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TravelScapes

JANUARY 2024, PAGES 72, ₹100

VOL. 01, ISSUE. 11



TRAVELSCAPES STEELING
THE SPOTLIGHT



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OVERTURE IN 2024

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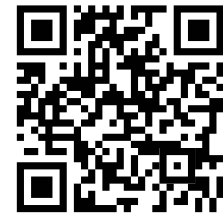
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Varun Malhotra
Publisher & CEO

Dear Readers,

TravelScapes celebrates its Steel Anniversary!

They say the moment one completes a decade of being, the foundation becomes as solid as steel. As TravelScapes magazine embarks on its 12th year, we stand at the threshold of endless possibilities in the B2B travel arena. Promising to persistently illuminate the path of industry insight, we embrace the journey ahead with anticipation, innovation, transformation and an unwavering commitment to excellence. For a decade now, innovation has been the key for us. We have added several feathers to our cap since its inception, only to fulfil the requirements of the travel industry aligning with the expectations of the industry lurking afresh.

VETA as a golden feather, when was added to TravelScapes' cap has only lifted its honour in the industry. Once again, like every year, VETA (Versatile Excellence Travel Awards) this year, brings new promises, new surprises and one motto of bridging the gap between Bollywood and the travel industry to not only open up a plethora of possibilities for the industry professionals to showcase their services and destinations but also, to spread the glitterati. VETA scheduled on February 21, 2024, will touch new horizons creating a benchmark in the industry with our co-partners.

Also scheduled in February, SATTE and OTM evoke a great sense of opportunities, for business as well as networking eventually picking up momentum for outbound travel. Travel has certainly taken a new shift and with the millennial traveller seeking immersive and experiential experiences, are inclined towards both national as well as international skies. And to quench the thirst of our avid travellers, Qatar is the country you must fancy for your next visit. But before you take a flight to Qatar, take a dip in the Kerala backwaters because TravelScapes brings you the must-dos in the beautiful land of coconut- Kerala.

Keeping in mind our friends and leading stalwarts from the industry, and our longstanding relationship with them, we collated their insights on the vision of travel preferences and patterns for the year 2024 which is extremely integral to us. I, once again, sincerely thank all the industry leaders, because it's with your support and well wishes, we have been able to come this far. Together, we have transformed challenges into opportunities, and I am confident that the coming years will unfold new horizons for us. Our commitment to delivering quality content, fostering meaningful connections, and being at the forefront of the travel trade narrative remains unshakable.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey.

Salut to the expedition!

We value your feedback and suggestions, so please share them with us at varun@versatilemedia.in.

Happy reading!

Varun Malhotra

TravelScapes

VERSATILE MEDIA

PUBLISHER & CEO

Varun Malhotra
varun@versatilemedia.in

DIRECTOR

Pranav Khullar
pranav@versatilemedia.in

EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL HEAD

Aanchal Sachdeva
aanchal@versatilemedia.in

CREATIVE WRITERS

Ananya Trivedi
ananya@versatilemedia.in

DIGITAL MARKETING SPECIALIST

Ritika Verma
ritika@versatilemedia.in

ADVERTISING SALES

HEAD OF SALES & MARKETING

Nisha Verma
nisha@versatilemedia.in

AGM SALES & MARKETING (MUMBAI)

Aarti Rajkhewa

CONSULTANT

Anindya Malhotra, Jitin Mann

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

ART DIRECTOR

Rakesh Kumar

ADMIN HEAD

S. Sindhu Darshini

EXECUTIVE-CIRCULATION

Suraj Singh and Rohit Rajput

ACCOUNTS

Chandan Kumar Jha,
Shahanawaj Salmani and Rohit Negi

Editorial & Marketing Office: Versatile Media: 207, Satya Mansion, Commercial Complex, Ranjeet Nagar, New Delhi-110008 Contact: 011 - 45530380/83 varun@versatilemedia.in All information in TravelScapes 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 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 reserves the right to refuse, withdraw or otherwise deal with all advertisements without explanation. All advertisements must comply with the Indian Advertisement Code. The publisher will not be liable for any loss caused by any delay in publication, error or failure of advertisement to appear. Owned and published by: Varun Malhotra, Editor & Publisher, EB-63, Maya Enclave, Hari Nagar, New Delhi - 110064 and printed at in-house facility.

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As TravelScapes marks its Steel Anniversary, our commitment stands strong at 11 years of illuminating the travel industry with unparalleled insights. Much like steel, resilient and enduring, our Annual Issue captures the vibrance of the travel and tourism realm, featuring visionary leaders, cutting-edge destinations, and innovative technologies steering the travel trade into the future. This year, we unveil the evolving landscape of travel and tourism, spotlighting the introduction of transformative policies that promise to redefine the industry. As Indian states passionately invest in tourism-related initiatives, we witness the nation ascend to new heights, becoming a powerhouse in the global tourism arena. This not only promises to enhance the travellers' experience but also catalyses robust economic growth. We are pleased to have the industry on board with us, as TravelScapes continues to forge ahead, shaping the narrative of an industry in constant evolution



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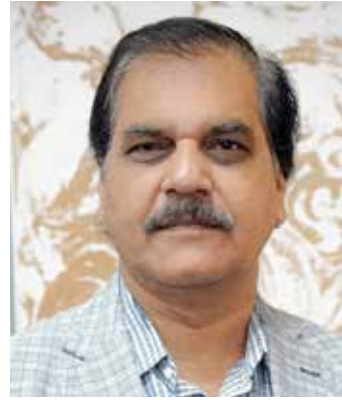
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Odisha celebrates surge in tourism

Odisha's tourism season commenced with a vibrant series of events organised by the Department of Tourism. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the 13th International Sand Art Festival and the 34th Konark Festival in December, both flagship events in collaboration with Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and Odisha Tourism Development Corporation. Set against the backdrop of the Sun Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the festivals feature cultural performances by renowned artists. The inaugural Odissi performance by Soor Mandir highlighted surrender to the divine. Chandrabhaga Beach hosts thematic sand art creations by 114 artists, including six international talents. The



events aim for wider outreach through live-streaming on Odisha Tourism's social media platforms. The annual camping event, EcoRetreat, began on November 1 across seven scenic locations, anticipating a significant domestic tourist turnout, constituting around 60% of total footfall. The EcoRetreat spans three months, promoting tourism in Odisha.



