeroPrime Group continues to redefine the paradigm of GSA services. With a steadfast commitment to excellence, a global outlook, and a dedication to innovation, it navigates the skies with precision and purpose. Their journey is one of constant evolution and growth, fuelled by their passion for excellence and unwavering commitment to serving their clients and the aviation industry at large.



Club Med's journey to Global Hospitality Excellence

Club Med's continued expansion, strategic partnerships, and commitment to staying atop current trends, position it as a leading player in the global hospitality industry. By catering to diverse market preferences, adopting innovative concepts, and prioritising guest satisfaction, Club Med remains at the forefront of the all-inclusive resort sector, ready for sustained growth and success in the coming years. Rachael Harding, Chief Executive Officer, East and South Asia & Pacific Markets, Club Med shares on strategies designed to ensure steady growth in the Indian market.

-Naina Nath



Expanding markets & trends

Traditionally, the company is focused on Indian Ocean destinations, catering to markets such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and India. However, recent trends indicate a growing interest in high-end, immersive experiences, such as mountain getaways in the European Alps and Japanese ski resorts. This transformation reflects the evolving dynamics of travellers, especially from India, who seek longer stays and embrace the all-inclusive concept, a hallmark of Club Med's offerings. "We at Club Med have observed a notable shift in market preferences," adds Rachael Harding.

Strategic partnerships & market penetration

With 67 resorts worldwide, Club Med is aimed to expand its brand presence in a competitive hospitality landscape dominated by thousands of hotels. "To overcome this hurdle, we rely on strategic partnerships and collaborations with influencers, travel agencies, and other stakeholders. By leveraging the expertise of our partners and implementing targeted marketing initiatives, we aim to strengthen our foothold in both established and emerging markets," mentions Rachael Harding. By adopting marketing initiatives and leveraging trade partnerships, Club Med seeks to expand its reach and consolidate its position in the Indian tourism landscape.

The unique 'All-Inclusive' concept

Club Med's unique selling proposition lies in its all-inclusive model, which goes beyond traditional offerings to include not only food and beverage but also a wide range of activities tailored to different demographics. Rachael Harding further adds, "With 70 per cent of our guests being families, we place particular emphasis on our thoughtfully curated kids' clubs, where children can engage in age-appropriate activities under expert supervision." This commitment to providing a holistic vacation experience distinguishes Club Med from its competitors and fosters loyalty among guests seeking

convenience and value for money.

Diverse source markets & expansion plans

While France remains Club Med's primary market, the company has strategically diversified its portfolio to include North America, Brazil, and key Asian markets such as Singapore and Australia. "Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, Club Med has maintained its development strategy, opening five new resorts and planning 17 additional properties by 2025," says Rachael Harding. These ambitious expansion plans underscore the company's confidence in the resilience of the travel industry and its commitment to meeting the evolving needs of discerning travellers worldwide.

Multicultural culinary experiences

Club Med's culinary offerings reflect its commitment to catering to diverse tastes and preferences. With dedicated corners for different cuisines and a focus on vegetarian options, they ensure that guests from around the world feel at home. Adding to it, Rachael Harding says, "Club Med acknowledges the evolving preferences of Indian travellers, who seek authentic, local experiences alongside familiar comforts. By incorporating regional flavours and culinary traditions into its menus, Club Med enhances the overall guest experience and encourages cultural exchange among its diverse clientele."

Wellness & more

From yoga and meditation to sports and spa treatments, guests can tailor their experience to their individual preferences and wellness goals. By prioritising wellness and recreational activities, Club Med ensures that guests return home feeling rejuvenated and inspired, further cementing its reputation as a leader in the all-inclusive resort sector. "In response to the growing demand for wellness-focused travel experiences, we at Club Med have expanded our offerings to include a wide range of activities aimed at promoting physical and mental well-being," highlights Rachael Harding.



Rachael Harding

Expanding reach through digital platform

Club Med maintains a direct Indian line and email support to cater specifically to the needs of its Indian clientele, further strengthening its presence in the market. "We recognise the importance of a robust online presence in reaching potential guests and engaging with existing ones. In addition to its main website, the company has developed Club Med Travel Agent (CMTA), a dedicated platform for travel agents. This initiative enhances accessibility and provides resources and training for agents to promote Club Med's offerings effectively," elaborates Rachael Harding.

Community engagement & sustainability

The company actively participates in local initiatives and collaborates with community organisations to support social and environmental causes. Club Med prioritises sustainability in its operations, implementing measures to minimise its environmental footprint and promote conservation efforts in the destinations it operates. "As a responsible corporate citizen, we are committed to community engagement and sustainable practices," shares Rachael Harding.





Dimuthu Tennakoon

SriLankan Airlines soars with strategic expansion in India

As the landscape of the aviation industry continually evolves, SriLankan Airlines maintains its unwavering commitment to innovation and partnerships, reinforcing its position as a significant player in the market. Dimuthu Tennakoon, Head of Worldwide Sales and Distribution at SriLankan Airlines shares on the latest market strategies and how they intend to achieve robust growth.

-Naina Nath

Expanding operations to meet the growing demand

With a strategic focus on enhancing connectivity from India, leveraging technological advancements, and expanding collaborations, the airline is well-positioned to not only

overcome current obstacles but also emerge as a leader in shaping the future of air travel from India. Currently, SriLankan Airlines operates 95 flights, serving nine cities including Mumbai with 14 flights per week, second only to Chennai which has the biggest operations. Offices are established in nine Indian cities, strategically located to match flight routes, aiming to increase capacity rather than expanding to new destinations. "By prioritising existing routes, we aim to enhance service quality and frequency to meet the growing demand, especially in key cities such as Delhi and Mumbai," adds Dimuthu Tennakoon.

In 2018, SriLanka witnessed its best tourist arrivals, totaling 2.3 million, with Indian tourists comprising a significant portion. However, recent figures show a decline, attributed to various factors including the pandemic. Dimuthu Tennakoon further shares, "Despite challenges, we remain optimistic, targeting to surpass the 2018 figures by catering to evolving travel trends

and enhancing connectivity, especially to popular destinations such as Australia and European hubs."

Innovative & seamless booking solutions

Recognising India's significance in its operations, SriLankan Airlines prioritises collaboration with Indian agents underscoring the importance of technological advancements in streamlining booking processes and enhancing customer experience. Adding to it, Dimuthu Tennakoon shares, "Introduced in June last year, the agency booking engine facilitates seamless bookings for travel agents, with over 200 agents currently utilising the platform."

Encouraging promotional plans

SriLankan Airlines prides itself on offering both business and economy class options across all aircrafts. This commitment to providing diverse travel experiences aligns with the airline's dedication to meeting the needs of a broad customer base,

ensuring comfort and convenience for all passengers, regardless of their travel preferences or budget constraints.

Active engagement in industry events such as OTM and SATTE highlights SriLankan Airlines' cooperative strategy alongside the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA). "By jointly promoting the destination, both entities mutually benefit from increased awareness and interest among travellers. This further strengthens the airline's commitment to driving tourism growth and economic development in Sri Lanka," mentions Dimuthu Tennakoon.

Expansion plans

Looking ahead to 2024, SriLankan Airlines is positioned for aggressive expansion and market penetration in India. "With a clear focus on surpassing previous milestones and achieving robust growth, we remain committed to leveraging our extensive network and strategic partnerships to emerge stronger and more resilient in the post-pandemic aviation landscape," highlights Dimuthu Tennakoon.



Host State



RAJASTHAN

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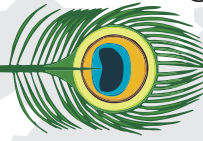


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Centara Hotels and Resorts

Elevating hospitality standards across Asia

Centara Hotels & Resorts has long been synonymous with luxury and excellence in the hospitality industry. **Moumita Paul**, Director of Sales & Marketing – India at Centara Hotels & Resorts shares valuable insights on their expansion plans.

- Tripti Jain



Centara has always been creating strategic initiatives which are aimed at ensuring that the guests receive nothing short of extraordinary service and accommodations. From its inception, the brand has continually raised the bar for what it means to deliver exceptional experiences to travellers across Asia. Moumita shares, "At Centara Hotels & Resorts, we believe in going above and beyond to exceed our guests' expectations. Our upcoming ventures and strategic initiatives reflect our commitment to redefining luxury hospitality and creating lasting impressions."

Pioneering unparalleled experiences

Moumita shares exciting details about Centara's upcoming venture, the Centara Mirage Lagoon Maldives, "This project is truly ground-breaking. It will be a full-fledged family destination, unlike anything else in the Maldives. With its innovative concept and comprehensive facilities catering to families, the Centara Mirage Lagoon Maldives is poised to redefine luxury travel in the region."

Indian favourites

India has emerged as a significant market for Centara Hotels & Resorts, with numerous

properties witnessing a steady influx of Indian travellers. Moumita elaborated on this trend and shares, "Properties such as Centara Grand Krabi, Centara Grand Mirage Pattaya, and Centara Grand Phuket are perennial favourites among Indian tourists. These properties' strategic locations, luxurious amenities, and diverse leisure offerings make them highly sought-after destinations for travellers from India."

What the future holds!

Reflecting on Centara's performance in the Indian market, Moumita shares insights into the brand's market share and future outlook. "Indian tourists consistently rank among the top nationalities across our properties. In some locations, they even comprise the largest demographic. With optimistic projections for the upcoming year, Centara remains committed to providing unforgettable experiences to Indian travellers."

Brewing something new

Centara's expansion strategy highlights its dedication to growth and innovation. Moumita discusses the upcoming projects, including the highly anticipated Centara Mirage Lagoon Maldives

and Centara Grand Lagoon. "These ventures exemplify Centara's commitment to pushing boundaries and setting new standards in luxury hospitality. These openings mark significant milestones in Centara's journey towards becoming the preferred choice for travellers across Asia."

Long term growth

In today's competitive landscape, effective marketing is essential for standing out and engaging with consumers. Moumita sheds light on Centara's strategic marketing initiatives, emphasising the importance of targeted campaigns and partnerships. "Our focus is on fostering meaningful connections with our audience through initiatives like the India Roadshow. These efforts demonstrate Centara's commitment to staying relevant and resonating with travellers in key markets like India."

