India's Leading, Multi-Award-Winning Travel Magazine

TRAVEL turtle

VOLUME 6 | ISSUE 10
OCTOBER 2026
₹200/-
PAGES 72

www.travelturtle.world



Seychelles

THE SOUL BEHIND THE SHORE

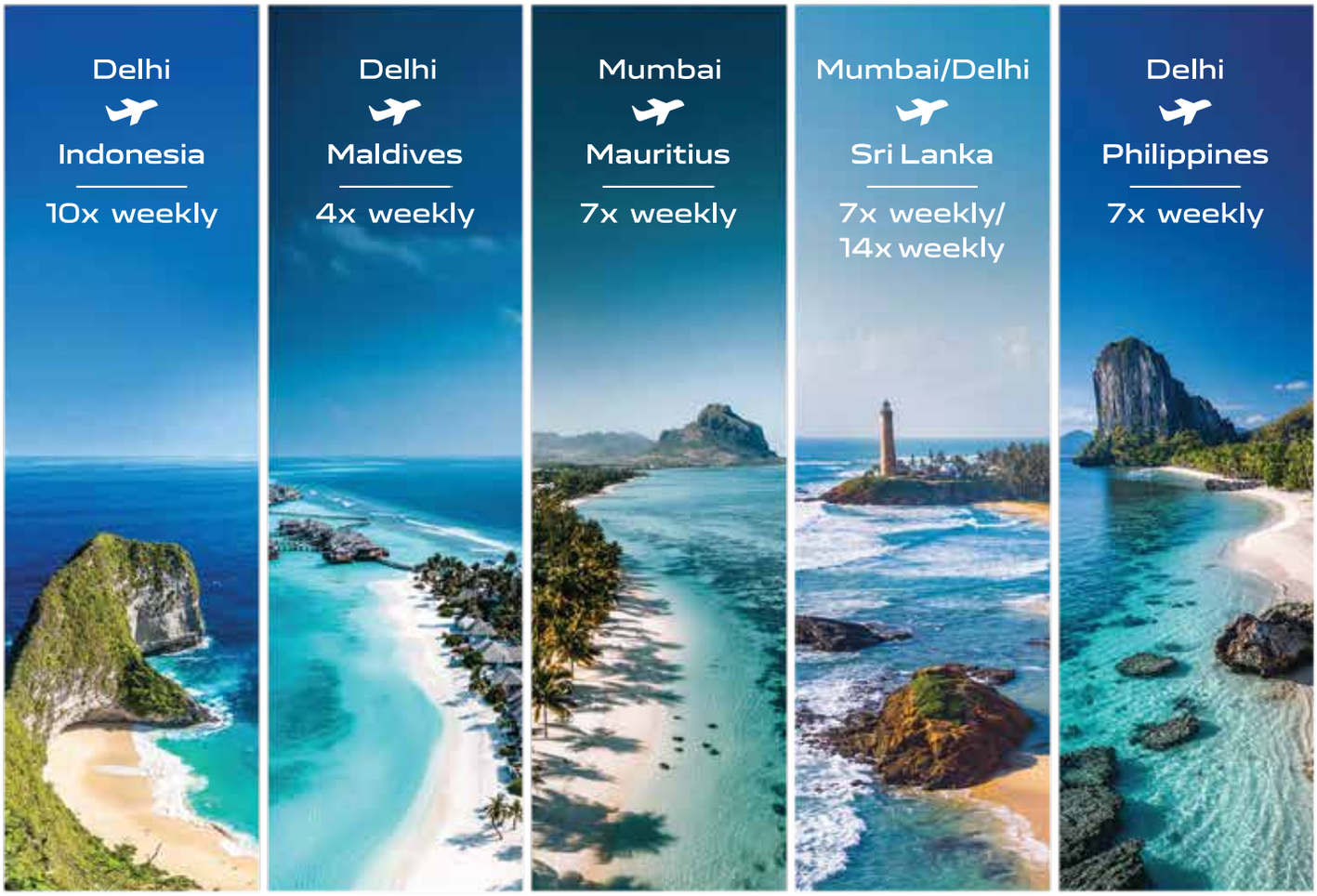
STAR ALLIANCE

AIR INDIA



50x WEEKLY FLIGHTS TO THE WORLD'S BEST BEACHES

Non-stop connectivity from Delhi and Mumbai



Hot Gourmet Meals

3-Cabin Configuration Including India's Only Premium Economy*

1200+ Hours of Entertainment

*On select routes

For more information, please contact your Air India sales representative.

EDITORS LETTER

The Things We Carry Home

"Badi sohni sewa kiti inna ne. Sohna safar si"

They had looked after us so beautifully. It was a beautiful journey.

I heard these words from an elderly woman as I returned to India from Greece after attending the TAFI Convention. Travelling with her son, she had just arrived home and bent down to touch the Indian ground beneath her feet. What moved me most, however, was the gratitude with which she thanked the people who had assisted her along the way.

I don't know how long her journey had been, but I know what she carried home from it: the feeling of having been cared for. In an industry that constantly chases the next destination, the next big experience and the next benchmark in hospitality, her words felt like a quiet reminder of what truly matters. We often measure travel in miles covered, meetings attended and experiences curated. Yet, sometimes, its greatest success lies in something far simpler: making another person feel that their journey mattered.

Perhaps that is what makes this industry so special. Behind every itinerary, every destination and every hotel is a human story waiting to unfold.

September certainly gave us plenty of stories to bring you this October. Between the IATO gatherings and the TAFI Convention in Greece, it was a month of conversations, connections, fresh perspectives and renewed enthusiasm for an industry that never stands still. In this edition, we take you to Seychelles, looking beyond its postcard-perfect shores to explore its distinctive appeal for today's traveller. We also bring you a special story and interview on Amrit Bhavan, exploring the people and ideas shaping its hospitality offering. Alongside our industry coverage, these stories reflect the many dimensions of travel, from discovering new destinations to understanding the experiences that make them memorable.

As you turn these pages, I hope you find inspiration, fresh ideas and perhaps a destination you will want to explore next.

And above all, I hope we remember what that woman reminded me: a beautiful journey is not always about where we go, but how we feel along the way.

Happy reading, and happy travels!



Bharti Sharma

Bharti Sharma
Editor

: travelturtlemag



Travel Turtle Team

Publisher: **Harish Chandra Uniyal**
Editor: **Bharti Sharma**
Executive Director: **Sudipta Saha**

Bureau Chief (West): **Naina Nath**
Assistant Editor: **Tripti Jain**
Sub-Editor: **Srishti Mukherjee**
Itika Nindrajog

Contributing Editors:
Inder Raj Ahluwalia
Misbaah Mansuri

Marketing: **Tejas Sharma**

Art Director: **Pankti Anjaria**
Rajas More
Legal Consultant: **Aditya Singh**
Photographer: **Khurshed Ahmad**
Circulation: **Pradeep Kumar**
Accounts: **Dinesh Kumar**

ACHIEVERS' WORLD CSR TIMES

All information in Travel Turtle is derived from sources we consider reliable. It is passed on to our readers without any responsibility on our part. Opinions/views expressed by third parties in abstract or in interviews are not necessarily shared by us. Material appearing in the magazine cannot be reproduced in whole or in part(s) without prior permission. The publisher assumes no responsibility for material lost or damaged in transit.

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

WHEN TRAVEL TAKES AN UNEXPECTED TURN,

Trust A Specialist

TO GET YOU BACK ON COURSE.



ASEGŌ

26 YEARS OF PROTECTING JOURNEYS!

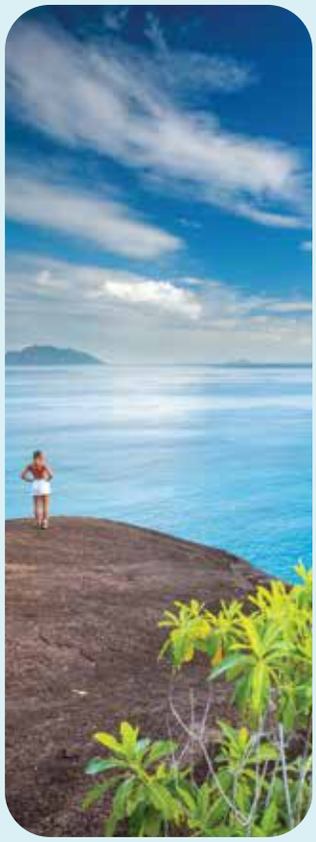
TALK TO US TODAY!

Note: Assistance services are provided by Asego Global Assistance Limited. Please note that insurance is underwritten by an IRDAI authorised underwriter and is a subject matter of solicitation. The content expressed in this poster is for information purpose only and it does not accept any liability of any sort unless confirmed by an authorized representative of Asego. All Insurance policies are sold under the Corporate Agency of Asego Insurance LLP bearing IRDAI registration no. CA0776.

24x7 helpline: +91 8448582205 **I** customersupport@asego.in **I** claims@asego.in

*T&C Apply

Contents



16-18
Seychelles
The soul behind the shore



24-26
Courchevel Tourism
Eight decades of Alpine whimsy



32-34
IATO
Charting India's Tourism Opportunity



38-40
Amrit Bhawan
Haridwar beyond the city



42-44
Vida Aljada
A new Sharjah


Get Upto 10% Off on Hotels
Discover
Masterpieces That Inspire
Where art, culture & history come together
rezlive.com
award winning global reservation system
experience
abu dhabi



TBO.Com hosts exclusive Washington, DC Destination training for travel trade in Mumbai

Bianca Coralo, Global Tourism Development Manager at Destination DC, led an exclusive travel trade training session at Fairmont Mumbai, showcasing Washington, DC's diverse offerings in food, culture, museums, events and experiential travel, and highlighting the growing demand for immersive, personalised itineraries beyond its iconic landmarks.



Synergi Hospitality partners with Tiara, Calicut

Synergi Hospitality has partnered with Tiara by MPS, Calicut, to strengthen its offline marketing and expand its presence across key travel and hospitality segments. The 105-key contemporary hotel offers Suites, Studio, Premium and Deluxe rooms, a city-facing pool, specialty and all-day dining, spa, gym, and banquet and conference facilities, catering to both business and leisure travellers visiting Calicut.

Ministry of Tourism gears up for special campaign 6.0

The Ministry of Tourism is preparing for the Government of India's Special Campaign 6.0, running from October 2–31, 2026, to promote Swachhata, reduce pendency and improve e-waste collection, segregation and disposal. The campaign will focus on public-service field and outstation offices, Ministries, Departments, Autonomous Bodies and Public Sector Undertakings. It will be conducted in two phases: preparation from September 15–30, followed by implementation from October 2–31, 2026.





Brand USA selects 15 Indian travel trade ambassadors, partners with Emirates

Brand USA has appointed 250 Global Travel Trade Ambassadors worldwide, including 15 from India, to mark America's 250th anniversary. The network aims to inspire travel to the US, strengthen destination expertise and support trade engagement. Brand USA India has also partnered with Emirates as the program's preferred airline, enhancing connectivity to the US.



Air India adds new Boeing 787-9

Air India has inducted its fourth line-fit Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner of 2026, with aircraft VT-AWD arriving in Delhi from Boeing's Everett facility in Washington as part of its fleet renewal programme. The aircraft's acceptance was led by Yuvraj Puri, Chief Manager Technical Services (Engineering), alongside teams from engineering, product, customer experience and operations. Features include Bluetooth-enabled inflight entertainment across all classes and electronically dimmable windows controlled via the entertainment system.



teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi

Explore Abu Dhabi

04 Days from

US$ 505*

per person

Inclusions:

- ✓ 03 Nights Accommodation
- ✓ Daily Breakfast
- ✓ Return Airport Transfers From Abu Dhabi Intl. Airport on Private
- ✓ Abu Dhabi City Tour on Private
- ✓ Yas Island 1 Day 2 Parks from Abu Dhabi - Ticket Only
- ✓ teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi - Ticket Only
- ✓ BAPS Hindu Temple Tour from Abu Dhabi with transfers on Private

Remarks: Rates are based on DBL/TWN sharing basis & are Commissionable to Travel Agents. Rates and Offers are subject to change without prior notice & are subject to availability. Valid till 15Dec 2026 (Except Peak Season) *T&C Apply.

Ottila International Pvt. Ltd.

Mumbai (Registered Office & Corporate Headquarters) : 022 6720 5000

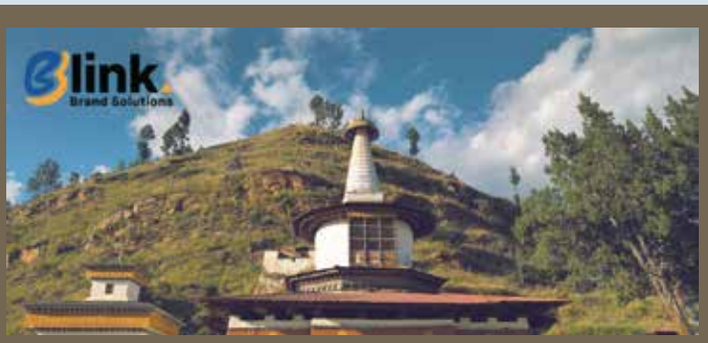
Ahmedabad: +91 93 7612 0982
Bengaluru: +91 96 0648 4185
Chennai: +91 44 4555 8582
Coimbatore: + 91 99 5271 7750
Hyderabad: +91 88 8501 5970
Indore: +91 73 1491 1374
Kochi: +91 75 9386 3903
Kolkata: +91 98 3011 9561
New Delhi: +91 11 4141 4242
Pune: + 91 89 7636 5200
Nashik: +91 25 3231 0044

For Enquiries & Bookings, please contact any of our offices | **B2B Portal:** www.ottila.net



Centrum Air Hyderabad–Tashkent launch and networking event

Centrum Air marked the launch of its Hyderabad–Tashkent services with an exclusive networking evening in Hyderabad, attended by representatives from the Embassy of Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan Tourism Committee, Aeroprime Group, travel agents, OTAs and industry stakeholders. The new service strengthens air connectivity, offering travellers from Telangana and South India better access to Tashkent and beyond, while boosting tourism, business and trade between the two markets.



Tourism Bhutan appoints BlinkBrand Solutions as Official Representation Partner for India & MENA

Bhutan is strengthening its tourism source markets and traveller engagement, appointing BlinkBrand Solutions as its official Public Relations and Sales Representative for India and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The appointment by the Department of Tourism, Ministry of Industry, Commerce & Employment, covers destination marketing, PR and trade engagement.

RezLive.com expands Rail Booking portfolio beyond Europe with new global rail offerings

RezLive.com has expanded its rail booking portfolio beyond Europe to the Middle East, Asia and North America, covering high-speed, intercity, metro and airport rail services. New offerings include Saudi Arabia's Haramain High Speed Railway, connecting Makkah, Madinah, Jeddah, King Abdulaziz International Airport and King Abdullah Economic City; Malaysia's KLIA Ekspres, linking Kuala Lumpur International Airport and KL Sentral; and South Korea's AREX Airport Railroad, connecting Incheon Airport with central Seoul.





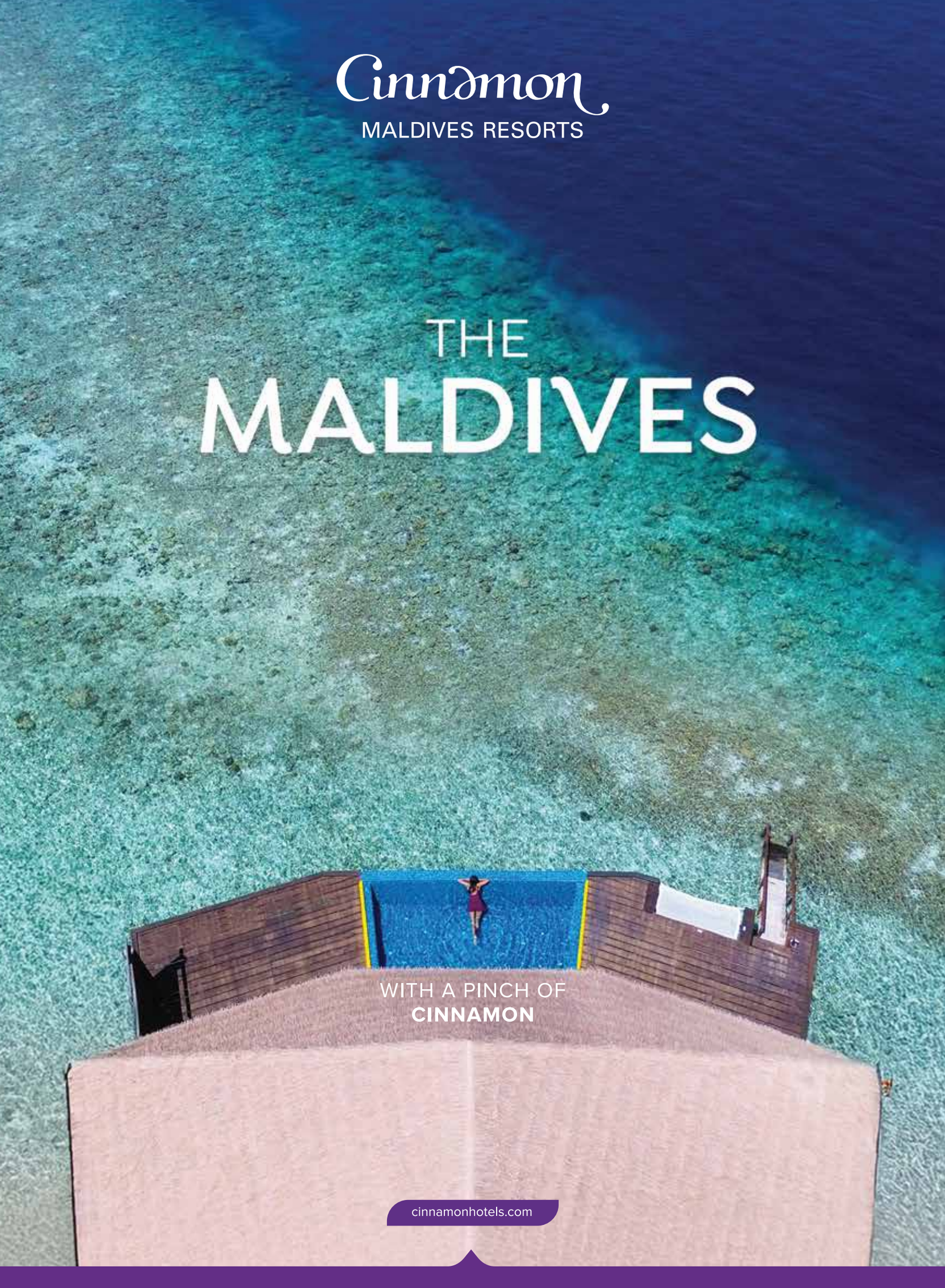
TripJack lands in Dubai

TripJack has launched its Dubai office, establishing the UAE as its base to serve travel partners across the Middle East and GCC. Amid growing India–Middle East travel and changes in B2B travel distribution, the company will offer global inventory, competitive content, smarter technology and faster support. Dubai was chosen for its global connectivity and central role in the region's travel ecosystem.



TAAI announces its 69th Convention Of TAAI from 25th to 27th oct. 2026 in Kolkata

The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), representing around 2,500 companies across travel, tourism, hospitality and MICE, will celebrate 75 years of excellence at its 69th Convention & Exhibition from October 25–27, 2026, at ITC Royal Bengal, Kolkata, marking its legacy of leadership and service to India's travel and hospitality industry.


Cinnamon
MALDIVES RESORTS
THE
MALDIVES
WITH A PINCH OF
CINNAMON
cinnamonhotels.com

EVERYONE WANTS INDIA

Who is winning India?

The world is courting India's outbound traveller.
But in a market this diverse, being noticed is easy.
Being chosen is the real business.

-Bharti Sharma



There is a new favourite phrase in global tourism: the Indian traveller. Destination presentations feature India. Hotel groups are sharpening their India strategies. Airlines are chasing connectivity, and tourism boards are investing in campaigns, partnerships and trade engagements. Everyone seems to have India on the agenda. The more interesting question is what happens after the presentation ends.

India is not one market, one budget or one travel personality. It is a collection of ambitions, occasions and spending patterns. One traveller is planning a quick family holiday; another is building a multi - country European itinerary. Some are chasing beaches, others culture, shopping, wellness, adventure or an experience they cannot easily replicate at home. And while one traveller may be perfectly happy booking online, another wants a trusted travel professional to make the entire journey seamless.

The World Has Discovered India. Now What?

The rush to attract Indian travellers is understandable. A growing appetite for international experiences, diverse traveller segments and strong interest in premium travel have made India an important market for destinations around the world. But attention is not the same as market share. A destination can feature prominently in campaigns, enjoy impressive engagement at a travel fair and attract a room full of industry professionals, yet still struggle to convert that interest into actual bookings.

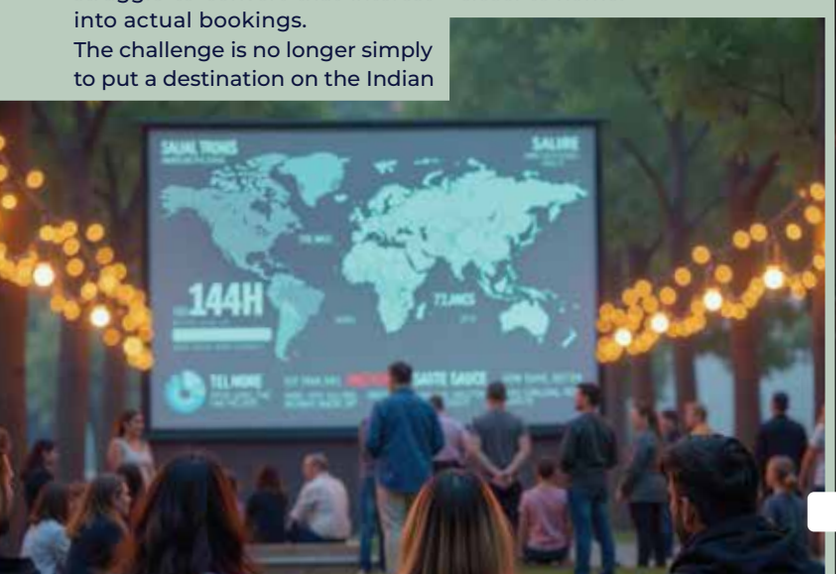
The challenge is no longer simply to put a destination on the Indian traveller's radar. It is to give that traveller a compelling reason to choose it over the alternatives. When several destinations offer sunshine, shopping, family attractions or indulgent stays, the deciding factor may be a visa, a flight connection, the ease of planning, the overall cost or one experience that feels genuinely different.