Tourists footfall surges in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar

Tourist visits to five prominent sites in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Maharashtra, surpassed 50 lakh between March 1 and November 30 in 2023, a notable increase from 22 lakh during the same period last year, according to an official from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Ellora Caves, a World Heritage Site, attracted the highest footfall. The total domestic tourist visits to Ellora

Caves rose from 8.64 lakh last year to 24.22 lakh this year, while foreign tourist figures increased from 4,051 to 18,669. Although domestic visits to Aurangabad Caves slightly decreased from 80,492 to 78,560, foreign tourist arrivals rose from 282 to 616. Overall, the tourist influx to these historic monuments demonstrated a significant rise, contributing to Maharashtra's cultural heritage promotion.



Delhi's Annual North East Festival returns

Delhi hosted the 11th edition of the vibrant North East Festival at the JLN Stadium premises. Promising visitors a memorable experience, the three-day festival showcases the diversity of the northeastern states, featuring regional artifacts, cultural extravaganzas, and delicious cuisine. The dynamic lineup includes 300 folk artists, a Meitei martial arts showcase, and a doodle art masterclass by artist Santanu Hazarika. Musical performances include Girish and The Chronicles, Zubeen Garg, Papon, and Shruti Haasan. Chief Organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta expressed the festival's evolution as a symbol of identity for the Northeast and highlighted the promotion of northeastern products through B2B meetings. Anticipating a surpassing of the 2022 footfall of 40,000, the festival also emphasised cross-cultural awareness through diverse food stalls, authentic product markets, and displays of local fabrics and designs. The festival has significantly contributed to boosting tourism and raising awareness about the northeastern region since its inception in 2013.

Karnataka Govt to release new tourism policy in 2024

Tourism Minister HK Patil revealed that Karnataka has approximately 25,000 "worthy monuments" lacking proper protection. To address this, a plan will be devised to engage private partnerships, focusing on developing tourism and creating essential infrastructure. During the assembly's Question Hour, Patil emphasised the need for private sector involvement to safeguard and benefit from these cultural assets. The tourism department actively seeks private investments, promoting a conducive business environment in 26 areas. Patil highlighted

diverse tourism programs encompassing adventure, agriculture, recreation, culture, eco, heritage, homestay, and more. Plans are underway to adopt memorials and enhance facilities at tourist spots. Coastal districts like Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, and Uttara Kannada hold potential for adventure tourism. In response to MLA PM Narendraswamy's query, Patil confirmed ongoing inspections for cable car installations at various locations, awaiting technical and financial viability reports before commencing the work.



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Gyrocopter 'Himalaya Airsafari' to launch in Uttarakhand

The Uttarakhand Tourism Department announced the launch of the 'Himalaya Airsafari,' a pioneering gyrocopter adventure tourism initiative in India. Following a successful gyrocopter flight test in Haridwar, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation granted necessary approvals. The gyrocopters, equipped with advanced German technology, aim to connect tourists with untouched destinations in Uttarakhand. Colonel Ashwini Pundir, Additional Chief Executive Officer of Uttarakhand Tourism Development

Board, revealed plans for the 'Himalayan Airsafari,' allowing tourists to effortlessly travel between scenic locations while enjoying views of the Himalayan range and serene rivers. Specially trained German pilots will initially operate the state-of-the-art gyrocopters. Collaborating with the civil aviation department and district magistrates, the tourism department intends to establish dedicated airstrips for gyrocopters at picturesque locations, enhancing the adventure tourism experience in Uttarakhand.

1300 tabla artists set Guinness World Record at Gwalior's 'Tal Darbar'

Gwalior witnessed a historic moment as more than 1300 Tabla players orchestrated a breathtaking Tal Darbar performance, securing their places in the Guinness Book of World Records. Set to the melody of Vande Mataram, this grand spectacle echoed through the city, showcasing the cultural and musical richness of Madhya Pradesh. The event paid homage to the legendary musician Sangeet Samrat Tansen celebrating state's musical legacy. The rhythmic symphony of 1300 Tablas reverberated through Gwalior Fort, creating an atmosphere reminiscent of an Indra's Darbar. Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav, present at the event, received the official Guinness World Records certificate, designating December 25 as "Tabla Day" in



Madhya Pradesh to honour this exceptional achievement. The multi-generational symphony at "Tal Darbar" featured tabla players spanning 3 generations, emphasising the enduring passion for music in Madhya Pradesh. "Tal Darbar" served as a prelude to the centenary celebrations of Tansen, emphasising the timeless relevance of his musical principles.



Tripura to boost tourism with the help of ADB

The Indian government inked a pact with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), securing a USD 100 million loan to enhance urban services and tourism infrastructure in Tripura, a northeastern state. The agreement for the Tripura Urban and Tourism Development Project was signed by Juhi Mukherjee, Joint Secretary at the Department of Economic Affairs for the Government of India, and Nilaya Mitash, Officer-in-Charge of ADB's India Resident Mission. The initiative aims to enhance municipal infrastructure and public services in

Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) along major national highways in Tripura while upgrading key tourism sites. The project intends to position the state as a gateway to the northeast by developing tourist destinations, improving urban governance, and ensuring financial sustainability through enhanced resource mobilisation. ADB's support will also empower ULBs for integrated planning, focusing on climate and disaster resilience, and fostering community and private sector participation in tourism and marketing.