Centara Hotels & Resorts continues to set the standard for luxury hospitality across Asia, driven by a relentless pursuit of excellence and innovation. As Centara embarks on its journey to redefine luxury travel, it remains dedicated to creating unforgettable moments and memories for travellers from around the world.



Singapore's MICE Magic

Blending Business with Experiential Joy

Singapore has long been lauded as a premier destination for MICE, and it's not just the top-notch hotels that make it so. Beyond the boardrooms and ballrooms, Singapore offers a tapestry of activities and attractions that cater to every palate, ensuring that business travellers find ample opportunities for exploration and enrichment amidst their professional engagements.

- *Bharti Sharma*





Cheers to Sentosa



For all the Gin lovers

Could it be that my love for Singapore stems from my Leo nature, resonating deeply with the country's essence? Or perhaps it's the impeccably planned city, surpassing even my meticulously crafted professional itineraries? The answer to countless questions boils down to one simple truth: we all adore Singapore because it deserves that affection. From the ever-smiling faces to the genuine warmth, the city's rich tapestry of cultures, and yes, the abundance of lush green skyscrapers – Singapore embodies the seamless coexistence of urbanisation and nature. It's a testament to harmony, where city life and natural beauty intertwine effortlessly, leaving an indelible mark on all who visit.

Even though it was my fourth visit to this gem, my excitement remained unbounded, as I eagerly set out to explore the destination with a well-planned itinerary highlighting the finest MICE offerings. Soon enough, you'll understand why I believe this destination is the epitome of excellence for MICE, without a shadow of doubt. From the moment you step onto a Singapore Airlines (SQ) flight, you're enveloped in warmth that sets the tone for the entire journey. Their crew, without a doubt, ranks among the most hospitable in the entire world, ensuring a journey of unparalleled comfort. And let's not

forget the 'jewel' of Singapore – Changi Airport – where the immigration process is seamlessly efficient, leaving you exhilarated at being in one of the world's finest airports.

Our home for the next few days was the Pullman Singapore Hill Street, the newest addition to Singapore's esteemed hospitality portfolio. Here, we were pampered with utmost care and attention. Designed by AP Architects, the hotel boasts a distinctive U-shaped structure housing 350 Art Nouveau-inspired rooms and suites. For larger conferences, it seamlessly integrates with two nearby Accor properties, ensuring convenience and flexibility for events of any size.

High on experiences

When I say there's never a dull moment in Singapore, believe me instantly. I may have lost count of the number of experiences on my trip, but the memories are deeply etched forever. Would you believe me if I told you I was blown away by the magnificent collection of the world's finest whiskeys at **The Grande Whisky Museum!** Their vault houses over 7,000 bottles, including the rarest ones, such as the one signed by King Charles and Camilla, Queen Consort of the United Kingdom. After sampling some of the finest whiskeys, including Auchentoshan, Bowmore, and Glenglassaugh, the entire experience feels surreal. You

not only learn about various whiskeys but also leave as a Whiskey Connoisseur, even if you entered with just a handful of knowledge.

Hey, Gin Lovers, fret not; there's plenty for us too! Enter **Tanglin Gin Distillery**, right in the heart of Dempsey Hill. Their Creations Lab hosts tours where you'll learn the entire process of gin making. And once you're educated, it's time to enjoy the best gin cocktails at their Gin Bar.

But it's not just about drinks; did you know Singapore is also home to some of the finest chocolates? At Mr Bucket Chocolaterie, you can witness the entire chocolate-making process while indulging in their menu. They are revitalising Asian chocolate industry and educating visitors about the bean-to-bar chocolate-making process. It's safe to say there's not a human who doesn't like chocolate, making it a perfect choice for your next trip.

While I may not fly a plane, that didn't stop me from enjoying the most amazing views of the destination's landscape from **the Singapore Flyer**. This observational wheel lives up to its name, offering breath-taking views of the city. The 30-minute ride in air-conditioned cabins allows you to soak up the views of the sea, Marina Bay Sands, and the entire cityscape, although we were so captivated by the scenery that we hardly took any pictures.

Witness the entire chocolate-making process



View the Marina Bay Sands from the National Gallery



**Tranquility to Thrills:
Unraveling Sentosa's
Adventures**

En route to Sentosa, our tour leader Naseem enlightened us with the origin of the island's name, 'Sentosa,' derived from the word 'Santosh,' meaning tranquillity. Amidst the adventure and fun on the island, I truly felt this sense of tranquillity. With an abundance of activities to choose from, we dabbled in a couple of them. Our grand entrance to the island was via the Mount Faber Line, offering breath-taking vistas from a high vantage point. Despite my belief that I was afraid of heights, we spent most of our time in the cable car, capturing shots of the landscapes.

The beauty of Singapore is inexhaustible, leading us to **Sky Helix**. Each of us was eager to experience it. As we sat in the open-air gondola, gently rotating as it ascended to a height of 79 meters above sea level, we savoured the uplifting experience with a cool drink in hand. But guess what was the highlight of the ride? Spotting Capella, where Taylor Swift stayed during her visit for The Eras Tour. Despite descending, we were still exhilarated by the breath-taking 360° views from Sentosa to the Keppel Bay area and the Southern Islands. After experiencing tranquillity in the air, it was time to dive into the



Fun with gang at Skyhelix



At S.E.A aquarium

ocean – well, **the S.E.A. Aquarium**, to be precise. One of the world's largest aquariums, its home to over 100,000 marine animals representing 1,000 species across more than 40 diverse habitats. Welcomed by two divers holding a special welcome board, we felt the warmth of the water and immersed ourselves in the aquatic wonders. Next up was an adrenaline-pumping adventure at **HyperDrive**, located in The Palawan complex on Sentosa Island. This futuristic track pushes the boundaries of karting by fusing virtual reality (VR) thrills with real-life hairpin turns. Despite finishing last, I was eager to do it again, channelling my inner Schumacher.

We then sped our way to the next thrilling experience: a yacht tour of the **Southern Islands**. S Kogu, Director, and Founder of Yacht Cruises, also served as our pilot, ensuring we'd never forget this ride. If only I could capture the video of our screams of joy, you'd realise how amazing it truly was. If only I could receive a certificate affirming my foodie credentials, I'd proudly present it to attest that I'm not exaggerating when I say that the food scene in Singapore is truly mind-blowing. Our itinerary was brimming with visits to some of the best restaurants in the city, each promising a culinary adventure like no other.



Immerse in the symphony of colours at Asia's largest bird park



Strike a pose with a birdie at every step



TRAVEL THERAPY

A Foodie's Singapore Saga

Our gastronomic journey commenced with a heartfelt meal at Coriander Leaf, where I experienced the epitome of authentic Pan-Asian cuisine for the first time. Amidst a diverse menu, the consistency in taste and quality of each dish was remarkable. Inspired by millennia-old traditions, Coriander Leaf aims to weave these stories onto the dining table, offering path-breaking culinary education and team-building programs, perfect for groups seeking a unique culinary experience.

Venturing into the oldest Mexican restaurant in Singapore, Margarita was an absolute delight. Sipping on delicious Margaritas, we indulged in the most amazing tacos, fire-roasted corn cobs, and their best-selling hand-churned, hand-piped churros, savouring every bite with sheer delight.

But the revelation came when I experienced Indian cuisine at Royal Taj Sentosa, surpassing the standards of many restaurants back in India. From the impeccable dal and biryani to the freshly baked naan, every dish was a culinary masterpiece that left us in a blissful silence, fully immersed in the flavours.

Firangi Superstar presented us with a unique perspective on Indian cuisine, offering a cinematic journey through the Motherland, reimaged through a kaleidoscopic fantasy lens. With its warm interiors and meticulously curated menu blending Indian flavours with modern presentation, the dining experience was nothing short of magical.

Walking away from Firangi Superstar led us to High Bar Society, where the concept of a gelato ice cream bar was redefined. Serving an eclectic fusion of alcoholic gelato ice cream and meticulously crafted cocktails, this establishment offered an array of flavours infused with the likes of Macallan and Singapore Sling, tantalising our



Scrumptious delight at Margarita



Let the night begin at Marina Bay Sands



Pose for a picture at Design Orchard

taste buds with every spoonful. And what better way to culminate our culinary adventure than at Jigger & Pony, hailed as one of the world's best bars. Nestled within Amara Hotel, this establishment, known as the 'Living Room of the City,' exudes a welcoming ambiance where guests can unwind and feel completely at home. With its warm yet professional service, classic drinks with a twist, and excellent snacks, Jigger & Pony is an absolute must-visit for anyone seeking an unforgettable drinking experience.

The best MICE Rolodex

While scouring the delicacies and fabulous experiences of the 'Red Dot', we went on a journey through some of the best MICE offerings in Singapore. The COMO Metropolitan, with its high tech transformative experiences holds a special place in the future of technology. Pan Pacific Orchard boasts an array of event spaces, perfect for gatherings and meetings. This makes it one of a kind in its own way. The Mount Faber Ballroom had a distinct appeal with spectacular views of the cable car line and the glistening harbour. Far East Hotels at Sentosa, the newest experience at Sentosa is an island gateway and getaway. It is a wonderfully - transformed heritage site brimming with adventure, history and romance. Moving on to the Marina Bay, PARKROYAL Collection Marina Bay was a breath of fresh air with their innovative design that enriches a sense of wellbeing and a strong connects with the nature. Moving onto the Mandarin Oriental with its exceptional taste is an eye catcher. With 510 opulent rooms and suites boasting stunning views, five exquisite restaurants including the award-winning MO BAR is perfect for groups looking for a relaxing getaway. The décor and aesthetically appealing artwork on the walls were the cherry on top of the cake. The experience was indeed a bundle of information.