A Visa Can Be More Persuasive Than a Campaign

Travel inspiration might begin with a beautiful photograph, but the booking often encounters more practical questions. How easy is it to get there? Is the visa process straightforward? Are flight connections convenient? Can a family plan the trip without turning the logistics into a second job?

These considerations rarely make glamorous campaign headlines, yet they can shape the final decision. A destination with a strong proposition but cumbersome access may lose out to one that makes travelling feel effortless. Connectivity, clear information, transparent pricing and a smooth visitor experience are not merely operational details. They are part of the destination's sales pitch.

This is where competition becomes more interesting. Destinations are not competing only against places with similar landscapes or attractions. They are competing against every other use of the traveller's time and money, including staying closer to home.



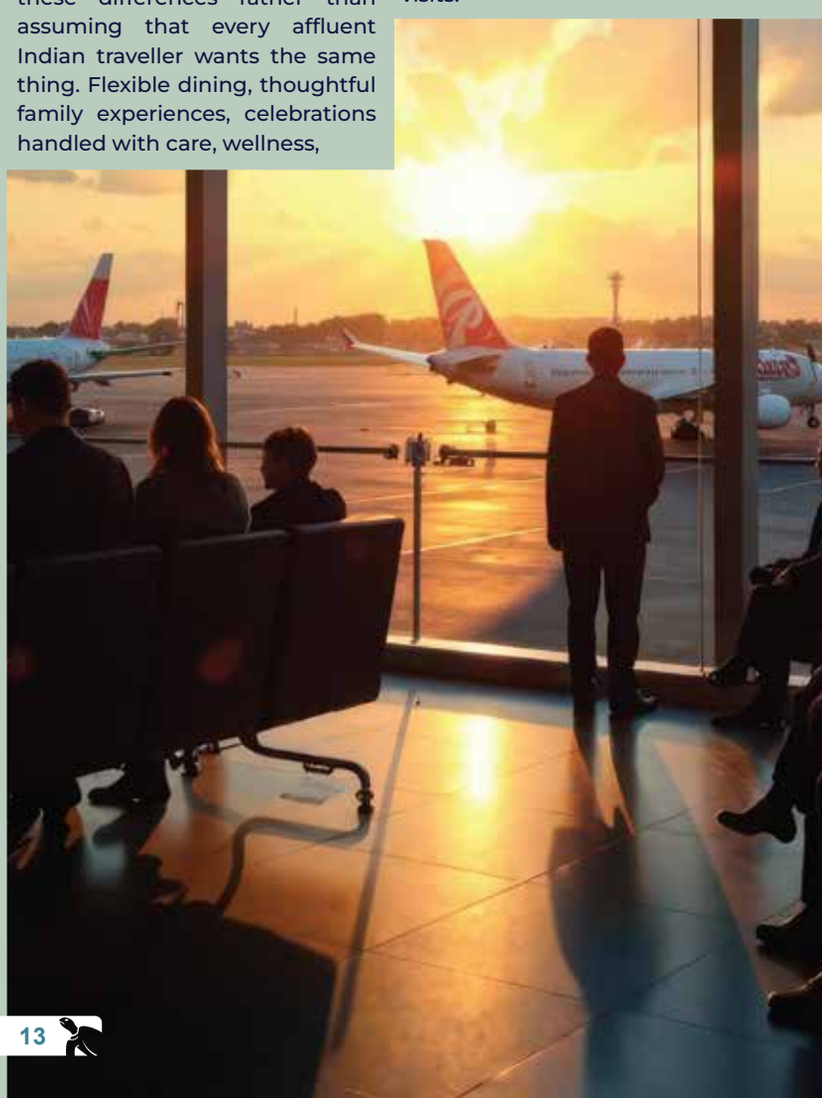


Luxury Has a New Guest List

The premium traveller is an attractive prize, but luxury is no longer a simple contest of room rates, suite sizes and impressive lobbies. Travellers are increasingly looking for experiences that feel personal, distinctive and worth the journey. Privacy may matter to one guest, culinary discovery to another, and meaningful cultural access to someone else.

For hotels and resorts, the opportunity lies in understanding these differences rather than assuming that every affluent Indian traveller wants the same thing. Flexible dining, thoughtful family experiences, celebrations handled with care, wellness, shopping access and well-designed itineraries can all influence a decision. The details matter because premium travellers are not necessarily paying more for more of everything. They are paying for the things that matter to them.

The same principle applies beyond luxury. Across price points, travellers want to feel that the experience justifies the expenditure. A premium label can attract attention; a well-delivered experience earns recommendations and repeat visits.



The Roadshow Was Full. Was the Business?

Tourism boards and travel brands continue to invest in trade shows, roadshows, networking evenings, familiarisation trips and partnerships with the Indian travel trade. These platforms can be valuable. They create access, establish relationships and help agents understand products they may not otherwise sell.

But attendance figures tell only part of the story. A crowded room is not automatically a successful market - development exercise, just as a long list of meetings is not proof of commercial impact. What happens next is more revealing. Are new itineraries being developed? Are agents confident enough to sell the destination? Are enquiries becoming bookings? Is business growing beyond the campaign period?

None of this means that every initiative should be judged by immediate sales alone. Awareness and relationship - building take time. But a serious India strategy should define what success looks like before the event begins, not after the photographs have been circulated.

The Agent Is Not a Checkbox

For all the talk of digital discovery and direct bookings, travel professionals remain important to a significant part of the market, particularly when trips become more complex. Multi - country holidays, special - interest itineraries, group travel and high - value family trips often require advice, coordination and reassurance that an online search cannot always provide.

The relationship works both ways. Agents need relevant product knowledge, competitive commercial terms, responsive destination partners and information they can use with clients. They cannot be expected to sell a product simply because they attended a presentation about it. A destination that wants sustained visibility must make its offering easier to understand, package and sell.

The opportunity is to treat the Indian travel trade as a commercial partner rather than a distribution list. The difference shows up in the quality of the itineraries, the confidence of the seller and, ultimately, the traveller's experience.

Everyone Has a Strategy. Who Has a Result?

There is no single formula for winning India. For some destinations, it may mean better air access. For others, it could be a sharper family proposition, more relevant luxury experiences, simpler travel formalities or stronger engagement with the trade. For hotel groups, it may mean moving beyond broad campaigns to understand what different Indian guests actually value.

The measures of progress should be equally practical: visitor numbers, conversion, spending, length of stay, repeat travel and satisfaction. No one metric tells the whole story, and not every initiative will deliver the same outcome.

But without a clear way to evaluate performance, even the most polished India strategy risks becoming a collection of activities rather than a plan for growth.

India is too varied to be won with a single message, and too commercially important to be approached as a passing trend. The destinations and brands that understand this will look beyond visibility and ask harder questions about access, relevance, experience and value.

Because everyone may want India. But the real winners will be those who give Indian travellers a reason to choose them, a reason to return, and a reason to tell someone else.

Editorial note before publication: I would have the four statistics independently checked against the latest official releases, particularly the Thailand and Singapore figures, and add a publication date to the fact box. The figures reflect different national reporting systems, so the box deliberately avoids presenting them as a league table.

INDIA'S OUTBOUND MOMENTUM

32.83 million
Departures by Indian nationals in 2025, up 6.3 per cent year on year.

2.49 million
Indian visitors to Thailand in 2025, up 16.82 per cent year on year.

1.2 million
Visitors from India to Singapore in 2025, placing India among its five largest source markets.

131,625
Indian tourist arrivals in the Maldives in 2025.

Sources: India Ministry of Tourism and Bureau of Immigration; Thailand Ministry of Tourism and Sports; Singapore Tourism Board; Maldives Monetary Authority, drawing on Maldives Immigration data. Figures use different national reporting methodologies and are not directly comparable.





GIVE EVERY SAUDI JOURNEY AN UPGRADE

Get up to **15% OFF on Umrah+ Packages** + a
Complimentary Room Upgrade* on eligible hotel bookings.

BOOK WITH TBO

Saudi
Welcome to Arabia

Seychelles

THE SOUL BEHIND THE SHORE

From granite-framed shores and ancient palm forests to Creole food and slow island living, Seychelles makes its strongest case when travellers venture beyond the water.

-Srishti Mukherjee





There's a distinct allure to a beach destination that pulls you in with its saltwater air and white sands and Seychelles is just that destination. But there is more to Seychelles than just picture - perfect beaches. Scattered across the Western Indian Ocean, this archipelago of 115 islands brings together not only beaches, but also coral reefs, natural reserves and rare wildlife, perfectly blending it with a relaxed pace of life. The appeal of this archipelago lies beyond its vast expanse of sandy beaches; it lies in discovering how differently each island can shape a holiday.

Located northeast of Madagascar, Seychelles offers Indian travellers the chance to combine several kinds of holiday in one trip. Mahé brings together beaches, mountains and city life; Praslin is known for its remarkable forests and quieter coastline; and La Digue invites visitors to explore at a bicycle pace. Improved air connectivity has made the destination more accessible from India. In 2025, approximately 13,400 Indian travellers visited Seychelles, nearly 75 per cent more than the previous year, according to the Seychelles Tourism Board.

Three islands, three experiences

For first - time visitors, Mahé, Praslin and La Digue, the three main islands offer three distinctly different introductions to the country. Mahé is the largest island and the main gateway to Seychelles that acts as a starting point for exploring the destination. With a coastline that alternates between sandy bays and granite headlands, and mountainous interiors that offer a blend of forest trails and panoramic viewpoints, Mahé fits everyone's plans. Victoria, one of the world's smaller national capitals, offers a look at everyday Seychellois life beyond the resorts, with local markets, and heritage landmarks. On the northwest coast, Beau Vallon pairs an accessible beach with restaurants, water activities and a wide choice of places to stay. Inland, Morne Seychellois National Park offers travellers another perspective with forested landscapes and walking trails that take travellers away from the coast. This contrast makes Mahé best suited for travellers who prefer their travel experiences to be a mix of leisure and exploration rather than a holiday spent entirely in one location.

A short domestic flight or ferry away, another island in Seychelles, Praslin introduces the quieter side of the island country. Its defining attraction isVallée de Mai, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that is known for its ancient palm forest and the endemic coco de mer palm, which produces the largest seed in the plant kingdom. While the reserve's dense vegetation supports a distinct island of wildlife. Walking through the forest feels worlds away from the familiar beach image of Seychelles. The coastline of the island is no less compelling than its greenery, and Anse Lazio makes Praslin's best-known beaches, offering a striking combination of pale sand, granite formations and clear water. With a location that makes it a convenient base for excursions to neighbouring islands, making it easy to combine relaxed beach days with time in nature.

On La Digue, the rhythm changes again. Bicycles are a familiar way to get around, and the island's compact scale encourages unhurried exploration. Its best-known setting, Anse Source d'Argent, is framed by enormous granite boulders, shallow turquoise water and pale sand. Beyond the beach, Creole homes, local eateries and village roads reveal a more intimate side of island life.

La Digue also rewards time spent away from the sand. Walking routes lead through tropical vegetation and uphill towards coastal viewpoints, while nearby waters offer opportunities for kayaking, snorkelling and boat excursions. Activities depend on sea conditions and local conservation rules, but the appeal is the same: there is little need to rush from one stop to the next.

The country's natural heritage extends well beyond its three most visited islands. Protected habitats support endemic plants and birdlife, while remote Aldabra Atoll, Seychelles' second UNESCO World Heritage Site, is recognised for its exceptional ecological significance. It is not a routine addition to an island-hopping itinerary, but it speaks to the scale of the archipelago conservation story.





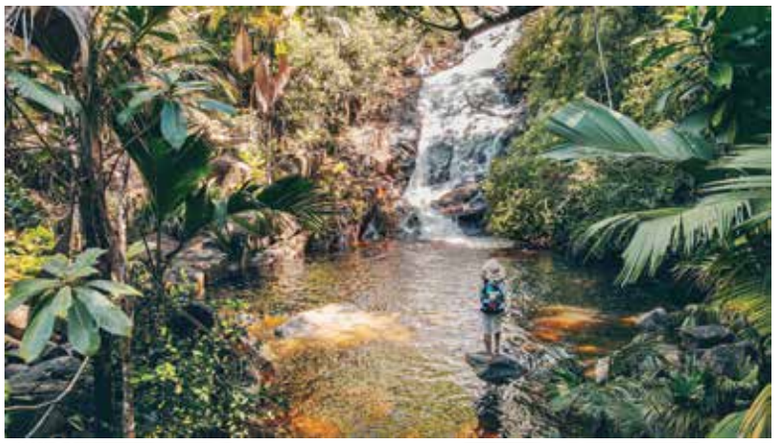


The cultural side of Seychelles

Seychelles' cultural identity reflects African, European and Asian influences, visible in its languages, food, music and traditions. Seychellois Creole, English and French are its three official languages. These influences are most interesting when encountered in everyday life, from a conversation at a market stall to the food served at a neighbourhood restaurant.

Victoria is a natural place to begin with its market, heritage landmarks, museums, and art spaces. Smaller communities across the islands offer glimpses of traditional crafts, local architecture and customs that can be easy to overlook on a beach-focused itinerary.

Food provides another way into Seychellois culture. Creole cooking draws on seafood, coconut, spices and fresh produce, with grilled fish, curries and locally prepared accompaniments featuring on many tables. Eating at a local restaurant as well as at a resort gives travellers a fuller sense of the islands' flavours and everyday routines.







One country, multiple itineraries

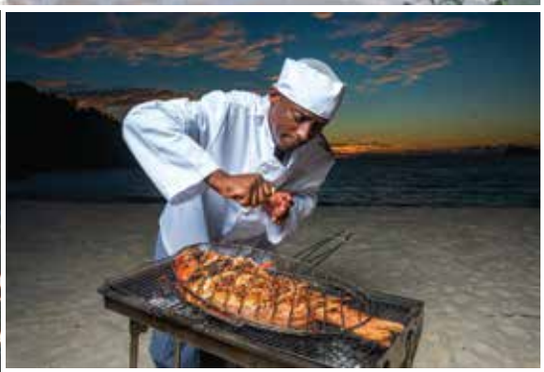
The ease of moving between Mahé, Praslin and La Digue allows travellers to shape a holiday around different interests rather than choose just one. Couples might pair a resort stay with forest walks and slow days on La Digue. Families can mix beach time with nature trails, boat excursions and opportunities to spot wildlife.

Those seeking more activity can explore hiking routes and underwater landscapes, while travellers after a gentler break can make room for wellness, scenic drives and afternoons without fixed plans.

Where travellers stay also changes the experience. Alongside luxury resorts and private - island retreats, Seychelles has boutique hotels, guesthouses and self - catering accommodation. That range makes it possible to balance a premium stay with smaller, locally rooted properties across an island-hopping itinerary.

The beaches may be what first put Seychelles on a traveller's wish list, but island-hopping reveals why a longer stay pays off. Mahé, Praslin and La Digue are close enough to combine in one journey, yet different enough that moving between them can feel like changing the pace, landscape and character of the holiday altogether.







eurostar

Rail Europe



Eurostar



Cologne, Germany



Eiffel Tower, Paris

EARLY BIRD OFFER IS BACK

25% on Eurostar Plus

Travelers can start planning their European journey at budget and in style:

- London <> Paris
- London <> Brussels
- London <> Amsterdam / Rotterdam
- Paris <> Brussels
- Paris <> Amsterdam / Rotterdam
- Paris <> Cologne

Sales: From 13 October to 2 November 2026.

Travel: From 2 November 2026 to 31 August 2027.

*T&C Apply.

Ottila International Pvt. Ltd.

Network: Mumbai (Registered Office & Corporate Headquarters): 022 6720 5000

Ahmedabad: +91 93 7612 0982
Bengaluru: +91 96 0648 4185
Chennai: +91 44 4555 8582
Coimbatore: +91 99 5271 7750
Hyderabad: +91 88 8501 5970
Indore: +91 73 1491 1374
Kochi: +91 75 9386 3903
Kolkata: +91 98 3011 9561
New Delhi: +91 11 4141 4242
Pune: +91 89 7636 5200
Nashik: +91 25 3231 0044

For Enquiries & Bookings, please contact any of our offices | **Website:** www.ottila.com; **B2B Portal:** www.ottila.net



Maldives

GST hike puts travel trade on edge

As the Maldives extends its 17 per cent GST to inbound tourism products Indian tour operators and travel agents explain the mounting concerns amongst the travel trade fraternity over rising package costs, squeezed margins, compliance burdens and the destination's long-term competitiveness.

-Srishti Mukherjee

In a recent reform, the government of Maldives has decided to extend a 17 per cent tax on inbound tourism products and bring this change into its GST framework starting October 1. Rajeev Kohli, Managing Director, Creative Travel, Koonal Jain, Co-Founder, The Luxe Connections, Sindhu, Founder & CEO, Travonn Luxury Holidays, Nitin T Dubey, Founder, Seven Wonders Vacation, share how this decision has resulted in growing concerns among international travel trade partners over its potential impact on not just pricing, but also margins and the destination's competitiveness.



Rajeev Kohli

A surprise for travel trade

For Indian tour operators and travel agents, the proposed GST could have implications that go beyond the final package price. It could influence contracting, rate negotiations, compliance and future marketing commitments. Rajeev Kohli, Managing Director, Creative Travel shares that this move by the Maldivian government was a very surprising one and a shocking one. He adds, "I don't think a government has the right to tax a foreign citizen outside their jurisdiction. I also don't see any reason why I would want to share my confidential documents, pricing, and information with any government. Even the Indian government doesn't ask me for that detail. Because it is difficult to get the invoices from the tour agents."

Furthermore, he shares, "There have been several conversations between travel agents, tour operators, tour travel associations across Europe, and the consensus is very clear: This is unacceptable and will not be agreed upon. While I do understand this initiative for revenue generation by the small island country, there will have to be other ways to do it."

Direct impact on package costs

One crucial question that arises due to this GST tax is how it would impact the pricing of the packages for Maldives. Koonal Jain, Co-Founder, The Luxe Connections, shares that the new GST pricing of the Maldives packages will directly impact Indian travellers, "Maldives is already a premium destination, and a higher GST will show up directly in package costs. Most Indian travellers compare prices closely, so even a small rise can push some of them to think twice, especially in the mid - range segment."

Sindhu, Founder & CEO, Travonn Luxury Holidays, also believes that the impact be significant, although it may not necessarily be visible as a direct increase in the final package price. "Indian travel businesses already operate within an 18 per cent GST framework, and this additional tax can put considerable pressure on the agent's profitability. At a time when margins in the travel industry are already under pressure, this creates a situation where agents have significantly less incentive to sell the destination."

Nitin T Dubey, Founder, Seven Wonders Vacation, adds, "The increase in TGST to combined with the mandatory 10 per cent service charge and doubled Green Tax ($12 per person, per night) brings the baseline tax component to around 27 per cent plus flat fees on every booking. We expect the final package prices for mid - segment and luxury travellers to jump by 4 per cent to 6 per cent on an all-inclusive basis. This hike will force many to shorten their stay, downgrade room categories (e.g., opting for beach villas over water villas), or rethink their destination entirely."

Tight margins for tour operators

The travel trade landscape is sure to witness a shift with this tax increase especially if the additional tax cannot be passed on to the customer. Koonal shares, "The margin will get squeezed, and the Tour Operators and agents will feel it first. Many packages are sold weeks or months in advance, so absorbing a sudden tax change is hard. Smaller agents will be hit the most."



Koonal Jain

Furthermore, Indian tour operators are operating on increasingly tight margins due to heavy competition and rising operational overheads. Nitin highlights, "Profit margins on outbound Maldives packages often average between 6 per cent and 10 per cent; absorbing even a 1 per cent to 2 per cent cost increase cuts deeply into net earnings. Smaller B2B sub-agents and boutique travel firms will face the brunt of this, which could lead to reduced credit terms, cash flow bottlenecks, and lower marketing push for the destination," he explains.

Sindhu adds, "If the additional cost cannot be passed on to the customer, the immediate impact will be on the margins of tour operators and travel agents. For many businesses, particularly those selling high-value luxury Maldives holidays, profitability is already calculated around negotiated rates, commissions and service costs. Absorbing another significant tax burden would make the destination commercially less attractive to sell. Over time, this could result in agents reducing their focus on Maldives or prioritising destinations where their margins are more sustainable."

Increased Competition

What is particularly intriguing is how tour operators will view Maldives as a destination after the new tax. Koonal adds that it can make Maldives less commercially competitive for Indian tour operators. He explains, “Indian travellers have several other options that offer lower cost and with more flexibility. Maldives will still attract luxury and honeymoon travellers, but it becomes a harder sell for the value-conscious traveller.”



Nitin T Dubey

Nitin adds, “The Maldives has enjoyed an advantage as a top-of-mind beach destination. But with the changes coming in, along with an existing 10 per cent resort service charge, doubled Green Tax, flight costs, and TCS, the total package cost increases substantially. Competing destinations offer lower land taxes, visa - free or visa - on - arrival entry, and highly attractive value - for - money propositions, making them easier for the Indian agents to sell.”

Prime alternatives to Maldives

With the rising taxes in the Maldives resulting in pressure on margins, the Tour operators and travel agents are sure to shift their focus from the island destination. Koonal shares, “We’d look at Thailand, Bali, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and the UAE for marketing spends and advance commitments. Mauritius and the Seychelles are also worth a look for the beach - and - luxury crowd. The idea is to spread the risk rather than depend on one destination.”



Sindhu

Sindhu adds, “The immediate concern is that travel companies may become more cautious about committing marketing budgets and advance commercial investments to Maldives. Instead, operators could increasingly consider other emerging luxury markets.”

Nitin further explains, “We will likely reallocate a portion of our ad spend, marketing budgets, and group commitments toward destinations that offer stronger price competitiveness and trade support.”