Rajasthan Tourism focuses on ensuring safety of tourists

Rajasthan Tourism convened a virtual meeting with a focus on fostering collaboration among stakeholders to formulate strategies ensuring a secure environment for tourists exploring the state. Gayatri Rathore, Principal Secretary Tourism, Government of Rajasthan, disclosed plans for an upcoming campaign during the meeting. The initiative aims to raise awareness about responsible conduct towards travellers, with a specific emphasis on the

safety of women tourists. Rathore stressed the importance of proactive measures, detailing the campaign's multifaceted approach, including sensitisation workshops for various stakeholders in the tourism ecosystem. This encompasses auto-taxi drivers, souvenir shop operators, tourist guides, elephant mahouts, and camel safari operators. The comprehensive campaign aims to utilise social media, theatrical plays, and 'nukkad natak' for tourism practices.

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Exciting attraction unveiled at Kutch's Rann Utsav

The White Rann of Kutch, renowned nationally and internationally, prepared for a new attraction. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated a captivating light and sound show at the White Rann watchtower. Set against the white desert backdrop, the show provided a spectacular experience, complemented by village-themed decorations showcasing Kutch's rich history and culture. CM Patel and Tourism Minister Mulubhai Bera attended the event, followed by a cultural program based on the theme "Kutchdo Khele Khalak Mein." Theme pavilions, cultural activities, craft stalls, a food bazaar, a creative food zone, and adventurous activities were part of the organised event. The state government actively enhanced Gujarat's tourism by developing infrastructure, roads, and attractions. The Kutch region, particularly the Ranotsav initiated under Chief Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, gained global acclaim, revitalizing Kutch's economy. In 2022-23, around 3.5 lakh tourists explored the mesmerising White Rann of Kutch.



Gulmarg booms as tourists fill Kashmir

An influx of tourists swept into Kashmir to celebrate Christmas and usher in the New Year, leading to fully booked hotels in popular destinations like Gulmarg and Pahalgam. Anticipation of snowfall added to the allure of these picturesque locations in the valley. Tourism Secretary Syed Abid Rasheed Shah expressed optimism, noting the positive trends with both domestic and international tourists. Gulmarg, often dubbed

the 'Switzerland of Asia,' was particularly sought after, being completely sold out for Christmas and New Year's Eve. The heightened tourist activity was credited to recent snowfall, enhancing the appeal of Kashmir. For the New Year the tourism department planned various activities, including musical evenings, a firecracker show, night skiing, and torch skiing to enrich the experience for travellers.

Ayodhya welcomes Maharishi Valmiki International Airport

Ahead of the Ram Temple opening, Ayodhya underwent a significant transformation as Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated several development projects. The projects, valued at over INR 15,700 crore, aimed to modernise civic amenities, beautify roads, and introduce infrastructure aligned with the city's historical heritage. The state-of-the-art airport, costing over INR 1450 crore, was named Maharishi Valmiki International Airport Ayodhya Dham, paying homage to the Ram Mandir. Featuring sustainability elements like rainwater harvesting and solar power, the airport aimed to serve 10 lakh passengers annually. Enhancing regional connectivity, the airport aimed to boost tourism, business activities, and employment opportunities.



The launch of the Amrit Bharat train and six new Vande Bharat Trains furthered railway connectivity in the region. These initiatives, part of a broader infrastructural push in Uttar Pradesh, aimed to modernise Ayodhya while preserving its cultural legacy, stimulating tourism, economic activities, and job creation in the region.

Goa sees rise in international tourists

Foreign tourist arrivals in Goa rebounded after a substantial decline caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, but they have yet to reach pre-pandemic levels, as per official statistics. Over the initial seven months of the year 2023 Goa welcomed 2.81 lakh foreign tourists, surpassing the figures for both 2021 and 2022, when the tourism sector faced setbacks due to the pandemic. The Union tourism ministry, in response to Goa MP Francisco Sardinha's inquiry in the Lok Sabha, revealed that foreign traveller numbers in 2021 were 22,000, escalating to 1.75 lakh in 2022. A senior official from the state tourism department acknowledged the improvement but noted that the current footfall of 2.81 lakh foreign visitors still lags significantly behind pre-pandemic levels, in line with a global trend of reduced international travel.



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TRAVELSCAPES STEELING THE SPOTLIGHT



VARUN MALHOTRA, CEO & PUBLISHER, TRAVELSCAPES

As we celebrate the completion of 11 remarkable years, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we've undertaken together. It feels like just yesterday that TravelScapes took its maiden flight into the expansive skies of the B2B travel sector.

Throughout the journey, we've traversed uncharted territories, weathered industry storms, and soared to new heights. TravelScapes has become more than a publication; it's a tapestry woven with the threads of our collective passion for travel, innovation, and storytelling. Each edition is a chapter in our ongoing adventure, and I want to express my gratitude to the dedicated team, visionary contributors, and our cherished readers who have made the journey possible.

As we stand at this juncture, I am filled with excitement for the future. The world of travel is evolving, and TravelScapes is poised to embrace the winds of change, adapt, and continue being a beacon for industry insights, trends, and inspirations.

Here's to 11 years of growth, resilience, and exploration, and many more chapters of success, innovation, and camaraderie.

Bon voyage!

PRANAV KHULLAR, DIRECTOR, TRAVELSCAPES

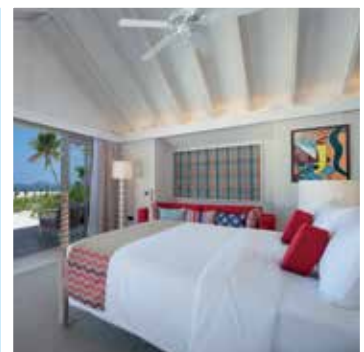
As we celebrate the remarkable milestone of 11 years soaring through the travel trade universe, I am awash with gratitude and excitement. It's been an exhilarating journey, woven with the dreams, destinations, and dynamic spirit of the travel industry. Through these 11 years, TravelScapes has chronicled the evolution of B2B travel publications, it has been a pioneer of storytelling, connecting us all through the shared love for exploration.