HEADS IN BEDS

Ayana Bali

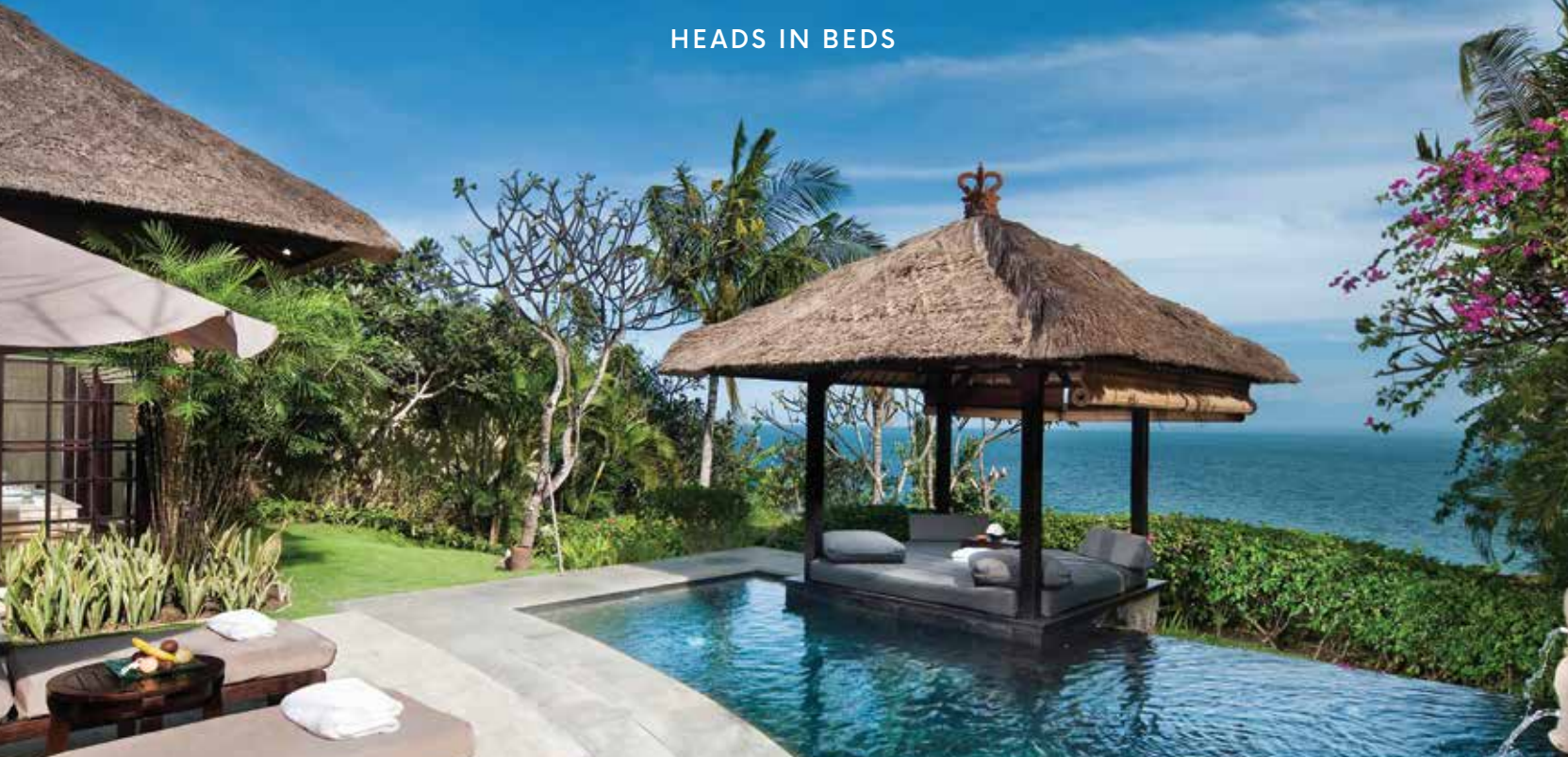
AN AWE-INSPIRING BALINESE HAVEN

Ayana Bali is where exquisite nature meets intoxicatingly stellar indulgences. With some 4,300 options to choose from, when it comes to choosing the best hotel in Bali, the bar is set high.

- *Misbaah Mansuri*



HEADS IN BEDS



Here is an island that is blessed with postcard scenes around every bend, even the most basic Bali villas and bungalows offer dreamy views and innovative designs from bamboo and volcanic rock. What do you give an island that has everything? I found the answer to this question during my stay at Ayana Villas in Bali.

An opulent check-in

Upon arrival, the AYANA Estate revealed itself as a constellation of luxury, comprising AYANA Resort Bali, AYANA Segara Bali, AYANA Villas Bali, and RIMBA by AYANA Bali. This sprawling estate boasts an impressive array of amenities, including 14 swimming pools and 26 dining venues, each offering a unique ambiance and exquisite culinary delights.

Stepping foot on AYANA Villas BALI, nestled within the expansive 222-acre AYANA Resort in Bali's Jimbaran Bay, was an experience that epitomised luxury and serenity. From the moment I arrived, the resort's commitment to creating an unforgettable stay was evident. The villas, part of a resort-within-a-resort concept, offer a unique blend of privacy and opulence, each perfectly secluded within the property's lush, cliff top gardens.

The villa I stayed in was a haven of luxury, with every detail thoughtfully designed for comfort and relaxation. The sprawling bedroom and bathroom were both elegantly furnished, and the separate living room provided a spacious retreat. However, it was

the private plunge pool and the outdoor bale, nestled among the tropical garden that truly captured the essence of a secluded paradise, every detail making me squeal. The bathtub, offering direct views of the ocean, allowed for moments of serene contemplation as I soaked in the beauty of Bali's coastline. The exquisite bedrooms and bathrooms have intricate stone carvings on the walls, below the his-and-her sinks, and along the large soaking tub. This décor, along with the alang-alang thatched roof, the private plunge pool and the outdoor cabana, creates an environment that is perfect for hiding away.

AYANA's signature personalised service was apparent in every

interaction. The staff's attention to detail was impeccable, from the flower-studded bath prepared upon my arrival to the seamless prioritization at the resort's iconic Rock Bar. It was these special touches that made my stay at AYANA Villas BALI not just a vacation, but a series of unforgettable moments of luxury and personalised care.

Beyond the villa itself, the resort offered an array of amenities and experiences, each designed to showcase the best of Balinese hospitality and culture. Yet, it was the tranquil atmosphere, the stunning natural surroundings, and the unparalleled service that made my stay at AYANA Villas BALI a truly exceptional experience.



HEADS IN BEDS

A cornucopia of experiences

On day one, my adventure began with a tour of the estate that unveiled the magic of AYANA's diverse offerings, culminating in a mesmerising evening at Rock Bar. Sipping cocktails as the sun dipped below the horizon, we were treated to a world-class dining experience, where the ambiance, service, and culinary mastery were in perfect harmony. The next morning unfolded with a serene breakfast at DAVA, setting a tranquil tone for a day dedicated to unwinding and refreshing the soul. The River Pool then beckoned, offering a secluded retreat where the water's embrace promised escape and serenity. Lunch at Sami Sami was an affair to remember, blending authentic Italian flavours with breath-taking views of the ocean, a feast not just for the palate but for the eyes as well. The afternoon was dedicated to the AYANA Spa's Thalassotherapy treatment, an immersive experience in the world's largest aquatonic pool and all my stresses had melted away with the water. The day concluded with a romantic sunset picnic at Kubu Beach, a

moment where time stood still, and the beauty of Bali was all-encompassing. There, amidst the whispers of the ocean and the vibrant hues painting the sky, time paused. Bali's mesmerising beauty unfolded around us in a moment so pure and captivating, it felt like the world had been created anew.

Indulgences galore

Day three began with an indulgent breakfast at DAVA, setting a luxurious tone. The morning's highlight was a couple's Balinese Massage at Spa on the Rocks, an extraordinary experience with the soundtrack of the Indian Ocean's waves.

It was a ceremonial journey beginning with a Balinese ritual that gently ushered us into a state of serene anticipation. The treatment unfolded as a rich, skin-refining body mask enveloped us, its luxurious texture promising renewal. Wrapped in a cocoon of warmth, the outside world faded away as gentle acupressure on the face and head invited a deeper state of relaxation. After a refreshing shower, the scent of frangipani filled the air as the body oil, massaged into our skin, eased

every tension, leaving behind a trail of nourishment and softness. The finale, a focused foot reflexology, aimed at revitalising internal health, left us feeling balanced and rejuvenated.

The Spa on the Rocks is perched dramatically atop a rugged cliff, encircled by the ocean's endless blues. This unique location, housing two spectacular spa villas, offers exclusivity not just in setting but in its specially curated menu, designed to harmonise with the breath-taking surroundings.

Lunch at Damar Terrace immersed us in a world of Asian flavours, served in an environment that captivated the senses. The afternoon brought a whimsical twist with a floating high tea in our private villa pool, marrying the relaxation of a pool day with the refined tradition of afternoon tea. The day reached its zenith with a romantic dinner at Asmara Gazebo, an intimate affair that transported us into a dreamlike state, accompanied by a five-course meal that is sure to be etched in our memory like nothing else can.

The final touch

The Asmara Gazebo experience was nothing short of magical—a

private dinner that truly embodied the essence of romance. Seated beneath a beautifully crafted gazebo, with delicate curtains billowing in the gentle sea breeze, the setting was straight out of a dream. The intimate setting with floral decorations that spelled out 'I Love You,' symbolised the meticulous care put into personalising the experience.

Soft candlelight flickered, casting a warm glow over the table, enhancing the natural twilight ambiance. Every course of the five-course meal was a culinary masterpiece, an orchestra of flavors that tantalised the senses, each dish outdoing the last. The seclusion provided by the gazebo offered a private slice of paradise, where the only sounds were the whispers of the ocean and the quiet intimacy shared between two people. Here, in this intimate dining enclave, the world seemed to stand still, allowing for a moment of pure connection against the backdrop of Bali's enchanting night sky. This was the magic created by the stellar staff and fabulousness that is Ayana Bali.



How has 2024 been for Ayana Bali?

We have experienced an exceptional beginning to 2024 at our resort. More arrivals and additional flights from several destinations have started to fly to Bali again and in late January, we warmly embraced numerous Chinese guests as they celebrated the Chinese New Year with us. Then, in March, we joyously observed Nyepi, the Balinese Day of Silence, marking the New Year according to the Balinese Saka Calendar.