Impact of new GST on negotiations

The changes in GST could also influence how tour operators and agents negotiate. Koonal shares, “We'll push for clear tax - inclusive or tax - exclusive terms, more flexibility on release dates and cancellations, and some protection if rates or taxes change after we've committed. We'd also be more careful about large advance commitments. Additionally, the new registration and GST compliance requirements for overseas suppliers could also add to the workload.”

Sindhu suggests, “For the 2027 season, many contracts and commercial agreements have already been negotiated and signed, so I would not necessarily expect an immediate change in contracted resort rates. The larger concern is what happens to the profitability of the agent after the additional tax is applied. Resort rates may remain unchanged, but the effective cost of doing business for the agent increases. Going forward, this is likely to become an important consideration during negotiations with resorts and DMCs, particularly around commissions, incentives, marketing support and overall commercial terms.”

Nitin also highlights, “We will push for tax - inclusive pricing, better margins, flexible cancellations and extended payment terms. Overseas GST compliance could also add significant legal and administrative burdens. Most Indian travel agencies especially MSMEs do not have the infrastructure, legal bandwidth, or cross-border tax resources to maintain direct tax filings in foreign countries. If overseas operators are forced into complex registration frameworks, many will choose to step back from direct contracting and route all business through registered Maldivian DMCs instead, adding another middleman layer and driving up costs further.”

If the tax remains

If the tax remains for the next 12 months, the travel trade industry and the Maldives market is bound to witness a shift. Koonal says, “We'd probably stay in the Maldives market, but be more selective. Expect a sharper focus on higher - value customers and better-planned inventory. If the tax stays, the market will adjust, but volumes in the budget and mid segment may take a hit.”

While, Sindhu shares, “I would expect travel businesses to become considerably more cautious about actively promoting and investing in Maldives. If the economics become less attractive, agents may naturally divert sales, marketing budgets and client attention towards destinations where the business model provides healthier and more sustainable margins.”

Additionally, if the tax structure remains unadjusted over the next 12 months, their overall approach to the Maldives will shift from volume - driven marketing to targeted, high - yield positioning. Nitin shares, “We will focus on the ultra - luxury segment that are far less sensitive to tax adjustments than the 4 - star market and the strategies will focus heavily on specialised travel where unique experiences take priority over price sensitivity. Rather than holding inventory risk or direct overseas contracting, we will rely on local Maldivian DMC partners to manage local compliance and tax obligations on our behalf.”

Hence, Maldives remains a very strong luxury destination and has an excellent product offering but maintaining that position in the Indian market requires the destination to remain commercially attractive to the travel trade that actively sells and promotes it. And while this tax is still being negotiated by the Indian tour operators and agents as OTOAI urges Maldives to reconsider this tax increase, it is believed to impact the way the Indian travellers as well as the Tour Operators and agents approach the destination in the long run.

Bihar

Where the Journey Within Begins

The land where enlightenment was born

Some places are visited. Others are felt. Bihar is the latter.

Here, a prince sat beneath the Bodhi tree and rose as the Buddha. Here, Sita is believed to have been born. For thousands of years, families have gathered at dawn and dusk to honour their ancestors. With new infrastructure and sacred corridors taking shape, Bihar is emerging as one of the world's great spiritual destinations.

21st International Tripitaka Chanting Ceremony

25th November - 13th December 2026

BEST TIME TO VISIT

October to March, when the weather is pleasant and the Buddhist pilgrimage season is at its height.

KEY OCCASION

Buddha Purnima (April–May), marking the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing.

SUGGESTED STAY

2–3 days for Mahabodhi, the Great Buddha Statue, the international monasteries, Rajgir and Nalanda.

01 Mahabodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya

The Seat of Enlightenment

A UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the holiest places in the Buddhist world. Beneath the Bodhi tree here, Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment. Pilgrims from Sri Lanka, Thailand, Japan, Myanmar, Bhutan, Tibet, Vietnam and beyond come to meditate, chant and sit in stillness.



02 Pitripaksha

A fortnight of remembrance

Every year, Gaya Ji becomes the heart of an ancient ritual of gratitude. Pitripaksha, a period of about 15–16 days in the Hindu month of Ashwin (September–October), is set aside to honour ancestors through Pind Daan and Tarpan.

On the banks of the Phalgu, Gaya Ji is regarded as the most sacred place for these rites. Offerings made at the Vishnupad Temple and nearby sites are believed to bring peace to departed souls and blessings to their families. Lakhs of pilgrims from across India and abroad gather for the Pitripaksha Mela each year.

Pitripaksha follows the lunar calendar, so dates vary each year. Please check the official dates on the tourism website before planning your visit.



03 Chhath Puja

The Festival of the Sun

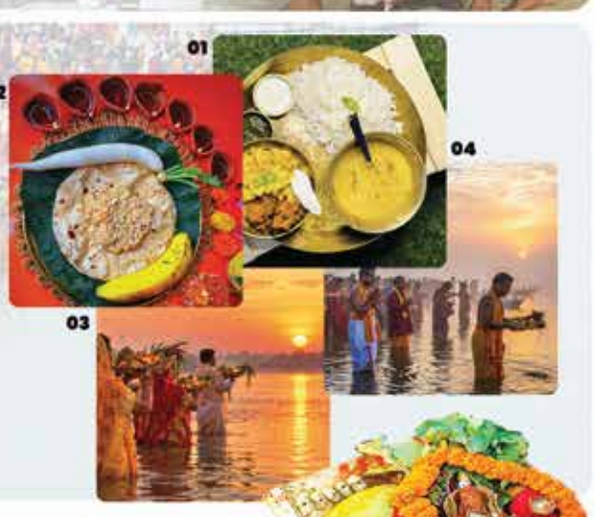
If one festival holds the soul of Bihar, it is Chhath. Observed in Kartik (October–November), about a week after Diwali, this four-day festival honours Surya Dev and Chhathi Maiya, and is marked by discipline, purity and deep devotion.

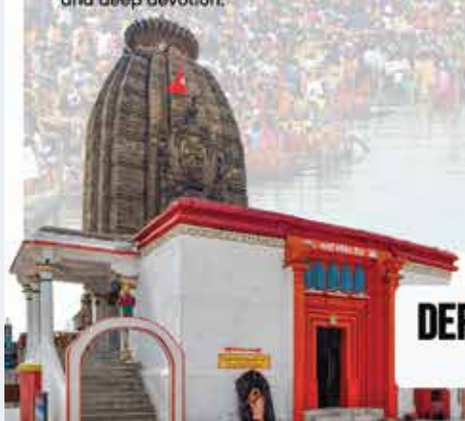
Day 1 Nahay-Khay:
Devotees bathe in the river and partake of a simple, sanctified meal.

Day 2 Kharna
A fast through the day, broken at dusk with kheer and roti.

Day 3: Sandhya Arghya
A strict fast without even water, concluding with offerings to the setting sun on the riverbank.

Day 4: Usha Arghya
Offerings to the rising sun, after which the fast is broken.







DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR

www.tourism.bihar.gov.in @tourismbihargov

Courchevel tourism


Theirry Mugnier

Eight decades of Alpine whimsy

As Indian travellers increasingly look beyond traditional European destinations, Theirry Mugnier, President, Courchevel Tourisme shares that Courchevel is positioning itself as a luxury winter destination.

-Srishti Mukherjee



The outbound tourism industry in India has grown to become integral for the international destinations across Europe and Courchevel is no exception to this. The French Alpine resort views India as a promising market for its affluent travellers and believes that the Indian market is an opportunity to introduce a new generation to skiing and the wider experience of a luxury mountain holiday.

Celebrating 80 years of Alpine excellence at its Delhi roadshow, Theirry Mugnier, President, Courchevel Tourisme, talks about the importance of the Indian market. He says the Indian market is booming everywhere, whether it is in France and Paris or in Switzerland. It has become crucial to cater to the large pool of Indian travellers.

The curious travellers

He says Courchevel is particularly interested in the curiosity of Indian travellers, "Indian tourists are very curious. It means when they come to Courchevel, they would like to try everything. It doesn't matter if they have never skied before, they would like to learn. Since we are a very young country, we need a new generation of skiers."

He believes that the appetite for exploration and discovery is an important element for Courchevel Tourism, since the destination has much more to offer than a conventional ski holiday. While skiing remains at the heart of the destination, Courchevel also encompasses French gastronomy, wellness, luxury retail, events and the broader French Art de Vivre.

He adds, "I was surprised the first time I met an Indian person. I had a kind of cliché in my mind. I imagined they would come and just eat Indian food. But that wasn't the case. They try to discover everything, from meat to cheese. They are curious and they would like to experience things. This is why it's very important because Courchevel is special. It's more than a ski resort, as you can see. It's a kind of place mixing French Art de Vivre, gastronomy, wellness, activities and sports events in a ski area."

Furthermore, he shares that Courchevel's luxury positioning is one of its key differentiators within the French Alps. While the other ski destinations also offer premium accommodation and international luxury brands, the resort believes its particular combination of skiing and French luxury gives it a unique identity.

Paris in the mountains

Theirry took the opportunity and described Courchevel as Paris in the mountains, rather than making comparisons between Courchevel and other luxury international destinations. He explains, "I heard some people call it Dubai in Montaigne, but I'd rather call it Paris in Montaigne. That's the difference because we are really proud of our French Art de Vivre which is really part of the DNA of Courchevel. French Art de Vivre in the mountains is one of the reasons why Courchevel became very popular at the beginning, along with the ski area."

Targeting the luxury markets

Pondering over the segments that Courchevel is targeting from the Indian market, Theirry added that to begin with they are targeting the high - standard segment because the destination is quite new. He believes that for the Indian market this creates a proposition that is initially aimed at the high - spending travellers who are looking for a combination of exclusivity and experiences.

He shares, "If you talk about the Indian market, if you see the spending capacity, it's mostly the Tier II and Tier III markets that have a lot of money. And that is something which is unknown to a lot of brands. We did exactly the same before with Russians, Brazilians and people from the Middle East. After a few years, we target the middle class. I would like to say everything is step by step. Because also, the high - standard and high - class Indian traveller is a model for the others."

He believes that Courchevel is really specific if it is compared with other French ski resorts because nothing is comparable with the other French resorts. And this is evident in Courchevel 1850 where the luxury retail and hospitality ecosystem includes some of the globally recognised names. He adds, "We have this segment of luxury that you will never find in Val d'Isère or Megève. You can find some beautiful brands and luxury ski brands like Moncler or Fusalp in Megève or Val d'Isère, but you will never find Chanel, Fendi or Rolex. It's really special. So, of course, in Courchevel 1850, we targeted a special category of people. It's a kind of niche market."

Courchevel and MICE

Theirry further shares that Courchevel is also looking towards MICE. He says, “We call it in French aile de saison. It means the shoulder seasons, at the beginning of the winter season or sometimes at the end of the season. We target MICE. We not only start to target India, but in some countries, yes — in France mostly, and also in the UK. For example, there is a roadshow in Courchevel from Ennata in December which is usually held in the Middle East, in Dubai. This year, they will do it in Courchevel for the first time. So, we are also starting to work towards building our MICE engagements”

He further mentions that for MICE, Courchevel is only looking to host a limited number of people for now. “It’s only 100 T.O.s. because in Courchevel, we don’t have many big accommodations or big hotels. Most of the hotels have around 40 – 45 rooms. But we still have some big hotels. Not big hotels compared to other destinations, but big for Courchevel. That means 120 rooms, 180 rooms or 110 rooms.”

The classical market

Courchevel’s classical source market, according to Theirry, still remains the British market. He explains, “The British have the first position. Courchevel is very specific. In most French resorts, it’s 50 - 50. It means 50% French people and 50% foreigners. However, Courchevel is 30-70 — 30% French people and 70% foreigners. So, the top one is British because it's a really traditional market in France with approximately 20% tourists. The second one is always different. Sometimes it’s Brazilian, sometimes it’s people from the Middle East, and sometimes American, at around 10%. After that, you have many countries with 4 per cent, 3 per cent and 2 per cent, like Russia, Ukraine and Switzerland.”

Talking about the Indian market, Theirry states that it is also 2 per cent. He continues, “So, it’s quite traditional because this is also very specific. For Courchevel, we have a lot of nationalities. In many ski resorts, you have a kind of top six - Belgian, Dutch, German, Swiss and British. In France, in Courchevel, we have a lot of nationalities and a lot of diversity. We have a lot of people from South America, a lot of people from Asia, but just in small figures. Four per cent are Chinese, 2% are Indian, 2% are people from Singapore, 1% are Malaysian and 1% are Thai. There are a lot of different figures.”

Ideal time to visit

Theirry further shares that the ideal duration for an Indian traveller to visit Courchevel is when they can ski. “If you have never tried skiing, you should try it. We are proud to be part of Les Trois Vallées, the biggest ski area in the world. But I know Indian travellers are beginners, and that makes Courchevel an even better option because it is famous for grooming. We have a good quality of snow. And we have a lot of ski instructors — more than 1,500 with a dedicated space for travellers to learn to ski,” he says.

Film tourism in Courchevel

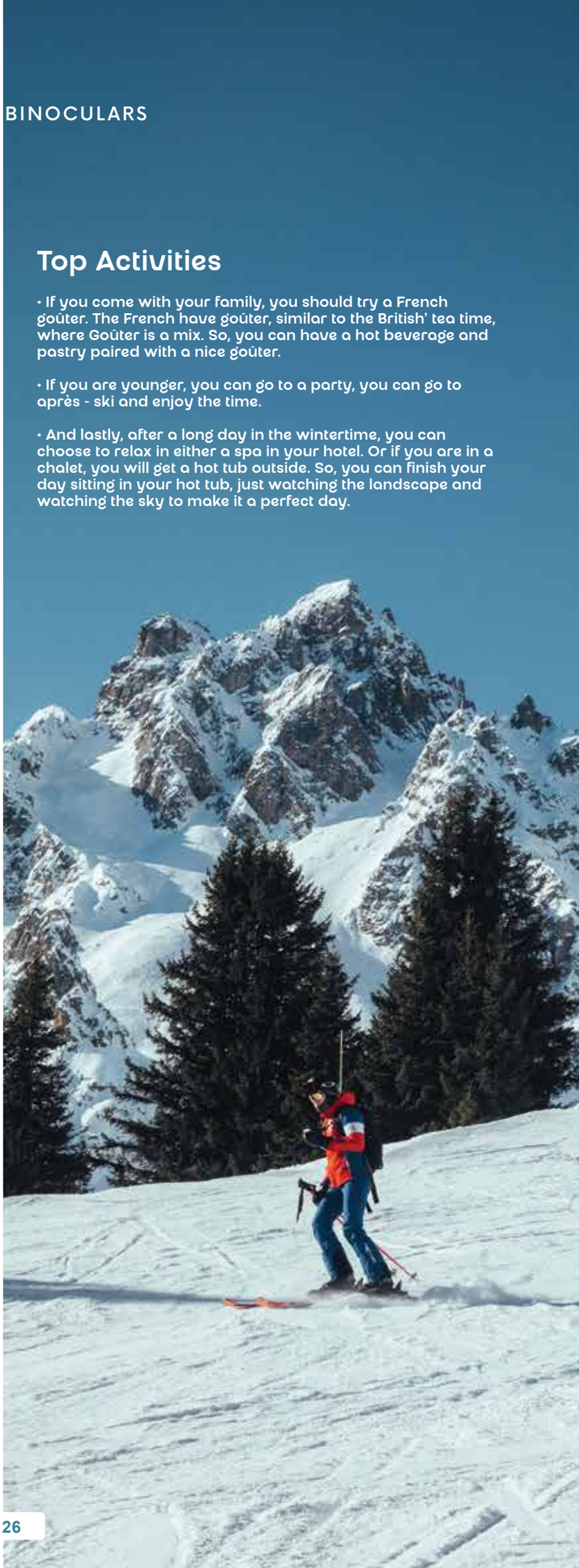
Nonetheless, there is more to Courchevel than just skiing. Theirry highlights that they are also looking at film tourism from India in the coming future. He shares, “You should not only stay in Switzerland. Come and discover Courchevel. Because while Switzerland is nice and you will have the same beautiful landscape and the same quality of slopes, what sets us apart is the French Art de Vivre. And that creates the biggest difference.”

An ideal day in Courchevel

While concluding, he shares his idea of an ideal day for an Indian traveller. He explains, “You start your day like normal people. You wake up and enjoy your breakfast either in your hotel or in your chalet, the choice is yours then you go skiing in the morning because it’s the best time. That is followed by lunch on the slopes where you can enjoy your time. If you are younger, you can have a kind of party because we have a lot of party restaurants like Bagatelle. So, you can enjoy a good lunch and have a nice party.”

Top Activities

- If you come with your family, you should try a French goûter. The French have goûter, similar to the British’ tea time, where Goûter is a mix. So, you can have a hot beverage and pastry paired with a nice goûter.
- If you are younger, you can go to a party, you can go to après - ski and enjoy the time.
- And lastly, after a long day in the wintertime, you can choose to relax in either a spa in your hotel. Or if you are in a chalet, you will get a hot tub outside. So, you can finish your day sitting in your hot tub, just watching the landscape and watching the sky to make it a perfect day.



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE GOLDEN CITY



Stay at Ramada.
Experience the best of Jaisalmer.

Enjoy a comfortable stay at
Ramada by Wyndham Jaisalmer and let us curate the experiences that make the Golden City unforgettable from heritage and culture to the magic of the desert.

EXPERIENCE JAISALMER

DESERT/DUNES

CAMEL/JEEP SAFARI

JAISALMER FORT

FOLK/CULTURAL EVENING

STAY | EXPLORE | EXPERIENCE

Comfortable Stay
Modern rooms and resort facilities

Desert Experiences
Sam Sand Dunes, camel safaris, and jeep safaris

Cultural Evenings
Folk music, Rajasthani performances, and bonfires

Heritage Trails
Jaisalmer Fort, local havelis, and sightseeing

Sunset Experiences
Desert sunsets, photography, and dune activities

Bespoke Experiences
Private dinners, celebrations, and curated moments











ONE STAY, ENDLESS JAISALMER EXPERIENCES.

RAMADA®
BY WYNDHAM
Jaisalmer

(Managed & Marketed by: Trulyy India)

Call Now : +91 93280 16885/86/87 | 079 2397 7600

Trulyy INDIA
HOTELS, RESORTS CAMPS AND SAFARIS

www.trulyy.in

Our Destinations :

Udaipur | Kumbhalgarh | Jodhpur | Jawai | Sasan Gir | Jaipur | Ujjain
Velavadar | Jaisalmer | Sam Sand Dunes | Rann of Kutch

TAFI's

Landmark Convention in Rhodes Opens New Avenues for India's Travel Trade

At its 40th anniversary convention, the Travel Agents Federation of India brought the industry to Rhodes, Greece, for four days of dialogue on new markets, stronger international partnerships and the evolving business of travel. With a tourism cooperation agreement signed with the South Aegean Region and Sri Lanka announced as the next host destination, the convention looked beyond celebration to the opportunities ahead.

-Bharti Sharma



Four decades in travel are measured not merely in the number of journeys sold or destinations brought within reach, but in how an industry learns to navigate change. For the Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI), its 40th anniversary offered an opportunity to reflect on that journey while considering what lies ahead for India's travel trade.

Held in Rhodes, Greece, from October 4 to 7, 2026, the four - day convention brought together Indian travel professionals and international tourism stakeholders under the theme Connecting Legacies – Crafting Futures. The choice of Greece added a distinct commercial dimension to the milestone, placing the Indian outbound travel market at the centre of conversations around destination development, trade collaboration and new business opportunities.

For Greece, the gathering represented an opportunity to deepen its engagement with a market whose travel ambitions extend well beyond conventional holiday itineraries. For India's travel trade, it offered a closer look at a destination with possibilities across leisure, weddings, gastronomy, culture, special - interest travel and MICE. The larger question was how to translate destination interest and industry dialogue into partnerships that endure beyond the convention itself.

Greece looks towards India

The convention was formally opened by Giorgos Hatzimarkos, Governor of the South Aegean Region and President of the Association of Greek Regions. In his address, he underscored the growing significance of the Indian market and the opportunities it presents for Rhodes and the wider South Aegean region.

The proposition extends beyond attracting Indian visitors to Greece's established destinations. Weddings, culinary experiences, leisure holidays and special - interest itineraries offer opportunities to develop travel products that speak to the preferences of different Indian traveller segments. For travel agents and tour operators, this creates scope to build more specialised programmes around the country's cultural heritage, island experiences and hospitality offerings.

Connectivity remains an important part of this equation. Greater accessibility, including IndiGo's services connecting India with Athens and the potential for stronger onward connections to Greek islands, can help make destinations beyond the capital more accessible to Indian travellers. Hatzimarkos also highlighted the importance of improving the availability of Indian food in Rhodes and neighbouring destinations, acknowledging the role that familiarity and thoughtful hospitality can play in shaping the visitor experience.

The emphasis on working closely with TAFI reflected a broader ambition: to establish a sustained relationship with India's travel trade rather than treat the convention as a standalone promotional opportunity. For a destination seeking to expand its presence in India, travel agents can be important partners in translating awareness into itineraries, recommendations and actual bookings.

From a milestone to a mandate

For TAFI, the response to the convention was a point of reflection on the organisation's four - decade journey and the role its members continue to play in a changing travel ecosystem.

Abbas Moiz, President, TAFI, acknowledged the response from members and the contribution of the Greek partners in delivering the event. He shares, “We started this journey almost seven months ago and we are overwhelmed by the response from our members. We hope to keep this momentum going for all our next events or conventions. We have got great feedback from our members about the convention. I have to give credit to our Greek partners who have been an eminent part of organising it so well. The response received from our Greek partners has been overwhelming, they also shared that the convention has been one of a kind for them.”







The scale of participation and the international setting gave the anniversary added significance. Beyond bringing members together, the convention created opportunities for the Indian travel trade to engage with destination representatives and tourism businesses directly, opening conversations around products, partnerships and the needs of a market with diverse travel aspirations.

A particularly important development was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between TAFI and the South Aegean Region. Signed by Moiz and Hatzimarkos on behalf of their respective organisations, the agreement established a framework for closer tourism cooperation and the promotion of the region in India.