As we stand at this crossroads of reflection and anticipation, I extend my deepest gratitude to the extraordinary team at TravelScapes, whose dedication has been the wind beneath our wings and to our readers as well as the collaborators who have embarked on this journey with us. My heart is full to say that your unwavering support fuels our determination to push boundaries and redefine the narrative. To the next chapter, the next adventure, and the next 11 years of TravelScapes – may they be as thrilling, inspiring, and limitless as the destinations we've yet to discover. Adventure awaits!



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TRAVEL AND TOURISM'S OVERTURE IN 2024

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By Aanchal Sachdeva

PRABUDDHA SEN, COO-SOUTH ASIA, VFS GLOBAL**Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year**

The travel industry in India has demonstrated remarkable recovery over the past two years, with a notable surge attributed to pent-up demand for outbound travel. This trend is anticipated to persist well into 2024, reflecting the buoyancy of the Indian travel sector. Destinations have astutely recognised the burgeoning outbound market and are actively enticing Indian travellers with compelling incentives to choose their locales. Furthermore, corporate travel will continue to be remarkably resilient throughout 2024. According to a recent report, the issuance of study visas to Indian students surged from 34,261 in 2019 to an impressive 139,539 in 2022. Notably, India has ascended to the status of the most common nationality granted UK study visas, surpassing China. This upward trajectory is expected to persist, defining the landscape even in 2024.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

TravelScapes magazine has played a pivotal role in delivering timely insights into the dynamic travel industry in recent years. As you celebrate your anniversary, we extend our heartfelt congratulations, offering our best wishes for continued success. We trust that your ongoing contributions will not only inform but also shape the narrative within the travel fraternity, solidifying your position as an influential voice in the industry.

SANJAY KUMAR, PRESIDENT AND CEO, INTERGLOBE TECHNOLOGY QUOTIENT PVT. LTD.**TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS**

Best compliments on the momentous occasion of TravelScapes' Steel Anniversary!

TravelScapes' commitment to innovation aligns seamlessly with our vision, and as we enter 2024, we see a huge opportunity in the tourism industry which is going to be highly impactful for the travel community at large. The coming year is not just another year, but a blank canvas inviting us to paint the future of travel and we are enthusiastic about contributing to the ongoing success of TravelScapes and shaping new standards in travel technology. Together, let's make every journey a story worth telling!

**B A RAHIM, FOUNDER, ONE ABOVE DMC****Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year**

In 2024, the landscape of travel is undergoing a significant transformation, steering away from hurried itineraries towards more deliberate and immersive experiences. The concept of slow travel is gaining momentum, encouraging travellers to move beyond mere surface-level sightseeing and engage with destinations on a profound level. At the core of this shift lies a profound embrace of community connections and a dedication to sustainable travel choices. As we eagerly anticipate the surprises and captivating experiences that the new year holds for us, there's a palpable enthusiasm to travel more extensively than ever before. Notably, 2024 seems promising for Indian travellers as several countries are opening their doors visa-free to visitors from India. This shift is expected to result in increased travel to visa-free destinations such as Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Maldives, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Thailand, Seychelles, and Vietnam.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Congratulations on this milestone of innovation and insightful contributions. If you do not network you don't do productive work to do productive work you need information which is accurate from the past and present and ideas for the future. TravelScapes has evolved in downloading accurate news on the past connecting to recent and ideas of the future.

RAJEEV KOHLI, JOINT MANAGING DIRECTOR, CREATIVE TRAVEL**Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year**

Travel is a perfect example of things never remaining the same. Every year brings new challenges and new opportunities. So, for an industry that is always in a constant flux of metamorphosis, it's impossible to predict where we go next. But I do know one thing: the desire to travel is programmed into our DNA as humans.

The global hiccups we are seeing today are not new. As travellers' habits change, so will the need for destinations to change what they offer. If you look at the offerings today of mature destinations like Dubai, Singapore, London, Paris, and more, they have embraced elements for a younger audience. Nightlife, modern museums, amusement parks and so much more. India needs to wake up and understand that the relevance of the ancient sites is not as important as it used to be. Culture and History will always have its following, and that is the core of our inbound arrivals. But we need to be more diverse in what we offer. That's the only way to grab a bigger share of the pie. Travellers want that Instagram moment. They want to be seen with the who's who. How we address these needs is what we need to have a larger discourse about.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Congratulations TravelScapes on your 11th birthday. I remember when you first started, nervous and excited. You have come a long way and have stood out in the industry. Well done and all the best for the next 11.

HUSSAIN PATEL, DIRECTOR, TRIPJACK**Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year**

Over the last few years, we have seen technology play a key role in the evolution of the travel landscape in India and across the world. From fast search to seamless booking experiences, there has been innovation and adoption of technology at a fast pace. We believe the progression of new technologies that personalise the customer experience and enhance efficiency will be the next step in the transformation of B2B travel. With the adoption of AI, one can enhance customer experiences, provide tailored suggestions, and optimise travel plans. As a travel-tech platform, we are excited about the evolution of technology and look forward to the way the industry progresses.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Celebrating 11 years of excellence, I extend heartfelt congratulations to TravelScapes for its commendable contributions to the travel industry. Their unwavering commitment over a decade, offering unparalleled news and updates and engaging the travel community through amazing events, reflects their unwavering dedication and hard work. Here's to a remarkable journey and continued success in shaping the future of travel trade media.

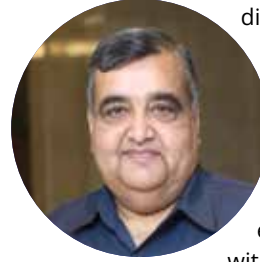
RAJEEV NANGIA, COO, TRAC REPRESENTATIONS (INDIA) PVT. LTD.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

The flourishing period of Travel and Tourism that we have been anticipating since the year 2020, we have finally arrived in 2023. The world moved faster than ever. Travellers filled airports, explored new destinations, tried unique and unconventional activities, reinvigorated restaurants and re-energised hotels.