This year, Nyepi held a special significance for AYANA Resort, following the soft launch of the SAKA Museum in 2023. The museum stands as our latest cultural destination, dedicated to the celebration of Nyepi. It features exhibits showcasing Ogoh-ogoh, giant effigies paraded on the eve of Nyepi, known as Pengrupukan day.

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

Our focus remains the guests experiences, Bali as a destination offers many opportunities, of beaches, mountains and culture among the top, we are very committed to make the guests experience the best it has ever been, we have enhanced our cultural experience with Saka museum, AYANA farm provides one additional options to live among the nature of Bali and the produce available on the island. Continuous innovation, caring guests experience, accompanied by spirited service will be again key as part of our strategy for this year.

Bali is inundated with properties, what gives the property an edge over the rest?

As the largest integrated resort in Bali, AYANA stands as a beacon of luxury, innovation, and unparalleled hospitality. Nestled amidst the lush landscapes of Bali, our expansive resort boasts four exquisite hotels, each offering a distinct ambiance and



Giordano Faggioli, General Manager

world-class amenities to cater to every traveller's preferences and desires.

With 28 dining destinations to choose from, AYANA presents a culinary journey like no other. From the iconic Rock Bar, perched atop towering cliffs with panoramic ocean views, to the newest additions of Japanese gastronomy at Honzen and Sumizen, guests are invited to indulge their palates in an array of flavours, textures, and experiences. Whether craving traditional Balinese cuisine, fresh seafood by the beach, or expertly crafted cocktails at sunset, AYANA's dining venues promise to delight even the most discerning of tastes.

Beyond gastronomic delights, AYANA offers a sanctuary of relaxation and rejuvenation. With 14 sprawling swimming pools scattered throughout the resort, guests can bask in the tropical sunshine or find moments of serenity amidst lush gardens and cascading waterfalls. Our secluded beach provides a tranquil escape, where pristine sands meet the azure waters of the Indian Ocean, offering the perfect setting for sun-soaked days and romantic evenings under the stars.

For those seeking ultimate pampering, the award-winning AYANA Spa beckons with a luxurious array of holistic treatments inspired by ancient Balinese traditions. Set amidst verdant gardens and tranquil ponds, the spa provides a haven of wellness and tranquillity, where expert therapists guide guests on a journey of self-discovery and renewal.

At AYANA, our commitment to excellence extends beyond mere accommodation – it embodies an ethos of hospitality that seeks to surpass expectations at every turn. Whether embarking on a romantic getaway, a family vacation, or a corporate retreat, guests are invited to immerse themselves in the unparalleled beauty and luxury of Bali's premier integrated resort, where every moment is crafted to create memories that last a lifetime.

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

I will start my morning with a hearty breakfast at one of the four breakfast restaurants located within the resort. My top choice is Karang at the new AYANA Segara Bali. In addition

to the buffet spread, Karang also offers several dishes with ingredients from our own AYANA Farm, ensuring the freshest and healthiest meal to start the day. Next, I will visit the Kubu Beach Club for a coconut by the pristine beach, followed by lunch at the Trattoria-style Italian restaurant Sami Sami. For relaxation, I plan to enjoy a signature spa treatment, either the Balinese massage or our Thalassotherapy overlooking the ocean. After this rejuvenating spa experience, I will begin my evening at the iconic Rock Bar, enjoying the sunset with arak-based cocktails in hand, followed by dinner.

What are your big plans and focus areas for the year ahead?

Our key focus is always to make our guests feel at home when they stay with us, fostering a sense of belonging and anticipation for their next visit. This commitment is reflected in our continuous efforts to deliver the best experience through exceptional service, personalised attention, and attention to every detail. From the warm welcome upon arrival to the thoughtful amenities in their rooms, we strive to exceed expectations and create lasting memories for every guest. Our dedication to excellence ensures that each stay with us is not just a visit, but an unforgettable experience that they'll cherish and eagerly anticipate returning to.

In addition to that, AYANA is evolving into more than just an integrated resort; it's becoming a premier destination in Bali. We are embarking on several major plans in 2024 and beyond, which encompass the development of new dining destinations and a night club. Stay tuned as we unveil these exciting developments, promising unforgettable experiences and elevating AYANA to new heights as a sought-after destination.

URBINO

HISTORICAL SHOWCASE

Offering a vast swathe of Italian civilisation, it watches over the surrounding countryside from its hill-perched vantage point. On the face of it, it is just a busy little town teeming with cafes, shops and tourists. But a visit reveals myriad other attractions.

- Inder Raj Ahluwalia

My start was quiet enough, with the drive here from La Foresteria being a ninety-minute affair that took me past fields, the seaside, and then green hills. Finally, Urbino loomed up above, a mass of golden concrete, its intact, stately palace etched against the sky.

An entry through the gate, followed by a walk straight in and up, deposited me smack in the middle of town, and indeed, in the middle of Italian heritage. From here narrow, cobbled streets flanked by brick buildings funnelled off in different directions.

Urbino's history is a repository of

sustained efforts towards artistic and architectural grandeur. In his effort to make his home the dwelling place of the Muses, Federico da Montefeltro called to his court the greatest personalities and artists of his time: Luciano Laurana; Francesco di Giorgio Martini; Raphael; Bramante and Piero della Francesca, all visited the town and left their mark.

Post-Renaissance, the town saw a period of new splendour in the beginning of the 18th Century when Clement XI, son of the aristocratic Albani family, ascended to the Papal throne. The family constructed civil and

religious buildings of note, and also unfolded and exposed the urban fabric to modern architectural renovations. Today, one gets to see the fruits of their architectural prowess.

In a rich field, the undoubted highlight is the Montefeltro's Ducal Palace, a stupefying testimony of Renaissance grandeur. It's one big labyrinth of rooms, halls, chambers, cellars, pantries, kitchens, and corridors. The two hours I spent exploring this grand, self-contained complex, admiring the numerous paintings, frescoes and statues that reflect the region's rich

history, was eddying to the hilt, but didn't quite do full justice.

Also housed in the palace is the 'Galleria Nazionale delle Marche', the city's foremost museum, preserving works of art ranging from the 14th to the 17th Century, including masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance, notably the 'Muta' (Portrait of a Gentle woman) by Raphael; 'Citta ideale' (the ideal city); the 'Flagellazione' (the Flagellation) by Piero della Francesca; and the 'Profanazione dell'Ostia (Profanation of the Host) by Paolo Uccello. Also at hand are exquisite works of Frederico Barocci; Titian; and Luca Signorelli.



TRAVEL THERAPY

It's a world of riches. Priceless decorations and ornaments embellish all corners of the palace, and particularly valuable are the portals, fireplaces and inlaid decorations of the doors that reach their climax in the 'Study', the ideal synthesis of art and culture. The next floor greets you with a large ceramics collection. The palace also houses the 'Museo Archeologico', a collection of ancient inscriptions, urns and memorial stones from the Roman era.

Emerging from the palace tour seems to propel one back into the real world. Just outside, life ebbed and flowed. The Duomo's steps were the right place to sit, take stock, and reflect, and I did just that, watching the crowd that was an even mix of tourists, locals, and students.

Urbino's plethora of attractions stretches on and beyond. Religious works of art abound in the 'Museo Diocesano Albani', while the 'House of Raphael' reveals the fascinating structure of a Renaissance private home. It is also worth stopping by at the 'Leonardo Castellani Hall of Engravings'; the 'Gallery of Plaster Casts'; and the 'Physics Cabinet'.

If this is Italy, there must be churches! Well, you've got that just about right. The fact is they come thick and fast. The Church of San Bernardino just outside the city; the 17th Century Church of the Santo Spirito; and the churches of San Francesco and San Domenico are all notable, architecturally beautiful shrines.

Amidst this maze of historical and religious attractions, the treasures of the Fraternities are probably Urbino's most secret heritage. These small churches, called oratories, were closed to the public for years, but are now open, showing the world of the fraternities, which characterised the Italians' life over the centuries so intensely, from a religious, social and artistic point of view. While a flair for art is a common thread among them all, the Oratories of San Giovanni and of San Giuseppe stand out for their



artistic richness and grandeur. Urbino deserves at least part of the blame for making Italian food an international rage. While here, feast heartily! Local cuisine tends to be traditional and uncomplicated, drawing on local produce, and strong on freshness. I strongly recommend the soups, especially 'cappelletti' in capon soup or 'passatelli'. If you like your meat, you'll feel at home. The menu goes beyond the lamb and beef drill to include an assortment of game meats. After tasting the roasts, it's time to savour the famous 'caciotta' - a fresh cheese with a delicate flavour. Also famous is the 'crescia sfogliata', a bread-like specialty usually filled with home-grown vegetables or local ham.

Wash all this down with a glass of light and sparkling Bianchetto del Maeauro wine. Then settle for a good old espresso, take a deep breath and venture out again.

My stay in the Marche region had lulled me into a certain sense of languor. That is precisely why Urbino came as a surprise, jerking me back to action!



Travel Facts

- Urbino is about five hours drive from Milan.
- Stay overnight. There's a hotel for your budget.
- The shopping experience revolves around local handicrafts, brass religious symbols and foodstuffs. Small shops vie with chic boutiques.
- If visiting in winter, ensure you've got those woollens handy. And take along a good pair of walking shoes.
- This town was made for walking, so do just that.



About the author

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



Dusit Hotels and Resorts

Uniting hospitality across continents

Dusit International, renowned for its unwavering commitment to impeccable hospitality, recently concluded its 'Three-City India Showcase,' a significant event aimed at strengthening ties and showcasing its diverse portfolio to key stakeholders across India.

- Tripti Jain

The showcase not only highlighted the brand's unique offerings but also served as a testament to its dedication to excellence in the global hospitality industry.

Rakesh Bhandari, Director of Global Sales, Dusit International's India office, expressed the significance of the showcase and shares, "The India Showcase provided us with a wonderful opportunity to connect with our esteemed partners in India and introduce them to the exceptional experiences offered by Dusit properties worldwide. Our goal is to deepen our relationships within the Indian market and continue providing unparalleled hospitality experiences to our guests."