The MoU is significant because destination development requires more than visibility. Building a market involves helping the trade understand a destination, identifying suitable products, creating commercial relationships and ensuring that prospective travellers can access relevant information and services. A structured partnership between a tourism authority and a national travel trade association can provide a foundation for that work.

For the South Aegean, the agreement offers a route to strengthen its engagement with Indian travel professionals. For TAFI's members, it creates an opportunity to explore the region's tourism offering and develop products that bring its islands and experiences to a wider Indian audience.









Recognising a legacy, preparing for change

The anniversary convention also recognised an individual whose career has been closely associated with India's travel industry. Subhash Goyal, Chairman of STIC Travel Group, received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution to the sector and his work in strengthening the visibility of India's travel trade on the international stage.

Over the years, industry veterans such as Goyal have contributed to conversations involving travel businesses, industry associations and policymakers. The recognition served as a reminder that the travel trade's progress has been shaped not only by changing consumer demand and technology, but also by individuals who have represented the industry's interests and helped it navigate successive phases of growth.

Yet the future of the business was firmly in focus as well. The convention included discussions on artificial intelligence and sustainability, two areas increasingly relevant to the way travel businesses operate and serve customers.

AI is reshaping how travellers research destinations, compare options and plan their journeys. For travel agents, the opportunity lies in understanding how these tools can support their work while preserving the human judgement, destination knowledge and personalised advice that distinguish professional travel planning. As information becomes more readily available, the ability to interpret it, curate meaningful experiences and manage the complexities of a trip remains an important part of the agent's role.

Sustainability, meanwhile, calls for closer consideration of how destinations are experienced, how tourism benefits local communities and how growth can be managed responsibly. For the trade, this also means developing a broader understanding of the products and experiences being sold, and the expectations of travellers who increasingly seek more considered ways to explore the world.

The convention's programme included a keynote address by Richard Nuttall, President of Philippine Airlines. The inaugural session was attended by Anil Kalsi, Vice President, TAFI; Jay Kantawala, Convention Chairman, TAFI; Amol Kataria, Deputy Convention Chairman, TAFI; Hitank Shah, National General Secretary, TAFI; and Nikolas Kavalieros, Managing Director, World of Travel Factory (WOTF) Group.

TAFI also announced the launch of its application, signalling an effort to strengthen the organisation's digital engagement with its members. Moiz described the initiative as a step towards moving from connecting people to connecting "people, information and possibilities".

For an industry association, digital tools can serve a purpose beyond communication. They can help members access relevant information, remain connected with industry developments and engage more efficiently with the wider professional community. The announcement therefore reflected the convention's broader emphasis on preparing the travel trade for a business environment in which relationships and technology increasingly work alongside one another.

Sri Lanka next: Carrying the conversation forward

As the Rhodes convention drew to a close, TAFI announced Sri Lanka as the host destination for its 2027 convention, providing the next opportunity to bring Indian travel professionals and destination stakeholders together.

For Sri Lanka, hosting the convention presents an opportunity to showcase its destinations, tourism products and hospitality offerings to India's travel trade. For Indian agents and tour operators, it offers a platform to deepen their understanding of a neighbouring destination and explore opportunities for developing and expanding travel programmes.

The announcement also provides continuity to the conversations initiated in Rhodes. International conventions can create visibility and bring stakeholders into the same room, but their longer-term value rests on what follows: stronger working relationships, a better understanding of destinations and commercial opportunities that can be developed over time.

TAFI's 40th anniversary was, therefore, both a celebration of the organisation's journey and an occasion to consider the work still ahead. The agreement with the South Aegean Region gave the convention a tangible outcome, while the discussions on technology, sustainability and industry collaboration reflected the questions facing travel professionals today.

Rhodes provided the setting for four days of exchange between India's travel trade and its international counterparts. The more enduring measure of the convention, however, will be the relationships and opportunities that continue to develop after the delegates have returned home. For TAFI, the next four decades will be shaped not only by the legacy it carries forward, but by how effectively it helps its members respond to a travel industry that continues to evolve.

SAFFRON WORLD

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT COMPANY

Your Reliable Partner in Europe

TRAVEL TO EUROPE

Dream. Explore. Discover.

Explore your dream destination in Europe with us.
We make travel easy and effortless.



Trusted Travel Partner

Memories for a lifetime!

- Customized Tour Packages
- Handpicked Hotels
- Trusted Travel Partner

OUR DESTINATIONS



01

GREECE

Ancient wonders, sun-kissed islands, turquoise seas, and timeless beauty.



02

ITALY

Historic cities, iconic landmarks, exquisite cuisine, stunning coastlines.



03

FRANCE

Elegant cities, iconic monuments, fine cuisine, timeless culture.



04

BALKANS

Diverse cultures, scenic mountains, historic towns, hidden gems.



05

SWITZERLAND

Majestic Alps, crystal lakes, charming villages, scenic railways.



06

CZECH REPUBLIC

Fairy-tale castles, medieval charm, rich history, vibrant culture.



07

THE NETHERLANDS

Windmills, canals, tulip fields, vibrant cities, rich heritage.



08

POLAND

Historic cities, resilient heritage, stunning architecture, vibrant traditions.

LET'S PLAN YOUR EUROPEAN ADVENTURE!

- Tailor-Made Experiences
- Unmatched Services
- Unforgettable Memories

FOR QUERIES
operations@saffronworld.travel
www.saffronworld.travel

ADDRESS
Stationsplein 45, 4th floor, 3013
AK Rotterdam, The Netherlands

CONTACT NOS
Utkarsh: +91 9999807969
Prince: +91 9555842672

Charting India's Tourism Opportunity

The 41st IATO Annual Convention in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, saw discussions across AI integration, sustainable visitor management and enhanced last-mile infrastructure amongst tourism leaders, state boards and travel operators as they mapped out a collaborative blueprint to overcome global headwinds.

-Srishti Mukherjee











The tourism sector of India is a flourishing one that caters to everyone with its thousands of years of history, wild landscapes, cuisine that becomes a core memory and an unmatched diversity. And the 41st edition of the IATO convention that was held in the coastal city of Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh was a testament to exactly that. Hosted from September 10th through 13th with the theme 'India-The World's Next Tourism Opportunity,' the convention brought together national leaders, state tourism boards, policymakers, hoteliers, airlines and tour operators including public figures such as Kandula Durgesh, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism, Culture & Cinematography, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh and Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, Hon'ble Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Govt. of India.

The four-day convention offered a dynamic platform for the key stakeholders and experts to evaluate the challenges faced by India's tourism sector in terms of the geopolitical headwinds, high airfare and supply-side constraints while highlighting strategies for the future that are focused on public-private collaboration, digital disruption, sustainability and regional destination development.

President's vision

Setting the tone for the gathering, IATO president Ravi Gosain, in his inaugural address, affirmed that while Incredible India remains an iconic global brand, revitalising inbound tourism requires modernising outreach through digital storytelling, artificial intelligence, cinema, influencer marketing and sustained campaigns in target source markets. He highlighted that inbound tourism numbers in 2025 ripped nearly 10% compared to 2024, remaining below pre - pandemic benchmarks, underscoring the urgency of addressing global route disruptions, surging operational costs and West Asian geopolitical friction.

Ravi, further, in his address, shed light on IATO's capacity-building programs that have trained over 600 tour operators in AI and digital competencies. On the global promotion front, he shared that IATO is building upon initiatives such as Namaste India Roadshow in Europe, advocating for professional tourism representation in key source markets abroad. Pressing on responsible growth, IATO launched the Swachh Paryatan Abhiyan, unveiled standard operating procedures (SOP) under its new Responsible Tourism Mission, and initiated its first-ever convention carbon audit through an MoU with the Indian School of Nature.

Hall of fame

A key highlight of the convention was the conferment of the IATO Hall of Fame award 2026 on Shri K.B. Kachru, President, Hotel Association of India and Chairman-South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group. The award was presented to him by Union Minister of Civil Aviation K. Rammohan Naidu in the presence of state tourism ministers, IATO leadership, and trade representatives.

The honour recognised Kachru's decades of leadership, during which he guided Radisson Hotel Group's regional expansion since 1998 and contributed actively to bodies like the Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council and the CII Tourism Committee. As Shri K.B. Kachru accepted his award before an audience of state ministers and senior officials, he underlined that recognition carries a duty to advance India's vision 2047 goals. He took the opportunity to commend the landmark decision of the government of Andhra Pradesh to grant industry status to tourism, emphasising its ability to unlock capital investments, stimulate job creation and drive economic integration.

All about the host state

With its 41st edition, the IATO convention returned to Vishakhapatnam for the first time since 2018 and it placed Andhra Pradesh's tourism blueprint in the spotlight. In a dedicated special session moderated by IATO COO Rahul Chakravarty, Shamsher Singh Rawat, Special Chief Secretary, Tourism & Culture, AP and Ravi Pattanshetti, MD, APTDC & CEO, AP Tourism Authority, engaged in a discussion that outlined actionable plans to engage the inbound travel trade.

A central focus of the session was the upcoming greenfield Bhogapuram International Airport, positioned as a transformative gateway connecting north coastal Andhra Pradesh with the wider hinterlands of southern Odisha and Chhattisgarh. State officials highlighted the area's industrial expansion, modern MICE facilities, growing tech investments and increasing hotel room inventory.

Further, the session addressed the state's destination strategy as Ravi Pattanshetti acknowledged that the local tour operator framework is still evolving. The discussion highlighted that to bridge this gap, the government proposed holding regular capacity building workshops with IATO and including tour operators within international official delegations. The administration also expressed openness to introducing financial incentives and market development assistance for operators who market Andhra Pradesh abroad.

To address the challenge of short transit trips—where pilgrims visit Tirupati or leisure travelers visit Visakhapatnam beaches for only a day—the state unveiled initiatives designed to extend visitor stays. The convention was also followed by six post-convention familiarisation tours for delegates, covering Araku Valley, local Buddhist heritage monuments, and coastal corridors to promote tourism spots in Andhra Pradesh.











Plan for a strategic transformation

The first business session of the convention moderated by Peden Doma Bhutia, featuring Nakul Anand, Suman Billa, Shamsher Singh Rawat, and Ravi Gosain addressed the gap between India's vast cultural potential and lagging inbound performance, noting that domestic demand has caused high tariffs and supply bottlenecks for foreign visitors. Panellists emphasized fixing the "last-mile delivery" at monuments and focusing resources on a "One State, One Global Destination" model supported by modern, collaborative marketing. Nakul Anand shared, "Our biggest corporate doubt, and for India, and I call it a corporate doubt because it stands out in different situations, is that we have 6,000 years of civilisation that nobody can take."

The second session on technology and artificial intelligence moderated by Naveen Kundu, featuring Rocky Jogtiani, Chirag Agarwal, Abhishek Logani, Jitin Bhatia and Dev Karwat, reframed AI from a job-disrupting threat into an essential operating tool. The discussion highlighted that over 50-60 per cent of modern travellers already generate their initial itineraries using AI tools like ChatGPT, Claude or Gemini. The panel also acknowledged that the tour operator's role is evolving from an itinerary maker to an itinerary auditor. Rocky Jogtiani stated, "We are not making itineraries from AI tools any longer. We are auditing the itineraries because customers do not have clear information."

Moderated by Ram Pratap Singh, the third panel addressed the escalating pressures of overtourism. Featuring Pushp Kumar, Pradeep Murthy, Manjula Chaudhary, Vikram Cotah and Anish Andheria, the discussion centered on shifting destination management metrics away from gross visitor footfalls toward high-value, low-impact tourism models. The panel advocated using predictive AI, seasonal limits, and strict ecological carrying-capacity assessments while ensuring that host communities directly benefit from local tourism livelihoods.

Session four moderated by Homal Mistry featuring Suman Billa, Manish Puri, Abhay Arvind Bedekar, Vikram Madhok, Sanjay Basu and Megh Agaonkar examined specific levers for accelerating inbound visitor numbers. It focused on unlocking high-growth tourism by moving past standalone numbers to build an interconnected ecosystem across aviation, state governments, hospitality, luxury and coastal cruising. The panel emphasised working towards better arrival logistics, enhancing air connectivity, and tapping into high-value segments like wellness to encourage longer visitor stays. "If we really are talking about rebuilding tourism into India, let's fix the arrival. Let's fix the visa," Vikram Madhok stated.

The fifth session, moderated by Aashish Gupta, Consulting CEO, FAITH, brought together representatives from across the tourism value chain, including G. Rekha Rani, Parveen Chander, Arif Patel, Anshul Sethi, Rohit Arora, Pronab Sarkar and Kanwarjit Singh Sawhney. The discussion focused on eliminating operational friction across the value chain. The session underscored that tourism is a multi-stakeholder platform requiring tight coordination among the "Four Bs" (Hotels, Tour Operators, Airlines, and Transporters).

The last session, a masterclass by Vikas Anand, CEO of SafeTree, reframed operator risk from simple trip cancellations to boardroom-level enterprise liabilities and warned tour operators that client contracts legally place liability on them rather than vendors. Vikas asserted, "The point I'm trying to make is that incident free pass doesn't ensure that your future would be without any incidents." He further noted that most Indian operators function as MSMEs with limited risk-hedging mechanisms.

A pan-India state showcase

The convention also offered a dynamic platform for an extensive exhibition for the various state tourism boards across Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Meghalaya & Manipur and Delhi to present their diversified tourism circuits to the delegates present at the convention.

The 41st IATO Annual Convention highlighted the importance of realising that India's inbound tourism potential requires dismantling operational and administrative silos. By marrying state-level product innovation with private-sector packaging, embracing artificial intelligence to highlight human expertise, establishing rigorous visitor carrying-capacity frameworks, and rationalising taxes, the Indian travel trade established a coherent strategic roadmap at the annual convention.

viaeast DMC

A Unified Destination Group

School Special

Learn. Explore. Experience

Curated Educational Experiences Across East Asia

JAPAN

07Nights/ 08 Days

Tsukuba – Tokyo – Hakone – Disney Resort

STARTING FROM

JPY 353,300

PER PERSON

Minimum 35 Pax

i love Japan DMC

SOUTH KOREA

05Nights/ 06 Days

Seoul

STARTING FROM

USD 880

PER PERSON

Minimum 35 Pax

ASK And South Korea DMC

TAIWAN

07Nights/ 08 Days

Taipei – Nantou

STARTING FROM

USD 750

PER PERSON

Minimum 35 Pax

AND TAIWAN DMC

Sales@viaeastdmc.com +91-99200 93003

Asego

Why travel protection needs a specialist

Dev Karvat, Founder and CEO, Asego shares why expertise in travel protection should be an integral part of traveller experience and how Asego protects its travellers with its 26 years of expertise.

Travel today has become an increasingly seamless experience with everything built for convenience. A few clicks can take a traveller from browsing flights to boarding, with flights, hotels, visas, transfers and a host of other services connected through an ecosystem. But as travel continues to evolve into a technology-driven segment, so does the importance and role of travel protection. And For travel advisors, travel protection is more than just an add-on to a booking, it is an imperative part of the entire traveller experience, especially when journeys take an unprecedented turn.

Dev Karvat, Founder and CEO, Asego believes that travel protection has naturally become an important part of this journey. He shares, "There is a fundamental difference between travel protection and most other travel products. Its value is not truly experienced at the time of purchase; it is tested when something goes wrong. When a flight is cancelled, baggage is delayed, a traveller requires medical assistance overseas or a claim needs to be resolved, protection moves from being a product to becoming a critical responsibility."

Specialisation is key

Dev shares that in travel protection specialisation and domain depth matters just as much as organisational scape. He adds, "A specialist provider builds its business around a clear purpose — to understand travel, anticipate its risks and support travellers when circumstances do not go as planned. And over time, that focus creates expertise that extends far beyond product features. It means understanding how travellers move, where disruptions are likely to occur, what travel advisors need, how assistance should be delivered and how claims need to be handled when situations are complex or unexpected."

Furthermore, he shares, "While technology can make access to protection faster and distribution more seamless, what sits behind that transaction ultimately determines the experience. That depth of understanding is difficult to replicate simply by adding travel protection to a broader portfolio," Dev says.

Trust is imperative

Pondering over the importance of trust and accountability when it comes to travel protection, he further adds, "For a travel advisor, recommending a protection provider is also a matter of professional accountability. Their reputation is intrinsically connected to the solutions they recommend to their customers. So, reliability, responsible handling of customer information, accessibility of service and accountability in claims are not secondary considerations — they are fundamental to the relationship. A trusted protection partner has to demonstrate that it will be there when the traveller actually needs it. The relationship does not end when a policy is issued; in many ways, that is when the real responsibility begins."

Asego and travel trade

When it comes to Asego's relationship with the travel trade, Dev shares that the focus has always been on becoming a dedicated travel protection and global assistance partner for the B2B travel ecosystem. "That means building our capabilities around the needs of travel trade partners rather than treating them simply as another distribution channel. For us, a travel advisor is not just a route to the traveller. They are a partner whose business growth matters. That distinction influences everything we do — from product development and servicing to the technology we invest in. Our objective is to give partners the confidence to recommend protection because they know there is meaningful expertise and capability supporting that recommendation," he explains.

As technology continues to transform travel, Dev believes it should solve for the partner rather than just impress the user. He says, "The real question should always be: what problem does it solve? For us, technology needs to make it easier for partners to sell, service, manage and support travel protection while removing friction from the customer experience. It should simplify the journey rather than add another digital layer to it."

He adds, "The travel protection market will continue to evolve and technology will only become more deeply embedded with product choices expanding and distribution becoming increasingly seamless. But while all of this is positive, as the market grows further, the value of specialisation becomes even greater. Technology can enable the experience, but expertise gives that experience substance."

26 years of deep understanding

With 26 years of experience in global assistance and travel insurance, Asego brings a specialist perspective to the changing needs of travellers and the travel trade. Dev highlights, "That experience has given us something that cannot be built overnight — a deep understanding of the travel trade, its evolving challenges, its expectations and, most importantly, the moments when the promise of protection is put to the test. For us, those 26 years are not simply a measure of longevity. They represent the learnings accumulated from being deeply invested in one domain and continuously understanding what travellers and travel partners need as the industry evolves. Our vision has always been simple: to pursue excellence in one thing that matters — protecting travellers and enabling the partners who serve them to do so with confidence."

Dev says while concluding that when a traveller's journey is at stake, protection should not be an experiment. It should come with experience. And as technology makes the journey more seamless, expertise in travel protection, accountability and dependable assistance remain at the core of a traveller's travel experience.



Dev Karvat

Bihar's Upcoming Global Projects



Bihar is investing in its sacred geography on a scale that will place its holy sites among the world's finest pilgrimage destinations.



Maa Janaki Janmasthali,
Punaura Dham, Sitamarhi

Celebrated as the birthplace of Mata Sita, Punaura Dham is set for a grand transformation.

- The Bihar Cabinet has approved a ₹882.87 crore plan: about ₹137 crore for the temple and ₹728 crore for pilgrim infrastructure.
- The plan includes the Sita Vatika, Luv-Kush Vatika, a new parikrama path and facilities for visitors.
- Inspired by the Ayodhya Ram Mandir, the project's design consultant is the firm behind the Ayodhya temple.
- A proposed four-lane Ram-Janki corridor of about 240 km, estimated at ₹6,155 crore, will link Ayodhya and Sitamarhi, allowing devotees to follow the journey of Ram and Sita in a single pilgrimage.

Project Cost ₹942.38 Crore



Vishnupad Corridor,
Gayaji

The ancient Vishnupad Temple, which holds the footprint of Lord Vishnu and is closely tied to Pitripaksha, is set to be redeveloped at an estimated cost of ₹2,390 crore. The lakhs of pilgrims who arrive for Pind Daan can look forward to wider access paths, better ghats, and improved amenities and safety.





Hariharnath Temple Corridor,
Sonepur, Saran

Where the Ganga meets the Gandak stands Baba Hariharnath Temple, a rare shrine uniting Lord Shiva (Hara) and Lord Vishnu (Hari). Sonepur is also home to the Sonepur Mela, one of Asia's largest cattle fairs. The Bihar Cabinet has sanctioned ₹680 crore for the temple's redevelopment, modelled on the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor.