The emerging travel trends for 2024 are sustainable travel; 'luxe-for-lifetime' experiences; unique activities a destination has to offer; lesser-known places and local as well as unique culinary experiences; and solo travel.

All of us at TRAC take this opportunity to wish TravelScapes and its entire team all the very best in completing 11 strong years. The travel trade magazine environment is very complex and competitive in India. Versatile Media as a team has made TravelScapes magazine truly stand out and create a niche for itself in the industry. We hope and wish this successful journey continues and that we all be a part of many more milestones together in the future.



digital health passports, and other technological solutions may become more widespread to enhance the overall travel experience and address health concerns. The rise of remote work has led to an increased interest in destinations that offer opportunities for both work and leisure. Travellers may prioritise experiences that allow for a deeper connection with local culture and nature including activities

such as cultural tours, eco-tourism, and immersive experiences. Responsible Tourism with inclusive growth will be the mainstay. Iran, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore have made Visa Free for travellers and we also need to look into such measures to attract foreign tourists to India.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

TravelScapes has focused on Destinations and has addressed policies too – an ideal combination. Your features that put forward the views of Industry leaders continue to catch eyeballs. 11 years of delivering successful readership is indeed a landmark achievement for TravelScapes and with many more thoughtful years ahead, I am confident that TravelScapes will pioneer more valuable inputs that shall keep industry soldiers like us glued to your magazine.

SUBHASH GOYAL, FOUNDER CHAIRMAN, STIC TRAVEL GROUP

Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year



Post-pandemic things like cleanliness and hygiene have become more important and short-haul destinations have become more popular amongst travellers. The closing down of Government of India Tourist Offices abroad has resulted in a decline in inbound tourist arrivals. The construction of

world-class Convention Centres like Bharat Mandapam on the exhibition grounds, Yashobhoomi in Dwarka and Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai, and the successful handling of G20 meetings and Conferences will give a further boost to MICE Tourism in India. The biggest challenge is the digitalisation of most of the marketing activities and with the coming of Artificial Intelligence, there is a change in the strategy of the airlines, travel agents, tour operators & hoteliers. Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies are being used to enhance the customer experience by allowing travellers to explore destinations before they book their trips.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

As Chairman of the Indian Chamber of Commerce Aviation, Tourism & Hospitality Committee, I would like to congratulate TravelScapes for the wonderful work it has been doing in promoting Travel and Tourism to various destinations in India and abroad. When I was President of IATO, I had the pleasure of giving an award to TravelScapes for their contribution to the industry. I wish them many more years of successful publishing.

RAJIV MEHRA, PRESIDENT, INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF TOUR OPERATORS (IATO)

Travellers may prioritise destinations and accommodations that demonstrate a commitment to cleanliness and safety protocols. Wellness and Ayurveda tours will gain ground. Contactless services,

PRATEEK HIRA, PRESIDENT & CEO - TORNOS, IATO CHAPTER CHAIRMAN - UTTAR PRADESH

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

TravelScapes has had a truly magical journey through these 11 years. It's not only its steel anniversary but the foundation of the publication is made of steel. The core properties of TravelScapes are exactly those of steel, strength, toughness and ductility, which can be stretched and moulded without the fear of breaking. TravelScapes has carved a niche in the travel and lifestyle space of publications. The quality of articles and the in-depth research in each edition surpasses the past one. The annual VETA Awards that are powered by TravelScapes have become a very prestigious calendar event that the industry looks forward to each year. The editorial team of TravelScapes has worked hard to take the magazine to great heights in a short span of eleven years which is hard to achieve in such a short duration. It is because of the team at the helm which includes Varun Malhotra and Pranav Khullar leading from the front and guiding their able team to deliver just what the industry wants. Its presence in all the top international travel marts including ITB-Berlin, WTM-London, ATM-Dubai, Fitur-Madrid and Top Resa-Paris gives a much-required edge to the advertisers and contributors. On the occasion of the Steel Anniversary, I wish TravelScapes more success and power in the coming years and wish its entire team all the very best.

JYOTI MAYAL, PRESIDENT, TRAVEL AGENTS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA(TAAI)

Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

Considering the year 2024, as I call it the year of surprise travel, we must not forget to co-create the experiences with the guests. Involve them in the design and delivery of tourism products or services to customise their itinerary. Use storytelling and narratives to create a multisensory environment. Also, Artificial Intelligence could take the form of a digital assistant that interacts with customers throughout the



journey. Adding further to this, we must build an infrastructure towards a greener ecosystem as there is a need to address the challenges of sustainability without compromising on the needs of the future generation, my request to everyone in the entire travel trade and consumers is to be diligent on all fronts and have an eye-opening experience and understand how the world envisages the future.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

I, Jyoti Mayal, President of TAAI, congratulate everyone at TravelScapes, a team which has worked tirelessly to bring out a magazine of repute with impeccable content each time. The publication has been able to stand out of the box through all odds and never shies away from delivering quirky yet insightful facts. I take immense pleasure in appreciating you all on this occasion for leaving an indelible mark on the media industry. May the team's unwavering dedication and passion for excellence continue to shape the media landscape and garner recognition internationally in the long run.

retreats & adventure tours are some other niche sectors that are likely to pick pace to forge a deeper connection with the destination. We can also expect an accelerated integration of new-age technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) throughout the traveller's experience. Furthermore, with new COVID variants gradually re-emerging in various parts of the world, health & safety will continue to remain paramount for travellers, encouraging them to prioritize and invest in securing their journeys with holistic travel assistance and insurance solutions.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Over the past decade, TravelScapes has catalyzed the travel trade, helping us navigate the ever-changing travel and tourism landscape and staying abreast with industry trends. Every issue of TravelScapes certainly instils a love for travel and adventure, inspiring travellers to explore the beauty & diversity our world has to offer with its highly captivating content. My team and I would like to extend our heartiest wishes to TravelScapes for this remarkable milestone and wish you all the very best for the future.