Sanjana Bhattachan, Corporate Director of Global Sales, MICE, and Corporate, shares this sentiment, emphasising the brand's commitment to excellence. "Through this showcase, we aim to showcase Dusit's unique brand of hospitality and demonstrate our ability to cater to various segments of the travel market, including Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE)."

Korakot Kanchanapiroj, Director of Distribution Strategy & OTA Partnerships, emphasises the importance of innovation in meeting the evolving needs of travellers. "In today's digital age, it is essential for us to continuously innovate and adapt to changing consumer preferences. We are constantly exploring new distribution channels and partnerships to ensure seamless booking experiences for our guests."

Representatives from Dusit



properties worldwide also share insights into their unique offerings. Rifaa Ath Saeed, Dusit Thani Maldives, highlights the resort's commitment to sustainability and unparalleled service. "Our resort is not just a destination; it's an experience. We take pride in our dedication to sustainability and our efforts to provide our guests with unforgettable memories."

Ajish Menon, Dusit Thani Hua Hin, shares about the resort's emphasis on wellness and relaxation. "Dusit Thani Hua Hin is a sanctuary for those seeking peace and rejuvenation. With our world-class spa facilities and tranquil surroundings, we offer our guests an escape from the stresses of everyday life."

Arvind Barathwaj, Dusit Thani Abu Dhabi, shares about the property's strategic location and luxurious amenities. "Located in the heart of Abu Dhabi, Dusit Thani Abu Dhabi offers unparalleled convenience and luxury to both business and leisure travelers. With our state-of-the-art facilities and personalized service, we aim to exceed our guests' expectations."

Dusit International's 'Three-City India Showcase' exemplified the brand's commitment to excellence, innovation, and sustainability in the global hospitality industry. As Dusit continues to expand its footprint and uphold its legacy of unparalleled service, its India Showcase stands as a shining example of its dedication to exceeding guest expectations and setting new standards of hospitality excellence.



Furaveri Maldives

Haven in the Heart of the Indian Ocean

Amidst the crystal-clear waters of the Indian Ocean lies Furaveri Maldives, a sanctuary of luxury and tranquility that beckons travellers from around the globe. **Faizan Khan**, Manager of Sales, India and GCC market shares about the discerning tastes and preferences of Indian travellers.

- Tripti Jain



At Furaveri Maldives, they strive to create moments of magic that linger in the hearts and minds of their guests long after they depart, ensuring that their time is truly extraordinary. The extraordinary beauty and appeal of Maldives is increased at this spellbound property.

Exquisite accommodations

Furaveri Maldives boasts a collection of 11 distinct villa categories, each meticulously designed to offer a harmonious blend of elegance and comfort. From spacious beachfront villas to luxurious overwater retreats, every accommodation at Furaveri promises a private sanctuary where guests can unwind and rejuvenate amidst breath-taking natural beauty. Faizan shares, "Our diverse villa options cater to the unique preferences of Indian travellers, ensuring that every guest finds their perfect oasis in paradise."

Unforgettable experiences

Beyond its luxurious accommodations, Furaveri

Maldives offers a wealth of unforgettable experiences that immerse guests in the wonders of the Maldives. Whether it's snorkelling amidst vibrant coral reefs, embarking on a sunset dolphin cruise, or indulging in a private sandbank picnic, every moment at the property is infused with adventure and discovery. Faizan explains, "Our resort is dedicated to curating experiences that create lasting memories for our guests, offering a true taste of paradise that will stay with them long after they depart."

Culinary delights

Dining at the property is a culinary journey that tantalises the senses and satisfies the soul. With nine distinct dining venues serving a diverse array of international and Maldivian cuisine, guests can savour a symphony of flavours against the backdrop of stunning ocean views. From fresh seafood grills to authentic Maldivian curries, every dish at Furaveri is crafted with passion and precision to delight

even the most discerning palate. Faizan shares, "Our culinary offerings showcase the rich cultural heritage of the Maldives, inviting guests to embark on a gastronomic adventure unlike any other."

Wellness and serenity

For those seeking relaxation and rejuvenation, Furaveri Maldives offers a haven of tranquillity at its expansive Wellness Village. Here, guests can indulge in a range of holistic spa treatments, practice yoga overlooking the ocean, or embark on a wellness journey tailored to their individual needs. With state-of-the-art facilities and expert therapists, the Wellness Village the property is dedicated to promoting health, harmony, and balance for mind, body, and soul. Faizan adds, "Our Wellness Village is a sanctuary of serenity where guests can escape the stresses of everyday life and reconnect with their inner peace."

Commitment to sustainability

Faizan shares, "At Furaveri Maldives, environmental stewardship is at the heart of everything we do. From our

sustainable building practices to our coral reef conservation efforts, we are committed to protecting the fragile ecosystems that make the Maldives a true paradise on earth." Through initiatives such as beach clean-ups, reef monitoring programs, and community outreach, they strive to minimise the environmental footprint and preserve the natural beauty of the Maldives for future generations to enjoy. Furthermore he adds, "Our commitment to sustainability is an integral part of our ethos, as we work tirelessly to ensure that Furaveri Maldives remains a beacon of environmental responsibility in the Indian Ocean."

In a world where luxury is abundant and experiences are plentiful, Furaveri Maldives stands out as a beacon of excellence and hospitality in the heart of the Indian Ocean. With its exquisite accommodations, unforgettable experiences, culinary delights, wellness offerings, and commitment to sustainability, the property invites travellers from India and beyond to embark on a journey of discovery and relaxation unlike any other.



THE Sharjah WAY OF LIFE!

In February 2024, I had the privilege of experiencing the vibrant culture, rich heritage, and diverse attractions of Sharjah during the 13th Annual Sharjah Light Festival. From culinary delights to geological wonders, the Emirati gem offered a multifaceted glimpse into its rich heritage and natural beauty. Join me as I recount my adventures through the lens of 'The Sharjah Way.'

- Naina Nath



TRAVEL THERAPY

The Sharjah way of nature

Our first stop took us back in time, 93 million years to be precise, at the Buhais Geology Park. Set amidst geological significance, this park is a testament to Sharjah's history and natural wonders. The striking design of the building, resembling fossils, intrigued me from the onset. Inside, interactive displays unveiled the secrets of Sharjah's mountains and sand dunes, while exhibitions showcased the origins of limestone mountain ranges. The outdoor trail, adorned with unusual rock formations and ancient burial grounds, invited exploration, offering panoramic views of Jebel Buhais. As I traversed the park, I couldn't help but marvel at the efforts to preserve and educate visitors about Sharjah's geological heritage.

The Sharjah way of adventure

Day two unfolded with a journey into the wild at the Kalba Birds of Prey Centre. Here, the ancient tradition of

falconry thrives, inviting visitors to witness free-flying demonstrations and encounter native raptor species. Surrounded by the Khor Kalba nature reserve, the centre provided insights into Sharjah's wildlife landscape, from resident falcons to migrating wild raptors.

The serene ambiance of Khor Kalba further captivated me as I wandered through mangrove forests, home to unique biodiversity. Planting activities aimed at ecosystem regeneration echoed Sharjah's commitment to environmental conservation, leaving a lasting impression on me. Next on our itinerary was The Sharjah Safari, a sprawling sanctuary located within the Al Bardi Reserve. Spread over 8 square kilometers, this natural wonderland offers an immersive safari experience reminiscent of Africa. As we ventured into the jungles of Al Dhaid, I felt a rush of excitement, knowing that I was about to encounter exotic wildlife in their natural habitat. The safari's diverse landscapes, inspired by regions across Africa, unfolded

before my eyes, each region teeming with endemic species. From lions to giraffes, from deserts to savannahs, the Sharjah Safari embodied the essence of African wilderness, right here in Sharjah. This is a rather unique experience, especially for families and children.

The Sharjah way of culture

Exploring the Heart of Sharjah, we dove into the city's historical and cultural heartland. Amidst narrow alleys and traditional barjeel buildings, we immersed ourselves in Sharjah's cultural heritage. The restoration efforts underway breathe new life into this ancient district, offering a glimpse into Sharjah's merchant trade legacy. Surrounded by Museums and souks to explore, each activity narrates a chapter of Sharjah's storied past. The anticipation of potential UNESCO recognition adds a sense of significance to my exploration, and reinforces Sharjah's commitment to preserving its cultural heritage for future generations.





The Sharjah way of art

With a captivating blend of art and technology, the Rain Room at Sharjah Art Foundation offered a sensory journey like no other. Walking through a continuous downpour without getting wet felt surreal, evoking a profound connection to both nature and technology, illustrating their interplay along a complex spectrum. This immersive creation by Random International (a London-based art collective) exemplifies Sharjah's commitment to innovation and creativity. As I navigated the darkened underground space, pondering the intersection of humanity and nature in an increasingly mechanized world, the Rain

Room's presence in the Middle East marks a milestone in Sharjah's cultural landscape, leaving me awestruck by its ingenuity.

The Sharjah way of hospitality

Throughout my journey, Sharjah's hospitality radiated brightly, showcased by luxurious accommodations like The Chedi Al Bait Hotel and Sheraton Sharjah Beach Resort & Spa. A site inspection revealed the impeccable service and exquisite amenities that characterize the Sharjah hospitality experience. From lavish surroundings to warm hospitality, these establishments embodied the

essence of Arabian hospitality, leaving me feeling pampered and rejuvenated.

The Sharjah way of light

As night descended, Sharjah blossomed into a radiant spectacle with the Sharjah Light Festival. Artists from across the globe transformed landmarks into vibrant displays, merging science, creativity, and culture. The Light Village added to the excitement, featuring delightful cuisine and immersive activities. Visitors could partake in digital games and marvel at shimmering mirror balls. The festival captured Sharjah's lively essence, painting a vivid picture of the city's spirit beneath the twinkling sky.

Families laughed and children marveled at the magic, while friends gathered to share in the wonder. Each illuminated structure told a story, weaving together the past and present in a dazzling display of light. As the festivities continued into the night, the city came alive with energy and excitement, drawing people from near and far to experience the enchantment of Sharjah's illuminated landscape. As I bid farewell to this enchanting Emirate, I carried with me memories of a journey that transcended boundaries and embraced the true essence of Arabian hospitality. Until we meet again, Sharjah, shukran and ma'a as-salama!