Why These Corridors Matter

Kashi Vishwanath and Ayodhya have shown how thoughtful heritage infrastructure can transform a pilgrimage destination. For Bihar, this will mean:

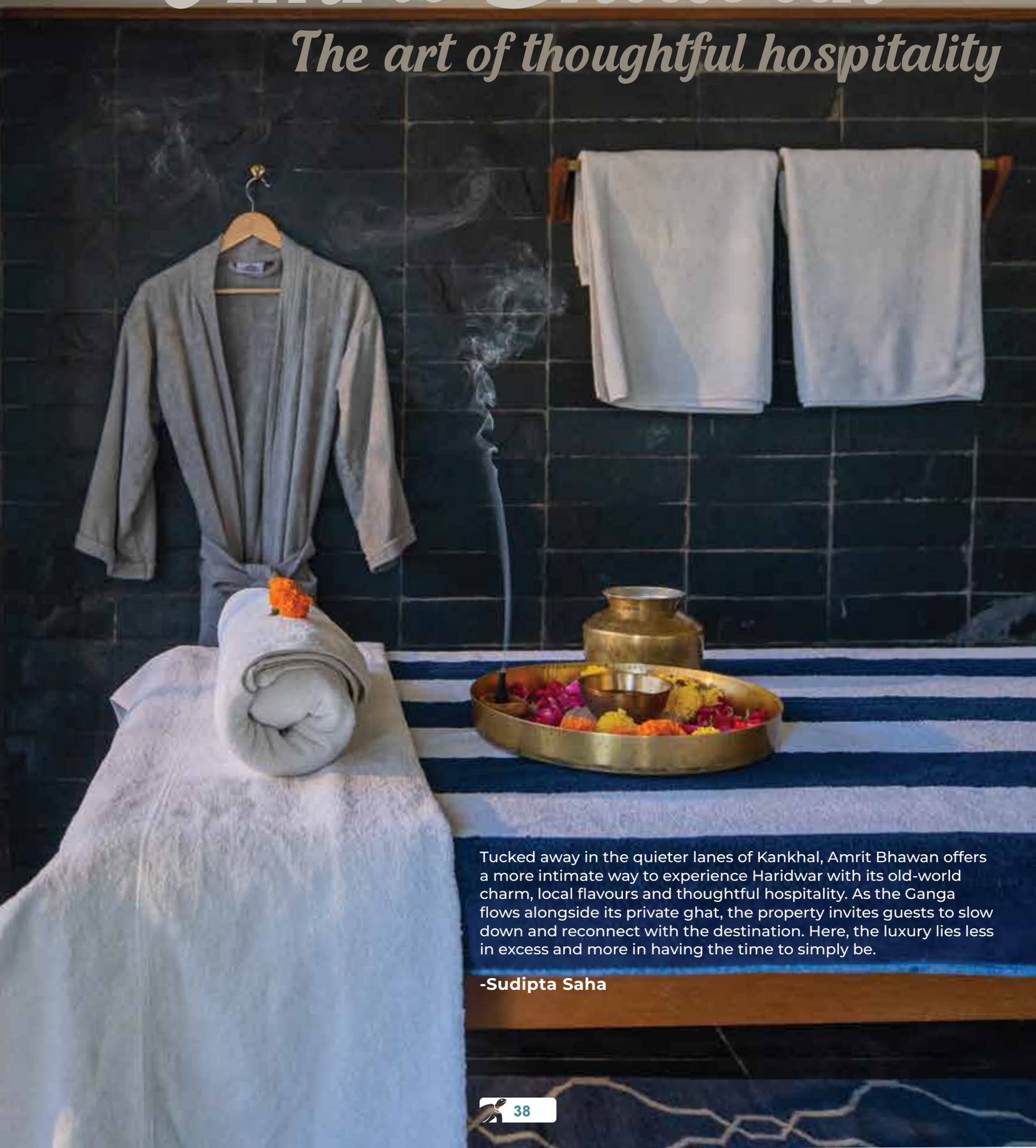
- Wider, safer and more accessible pilgrim routes
- More livelihoods for local guides, artisans, hoteliers and transport
- A Buddhist circuit (Bodh Gaya–Rajgir–Nalanda), a Ramayana circuit and a Vaishnav–Shaiva circuit, all within one state
- Better lodging, food, sanitation and crowd management
- Greater global visibility for Bihar's heritage

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR

www.tourism.bihar.gov.in @tourismbihargov

Amrit Bhawan

The art of thoughtful hospitality



Tucked away in the quieter lanes of Kankhal, Amrit Bhawan offers a more intimate way to experience Haridwar with its old-world charm, local flavours and thoughtful hospitality. As the Ganga flows alongside its private ghat, the property invites guests to slow down and reconnect with the destination. Here, the luxury lies less in excess and more in having the time to simply be.

-Sudipta Saha



There are quite a few properties in India that make your stay feel like a soft and slow melody and for me, Amrit Bhawan, Haridwar, Uttarakhand was one that fit right in. In a city that is synonymous with temples, pilgrims, crowded ghats and the energy of the Ganga with Har Ki Pauri often forming the centre of the experience, Amrit Bhawan is a property that offers a markedly different way of experiencing the city. When I stepped into Amrit Bhawan, tucked away in Kankhal, it felt like an escape from the hustle and bustle of the town.

More than just a hotel, this 54 - year - old art - deco bungalow is an old family home that has been thoughtfully restored and transformed into an eight-room boutique retreat, while retaining much of the character of the original house. The property dates back to the 1970s and was restored between 2017 and 2019, retrofitted with modern amenities to suit the tastes of the modern - day travellers.

A set from a period drama

Amrit Bhawan has a vibe unique to itself that pulls you in like a warm embrace from the past itself. And that is how I felt when I first entered Amrit Bhawan. With its vintage charm and ambience that felt like it was straight out of a period drama, Amrit Bhawan in Haridwar, seemed like a piece of history left to be admired and lived in for the travellers. But what was particularly intriguing to me was that the restoration did not only retain the character of the original house but also tried to retain the home's past with pieces of refurbished furniture to preserve its vintage charm, art deco-inspired artwork, old photographs and terrazzo floors while preserving comfortable and intimate common spaces that make it feel lived-in rather than newly constructed. The caretakers of the property have also been retained and retrained to give the property a sense of history and a personal touch without making it feel dated or overly polished.

The location of the property is one of the main characters that became the founding stones of the entire experience for me. Located along the Sanyas Marg, Kankhal is the quieter, southern part of Haridwar that is only about four hours away from Delhi, with Jollygrant Airport at an hour's distance and Haridwar Junction only eight minutes away. It is characterised by ashrams, residential neighbourhoods and an ancient vibe that has historically been associated with sages and spirituality.

Blending Ganga into the stay

While away from the noise of the pilgrim city, Amrit Bhawan felt like an oasis that is well placed for exploring Haridwar with Har Ki Pauri, the city's temples and bazaars with an easy reach.

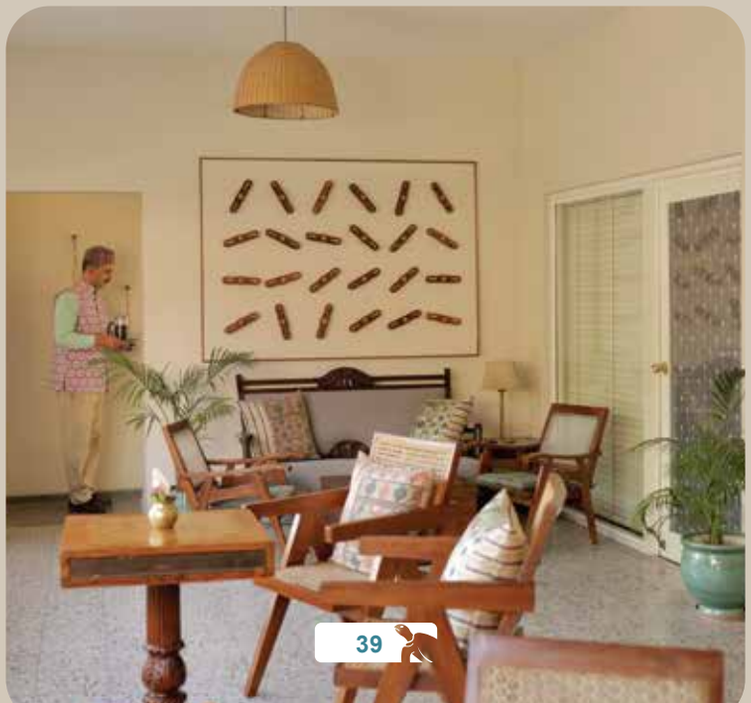
Amrit Bhawan has its own private ghat by the Ganga and I found the river naturally blending into the rhythm of my stay. There is a garden at the heart of the house that made for some of the most serene moments of my time at the property. I could spend my time sitting by the water, take in the garden views or simply sit and listen to the flowing river. It is a particularly soothing setting in times when I don't have to be anywhere else.

The Bhawan rooms

There are only eight rooms at the property that span four categories and that alone gives Amrit Bhawan an intimate and cosy feel that makes you want to stay a little longer and take a pause from your busy life. The rooms are well lit, with large windows, desks and essentials like air conditioning and heating, Wi-Fi, USB charging points, mini-fridges, safes, televisions and tea and coffee facilities. The terrazzo bathrooms embody the property's vintage aesthetic while bringing in modern comforts, making the stay feel cosy and comfortable with a quiet homely feel.

Two categories of the Bhawan rooms include the Ashram View Rooms and the River View Rooms. The Ashram View Rooms are south-facing and filled with natural light while the River opens onto verandahs or balconies that overlook the garden and river.

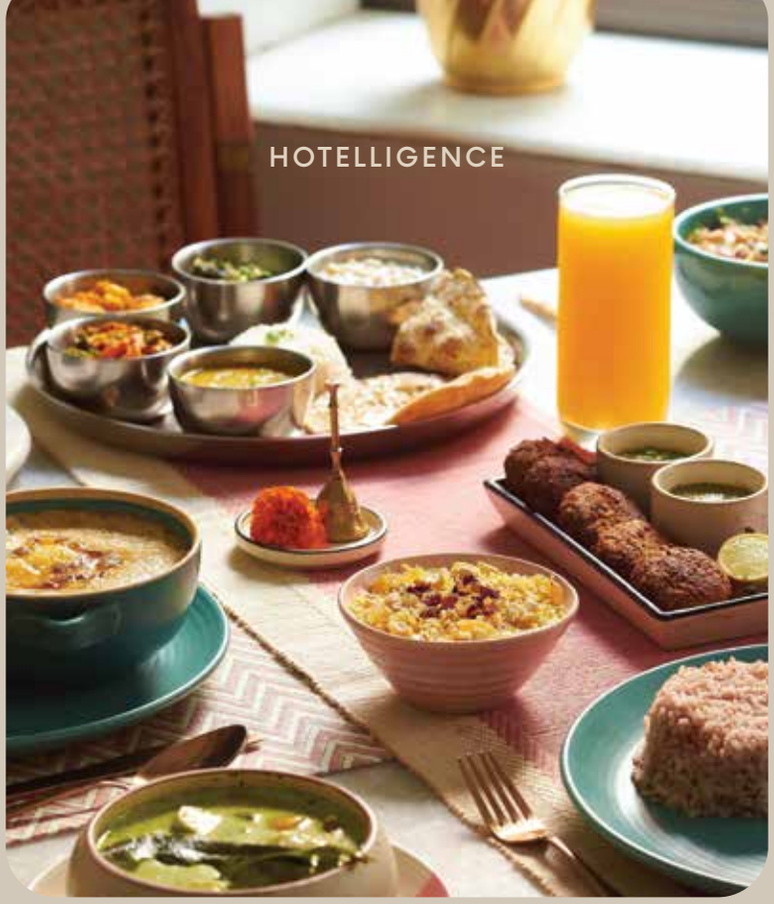
The highlight for me would be the River View Suite. A two-room accommodation with an ensuite bathroom, powder room and private terrace, the suite feels best suited for the guests who like their stays cosy yet luxurious and want to make the river a constant part of their stay.



A tranquil retreat

While there is a lot for guests to explore in Haridwar and even at Amrit Bhawan, one of the things that I enjoyed the most about the stay at Amrit Bhawan was that I did not have to stick to an itinerary or be on the move. A day here can begin as slowly as the guest wants, with yoga or meditation by the Ganga, or even take part in the soft sound therapy session, followed by a hearty breakfast in the garden, a stroll through property or reading in a quiet corner listening to the river and taking in the views. Lunch can be enjoyed al fresco before a laid - back afternoon or one filled with activity.

I found the high tea in the evening a soulful experience as it gave way to the property's intimate Ganga Aarti at Amrit Ghat. The later part of the evening can be spent around a bonfire accompanied by mountain melodies or a sound-bath session by the river, followed by a leisurely dinner. It is an itinerary built for an unhurried getaway and Amrit Bhawan ensures you get the same.



The unmissable cuisine

While everything makes Amrit Bhawan the stay you would want to book for your slow stays, the one thing that I believe is an unmissable part of the Amrit Bhawan experience is the cuisine. There is something about the food offered at the Bhawan that makes the experience feel rooted in its surroundings. It serves 100 per cent vegetarian cuisine with no meat, eggs or alcohol and the dining experience focuses on homestyle regional Indian cuisine prepared with local ingredients, with Uttarakhandi flavours taking centre stage.

I particularly liked the property's approach toward local food. The regional cuisine at the Bhawan forms an important part of its identity instead of being treated as a one-off special. The menus are designed to be as local and seasonal as possible and the kitchen uses Indian wheat varieties for staples such as breads and pastas. There are also Uttarakhandi thalis, North Indian thalis available for the guests.

That is not all, the property also offers Garhwali cooking classes that allow guests to engage in the process of making local cuisine and understand some of the traditions behind it. Amrit Bhawan also has a similar philosophy behind 'Naashta.' An ode to Uttarakhand's culinary heritage, the initiative of Naashta reinterprets traditional recipes and local ingredients in a contemporary way, while also working with local women and producing the food in small batches in Haridwar.

Beyond the obvious

But there is more to Amrit Bhawan. Another aspect of the property that stood out to me was its approach to experiences as it encourages guests to look beyond the spiritual side of Haridwar-Ganga Aarti, temple darshan, and walks through Kankhal. You can choose to immerse yourself in the spiritual whilst also exploring the cultural history of Haridwar during their stay at the property and that balance between experiences makes Amrit Bhawan a unique property.

I could visit temples and havelis of Kankhal, take a Har Ki Pauri and Moti Bazaar walk, go birdwatching or head out on a Chandi Devi hike and picnic. For the guests who want to take it a step further and venture out, there are experiences at Rajaji National Park, Garhwali village visits, whitewater rafting and day trips to destinations such as Tehri Lake, Dehradun and Devprayag.



A portfolio beyond the slow getaways

What is particularly unique about Amrit Bhawan is that it does not just restrict its portfolio to slow getaways and stays but it also caters to several celebrations. For the guests looking to organise cosy, intimate gatherings like family or friends' reunion, weddings, religious ceremonies like Mundans and Havans, Amrit Bhawan lends itself very well to private group bookings. The property focuses on creating special menus and offers flexible operational hours to fit the requirements of the group and that, I believe, sets the property apart from the others.

Amrit Bhawan does not try to compete with the energy of Haridwar rather it offers a retreat from the city while also complementing in several ways for the guests to enjoy the tranquility alongside the adventures that Haridwar has to offer.



पर्यटन मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

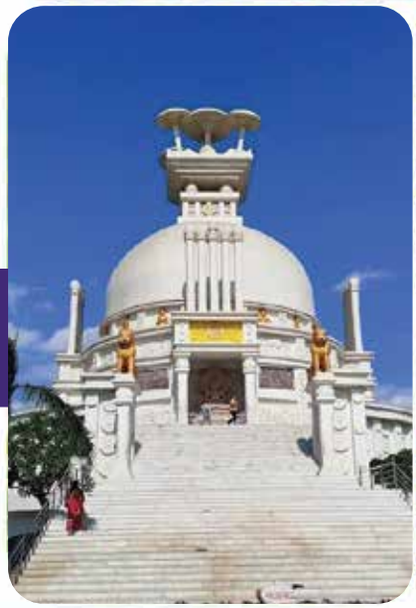
Approved By Ministry of Tourism

अतुल्य भारत
Incredible India

Holiday Mechanic®
Your Trusted Travel Partner
ODISHA DMC



EXPLORE ODISHA WITH HOLIDAY MECHANIC







OUR SERVICES

- AC Vehicle
- Hotels
- Breakfast
- 24×7 Support
- Pickup to Drop

PRE-PURCHASED INVENTORY

- Durga Pooja
- Diwali
- Christmas
- New Year

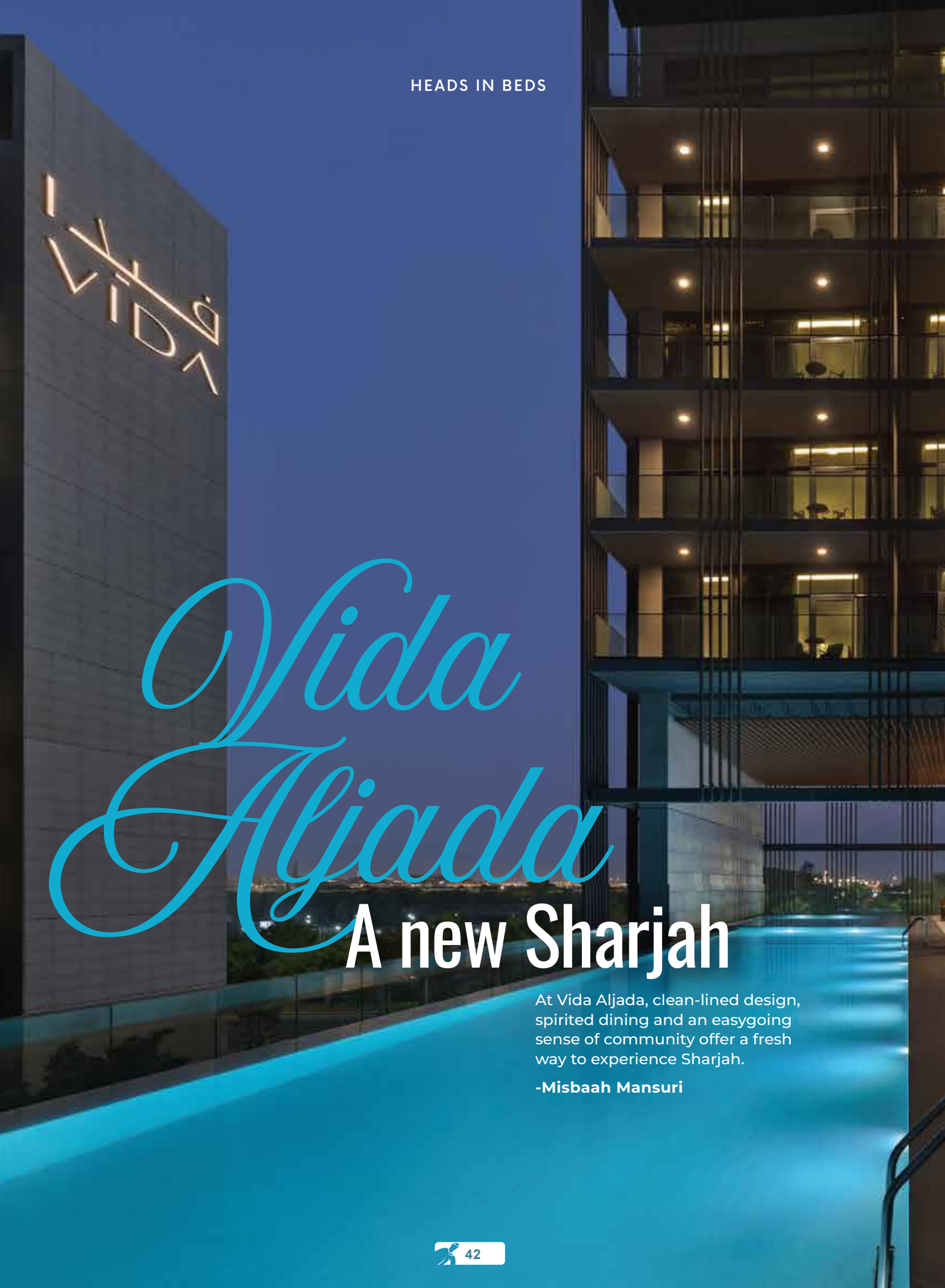
+91 9810798923 +91 9958540334

Follow us on:

operation@holidaymechanic.com

holidaymechanic.com

Plot No. A1/3A, Indra Housing Colony, Post Sisupalgarh PS
Dhauli Bhubaneswar Odisha- 751002



Vida Aljada

A new Sharjah

At Vida Aljada, clean-lined design, spirited dining and an easygoing sense of community offer a fresh way to experience Sharjah.

-Misbaah Mansuri



Sharjah has always been easy to define by its heritage. Museums, calligraphy, Islamic architecture and an extraordinary commitment to art have given the emirate a cultural identity quite distinct from its neighbours. Aljada suggests another side of the story.

Driving into the neighbourhood, the Sharjah outside the window feels younger and more spontaneous. Cafés spill into pedestrian spaces, families wander between restaurants and landscaped walkways, and contemporary architecture rises around a district conceived less as somewhere to pass through than somewhere to stay awhile.

At the centre of it all is Vida Aljada, the newest addition to the Vida Hotels & Resorts portfolio and the brand's first hotel in Sharjah. With 175 rooms and suites, along with serviced residences, restaurants and social spaces, it feels deliberately connected to the neighbourhood surrounding it rather than removed from it. It is an appropriate home for Vida.

This has never been a brand particularly interested in chandeliers, hushed lobbies or the choreography of traditional five-star hospitality. Vida's language is lighter: good coffee, contemporary design, communal spaces and restaurants you might visit even if you were not sleeping upstairs. Vida Aljada takes that idea and gives it a distinctly Sharjah address.

Checking in

The first impression is one of light. Rather than a cavernous lobby designed to make guests feel small, the ground floor feels deliberately social. Natural light moves through open spaces furnished in soft neutrals, warm timber and tactile fabrics, punctuated by greenery and playful contemporary details.

There is a pleasing clarity to the interiors. Lines are clean without becoming clinical, furniture is contemporary but comfortable, and there is enough colour and personality to prevent the minimalism from feeling anonymous. It is polished, certainly, but never stiff. More importantly, the design encourages you to actually use the spaces.

There are corners made for conversations, tables where opening a laptop over coffee would not feel remotely out of place and plenty of places to simply sit and watch the hotel move around you.

Our room continued that relaxed aesthetic. Warm woods, neutral tones, considered lighting and clean lines made it immediately comfortable, while generous windows brought the surrounding Aljada development into view. Everything felt functional without becoming utilitarian, with enough thoughtful design detail to remind you that this is a lifestyle hotel rather than simply somewhere to sleep. It also provided a welcome sense of calm after stepping in from the activity outside. That balance between retreat and connection would come to define the stay.

Around the table

Food turned out to be one of Vida Aljada's strongest suits. Mornings began at Origins, and one dish quickly became non-negotiable: the shakshouka. It arrived at the table piping hot, the eggs cooked just enough for the whites to set while preserving beautifully runny yolks underneath. The tomato base was rich and properly cooked down, carrying spice and acidity rather than tasting overly sweet or watery.

Break the yolk and drag a piece of warm bread through the eggs and spiced tomato sauce, and breakfast suddenly becomes a much longer affair than intended. It was the kind of seemingly simple dish that exposes a kitchen very quickly. Here, it was done properly.

Lunch at Origins brought out the heartier side of the menu. The mixed grill was particularly good: generous without being unwieldy, with beautifully grilled meats carrying smoky, charred edges while remaining juicy inside. The seasoning was confident, and the accompaniments provided enough freshness to balance all that richness.





Between meals, however, I found myself gravitating towards Stage2. Part lounge, part café and part social heart of the lobby, it embodies Vida's more relaxed approach to hospitality. You can meet someone for coffee, sit down with a laptop or simply stop for something sweet without the formality that sometimes accompanies hotel lobby lounges.