ROMIT THEOPHILUS, DIRECTOR, GNT0 INDIA

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

On behalf of GNT0 India, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to TravelScapes for achieving this significant milestone. We look forward to witnessing their continued success and contribution to the growth and development of the travel industry. Looking to the future, we do not doubt that TravelScapes will continue to be at the forefront of innovation in the industry. Their consistent drive and ability to adapt to changing times will ensure that they remain a trusted source of inspiration and guidance for both travellers and industry professionals.



ALEFIYA SINGH, DIRECTOR, IRIS REPS PVT LTD.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Emphasising the strength of the number 11: Congratulations to TravelScapes on achieving 11 remarkable years! This milestone signifies a robust and powerful journey. In numerology, 11 symbolises intuition, innovation, and heightened spiritual awareness, mirroring TravelScapes' exceptional resilience and ability to navigate the travel industry with insight and creativity. Cheers to this remarkable strength and the promising path ahead.



PRANAV KAPADIA, FOUNDER, GLOBAL DESTINATIONS

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Congratulations on TravelScapes completing 11 years. I can imagine the feeling as Global Destinations completed 15 years of sales, marketing & PR, earlier this year. TravelScapes, over the years, has become an integral part of our daily life with amazing content and one of the few publications I truly enjoy reading.



SUCHETA NAGPAL, DIRECTOR & CEO TRAVESTARZ GLOBAL GROUP

Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year



Long weekend travel has seen a huge demand for short-haul destinations with many countries making Visa Free for Indians. The new traveller has moved more towards online bookings however, the market will always remain robust for travel agents offering unique and niche products. Our DMC locations have seen phenomenal demand in 2023 for Egypt, Turkey,

Vietnam and Bali besides Thailand, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Singapore. Travstarz, as the Joint Promotion Partner for both Abu Dhabi and Qatar with more destinations in the pipeline, expects the demand for Abu Dhabi, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Bahrain to pick up in 2024 in addition to Sri Lanka, Azerbaijan and Bali. To dispel undue doubts, our Egypt Office Director, Ali El Samman organised a Networking Event with select travel partners from Delhi to assure them of the safety of all passengers due to ongoing tensions in the Middle East.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

We wish to congratulate TravelScapes on achieving this milestone. It is with dedicated hard work of Varun Malhotra, Pranav Khullar and the team which has led them to this achievement. We are proud to have been part of this journey and will continue to support the ongoing journey. TravelScapes has grown from just a travel magazine to hosting the most talked about Travel Awards which we are going to see in an even bigger way. We wish team TravelScapes all the best wishes to grow from strength to strength to achieve even greater heights.

DEV KARVAT, FOUNDER & CEO, ASEGO

Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year



We foresee a considerable change in travellers' preferences with the focus gradually shifting to immersive and unique experiences in 2024. With rising concerns about climate change and global warming, sustainable travel will be a key focus in 2024 as a huge chunk of domestic and overseas travellers are now opting for eco-friendly options. Experiential travel like food tourism, wellness

KARISHMA KAZI, FOUNDER CEO, BLACK TURTLE REPS



Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

Travel & tourism is ever evolving!

This can sometimes be a plus or minus point however you choose to look at it. According to me everything only gets better with time and so the advances in technology will make travellers more open to accessing more information about their destinations and planning trips with greater ease. With so much information and help provided - travellers will spend limited time planning and researching. Also, when we speak about global changes, there are lots of concerns but I'm very sure sustainable travel practices are going to be adopted more in the future amongst tourists so that they can continue to experience new adventures all over the world!

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

What I love about TravelScapes is it's a one-stop for everything. Be it the new destinations, the must-do list or even general knowledge about how our travel industry always changes & so many insights about what's the next thing we should focus on! I wish TravelScapes to reach the heights they always envisioned & continue to give us more information & knowledge while showing us the IT destinations for all the years to come.

KOMAL SETH, DIRECTOR, LINKIN REPS PVT LTD.



Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

As an avid participant in the dynamic travel landscape, I foresee the coming year as a transformative period marked by ongoing global changes. The travel industry, much like a well-forged steel structure, must adapt to evolving circumstances. Sustainability will take centre stage, with a heightened focus on eco-friendly practices and responsible tourism. Technological advancements will continue to redefine the traveller's journey, offering seamless experiences through innovations like virtual reality tours and contactless services.

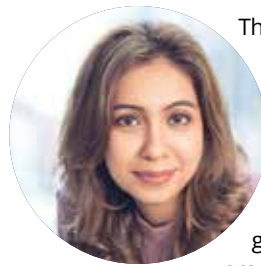
TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

In the wake of TravelScapes' remarkable 11-year journey, I extend my heartfelt congratulations on reaching this significant milestone. TravelScapes has been a beacon of insight, navigating the industry through its complexities with unwavering commitment. The Annual Issue, like a steel anniversary, reflects resilience and endurance, encapsulating the vibrancy of travel and tourism. Here's to TravelScapes continuing to be the vanguard of innovation, shedding light on visionary leaders, cutting-edge destinations, and transformative policies that shape the future of travel. As Director and Founder of Linkin Reps, I am proud to be associated with an industry leader that consistently propels the narrative of an ever-evolving sector. TravelScapes' role as a catalyst for innovation aligns seamlessly with our mission at Linkin Reps to foster meaningful connections and collaborations within the travel trade.