Explore 4 Dham Yatras with Aananda Holidays

In the bustling landscape of travel agencies, Aananda Holidays emerges as a trusted guide for pilgrims on the sacred journey of the 4 Dham Yatras. Anjeet Kumar, Founder, Aananda Holidays shares the art of showcasing religious destinations.

- Tripti Jain

In a world where the quest for meaning and purpose transcends boundaries, Aananda Holidays remains steadfast in their mission to be the finest travel advisors for the 4 Dham Yatra in India, bridging the gap between the physical and the divine. With a legacy of excellence and a pioneering spirit, Aananda Holidays stands as a premier facilitator for travellers from both India and abroad, ensuring a seamless and enriching experience.

Pilgrimage meets pioneering spirit

Founded with a vision to provide unparalleled travel experiences, they have carved a niche in the realm of pilgrimage tourism. Anjeet shares, "Our expertise lies in organising the holy 4 Dham Yatras, catering to the pilgrims from Maharashtra, Gujarat, South India, and Madhya Pradesh in India, as well as NRIs from the US, UK, Malaysia, Netherlands, and Singapore."

The sacred trail

Amongst the four sacred sites, Kedarnath and Badrinath reign supreme, capturing the imagination of pilgrims worldwide. He adds, "We ensure a holistic experience by offering meticulously crafted packages, encompassing pre-booked accommodations in the Dhams and Uttarakhand, thereby streamlining the booking process for their guests."

Embracing new horizons

Continuing their tradition of innovation, they are set to introduce new products to their portfolio. Anjeet shares, "The



Anjeet Kumar

Adi Kailash and Om Parvat Yatras promise to offer spiritual seekers an opportunity to explore lesser-known yet equally divine destinations, expanding the horizons of pilgrimage tourism."

Wellness and rejuvenation

Beyond the spiritual realm, Aananda Holidays offers a diverse range of wellness, yoga, and rejuvenation packages across Northern India. From the ethereal beauty of Valley of Flowers to the serene landscapes of Auli and Chopta, these offerings cater to the holistic well-being of travellers, blending spirituality with wellness.

What the future holds

As the 4 Dham Yatras beckon, Aananda Holidays stands poised to embark on yet another journey of spiritual fulfilment and exploration. With a commitment to excellence and a passion for service, they continue to redefine pilgrimage tourism in India, embodying the ethos of devotion and discovery. The journey for Aananda Holidays is not merely about travel; it is about fostering connections, nurturing spirituality, and enriching lives. With each pilgrimage, they strive to create moments of transcendence, guiding our guests on a path of self-discovery and enlightenment. As pilgrims embark on their sacred odyssey, they find solace in the assurance that Aananda Holidays is their trusted companion, illuminating the path to spiritual enlightenment.



Phulay Bay

Luxury and tranquillity under one roof

Nestled along the pristine shores of Krabi, Thailand, Phulay Bay, A Ritz-Carlton Reserve, beckons travellers with its promise of opulence and serenity. Vidya Sagar, General Manager, Phulay Bay, shares the resort's commitment to providing an unparalleled experience.

-Tripti Jain



Vidya Sagar





Designed for bliss

The heart of Phulay Bay lies in its luxurious accommodations, meticulously crafted to offer guests a haven of tranquillity. As guests step into this secluded paradise, they are greeted by a symphony of luxury and natural beauty. Sagar shares, "Our villas epitomise elegance and sophistication, featuring private pools, spacious interiors, and breath-taking views of the Andaman Sea. Each villa is a sanctuary unto itself, where guests can unwind in absolute comfort and indulge in the lap of luxury. We strive to create a sanctuary where guests can escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life and immerse themselves in pure luxury."

Unforgettable stay

At Phulay Bay, personalised service is not just a promise but a way of life. Sagar talks about individualising experiences to

customer's taste and shares, "We pride ourselves on our unwavering dedication to exceeding guest expectations at every turn. From the moment guests arrive, they are greeted by a team of attentive staff who anticipate their every need. Whether it's arranging bespoke experiences or catering to dietary preferences, our staff goes above and beyond to ensure a truly unforgettable stay."

Gastronomic delights for discerning palates

Culinary excellence takes centre stage at Phulay Bay, where guests embark on a gastronomic journey like no other. Sagar explains, "Our resort boasts a diverse array of dining options, from fine dining restaurants to casual eateries, each offering a unique culinary experience. With a focus on fresh, locally sourced ingredients and innovative cooking techniques, every meal at Phulay Bay is a celebration of flavour and sophistication."

Wellness and rejuvenation amidst Nature

Phulay Bay is not just a place to rest; it's a sanctuary for the body, mind, and soul. Sagar emphasises at the bespoke experiences and adds, "We believe in the transformative power of wellness, which is why we offer a range of holistic spa treatments designed to rejuvenate and revitalise. From yoga sessions overlooking the tranquil sea to indulgent spa treatments inspired by ancient Thai traditions, guests are invited to embark on a journey of self-discovery and renewal."

The heart of nature

Beyond its luxurious accommodations and world-class amenities, Phulay Bay offers guests the opportunity to connect with the natural beauty of Krabi. Sagar shares, "Our resort serves as a gateway to some of the most breath-taking landscapes in Thailand, where guests can explore pristine beaches, lush rainforests, and crystal-clear

waters. Whether it's kayaking through mangrove forests or hiking to hidden waterfalls, Phulay Bay invites guests to immerse themselves in the wonders of nature.

In the tranquil embrace of Phulay Bay, guests discover a world of unparalleled luxury. The vision for the resort as a sanctuary of indulgence and rejuvenation shines through in every aspect of the guest experience. As travellers seek refuge from the stresses of modern life, it stands as a sense of serenity, inviting them to unwind, recharge, and reconnect with themselves and the natural world. Phulay Bay is more than just a destination; it's a journey of discovery, where every moment is infused with luxury, beauty, and unparalleled hospitality.



Trulyy India



Naresh Arora

Enriching authentic experiences

In the world of hospitality, the pursuit of excellence goes beyond mere accommodation; it entails curating authentic experiences that resonate with guests long after their stay. Naresh Arora, Managing Director, Trulyy India, shares the ethos of the properties as personalised and authentic service.

- Tripti Jain

Embracing regional authenticity

At Trulyy India properties, guests are not mere spectators but active participants in the cultural landscape of their surroundings. Whether it's savouring traditional cuisine, partaking in local festivities, or exploring historical landmarks, every moment is imbued with the essence of the region. Naresh Arora believes that the heart of hospitality lies in embracing the rich tapestry of regional culture and traditions. He shares, "Each destination has a unique story to tell, and it is our responsibility to weave these narratives into the guest experience. We are on the path to redefine hospitality, prioritising cultural immersion and guest satisfaction above all else."

Seasonal dynamics

Understanding the ebb and flow of seasonal trends is important in the hospitality industry. Naresh Arora emphasises the importance of strategic planning and shares, "By anticipating fluctuations in demand, we can optimise resources and tailor our offerings to meet guest expectations. During peak seasons, such as winter wildlife expeditions or destination weddings, our properties experience heightened demand, requiring meticulous preparation and seamless execution to ensure a memorable stay for every guest."

Innovating culinary experiences

Food is not merely sustenance but a gateway to cultural

exploration. Naresh Arora shares, "The dining table is where stories are shared, and memories are made. Trulyy India properties boast an array of dining options, each meticulously curated to showcase the diverse flavours and culinary heritage of the region. From farm-to-table experiences to immersive cooking classes, guests are invited on a gastronomic journey that tantalises the senses and nourishes the soul."

Enriching connections

With plans to introduce new amenities and venture into untapped markets, Trulyy India seeks to continue its legacy of excellence while adapting to the changing needs of discerning travellers. Naresh Arora envisions a future where the brand expands its footprint while remaining true to its core values. He shares, "Expansion is not merely about physical growth but about enriching the guest experience and fostering meaningful connections."

Nurturing human touch

Beyond luxurious accommodations and exquisite dining, they understand that true hospitality is rooted in human connection. He shares, "At the heart of every memorable stay is the genuine warmth and hospitality extended by our team." From personalised welcome gestures to attentive service that anticipates guest needs, Trulyy India aims to create moments of delight and forge lasting bonds with every visitor.

Hospitality is not just a business; it's a way of life. Trulyy India has redefined hospitality, placing a premium on authenticity, innovation, and genuine human connection. As the industry continues to evolve, one thing remains constant: the unwavering commitment to crafting unforgettable experiences that leave a lasting imprint on the hearts of guests. The brand stands as a beacon of excellence in the realm of hospitality.



A glimpse of the Great Indian Travel Bazaar 2023

The 12th edition of the Great Indian Travel Bazaar was successfully held from April 23-25, 2023 at Jaipur, Rajasthan. It was jointly organised by the Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan (Host State), the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). It is supported by the Hotel & Restaurant Association of Rajasthan (HRAR), Indian Heritage Hotels Association (IHHA) and Rajasthan Association of Tour Operators (RATO). Gear up for the 13th edition which is to be held in May.