I ordered the gold cappuccino, which is exactly as playful as it sounds. Beautifully presented with its shimmering gold finish, it is the sort of coffee that inevitably earns a photograph before the first sip, but thankfully the novelty does not come at the expense of the coffee itself.

Alongside it came a strawberry tart, delicate and fresh, with bright strawberries cutting through the richness of the pastry and cream. Together, they made Stage2 one of those places where an intended 20-minute coffee can very easily stretch into an hour. That is perhaps its greatest success. It doesn't feel like a waiting area attached to reception. It feels like somewhere you would choose to meet even without a room upstairs.







By the pool

By late afternoon, the rhythm moves outdoors to Flo Pool Terrace. The atmosphere is deliberately uncomplicated: water, open sky, comfortable seating and somewhere to linger while Sharjah's heat finally begins to loosen its grip.

Around sunset is when Flo makes the most sense. The harder light of the afternoon softens, the temperature drops and Aljada begins to illuminate around you. Sitting beside the pool as day slowly slipped into evening also reinforced something that distinguishes Vida Aljada from a conventional resort.

The hotel isn't designed to make the neighbourhood disappear. Aljada remains present throughout the stay, which encourages you to venture outside rather than spend two days sealed inside a hotel bubble.

True slice

Dinner at True Slice was perhaps the clearest expression of Vida Aljada's personality. The Italian restaurant is casual and energetic, with pizza at the centre of the experience rather than treated as the safe option buried somewhere on an enormous international menu.

Our gamberos pizza was the standout. The crust arrived beautifully blistered from the oven, crisp around its puffed edges but retaining the satisfying chew of properly handled dough. The prawns, however, were what made it.

Rather than the sweetness often associated with prawn-topped pizzas, these were perfectly spicy, with enough heat to register immediately without overpowering the seafood. Against the charred dough and savoury toppings, that spice gave each slice a welcome kick and made it difficult to stop at one more.

It was exactly the sort of pizza I like: bold rather than timid, with proper heat and a crust good enough that the edges don't get abandoned on the plate. True Slice also avoids feeling like the obligatory Italian restaurant inserted into a hotel dining portfolio. There is enough personality to make it somewhere you could imagine returning to independently, particularly with Aljada's increasingly lively restaurant scene surrounding it.

A quick reset

The following morning introduced the hotel's quieter side with a 30-minute express facial. The emphasis really is on express. There is no drawn-out ceremony or attempt to turn half an hour into an elaborate wellness journey. Instead, the treatment is focused and practical, making it particularly appealing if you want the benefits of a facial without sacrificing half a day of your weekend.

After cleansing and treatment, my skin felt noticeably fresher, while the half - hour itself provided a welcome pocket of calm. It also suited the personality of Vida Aljada surprisingly well.

Wellness here does not require retreating from the world for hours. It can simply mean disappearing for 30 minutes between breakfast and an afternoon exploring Aljada, then carrying on with your day.

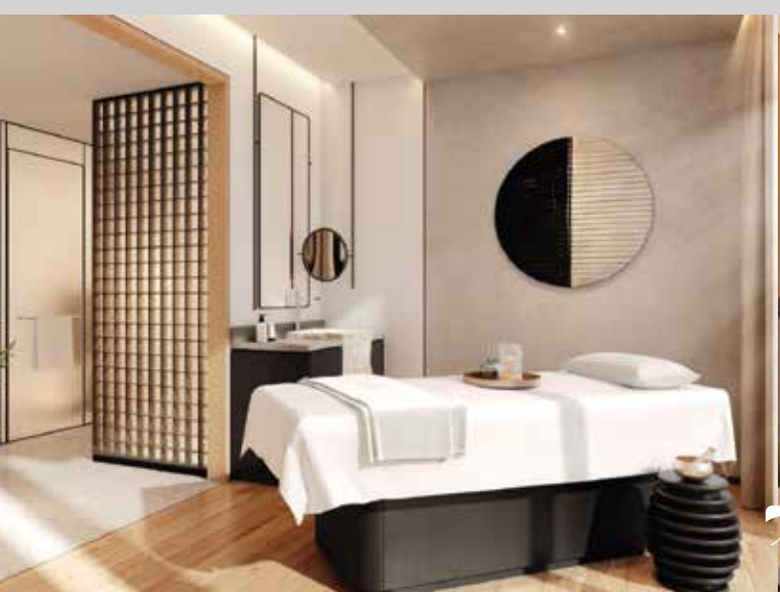
In a nutshell

Vida Aljada represents a different face of Sharjah. This is not the emirate solely viewed through its museums, heritage districts and cultural institutions, important as those remain. Aljada reveals a younger, increasingly design - conscious Sharjah, where restaurants, cafés, homes, hotels and public spaces coexist within the same neighbourhood.

Vida understands its role within that evolution. Its interiors are contemporary without becoming cold. The lobby is somewhere you actually want to spend time. Origins can take you from excellent shakshouka at breakfast to a smoky mixed grill at lunch. Stage2 turns a gold cappuccino and strawberry tart into an excuse to linger. Flo provides a front-row seat for sunset, while True Slice finishes the evening with blistered dough and prawns carrying exactly the right amount of heat.

But the thing I appreciated most was how easy the entire stay felt. There was no sense that every hour needed to be programmed. We could linger over breakfast, wander around Aljada, return for coffee and cake, disappear for a treatment, sit beside the pool as the light changed and head downstairs for pizza when hunger eventually returned.

For a new hotel, Vida Aljada already feels remarkably comfortable in its surroundings. It doesn't try to compete with Sharjah. Instead, it gives you a stylish, relaxed base from which to experience what this rapidly changing part of the emirate is becoming.





THE HORIZON TOURS
Where The Earth Meets The Sky

JAPAN & EUROPE DMC

The Horizon Tours

Where The Earth Meets Sky

JAPAN TO EUROPE & BEYOND

More Destinations More Experiences Same Trusted Partner.

B2B DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PARTNER

JAPAN & EUROPE

EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEYS FOR YOUR CLIENTS

The Horizon Tours is a trusted B2B Destination Management Company offering complete ground handling solutions across Japan and Europe.

We help travel partners deliver seamless experiences to their clients with our local expertise, reliable services and dedicated support.



Unique Experinatinces Always

OUR B2B SERVICES

AIRPORT TRANSFERS
Private & Group Transfers across Japan & Europe.

BULLET TRAIN TICKETS
All Japan Rail Passes & Shinkansen Reservations.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS
Wide range of hotel options to suit every budget.

GROUP & FIT SERVICES
Tailor-made itineraries for groups and individual travellers.

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT
Indian & English speaking support team in Japan & Europe.

WHY PARTNER WITH US?

- ☑ LOCAL EXPERTISE
- ☑ COMPETITIVE RATES
- ☑ 24/7 SUPPORT
- ☑ FAST & RELIABLE OPERATIONS
- ☑ LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP



WE COVER

JAPAN
TOKYO | OSAKA | KYOTO
SAPPORO | OKINAWA & MORE

EUROPE
FRANCE | SWITZERLAND | ITALY
SPAIN | NETHERLANDS | GERMANY
AUSTRIA | SCANDINAVIA & MORE

LET'S CONNECT!

+31 638 969 866
+49 176 7604 7308
+81 70-8982-1440

japan@thehorizontours.com
europe@thehorizontours.com
www.thehorizontours.com

Let's Grow Together!



HEAD OFFICE – AMSTERDAM
Pc Boutensstraat 5, 1321 TK
Almere, The Netherlands

JAPAN OFFICE
AC & C Co., Ltd.
4-2066-10 BOKKEMACHI,
ICHIKAWA-SHI, CHIBA-KEN,
JAPAN 272-0811



JAPAN TO EUROPE & BEYOND | *Where Journeys Become Memories.*

Pull up a chair with Away & Co.



Two founders, a room of curious editors, and a menu of journeys that never reads the same way twice. Ruchi & Rohit Kohli, Chief of Experience at Away & Co. share some amazing insights into their journey of travel curation.

-Tripti Jain



Ruchi & Rohit Kohli

Picture a long table, a generous spread, and editors with questions to match. Rohit and Ruchi Kohli of Away & Co. sit at the head of it, carrying five decades of Creative Travel family wisdom and a simple belief: a journey should feel written for the person taking it. Let's dive in a conversation that roamed from glaciers to gondolas and jazz nights in New Orleans to the Drake Passage in Antarctic.

Journeys with a conscience

Local dining sits high on the Away & Co. agenda, and responsible travel runs just as deep. Trips are built to include local experiences that support communities, and the company is Biosphere certified. Rohit shares, "Our guests love exploring a destination through its cuisine, and responsible travel is part of every journey we design."

Stories for the grandchildren

India holds two kinds of luxury: the kind people can see and the kind people can live. Away & Co. speaks to the second. Travellers are trading luxury goods for experiences, planning family trips with fresh energy, and opening bucket lists far sooner than before. Furthermore he adds, "People want to invest in doing things they can talk to their grandchildren about." Ruchi sees the same shift in how guests plan and says, "People used to wait for the right time. Now more and more of them say, let's do it now."

The Drake without the shake

Antarctica is the newest addition to the Away & Co. line-up, and its first season has just wrapped. Guests glide over the famously rolling Drake Passage by air, taking off from Punta Arenas in Chile and landing on King George Island at the polar ice cap. The price is printed openly, so every caller arrives informed and ready. One honeymooning couple even picked the white continent as their romantic escape. "Our Antarctica guests know exactly what they want, which is why the cost is there for everyone to read," says Ruchi.

A menu of moments

Wild: • Polar bears, up close: Specially designed tundra buggies bring guests to bears in their natural habitat.
• Galapagos, Ecuador: Iguanas, giant turtles, penguins and sea lions, with evolution in motion.
• Okavango by helicopter: Private safaris and flights over the delta, minus the crowds.
• Gorillas in Rwanda: Silverback treks need booking six to twelve months ahead.

Taste: • Oyster safari, Ireland: Wade the tidal waters with farmers, then toast with local sparkling wine.
• Salt flats breakfast: Crisp linen and champagne in Bolivia while the flats glow pink and gold.
• Cycling through vineyards: A family and couples favourite, with tastings along the route.

Sky: • Glacier picnic: Land on a glacier for a champagne breakfast. Exclusivity does not get higher.
• Atacama stargazing: Astronomers, telescopes and wine under some of the clearest skies on Earth.
• Finland and Alaska: Countryside canoeing beyond Helsinki, and aurora nights in Alaska.

Culture: • Panama hats, Ecuador: Visit the workshops where the famous hats are woven, and try weaving one.
• Salsa and jazz: Private salsa lessons with local dancers, and New Orleans jazz bars at night.
• Kenya's lodges: Wonderful through the year, with migration season as a bonus.
• Medina by sidecar: Small, surprising moments that guests could never arrange alone.
Ruchi shares, "Every experience can be simple and special at once, it is about what the guest loves, plus a surprise they were not expecting."

Who travels with Away & Co.

Professionals and business families lead the guest list, with an average age above forty. Tier II cities bring fresh aspiration, as second - generation travellers who studied abroad carry a bigger appetite. Retired couples plan one grand trip a year on budgets of 20 to 30 lakh. Grandparents and grandchildren now set off together, parents happily left at home. Golf tours and Formula One circuits fill other calendars, and luxury river cruising has found a devoted following.
Referrals and repeat guests drive most bookings. One couple in their fifties spent six days in Morocco and wrote back to say they would plan every future trip with Away & Co. Rohit throws light at the aspirational side of the travel experience and says, "Travel is as specialised as medicine. A doctor is not necessarily a cardiologist, and a travel designer is not necessarily an expert in every kind of journey. We focus on curating experiences guests cannot find themselves."

Compass check

• Morocco: Last year's number one single destination, with fifty - plus bookings. Medina sidecars and desert camps keep it fresh.
• Africa: Southern and eastern Africa top the revenue charts, with Kenya lovely year round.
• Mongolia: The Naadam Festival has travellers suddenly asking for Mongolia, and Kazakhstan has joined the buzz.
• Sicily: One of Europe's most underrated gems, ideal for guests who have done Rome and Venice.
• Dolomites: Landing in Milan means a long road north, so smart routing and the right chalets matter.
• Versailles: Repeat Paris visitors can stay on the estate, with after - hours palace access, lakeside picnics and butler service.
• Japan: Guides, cars and restaurant tables fill early, so planning ahead pays off in this much - loved destination.
• Saudi Arabia: Giga projects are rising fast, and Indian travellers are warming to the new leisure offer.
• Australia: A summer star for adventure and wildlife, with Tasmania's boutique lodges drawing fans.

Seat by seat

Conversation around the table drifted to the destinations that shape how trips are planned today. Dubrovnik, home to 35,000 people, welcomes a matching crowd by day, and the town after five in the evening tells a different tale. Venice glows in winter, calm and quiet. Away & Co. builds itineraries around these rhythms, steering guests toward quieter seasons and adding lesser - known corners to every plan. Rohit shares, "Venice is at its best in winter, peaceful and quiet. We love sending guests beyond the crowds, and we weave something lesser known into every plan."
Japan drew warm praise for the way it tells its story. Courtesy sits at its heart, strangers walk visitors to their destination, and teams tidy a meeting room themselves in five minutes flat. Reputation becomes the best marketing, and Australia shows another route by training the travel trade through its Aussie expert programme.
America remains a favourite on Indian wish lists, and interest in the country holds steady. Most US trips weave in family visits, so Away & Co. layers on weekend moments such as Louisiana jazz bars with local hosts.

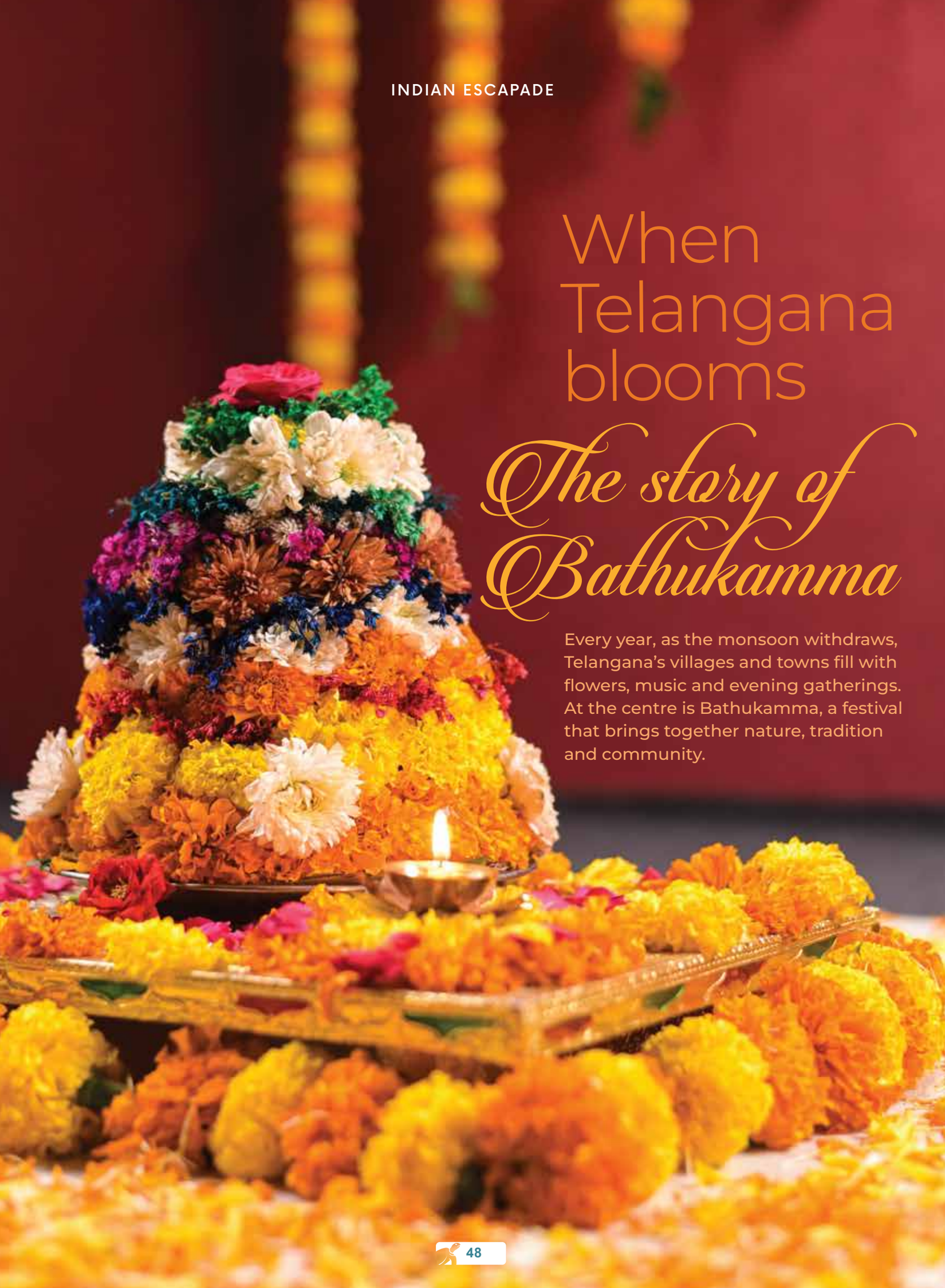
Five thousand reasons to check in

Away & Co.'s newest offering opens the doors to 5,000 hotels worldwide with guaranteed privileges: upgrades, early check-in, late check-out and breakfast every morning. Creative Travel serves the trade, Away & Co. serves the guest, and together they turn fifty years of partnerships into moments. Trust keeps building, and that is how relationships grow. One trip is only the beginning.

When Telangana blooms

The story of Bathukamma

Every year, as the monsoon withdraws, Telangana's villages and towns fill with flowers, music and evening gatherings. At the centre is Bathukamma, a festival that brings together nature, tradition and community.



By the end of the monsoon, Telangana looks different. Tanks and ponds are full, fields are green and seasonal flowers appear across the countryside. Tangedu brings bright yellow blooms, Gunugu adds its soft, feathery flowers, and marigolds appear in shades of yellow and orange.

During Bathukamma, these flowers are gathered and brought into homes, neighbourhoods and public spaces. They are arranged in layers to form the distinctive Bathukamma, a colourful floral mound that is at the centre of the celebrations.

Bathukamma is celebrated for nine days around the Navaratri - Dasara period. Women and girls gather in the evenings with their Bathukammas, sing traditional songs and move in circles around the floral arrangements. The celebrations culminate with Saddula Bathukamma, when the flowers are taken in procession to local lakes, tanks and ponds. For visitors, it is a chance to see a side of Telangana that is closely connected to everyday life.

Flowers first

A Bathukamma is made primarily with flowers that are available during the season. Tangedu, or Senna auriculata, is one of the flowers most closely associated with the festival. Its yellow flowers are used alongside Gunugu, marigold and chrysanthemum, as well as other seasonal flowers and leaves found locally.

The flowers are arranged in concentric layers, with larger circles at the bottom and progressively smaller ones towards the top. The result is a tiered, conical arrangement. Families and communities often have their own ways of putting one together, and the combination of flowers can vary from place to place.

The use of seasonal flowers is an important part of the tradition. They are gathered locally, used for the celebrations and eventually returned to the natural environment. The festival also keeps familiarity with local plants alive. Children who collect flowers with their families learn their names and recognise when they appear each year.

An evening of songs

As the sun goes down, Bathukammas are carried outside and placed in groups. Women and girls, often dressed in colourful saris and traditional jewellery, gather around them. The singing starts with one voice and gradually becomes a group activity. Traditional Bathukamma songs cover a wide range of subjects family relationships, village life, nature, agriculture, seasons and devotion. The refrain uyyalo is a familiar feature of many songs.

Much of this repertoire has been passed down orally. Older women teach songs to younger members of the family, while neighbours and friends learn from one another. The songs are therefore not just part of the celebration; they are also a way of keeping local traditions and memories alive. The dancing is equally informal. Women clap in rhythm and move around the Bathukamma in circles. There is no stage or formal audience. People watching can easily become participants.

The journey to the water

The final day, Saddula Bathukamma, brings the celebrations to the water. Bathukammas are carried in procession to nearby tanks, lakes and ponds. Families and neighbourhood groups gather there for more singing and dancing before the floral arrangements are offered to the water.

The connection is particularly relevant to Telangana. Tanks have long been an important part of the region's agricultural and settlement patterns, collecting monsoon water for use through the year. Bathukamma reflects that seasonal cycle. The monsoon brings the water and the flowers; the flowers are gathered and made into Bathukamma; and at the end of the festival, they return to the water.

This also makes the use of natural flowers particularly appropriate. Plastic decorations and synthetic materials can detract from a festival whose traditional character depends so much on seasonal, biodegradable flowers.