LUBAINA SHEERAZI, CEO & CO-FOUNDER, BRANDIT

Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

In 2023, we observed a remarkable rebound in international travel, with destinations like Thailand and Qatar surpassing their expected visitor numbers. Looking forward to 2024, safety, sustainability, and flexibility will continue to be paramount considerations for travellers. Destinations with efficient flight connections and streamlined visa processes, hotels offering flexible booking options and embracing a 'buy now, pay later' approach will be preferred, particularly for MICE events and celebrations.



The trends of 'workation' and 'bleisure' travel, alongside wellness tourism, will gain further momentum. Technology, especially AI-driven solutions facilitating personalised itineraries and improved traveller experiences, will play an increasing role. Sustainability will continue to be a prominent factor, with travellers showing a growing interest in environmentally conscious practices. Collaborations between tourism boards,

private sector stakeholders, and governments will be crucial in revitalising the industry. Overall, the travel landscape in 2024 will be shaped by a blend of safety, sustainability, technological innovation, and a desire for unique and meaningful travel experiences.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

I would like to congratulate TravelScapes on commemorating its Steel Anniversary! This significant milestone is truly commendable and symbolises a journey characterised by unwavering dedication, innovation, and a steadfast commitment to offering invaluable perspectives within the travel industry. As TravelScapes strides forward, I am confident that leveraging these years of knowledge and insights will accelerate the publication to more innovation and success in the future.

HARISH KHATRI, MD & FOUNDER, INDIA ASSIST



Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

In 2024, I anticipate a transformative shift in the travel landscape. The industry is poised for a resurgence as global conditions stabilise. Travellers, now more than ever — seek meaningful experiences and safety assurances. The rise of sustainable and experiential travel will be prominent, reflecting a conscientious approach towards the environment and diverse cultures.

Technology will continue to redefine travel, making it more seamless and personalised. At India Assist, we are gearing up to meet these evolving needs, integrating cutting-edge technology to provide comprehensive and tailored on-ground assistance, ensuring travellers set themselves up for journeys with confidence.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Congratulations to TravelScapes on its remarkable 11-year journey! This Steel Anniversary is a result of illuminating the travel industry for such a long time with consistent quality. Over the years, TravelScapes has been a source of invaluable insights. As I reflect on this milestone, it is clear that you guys have been instrumental in shaping the industry's narrative. Here's to another year of sparking innovation, fostering collaboration, and being the guiding light for the travel community. May the next chapters be filled with even more breakthroughs and shared successes. Cheers to 11 years of excellence!

GAURAV CHIRIPAL, CEO, QUADLABS TECHNOLOGIES

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Celebrating 11 years is a momentous achievement of TravelScapes marking its Steel Anniversary of illuminating the travel industry, I would like to congratulate Versatile Media and its team who work tirelessly day and night to bring every issue to fruition. TravelScapes' dedication to capturing the vibrance of the industry, featuring visionary leaders, cutting-edge destinations, and innovative technologies, is truly commendable. QuadLabs Technologies has





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always believed in TravelScapes' unwavering commitment to providing unparalleled insights into the travel and tourism sector. The magazine has become a trusted source of industry knowledge, leveraging its expertise to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of travel. By showcasing the industry's progress and latest trends, TravelScapes has played a paramount role in shaping the narrative of the travel industry. The emphasis on the latest technologies and automation highlights the magazine's role as a catalyst for positive change and progress, inspiring the industry to embrace innovation and adapt to emerging technologies. In conclusion, TravelScapes' 11-year celebration is not just a reflection of past achievements but a promise for a future filled with continued innovation and leadership in the dynamic landscape of travel and tourism.

NARESH ARORA, FOUNDER AND CEO, TRULY INDIA HOTELS & RESORTS

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

As TravelScapes marks its Steel Anniversary, the commitment stands strong at 11 years of illuminating the travel industry with unparalleled insights. Your thoughtful remarks on the completion of 11 years will help TravelScapes continue to be the catalyst of innovation in the industry. As an entrepreneur, I've witnessed the transformative impact of this travel magazine over the past 11 years. It's not just a publication; it's a gateway that seamlessly connects avid travellers with unique experiences. Congratulations on this remarkable milestone! Your commitment to inspiring wanderlust has not only enriched the travel community but has also contributed significantly to the hospitality industry.



DEEPIKA KHANNA, FOUNDER & CEO, ANCHOR DESTINATION

Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

An upward trend in the Travel Industry is hugely impacted by many factors such as Government policies, availability of direct connections on newer routes, disposal incomes, economic upward trends and more. The Upcoming year of 2024 seems very promising for global travellers despite the 5 % and 20 % TCS slabs introduced by the Government. Domestic Tourism is showing great upward trends and this shall continue for years to come. Inbound Tourism although still affected, 2024 shall still see a rise as compared to 2023. The introduction of newer routes like direct flights to Baku, Georgia etc has pulled a decent segment of outbound travellers to experience new destinations in an affordable luxury price package. Luxury Hotels Domestic and International Both will see a great inflow of tourists worldwide.



TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Much congratulations to the young and dynamic duo of Varun and Pranav and the entire team of TravelScapes, who have in a short period, set the standards and raised the bar to unparalleled heights in the travel media fraternity. This recognition is just not a day's work and a lot of vision, hard work, failures and the zeal to uplift and learn from them and achieve success marks the undying spirit of TravelScapes. We have seen amazing coverages, insightful stories, recognitions and awards, innovativeness and design which stands out remarkably. Wishing 2024 holds the entry to a new era of unimaginable success and glory to TravelScapes.