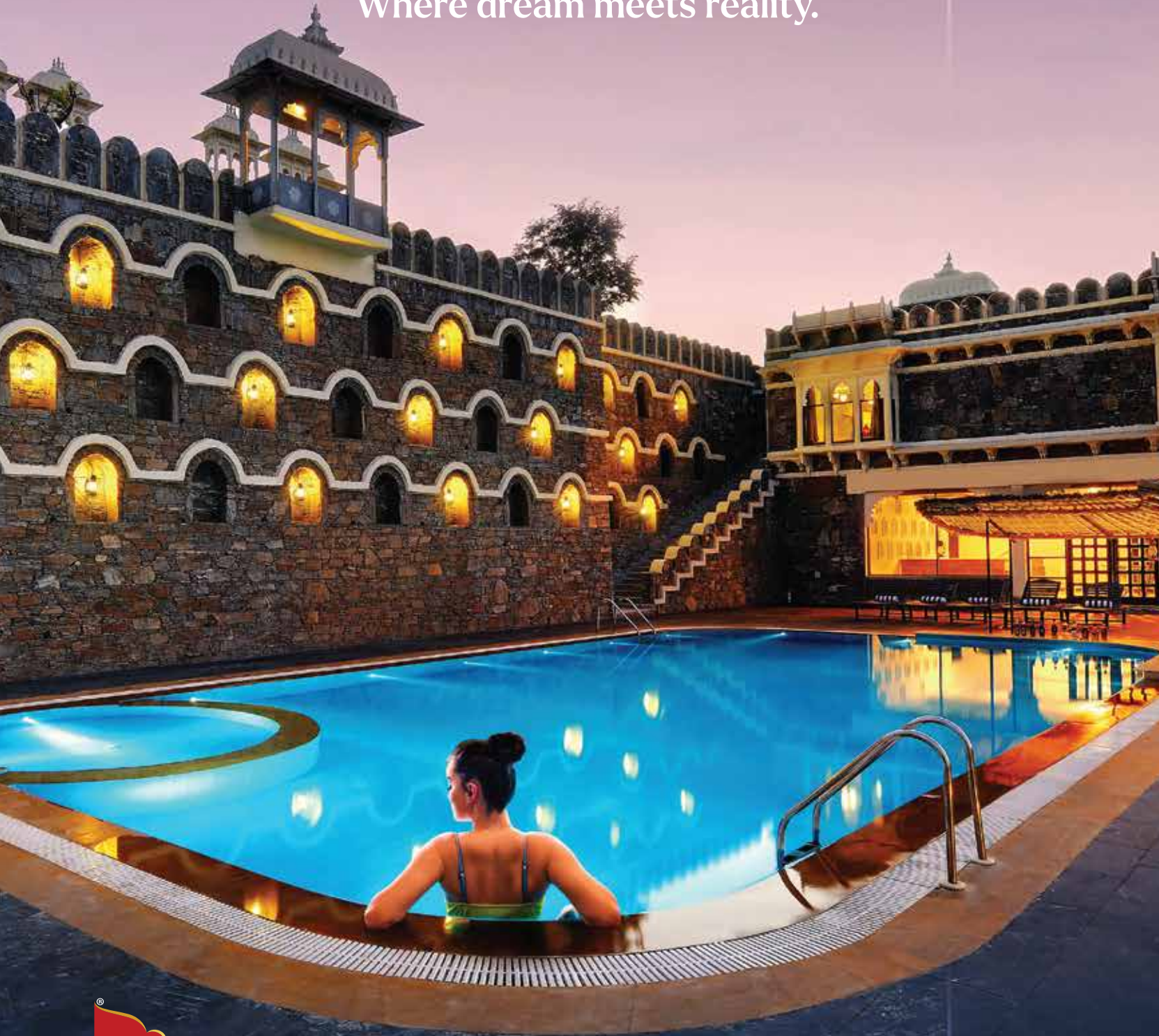
ITB Berlin 2024 receives an overwhelming response from the world

This year's ITB Berlin showed a clear focus on shaping the future and once again underlined its role as the leading international platform for business, innovation and networking. ITB Berlin recorded a slight increase with nearly 100,000 attendees – a result that exceeded expectations in the face of challenging strike circumstances. Diverse and globally represented, more than 5,500 exhibitors from 170 countries illuminated the three business days, occupying all 27 exhibition halls at the Berlin Exhibition Grounds.



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Reethi Faru Maldives

EXPLORING THE AQUATIC MARVELS



Curled up within the pristine waters of the Maldives, Reethi Faru stands as natural beauty of unparalleled experiences. **Prakhar Dhyani, Associate Director, Sales & Marketing, Reethi Faru Maldives** shares a glimpse of the property for travellers to immerse themselves in the wonders of the Indian Ocean.

- Tripti Jain



HOTELLIGENCE

This idyllic resort offers a sanctuary for traveller's adventure, relaxation and a getaway from their busy lives. From its renowned snorkelling sites to its commitment to sustainability, Reethi Faru beckons adventurers and romantics alike to indulge in a symphony of marine marvels and eco-conscious luxury.

Embracing the Indian market

Despite recent fluctuations in travel trends, Reethi Faru remains steadfast in its commitment to the Indian market. Prakhar adds, "Recognising India's significance as a key source market for the Maldives, the resort endeavours to strengthen its presence through strategic partnerships and targeted marketing campaigns. We are dedicated to nurturing our relationship with Indian travellers, offering tailored experiences that resonate with their preferences and aspirations."

A snorkeler's paradise

At the heart of Reethi Faru lies one of the best snorkelling sites in the Raa Atoll. With eight entry and exit points, guests have the opportunity

to explore a kaleidoscope of marine life, including vibrant coral reefs teeming with turtles, reef sharks, and various ray species. Prakhar shares, "Our house reef offers a mesmerising underwater spectacle, captivating snorkelers with its abundance of marine wonders."

Unravelling the water sports extravaganza

Beyond its enchanting snorkelling sites, Reethi Faru boasts one of the largest selections of water sports activities in the Maldives. Speaking on the same lines Parkhar adds, "From exhilarating Sea bob rides to gravity-defying fly boarding adventures, guests can embark on thrilling escapades amidst the azure waters. We aim to provide an unparalleled water sports experience, catering to adrenaline enthusiasts and leisure seekers alike."

Gastronomic delights and romantic retreats

Elevating the dining experience to new heights, Reethi Faru offers a myriad of unique culinary experiences. Whether savouring a sumptuous meal under the stars or

renewing vows amidst the island's natural splendour, guests are treated to an array of romantic indulgences. Prakhar adds, "Our resort encapsulates the essence of romance, weaving together exquisite dining options and intimate moments to create unforgettable memories."

Nurturing sustainability

As a bio-resort, Reethi Faru is committed to preserving the natural ecosystem of its island paradise. Prakhar shares, "Through initiatives such as island cleaning activities, coral restoration projects, and organic farming, the resort endeavours to minimise its environmental footprint while fostering a harmonious

coexistence with nature. Sustainability lies at the core of our ethos, guiding our efforts to protect and preserve the Maldives' fragile ecosystem."

In the azure expanse of the Maldivian waters, Reethi Faru emerges as a beacon of unparalleled beauty and boundless adventure. With its captivating snorkelling sites, diverse array of water sports activities, and commitment to sustainability, the resort invites guests to embark on a journey of discovery and rejuvenation. At Reethi Faru, they aspire to create moments that transcend the ordinary, allowing guests to forge lasting memories amidst the splendour of the Maldives.



Exploring Singapore's Top-Notch MICE Offerings

Singapore, known as the 'Red Dot,' is a prime destination for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE), offering a variety of luxurious and innovative venues for every event. The COMO Metropolitan excels in providing high-tech transformative experiences, making it an excellent choice for technology-focused events. Pan Pacific Orchard boasts versatile event spaces, perfect for hosting gatherings and meetings. Mount Faber Ballroom offers a distinctive appeal with picturesque views of the cable car line and glistening harbour, adding elegance to any occasion.

Far East Hotels at Sentosa combines adventure, history, and romance, presenting a unique island getaway that is ideal for memorable experiences. PARKROYAL Collection Marina Bay impresses with its innovative design and focus on well-being, providing a serene and refreshing atmosphere for attendees. Mandarin Oriental captures luxury with its opulent rooms and suites offering stunning views, alongside exquisite dining options including the award-winning MO BAR. Singapore's diverse MICE offerings make it a sought-after destination for hosting exceptional and unforgettable events. From the cutting-edge technology at COMO Metropolitan to the serene environment at PARKROYAL Collection Marina Bay, the city provides the perfect blend of modern amenities and natural beauty for events that leave a lasting impression.



VFS Global travel trade outreach attracts 1,200 agents across 12 cities

VFS Global, advancing its pre-season engagement with the travel trade in India, organised a series of roadshows across 12 cities in February and March. The roadshows enabled the company to share insights on their plans for the upcoming peak travel season and provided the agents a platform to address the challenges that they encounter. The programme commenced in Bhubaneswar on 19 February and concluded on 26 March in Kochi. The other cities where these roadshows were conducted include Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Jalandhar, Chandigarh, New Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, and Chennai. Over 1,200 agents from across these cities participated in the event.



Erco Travels celebrates 25 Years of Excellence and unveils new logo

Erco Travels, a pioneering force in the Indian inbound travel industry, proudly commemorated its Silver Jubilee on March 15, 2024, at Hotel Le Meridien, New Delhi. The event was a momentous occasion for the company, marked by the unveiling of their new company logo, symbolising their journey of growth, resilience, and commitment to tourism industry. The new logo, a fusion of the Conch Shell or Shankh and Mandala art, embodies Erco Travels' core values of new beginnings, prosperity, harmony, and unity. This innovative design encapsulates the essence of the company's evolution from its modest beginnings to becoming a beacon of excellence in the travel industry.



TCI organises a meet and greet for its members in Delhi

Travel Club of India held a networking event for its members and the tourism industry. The evening was graced by the dignitaries from the industry!



SSR Travel organises roadshows in India showcasing properties of Bali

SSR Travel Solutions brings together Luxury properties of Bali under one roof in a roadshow organised in Delhi and Mumbai.



TIA organises Rangotsav for the industry and its members

TIA held its Networking evening on 21st March 2024 at Qutab Golf Club for its members and partners. The august gathering had more than one hundred participants including representatives from Hong Kong Tourism Board, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Tourism Malaysia, Accor group of Hotels, Clarks Hotels, Aalia Collection, Egypt Air, Malaysia Airlines, Alliance Air and VFS Global Tourism Services.