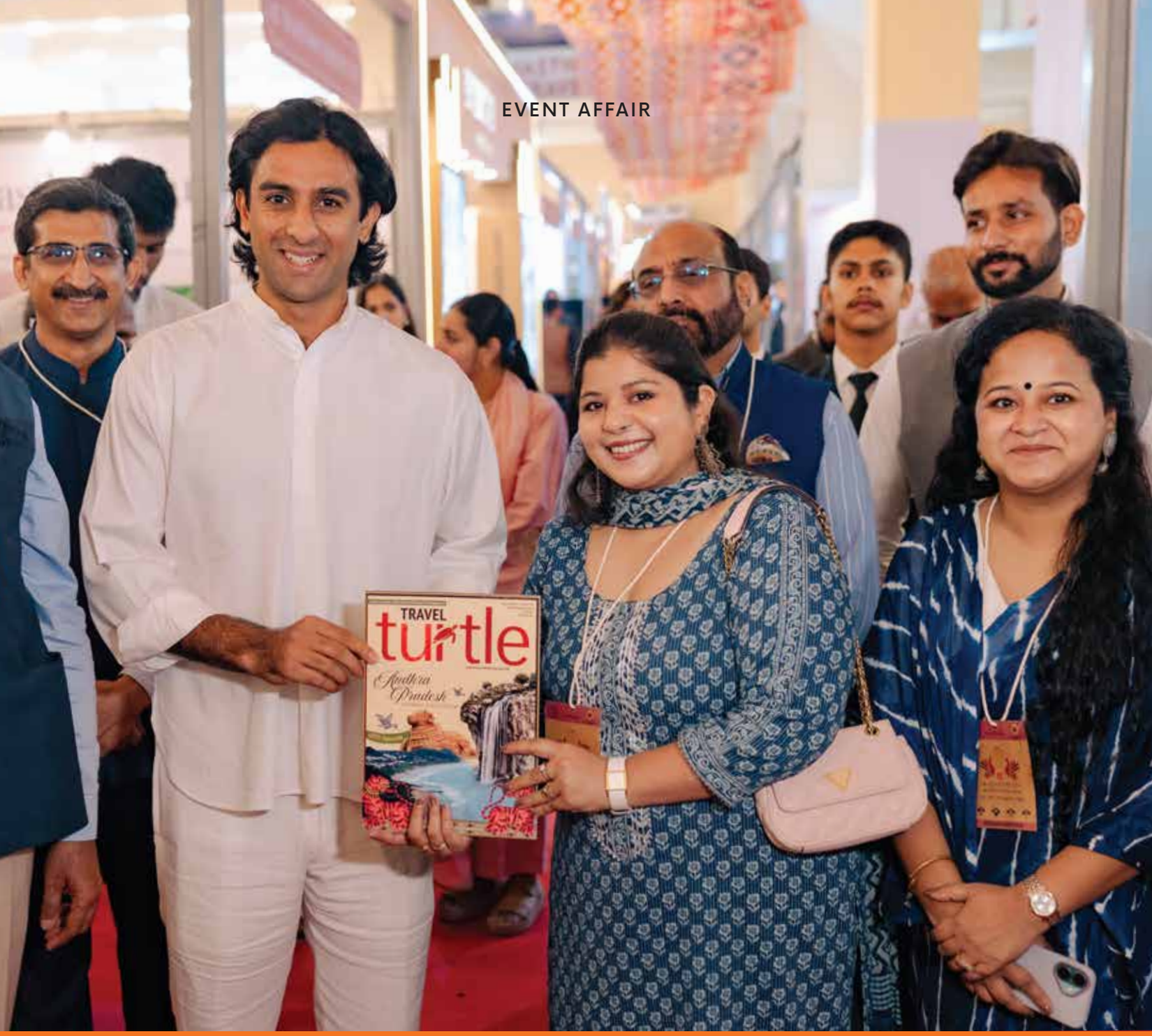
Seeing Bathukamma in Telangana

Bathukamma is best experienced in the places where it is part of community life. During the festival, neighbourhoods, villages and towns become gathering spaces, with flowers, music, traditional clothing and food adding to the atmosphere. Women remain central to the celebration. They gather the flowers, make the Bathukammas, lead the songs and pass the tradition on to younger generations.

For a traveller, the appeal of Bathukamma lies in this everyday participation. It is not a performance created for visitors. It is a festival that continues because families and communities continue to celebrate it.

Spend an evening around a Bathukamma and the experience is fairly simple: flowers arranged by hand, familiar songs, circles of women and girls, children joining in, and a procession towards the water. That simplicity is what makes Bathukamma memorable and gives visitors a genuine glimpse of Telangana's culture.





RDTM 2026

The Rajasthan connect

The sixth edition of the Rajasthan Domestic Travel Mart (RDTM) 2026 opened on a dramatic note at the historic Amer Fort, with a thunderous downpour setting the scene for an evening that brought together tourism leaders, travel trade representatives and industry stakeholders.

-Tripti Jain



Organised by the Federation of Hospitality and Tourism of Rajasthan (FHTR), the three-day event, held from 17 to 19 September, aimed to strengthen Rajasthan's position as a preferred domestic tourism destination.

A grand opening at Amer Fort

Set against the grandeur of Amer Fort, the inaugural evening brought Rajasthan's rich heritage and tourism potential into focus. Smt. Shuchi Tyagi, Secretary, Tourism, Government of Rajasthan, graced the occasion as the chief guest, while Smt. Rukmani Riar, IAS, Commissioner, Tourism, Government of Rajasthan, and Managing Director, Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC), was among the key dignitaries at the event.

The evening featured a panel discussion on 'The Future of Rajasthan Tourism: Trends, Transformation & Opportunities', followed by the inaugural session, addresses by senior government officials and an FHTR representative, and the felicitation of event partners. The proceedings concluded with a vote of thanks, followed by a cultural programme and networking dinner.

Conversations that create opportunities

With Rajasthan's diverse tourism offerings at the heart of discussions, RDTM provided a platform for the industry to exchange ideas, strengthen relationships and explore new business possibilities. The opening panel set the tone for conversations around the evolving tourism landscape and the opportunities emerging for the state.

From its heritage forts and palaces to rural experiences, wildlife, adventure, weddings and MICE, Rajasthan offers a varied portfolio









for domestic travellers. The mart served as an opportunity to bring these experiences into sharper focus and encourage travel professionals to explore newer itineraries and destination offerings.

Business beyond the show floor

The event moved to the B.M. Birla Convention Centre in Jaipur on 18 and 19 September, where the exhibition and pre-scheduled buyer-seller B2B meetings formed the core of the programme. Travel agents, tour operators and tourism stakeholders connected with registered sellers through structured meetings designed to facilitate business discussions and strengthen trade partnerships. The two days offered participants an opportunity to exchange product information, understand market requirements and identify avenues for future collaboration.

The programme also included a polo exhibition match at the Rajasthan Polo Club, adding another distinctive experience to the mart, alongside networking dinners that encouraged informal interactions among participants.

Taking Rajasthan forward

RDTM 2026 reinforced the importance of collaboration between the tourism department, hospitality businesses and the travel trade in expanding Rajasthan's domestic tourism footprint. By combining a heritage-rich inaugural setting with focused B2B interactions, the mart brought destination promotion and business development together on one platform.

As the curtains came down on the three-day event, the emphasis remained on building stronger trade networks, showcasing the state's varied experiences and creating new opportunities for Rajasthan's tourism industry.

MTM 2026
A royal welcome to Jodhpur

The historic Umaid Bhawan Palace opened its doors to the travel trade on 20 September as Jodhpur hosted the inaugural ceremony of the first-ever Marwar Travel Mart (MTM) 2026.

-Tripti Jain



Bringing together Rajasthan's royal heritage and its evolving tourism landscape, the three - day event created a platform for destination promotion, business networking and fresh industry connections.

Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Government of India, graced the occasion as the chief guest in the presence of Maharaja Gaj Singh Ji of Jodhpur, who welcomed guests to his home, Umaid Bhawan Palace, for the inaugural ceremony. The regal setting offered a fitting introduction to Marwar's forts, palaces, desert landscapes and living traditions.

A royal beginning

The inaugural ceremony celebrated Marwar's distinctive heritage and hospitality, setting the stage for greater engagement with the travel trade. The gathering also highlighted the region's potential to attract more travellers through its rich cultural experiences, architectural landmarks and desert tourism offerings.

Fresh faces, new connections

The business sessions on 21 and 22 September at Amritam Palace brought registered buyers and sellers together for structured B2B meetings. As the first edition of MTM, the interactions brought a refreshing energy to the travel trade, with several new faces adding to the diversity of participants and conversations.









The meetings offered an opportunity for travel agents, tour operators, hoteliers and tourism businesses to present their offerings, exchange ideas and explore potential partnerships. The mix of familiar industry professionals and new participants made the sessions engaging, opening doors for fresh collaborations and business opportunities. Networking dinners further strengthened these connections, allowing participants to continue conversations in an informal setting.

Experiencing the spirit of Marwar

Beyond the business meetings, MTM 2026 showcased Jodhpur and its surroundings through curated destination experiences. Hosted buyers explored the city, while a desert sundowner at Osian, followed by a cultural evening and networking dinner, offered a glimpse into Marwar's landscape and traditions. Optional excursions to the Blue City and Rao Jodha Park added further depth to the destination experience.

Building a new platform

With a royal inauguration, lively B2B interactions and immersive destination experiences, the first Marwar Travel Mart laid the foundation for stronger travel trade engagement in the region. The event opened new avenues for promoting Marwar's heritage, hospitality and lesser-explored experiences, encouraging travel professionals to bring the region to a wider audience.

SUMI YASHSHREE
HOTELS & RESORTS

A GRACIOUS FIVE-STAR WELCOME AWAITS IN ITANAGAR, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

YASHSHREE G D GARDEN RESORT & SPA



45 LUXURIOUS ROOMS	6000 SQFT BANQUET	2500 SQFT CONFERENCE	800 SQFT BOARDROOM
RESTAURANT & BAR	10000 SQFT LAWN	SWIMMING POOL	100+ CAR PARKING

OPENING SOON

Thoughtful stays, gracious celebrations and heartfelt hospitality come together across a sprawling 13-acre estate at Yashshree G D Garden Resort & Spa, Itanagar's newest five-star destination.

12 DESTINATIONS. 27 DISTINCTIVE ADDRESSES. ONE GRACIOUS WELCOME.

DARJEELING | GANGTOK | KALIMPONG | LACHUNG | LACHEN | BIJANBARI
PELLING | YANGANG | SILIGURI | VIZAG | ITANAGAR | DIGBOI

www.sumiyashshreehotels.com

+91 87448 57070

Braunschweig Calling



A simple way to describe Braunschweig is to just call it the ‘City of Henry The Lion’.

-Inder Raj Ahluwalia



This story is all about an eventful history fused with the present to form a story of medieval glories and heroics, told in an environment of contemporary high - tech. Welcome to Braunschweig.

Time has passed, but even today the cathedral, castle, and sculptured lion bear witness to the economic, cultural, and parochial splendour of the former ducal residence. Strategically located at the meeting - point of major trading routes, with the Oker river opening a navigable waterway to Bremen and the sea, Braunschweig was picked by 'Henry the Lion' to be the seat of his court in the mid-12th Century, laying the foundations for its becoming an important medieval centre.

Five precincts made up the medieval town's unique structure. Altstadt, Hagen, Altewiek, Neustadt, and Sack. Each had its own constitution, town-hall, market place, and parish church. Later, music and theatre transformed the city into a reputed cultural centre during the Age of Enlightenment. 1772 saw enacted here, the premiere of the First German domestic tragedy, Lessing's 'Emilia Galotti'.

Things were kind of busy in Braunschweig. If craftsmanship and daring commercial spirit created wealth and prosperity in medieval times, the driving force of the 19th Century were technical progress and industrialisation that created a multi - faceted, export - based economy.

Against this historical backdrop, Braunschweig today is a modern city, rich in art and culture, a present-day meeting point of yesterday and tomorrow, with its historical past contrasting sharply with its renowned contemporary technology.

Sightseeing centres around the ancient monuments, with the heart of the city formed by the medieval ensemble of the fortress 'Dankwarderode', the cathedral, and the 'Burgplatz'.

Just a few steps away lies the 'Altstadt' Market with its little shops and magnificent town hall. Here one walks through lively shopping areas bordered by intriguing pedestrian passageways, chic boutiques, attractive shops, department stores, pleasant cafes, and elegant restaurants.

From the old to the new, from the antique to the avant-garde, it all constitutes the city's rich cultural character. In the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum one gets to see one of Germany's largest collections of paintings including masterpieces of Rembrandt, Rubens, and Vermeer. The avant - garde of tomorrow grow up in the Braunschweig School of Fine Arts, among Germany's best known. The local theatre repertoire comprises performances in symphony and rock, opera, operetta, ballet, drama, and dance. Historically, the local centre point is Burgplatz or Castle Square, which along with the cathedral and several attractive half - timbered houses, still reveals its medieval arrangement. In the centre of this square is the famous Lion Monument, the city's premier symbol. Erected by Henry the Lion as a symbol of his authority and power of jurisdiction, the bronze cast - iron lion is an outstanding example of Romanesque sculpturing art, regarded as the first monumental outdoor statue of the Middle Ages. Not surprisingly, this is where tourists mill about with their ice creams and beer.





The Collegiate Church of St. Blasius, today a Lutheran cathedral, was erected by Henry the Lion and consecrated to St. John the Baptist and to St. Blasius. It houses the tomb of Henry and his English consort, Mathilde. Placed in the cathedral's nave, the tomb is a masterpiece of medieval stone carving.

Historical treasures abound. There is Dankwarderode Castle, once Henry's residence, today housing the medieval section of the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum. And Kleine Burg, one of the few typical lines of old houses that have survived in the city. One can wind up the historical buildings' circuit by stopping at the town Hall, a stately building erected in neo-Gothic style with four large windows framed by figures representing trade, arts, crafts and science.

Astoundingly, a mere 250,000 inhabitants have transformed the city into a case-study of modern sciences and technology, a regional economic and cultural hub, and a top research centre. The 'Federal Institute of Physics and Metrology', internationally - renowned for atomic time and measurements, reveals the exact time to the nearest thousandth of a second. The 'Federal Agricultural Research Centre', a biological research centre for agriculture and forestry, and the 'Centre for Environment and Health Research', are all world-famous local institutes.

Make no mistake. Braunschweig spells class. The famous lion exudes disdain and arrogance in its bearing, but the locals are laid-back and friendly. Don't expect to find roaring nightlife or teasing cabarets, as quieter entertainment is the local norm. But things balance out rather nicely, thanks to some trendy shopping and typical, good old-fashioned German food.



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.

TRAVEL FACTS

- Braunschweig is a few hours drive from Hannover, which is connected by several daily flights with Frankfurt, Lufthansa's hub and Germany's main air gateway.
- Accommodation in the city ranges from deluxe to standard hotels to suit different budgets.
- Though taxis are available at all hotels etc. it is possible and fun to walk to most local landmarks. Relevant tourist literature is readily available at the tourist office.

One State. Endless Long Weekends.

MADHYA PRADESH
THE HEART OF INCREDIBLE INDIA

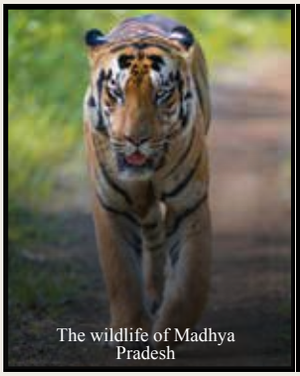
More Stories Per Holiday

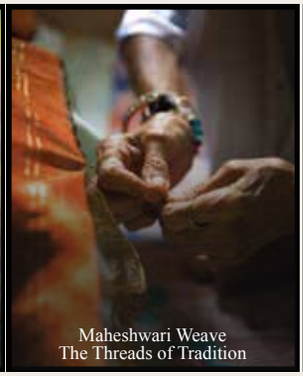
MADHYA PRADESH
The heart of Incredible India

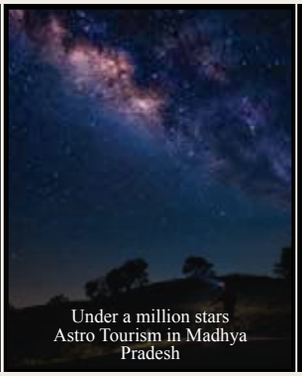
WILDLIFE
HERITAGE
CULTURE
ADVENTURE
SPIRITUALITY
AND MORE...

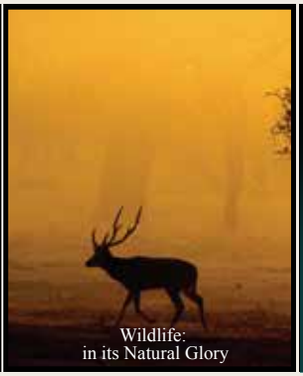
Khajuraho Dance Festival

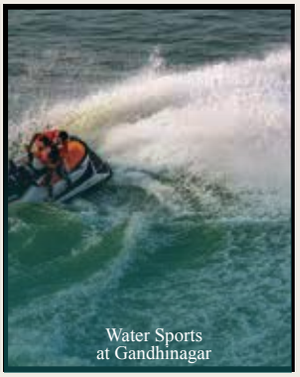
October changes the rhythm of travel in India. The air turns cooler, festive lights appear, and conversations turn to making the most of long weekends. In Madhya Pradesh, every break can tell a different story. At the heart of India, forests, ancient cities, sacred landscapes and wilderness lie within easy reach. A weekend could begin with a dawn tiger safari and end with sunset over the Narmada, or move from a day on the water to a campfire at a rural homestay and stargazing beneath clear skies.


The wildlife of Madhya Pradesh


Maheshwari Weave
The Threads of Tradition


Under a million stars
Astro Tourism in Madhya Pradesh


Wildlife:
in its Natural Glory


Water Sports
at Gandhinagar

WILDLIFE THAT INSPIRES

Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Satpura and Panna offer compelling wildlife experiences. Tigers may be the headline attraction, but the forests also reveal leopards, sloth bears, wild dogs, gaur and extraordinary birdlife. At Kuno, India's cheetah reintroduction project adds another dimension to the state's wildlife story. Beyond safaris, travellers can enjoy nature walks, birdwatching and sunrise yoga. Satpura offers walking and canoeing, while Gandhi Sagar adds water sports, boating and cycling.

STARLIT NIGHTS

Clear, unpolluted skies make Madhya Pradesh a natural setting for astro-tourism. Guided stargazing and astronomy sessions, campfires and storytelling beneath the stars turn evenings into experiences of their own.

HERITAGE TO DISCOVER

Slow travel brings its own rewards. Khajuraho's extraordinary temples remain among India's great artistic treasures, while Mandu's palaces and pavilions invite lingering over sunsets. Orchha's cenotaphs rise beside the Betwa; Gwalior's mighty fort dominates the skyline; and Maheshwar brings together its fort, ghats and handloom traditions along the Narmada. Chanderi is best explored on foot, through its monuments and weaving traditions.

SACRED JOURNEYS

Ujjain's Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga draws travellers into one of India's powerful sacred traditions. Omkareshwar, on an island shaped like the sacred 'Om', offers a gentler rhythm beside the Narmada. Chitrakoot evokes landscapes associated with the Ramayana, while Sanchi's Buddhist monuments invite contemplation.

A SEASON OF JOURNEYS

As October opens India's great travel season, Madhya Pradesh invites travellers to look beyond a single holiday. Think instead of a season of journeys, from festive breaks and winter weekends to Christmas and New Year escapes, each revealing another facet of the Heart of India.

SEASONAL STAYS

The cooler months bring seasonal Tent Cities and Forest Retreats to destinations such as Gandhi Sagar and Kuno. Running through October and November, they combine luxurious stays with rural homestays, wellness, water sports and wildlife experiences.

RURAL CONNECTIONS

Rural Madhya Pradesh offers another kind of immersion. Guests can stay in homestays, walk through villages, meet artisans, experience folk performances and discover regional food. Here, luxury lies in access to landscapes, communities and ways of life that conventional itineraries can miss.

FESTIVALS

December brings Tansen Samaroh to Gwalior, celebrating classical music in the shadow of its magnificent fort. January brings Bhopal's five-day Lokrang Festival, celebrating tribal heritage, folk traditions, art and craft. February is the time for the iconic Khajuraho Dance Festival, where India's classical dance traditions meet the illuminated temples.

Follow MP Tourism on:

For more information please visit: www.mptourism.com | www.tourism.mp.gov.in | info@mp.gov.in

ITB India 2026

India on Global Travel Map

The fourth edition brought more than 100 international exhibitors and 600 travel trade buyers together in Mumbai for three days of business, networking and industry exchange.

-Naina Nath



With India continuing to attract attention from international travel suppliers, ITB India 2026 provided a focused platform for the industry to examine where the opportunities lie and how businesses can tap into them. Across three days at Mumbai's Jio World Convention Centre, the event brought together global exhibitors, Indian buyers and industry leaders representing leisure, MICE, corporate travel and travel technology.

The show facilitated more than 4,800 one - to - one meetings, giving exhibitors and buyers a structured environment to discuss products, destinations, partnerships and potential business opportunities. Exhibitor participation extended across Southeast Asia, South Asia, Europe, Africa, Northeast Asia and South America, reflecting the growing international interest in India as both a source market and a destination.

Beyond business meetings

The diversity of suppliers was one of the defining features of the show floor, with tourism organisations, hospitality companies, airlines, cruise businesses, travel technology providers and other travel brands represented. For Mumbai's travel trade, the event provided an opportunity to discover new destinations and products while meeting international suppliers in a concentrated B2B setting.

The commercial programme was complemented by the ITB India Conference 2026, which brought together 80 speakers across 40 sessions. Running across the Knowledge & MICE Theatre and Tech & Experience Theatre, the programme explored developments across MICE, corporate travel, hospitality, travel technology and experiential travel. Discussions also looked at changing traveller expectations and how businesses can respond to an increasingly diverse Indian market.

Taking the conversation further

A new Leadership Roundtable, held in partnership with Simon - Kucher, brought senior decision - makers from tourism, hospitality, travel technology, investment, destinations and government together for a closed - door discussion. The conversations focused on India's evolving role in global tourism, including traveller segmentation, destination competitiveness, connectivity and investment.

The Cruise Capsule also returned for its second edition, bringing together cruise specialists, travel trade leaders and MICE professionals to examine opportunities in India's cruise market. Networking continued beyond the formal programme through the ITB India Happy Hour and additional industry gatherings.

A platform for growth

For the Indian travel trade, the 2026 edition offered a combination of international supplier access, focused appointments and industry dialogue. The emphasis on purposeful meetings was particularly relevant for buyers looking to assess new products and partnerships rather than simply expand their supplier lists. As ITB India looks towards its 2027 edition, its Mumbai platform continues to provide a meeting point between the international travel industry and one of the world's increasingly significant travel markets.



Darren Seah, Executive Director, Messe Berlin Asia Pacific

"ITB India 2026 demonstrated the strong and growing international interest in India's travel market. What stood out most was the quality of the people and conversations across the three days. Our focus has been on bringing together quality international exhibitors with carefully selected buyers from India and South Asia, creating an environment where meaningful business discussions and new partnerships can take place. We saw strong engagement across leisure, MICE, corporate travel and travel technology, as well as growing conversations around cruise, wellness and experiential travel. It is about bringing the right people together and creating quality connections that can translate into real business opportunities."



Antony Doucet, CXO, Kerten Hospitality

"ITB India 2026 has been a valuable opportunity to not just discuss the future of hospitality, but also to grasp the nuances of this market while engaging with a remarkably diverse mix of people from across the global travel and hospitality ecosystem.The conversations around how hotels can become part of the local community, create more authentic destination experiences and curate bespoke F&B were particularly interesting. I was also struck by how differently the idea of 'local' can translate across markets. For me, the real value has been exchanging ideas and understanding how these global trends translate within India's unique market."



Gauri Chhabra, COO, Trawellsmith

"Experiencing ITB India as a hosted buyer was truly a phenomenal experience. What I really enjoyed was the quality of sellers I got to meet, from tourism boards and DMCs to luxury hotels and cruise line consolidators. It was a great opportunity to discover new products and destinations, make meaningful connections and catch up with some of our existing suppliers. What stood out was ITB's focus on quality over quantity. Every meeting felt purposeful, with enough time to understand the product, exchange ideas and see how it could work for our clients. I came back with wonderful new connections, a better understanding of the market and exciting ideas for our clients."



Jay Shah, Founder, JC Tours & Travels

"Having ITB come to Mumbai is a very positive development for the travel trade. Mumbai already hosts several important travel events, but ITB brings a different scale, international perspective and, most importantly, a genuinely good quality of suppliers. As a local buyer, I found the event relevant for discovering new destinations, DMCs, hotels and tourism products under one roof. This edition offered stronger international representation and more focused business networking opportunities. The biggest takeaway was the quality and relevance of the suppliers I could meet. ITB Mumbai has created a platform where buyers can have meaningful conversations and explore new partnerships, rather than simply collecting contacts."



Naina Nath, Bureau Chief, West, Travel Turtle

"To have a global brand like ITB come to Mumbai is a great opportunity for the Indian travel trade. The calibre of exhibitors, speakers and buyers, along with the depth of sessions and conversations, made the show stand apart from other travel events in India. The event was particularly well organised and provided access to a different mix of international suppliers and clientele, which added significant value for the trade. We look forward to seeing ITB India continue to grow and evolve, and to the opportunities that future editions can bring. On behalf of Travel Turtle, we wish ITB continued success in the years ahead."

The 2026 edition may have drawn to a close, but the ideas and opportunities explored in Mumbai are set to shape conversations across the travel trade in the months ahead.

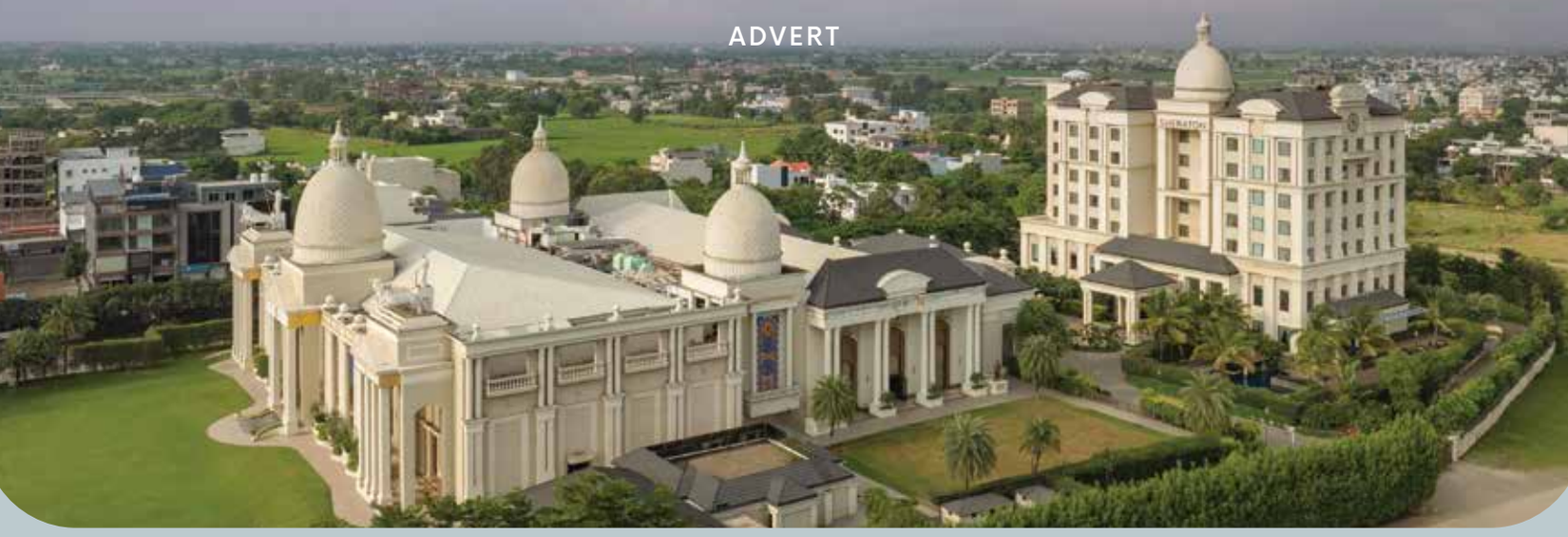
ADVERT

Madhya Pradesh charts a new MICE course

With MICE emerging as a standalone growth engine, Madhya Pradesh is combining policy support, convention infrastructure and private investment to strengthen its business-events proposition.



ADVERT



While leisure and wildlife remain at the heart of Madhya Pradesh's tourism circuits, the Ministry of tourism of the state is increasingly looking beyond to strengthen its position as a destination for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) and treat MICE as a standalone growth engine.

The state government is facilitating MICE development through not just structural support but also aggressive financial subsidies. With the set up of a dedicated MICE bureau, the state is finalising either a statewide MICE convention bureau or specialised sub-bureaus focused specifically on the corporate powerhouse Indore and Bhopal.

Madhya Pradesh's MICE story

While the state has already established MICE infrastructure in cities such as Bhopal, Indore and Khajuraho, the Madhya Pradesh Tourism policy 2025, actively focuses on promoting private investment in MICE facilities to position the state as a premier corporate and event destination. The policy further aims to set up standalone convention centers or integrated MICE hotels yielding a 15 per cent to 30 per cent capital subsidy, capped up to ₹90 crore for mega projects. It also involves standard hotel approvals that have been slashed from 30 down to just 10 clearances utilising a seamless single-window system via the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board. Hence, it brings together convention infrastructure, hotel inventory, policy incentives and tourism promotion with an aim to build the state as India's next MICE market.

The policy framework elaborates on the state's expansion of its physical MICE infrastructure as the provision applies to convention centres that have a minimum investment of ₹20 crore and a main convention hall with a seating capacity of at least 500 people.

The most significant project that is currently underway in Madhya Pradesh is the International Convention Centre for MICE in Bhopal, sanctioned under the Government of India's Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment Scheme. According to the Ministry of Tourism's latest project status, the convention centre that had the sanctioned cost ₹99.38 crore, is scheduled for completion by December 2026. Once operational, the convention centre will add to the city's convention and hospitality infrastructure.

However, this is not the first convention centre in Bhopal. The Kushabhau Thakre International Convention centre, housed in the restored Minto Hall, Bhopal already provides a venue for conferences, meetings and events with facilities spanning meeting rooms, breakout spaces, exhibition areas and outdoor event areas. Besides this, Bhopal's hotel sector also provides additional meeting capacity with properties such as Taj Lakefront, Jehan Numa Palace, Courtyard by Marriott Bhopal, Radisson Hotel Bhopal and Noor-Us-Subah Palace making for the city's established business-events inventory. The combination of convention centres and hotel accommodation provides the city with a base to develop larger conferences and corporate events.

The city of Indore, on the other hand, is already home to one of the state's strongest MICE propositions with the Brilliant convention centre, a large convention venue dedicated to meetings and conferences as well as the Sayaji Hotel Convention centre. Besides the convention centres, its wide ranging hotel inventory with properties such as Radisson Blu Hotel Indore, Sheraton Grand Palace Indore and Le Méridien Indore offer organisers a broader choice of accommodation and meeting venues. The city's MICE capacity is also set to expand through private investment. IHCL has announced a 350-key Taj hotel in Indore, with approximately 50,000 sq ft of banqueting and event space. The company has also announced new Vivanta projects in the city, adding further accommodation and meeting facilities.

Khajuraho, meanwhile, brings a different proposition to Madhya Pradesh's MICE strategy, blending conference infrastructure with one of India's best - known heritage destinations. The Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre is home to facilities across conferences and exhibitions with a large convention area, exhibition space, breakout rooms and other facilities with capacity for up to 1,200 people.

The location of the convention centre makes for an advantage for incentive programmes and conferences that can be combined with heritage experiences around the Khajuraho Group of Monuments. The Lalit Temple View, Hotel Chandela and Radisson Jass Khajuraho also provide accommodation and MICE options.

Beyond infrastructure, Madhya Pradesh Tourism is working to connect its tourism supply with domestic and international buyers. The Madhya Pradesh Travel Mart (MPTM) is the state's principal B2B tourism platform that includes MICE among the segments being showcased.

International Promotion

Furthermore, International Promotion is another part of the state's strategy to promote MICE. Madhya Pradesh Tourism participates in major international tourism marketplace and undertakes buyer and familiarisation programmes to increase the state's visibility among the overseas trade. This builds an avenue for MICE to promote destinations such as Khaujuraho, Bhopal and Indore for conferences , while showcasing the state's heritage and leisure and wildlife offerings.

The state is also benefiting from the Government of India's broader Meet in India initiative. The Ministry of Tourism's National Strategy and Roadmap for MICE Industry focusing on developing the MICE ecosystem, improving competitiveness and ease of doing business, strengthening marketing and building skills. Khajuraho has previously been a part of the national MICE promotion effort, including a Meet in India MICE Roadshow.

For Madhya Pradesh, the opportunity now lies in creating different MICE propositions across its key cities. The state's MICE story is largely focused on building capacity and market access and these developments give the state a stronger foundation to compete for India's growing business-events market. Hence, with a dedicated MICE provision in its Tourism Policy 2025, established convention infrastructure in Indore and Khajuraho, and a new convention centre coming up in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh is putting greater focus on meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions.

Travel Turtle celebrates sixth consecutive Best Print Magazine honour at IATO

Travel Turtle Magazine takes home the 'Best Print Magazine' award at the 41st IATO Annual Convention, marking its sixth consecutive win and reaffirming its strong connection with India's travel trade community.







Some milestones make you pause. Not just to celebrate them, but to think about the people who made them possible. For Travel Turtle, being recognised with the 'Best Print Magazine' award at the 41st Annual Convention of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) is one such moment.

This is the sixth consecutive year that the magazine has received the recognition. While the milestone is special, what means even more to us is what it represents — the trust, encouragement and support of the travel and tourism fraternity.

A travel magazine can only be as relevant as the industry it represents. At Travel Turtle, we have been fortunate to be part of an industry that is constantly evolving, with destinations changing, new markets emerging and fresh conversations shaping the way we travel.

Every issue has been built around the people driving this change — tour operators, hoteliers, tourism boards, DMCs, airlines, travel advisors, hospitality professionals and countless others who have opened their doors to us, shared their journeys and trusted us with their stories.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to IATO for the recognition and for continuing to bring the travel trade and media together. Most of all, we would like to thank our partners who have supported Travel Turtle throughout, and the entire travel trade fraternity for trusting us with your stories and allowing us to be part of your journey. This recognition is, in many ways, a reflection of that shared journey.



SHIVBHOLE Travelmart

Quality Travelling, Quality Services

EXPERIENCE DIVINE. TRAVEL IN COMFORT.

4 DHAM YATRA BY HELICOPTER

SAFE • SEAMLESS • SPIRITUAL



WHY TRAVEL WITH US?

- EXPERIENCED PILOTS
- PREMIUM ACCOMMODATION
- 24/7 GROUND SUPPORT
- DEDICATED TOUR GUIDES

SERVED OVER **1,00,000+** PILGRIMS

19 YEARS IN THE INDUSTRY

TRUSTED BY **1,000+** TRAVEL PARTNERS

FOR BOOKINGS & B2B ENQUIRIES

9540067400 | 9540078400 | 9540043400

sales@shivbholetravelmart.com | www.shivbholetravelmart.com

FOLLOW OUR **WHATSAPP CHANNEL** FOR LATEST UPDATES

QUALITY TRAVELLING QUALITY SERVICES

OUR PRESENCE - DELHI, DEHRADUN, VADODARA

Mélange 2026 wraps up in Mumbai

Mélange 2026 brought the travel trade together at the Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai, for two days of meetings, networking and business conversations. With travel brands, destinations, hotels, airlines and buyers sharing the floor, the event created plenty of room for new introductions, product discovery and meaningful discussions. The exhibition stayed active through both days, with buyers spending quality time with exhibitors rather than simply making a quick stop. More than 80,000 exhibitor-buyer interactions were recorded through the Mélange system, reflecting the level of engagement across the venue.





























KTM 2026 concludes in Kochi

Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) 2026 concluded in Kochi after four days of business meetings, networking and conversations around Kerala's diverse tourism offerings. The 13th edition brought together international and domestic buyers with tourism businesses from across the state, creating opportunities to discover new products and build industry partnerships. The event recorded 58,000 B2B meetings, including 45,000 pre-scheduled interactions and around 13,000 additional meetings, while the exhibition featured 383 seller stalls and 25 government institution stalls. Discussions also explored emerging tourism trends, including AI, evolving traveller preferences and new opportunities across Kerala's tourism landscape.



























France Tourism Development Agency hosts Explore France B2B showcase in Delhi

France Tourism Development Agency hosted its two-day biannual B2B showcase Explore France in Delhi in the presence of a delegation of 16 key stakeholders who represented France's varied travel offering. With more than 500 meetings taking place over the two days, the stakeholders interacted with more than 35 members of the Indian travel trade fraternity, offering buyers and exhibitors opportunities to explore partnerships and business prospects, while a presentation on India's outbound travel landscape and evolving traveller profile provided insights into market trends and opportunities for France.





TBO's Luxe Connect records 30 per cent growth in participation

TBO's Luxe Connect, its multi-city B2B luxury travel roadshow and networking platform, recorded a 30 per cent increase in participation over its previous edition, bringing together around 25 luxury and ultra-luxury exhibitors from the US, Europe, Asia and the Middle East with 150 buyers from across India. The New Delhi edition included 60 hosted buyers from the North, East and Northeast markets, and featured one-to-one business meetings focused on strengthening connections between international suppliers and India's outbound travel trade.



Courchevel takes its 80 year-year Alpine story to India's luxury travel trade

At its India roadshow, Courchevel Tourisme, in partnership with One Rep Global, brings together the luxury travel trade across New Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai to showcase the French Alpine destination's winter offerings and strengthen its engagement with the Indian market. The three-city roadshow, held across New Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai, highlights Courchevel's skiing experiences across Les 3 Vallées, Michelin-starred gastronomy, luxury hospitality, wellness, shopping and family and adventure-led activities and its portfolio of 43 hotels, including five Palaces, and seven Michelin-starred restaurants holding 11 stars collectively.











Ras-Al Khaimah brings its North India roadshow to New Delhi

At its North India Roadshow hosted in New Delhi, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority brings together key members of the travel trade and offers them a platform to engage with the Indian stakeholders of the travel trade industry. The engaging platform focused on networking, collaboration and strengthening partnerships. The roadshow provided opportunities for travel trade professionals and tourism partners to connect, exchange insights and discover more about Ras Al Khaimah and its tourism opportunities.

ATITHI & SATTE hosts networking evening to strengthen global tourism ties

ATITHI & SATTE brought together government representatives, diplomats, tourism leaders and key travel trade stakeholders for an exclusive networking evening centred on strengthening global tourism collaboration. Held to celebrate World Tourism Day 2026, the event focused on the theme "Building Stronger Two-Way Tourism Ties", fostering meaningful conversations around deeper international partnerships and the future of India's tourism ecosystem.















Western Australia Showcases Tourism and Trade Opportunities in India

The Australian High Commissioner to India, Philip Green, hosted a reception at his residence in New Delhi in honour of The Honourable Roger Cook MLA, Premier of Western Australia and Minister for Defence Industries; Tourism, Trade and Investment.



Wion hosts Iconic Tourism Summit 2026 in New Delhi

WION, in association with VFS Global and Red Hat Communications, hosted the Iconic Tourism Summit in New Delhi, bringing together leading voices from travel, tourism and hospitality to discuss the ideas and trends shaping the destinations of tomorrow. The summit featured sessions on visa and mobility, next-generation tourism skills, tourism and cultural diplomacy, India's aviation and hospitality infrastructure, and the role of technology in reshaping travel.













KK collection hosts networking lunch in New Delhi

KK Collection, Sri Lanka, hosted an intimate media networking lunch in New Delhi, bringing together leading travel, lifestyle and hospitality media for an afternoon of conversations around the evolving preferences of Indian luxury travellers and the distinctive experiences offered by its three properties — Kahanda Kanda, KK Beach and The Villa Bentota. The afternoon offered an opportunity to introduce KK Collection's approach to boutique luxury and its plans to further strengthen its visibility in the Indian market.



BIHAR

WHERE FAITH FINDS ITS HOME, AND THE WORLD FINDS ITS SOUL.

Getting to Bihar from New Delhi

By Air



Direct flights connect Delhi to Patna and Gaya in about two hours. Gaya also welcomes international flights, particularly from Buddhist countries. Darbhanga and Purnea are the latest additions to the state's air network.

By Rail



Fast and premium trains link New Delhi to Patna, Gaya, Rajgir and other stations across Bihar. Please check IRCTC for current schedules.

By Road



Expressways and national highways connect Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and ongoing four-laning and new corridors are making the journey smoother.

A DESTINATION THE WORLD IS BEGINNING TO NOTICE

Beyond faith, Bihar offers the ancient university ruins of Nalanda, Vikramshila, Vaishali (where the Buddha delivered his final sermon), the Valmiki Tiger Reserve, the waterfalls and hills of Kaimur, the hot springs and ropeway of Rajgir, and the folk art and cuisine of Mithila. Spirituality, heritage and nature come together in a single state.



GRIDDHAKUTA HILL
RAJGIR



VISHWA SHANTI STUPA
RAJGIR



ASHOKAN PILLAR
VAISHALI



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF
NALANDAMAHAVIHARA
NALANDA



MAHABODHI TEMPLE
BODHGAYA



GLASS BRIDGE
RAJGIR



80 FEET BUDDHA
STATUE
GAYAJI

A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

See Bihar from the Sky:
Heli Tourism

packages offer a bird's-eye view of the state's finest landscapes:

Valmiki Tiger Reserve:
the forests and rivers of West Champaran

Kaimur waterfalls, plateaus and forested ranges

Rajgir: sacred hills and ancient sites

Joy Ride:
short scenic flights at affordable prices



For rates, schedules and availability, visit:
"bookingtourism.bihar.gov.in"

PLAN YOUR JOURNEY WITH EASE

HOTELS
Comfortable stays for every budget

CABS
safe and reliable travel across Bihar

HELI TOURISM
Bihar from a new perspective

PITRIPAKSH PACKAGE
seamless arrangements for sacred rituals

Bihar Welcomes You

Come for the Buddha's silence, Sita's story, the sun on the riverbank and the blessings of your ancestors.
Discover why Bihar is becoming the world's next spiritual destination.

Explore More Destinations **www.tourism.bihar.gov.in**

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR

www.tourism.bihar.gov.in @tourismbihargov



Utah Office of Tourism

The Utah Office of Tourism, the official state agency that promotes travel, advertising, and economic growth across Utah, USA, has appointed Sartha Global Marketing LLP as its representative in India. Sartha Global Marketing will lead Utah's engagement in India with the travel trade and media by implementing a range of public relations and marketing initiatives, positioning the state as a compelling, year-round US destination for Indian travellers.



San Francisco International Airport

SFO has appointed Eva Cheong as its first female Chief Operating Officer, overseeing airport operations, AirTrain, safety and security, emergency dispatch, guest care, facilities, and the SFO Museum. Cheong joined SFO in 2012 after a long career at Delta Airlines, where she held several leadership roles, including California Regional Field Director, overseeing seven airports, including all three Bay Area airports.



SriLankan Airlines

SriLankan Airlines appoints Vipul Misra acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) , with effect from 9 September. Bringing over two decades of aircraft engineering and aviation leadership experience, Misra's background spans across significantly large commercial carriers including Air India, Vistara, Indigo, SpiceJet, Kingfisher Airlines, and Air Deccan. His comprehensive expertise across legacy, full-service, and low-cost carriers is expected to provide strong technical and operational direction during this interim period, as the national carrier of Sri Lanka works towards enhancing its performance and long-term sustainability.



The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace

The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace ,announces the appointment of Aditya Kaul as Director of Sales and Marketing. With extensive experience in the hospitality industry, Aditya brings strong expertise in sales leadership, commercial strategy, business development, market positioning and hotel pre-openings across leading international hospitality brands. Aditya has built his career across leading hospitality brands, with significant experience at Marriott International, where he progressed through various sales leadership roles across the Bengaluru market after joining the organisation in 2014.

PREMIUM SKI HOLIDAYS WITH HASSLE-FREE

Club Med

New Club Med Short-Stay Ski Packages
3–4 Nights (from selected 7-night Resorts)



More Bookings
Higher Value
Less Effort

Unlock higher value with all-inclusive experiences, where every detail is taken care of.

From USD 1,115* per person
3 nights

What's Included

- Ski lift pass
- Ski Lessons
- APRES-SKI
- Accommodation
- All-day dining
- Kids clubs
- Wellness
- Sports & Activities
- Open bar
- Entertainment

Pragelato Sestriere - Italy



From
USD 1,115* pp
Best entry price for first-time ski clients

Grand Massif Samoëns Morillon - France



From
USD 1,195* pp
Premium French Alps ski domain experience

*T&Cs Apply | Ski equipment rental and airport transfers extra | Travel period: Dec, 2026 - March, 2027



Contact us for more information

Rohan Kulkarni
+91 9821974999
rohan.kulkarni@clubmed.com

/ClubMed **www.clubmed.asia**

Stay pattern

- **3 nights from Sunday-Wednesday**
- **4 nights from Wednesday-Sunday**

Ideal for short breaks and limited time travel

All-inclusive beach and mountain Resorts
70+ Resorts Worldwide

RNI/DELENG/2021/79701

the Seychelles islands Another world

Adventure Without the Rush

Snorkel, hike, kayak, reconnect & celebrate together