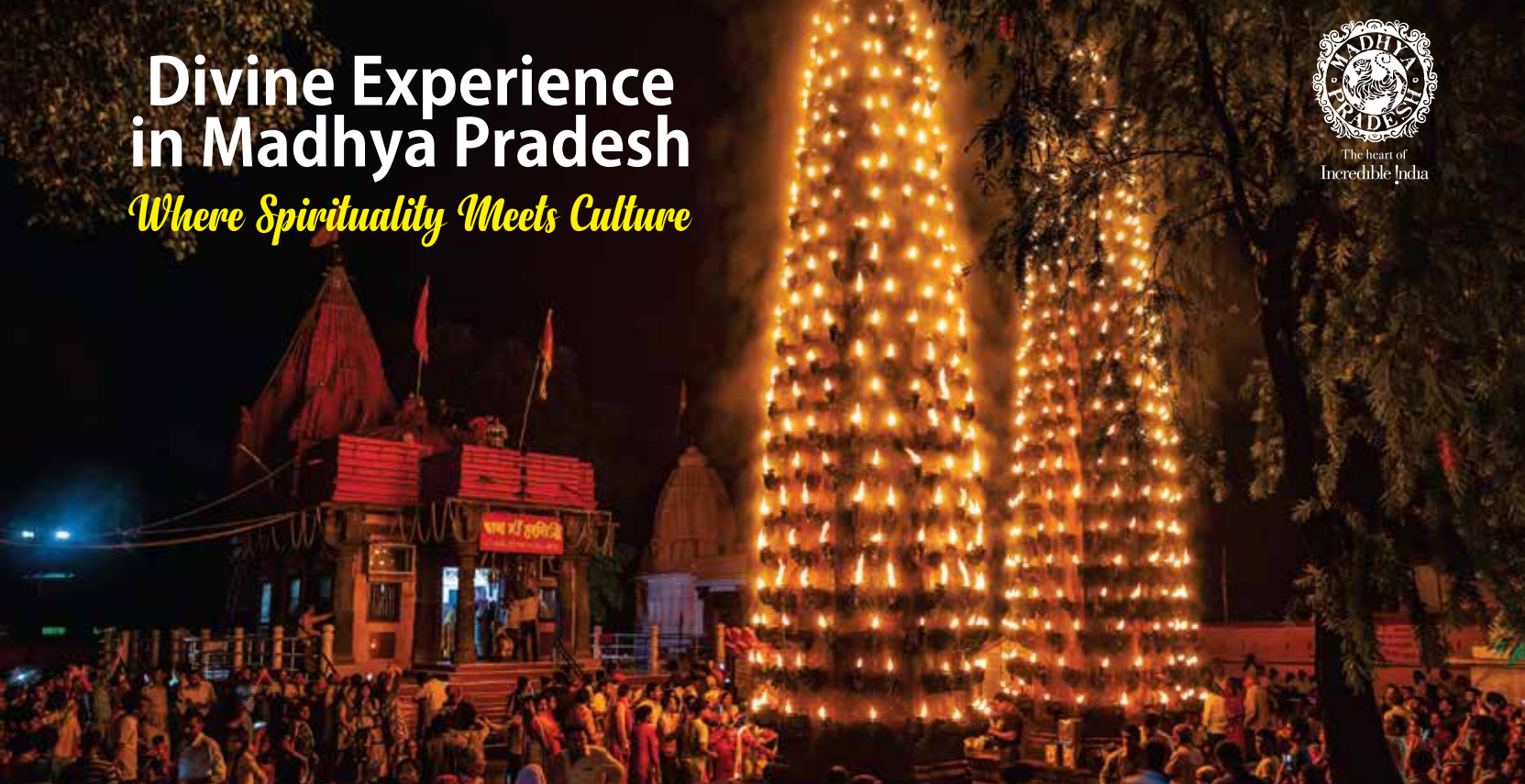
Vietnam Airlines and Aeroprime Group opens a new office space in Delhi

They are all set to spread awareness on the non-stop connectivity highlighting the introduction of Airbus A350 from New Delhi to Vietnam commencing on May 15th. Marking a significant milestone in their journey of connecting cultures, people, and places. This occasion was not just a celebration of their new space but a reaffirmation of their commitment to the Indian market.



Divine Experience in Madhya Pradesh

Where Spirituality Meets Culture



MP awaits you to offer a journey through richness and diversity



Madhya Pradesh known as the Heart of Incredible India is a Multispecialty Tourism Destination of First Choice where vibrant culture dances, age-old traditions whisper, beauty holds you spellbound, and diversity welcomes you with open arms. Spiritual tourism is flourishing and inviting you to delve into the Heart of India and discover its soul. The state is beyond its three UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Adventure & Beauty, and Cultural Delights. Indulge in the spiritual tapestry of two divine Jyotirlingas – Omkareshwar & Mahakaleshwar, Chitrakoot, Orchha Temple, Sandipani Ashram at Ujjain each a testament to India's rich culture.

Unveil the Sacred Jyotirlingas - 2

Madhya Pradesh is home to two out of twelve Jyotirlingas, one of the most sacred Shiva shrines in India. Ujjain known as the "City of Temples" is home to the Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga, nestled on the banks of the Kshipra River. Walk the newly inaugurated path of Mahakal Lok, leading you to the revered Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga. If you have planned to visit Mahakaleshwar temple, do not forget to seek blessings from Harsiddhi Temple, Kal Bhairav Temple, Mangalnath Temple, Shri Chintaman

Ganesh Temple, Navgrah Shani Mandir, and Gadhkalika Temple. Another key attraction is the Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga. The ancient temple, full of elaborate sculptures, attracts those looking for comfort and blessings as a symbol of unwavering faith located at the sacred island shaped like 'Aum'. The 108-foot-tall "Statue of Oneness" of Adi Shankaracharya at Omkareshwar is a must-explore spiritual destination in the precincts.

Ram Mandir's at Chitrakoot & Orchha

Ram Raja Temple, Orchha: Witness a unique tradition where Lord Rama is worshipped as King. Explore the historic town of Orchha nestled on the banks of the Betwa River, founded in the 16th century by the Bundela Rajput chief Rudra Pratap. Delve into its captivating architecture and vibrant history. Enjoy the nearby attractions and activities like river rafting and kayaking, jungle safari, the captivating architecture, light and sound show at Orchha.

Chitrakoot: Owing to its mythological significance and natural beauty, Chitrakoot is popularly described as 'the place of many wonders'. The Hindu trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh are believed to have taken their incarnation in Chitrakoot. This sacred place is

(deer) in the region. According to folklore, Lord Ram and Sita spent eleven of their fourteen years of exile in the deep jungles of Chitrakoot.

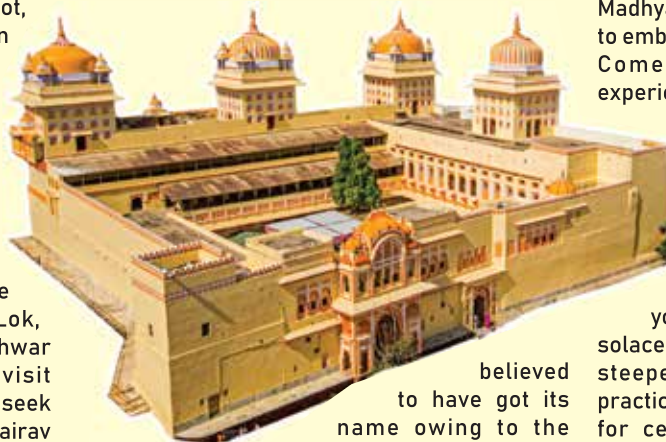


Sandipani Ashram at Ujjain

Ancient Ujjain also thrived as a prestigious center of learning around the beginning of the Mahabharata period. The text mentions renowned figures like Lord Krishna and Sudama receiving education at the ashram of Guru Sandipani. The location of the ashram on Mangalnath Road and the presence of numbers engraved on a stone are believed to be by Guru Sandipani himself. Ankpat is where Lord Krishna washed his writings. Gomti Kund is an ancient water source, mentioned in the Puranas, served as the lifeblood of the ashram, further emphasizing its historical roots.

Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board welcomes you to embark on a transformative spiritual journey. Come, discover the divine within, and experience the magic of this incredible land.

Immerse in the divine state, where ancient temples resonate with devotion and vibrant culture ignites the senses. Madhya Pradesh boasts of an unmatched tapestry of religions, cultures, and languages, offering a feast for every curious soul. Whether you seek architectural marvels or spiritual solace, the state has it all. This spiritual haven, steeped in ancient traditions and diverse practices, has beckoned pilgrims and seekers for centuries and created a symphony of holiness.



believed to have got its name owing to the presence of 'cheetal'

APPOINTMENTS



The Standard

The Standard appoints Sushant Tiwari as the Sales Manager, India and Middle East. Sushant comes with over 15 years of experience in B2B Sales in Hotels and Airlines. He sells Maldives Resorts in Indian market from 2016 and has played pivotal role in establishing Maldives Resorts in Indian Market. He introduced Baglioni, Heritance and Adaaran brand resorts in Indian Market and established India as one of the key feeder markets to these resorts.

Conrad Maldives

Conrad Maldives Rangali Island announces the appointment of Thomas Hoeborn as General Manager. A hospitality veteran with close to 40 years in the industry, Hoeborn's new role will see him further drive Conrad Maldives Rangali Island's on-going commitment to luxury and innovative guest experiences.



Fortune Hotels

Fortune Hotels, a member of ITC's hotel group is pleased to welcome General Manager, Ajinkya Salunkhe to Fortune Select Global in Gurgaon. This strategic addition to the leadership team underscores Fortune Hotels' unwavering commitment to delivering unparalleled services and exceptional guest experiences.

Atmosphere Core

International hospitality company, Atmosphere Core, announces two strategic senior corporate appointments. The company welcomes Anupam Banerjee as the Vice President of Food & Beverage and Euan Blake as the Assistant Vice President of Communications. Based in the Maldives, the leaders will be responsible for Atmosphere Core's three brands, THE OZEN COLLECTION, COLOURS OF OBLU, and Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts.



THE PLACE TO BE

The world is yours to explore. Across Thailand, Laos, the Maldives, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, the Middle East or Japan, you can find a place you want to be. This is the essence of Centara Hotels & Resorts. Whether your clients are planning a family beach holiday, an immersive cultural experience or an exciting urban getaway, Centara's signature hospitality, warm Thai family values and world-class service will be at the heart of their stay anywhere in the world.



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MALDIVES



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