SONAVI KAICKER, CEO NEEMRANA HOTELS PVT. LTD.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

We extend our heartfelt congratulations on 11 years of illuminating the travel industry with unparalleled insights. As Neemrana Hotels reflects on our journey, we acknowledge the invaluable role that TravelScapes has played in fostering a deeper understanding of the travel landscape. Your platform has been a trusted companion, guiding us through the shifting currents of the industry and providing a platform for sharing our own unique stories. We appreciate TravelScapes' tireless efforts to elevate the travel discourse, offering a space where industry leaders, visionaries, and enthusiasts converge to celebrate the magic of exploration. Your commitment to excellence has undoubtedly contributed to the enrichment of the travel community and the broader cultural tapestry. As you embark on another year of exploration, discovery, and storytelling, Neemrana Hotels remains excited to participate in this journey. Together, let's continue to push boundaries, challenge norms, and inspire the true spirit of exploration within every traveller. Here's to TravelScapes – a beacon of light in the travel industry's vast landscape. May the next chapter be filled with even more insightful revelations, groundbreaking stories, and a continued commitment to shaping the future of travel.



J K MOHANTY, CHAIRMAN – IATO, EASTERN REGION & CMD – SWOSTI GROUP

Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

The travel landscape is likely to continue evolving in response to ongoing global changes, including factors such as the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, advancements in technology, and shifting consumer preferences. Travellers are likely to remain focused on health and safety considerations. Enhanced cleaning protocols, health certifications, and digital health passports may become more widespread. Increased adoption of technology for contactless transactions, check-ins, and other processes to minimise physical contact and enhance overall efficiency. Growing awareness and concern for environmental issues may lead to an increased demand for sustainable and eco-friendly travel options. Travellers may choose destinations and accommodations that prioritise environmental conservation.



TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

As TravelScapes marks its Steel Anniversary, the commitment stands strong at 11 years of illuminating the travel industry with unparalleled insights. Your thoughtful remarks on the completion of 11 years will help TravelScapes continue to be the catalyst of innovation in the industry. My heartiest congratulations to TravelScapes for completing its 11 years of glorious journey by providing excellent information to support the travel and hospitality sector. I am sure TravelScapes will continue to provide appealing content/information to its readers and I wish all success to TravelScapes.

HAVE A WONDERFULL 2024

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K MOHAN ALAPATY, MANAGING DIRECTOR, SOUTHERN TRAVELS



Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

The travel landscape will likely continue to evolve, adapting to changing consumer preferences, technological advancements, and global circumstances. Flexibility, adaptability, and a focus on health, sustainability, and unique experiences are expected to be key drivers in shaping the future of travel. Travellers may seek more personalized and tailored experiences, focusing on unique and authentic cultural encounters rather than mass tourism. Travel providers may continue to offer more flexible options to accommodate changing travel plans due to uncertainties. The use of contactless technology, and virtual experiences will become more prevalent. With remote work becoming more mainstream, the trend of "workcations" is likely to continue. Domestic travel and nature-based experiences are expected to be popular.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

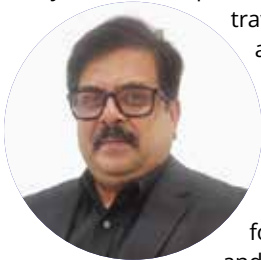
Heartfelt congratulations to the TravelScapes Team on reaching this incredible milestone of 11 years. Your unwavering commitment to delivering insightful and industry-leading content, fostering partnerships, and illuminating the travel sector has been exemplary. Over the past 11 years, TravelScapes has been the guiding light, shaping the landscape of travel through its compelling narratives, comprehensive insights, and dedication to excellence. Your journey of success is inspiring, and we eagerly anticipate the continued brilliance and impact of TravelScapes in the years ahead.

NEERAJ KUMAR AILAWADI, DIRECTOR TRAVEL MUDRA PVT LTD.

Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

In my opinion, there will be no impact of global changes on travel and tourism. Travelling will become easier and more accessible, allowing more people to access the world. The global travel and tourism sector is recovering very fast post-pandemic and we have seen a boom in the travel industry worldwide. The travel landscape may continue to evolve with a focus on sustainability and flexibility. Health and safety concerns might shape travel norms, influencing preference for less crowded destinations.

These destinations would be offbeat remote work trends may lead to workation packages blending work and leisure travel. Environmental consciousness may drive the shift towards eco-friendly travel options. Overall adaptability and technology are key factors of future travel.



TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

Congratulations on 11 years of TravelScapes! This remarkable milestone reflects a dedication showcasing the ever-evolving travel & tourism. May TravelScapes continue to inspire innovation, explore new horizons and serve as a beacon for travellers seeking unique experiences. TravelScapes has undoubtedly become a trusted source of inspiration for the Tourism Industry and a window to diverse cultures. On this significant milestone, it is worth acknowledging the impact. TravelScapes has fostered a global community of travel and tourism. Congratulations to TravelScapes on achieving the milestone of VETA awards. Hosting such awards signifies a commitment to recognizing excellence and innovation in the travel industry. These awards play a significant role in inspiring and acknowledging outstanding contributors to the Travel & Tourism Industry. Cheers to many more years of success in the travel & tourism industry!



P P KHANNA, PRESIDENT, ADTOI



Envision the travel landscape evolving in the coming year

Of late there have been tremendous changes in the profile of media houses having activities like destination promotion through the conduct of webinars with the support of overseas tourism boards to promote outbound tourism. Similarly, they tie up with State Tourism Boards/Hoteliers and organise Conclave/Seminar to promote domestic destinations.

There is ample diversification in the profile of Media Houses. This is attracting all-round interest among people associated with Media House resulting in the mushrooming of new agencies. This creates awareness among the travellers about the destinations within and outside the countries. By working with Association Media House get the support of its member's presence in all the events organised by them. Domestic tourism will keep growing as seen during COVID times. People cannot stop travelling for one reason or another and with the season change there will be an influx of tourists to northern India which has a cool climate. It is ironic that to get the one-millionth foreign tourist arrival, the country had to wait for decades whereas millions of Indian tourists are now visiting foreign destinations every year through the vibrant promotional campaign both by foreign tourism boards and Media.

TRAVELSCAPES' COMPLETION OF 11 YEARS

It is a matter of great pride that TravelScapes will be completing 11 years of unstinted service to the tourism industry which is incredible. Also, we as an Association of Domestic Tour Operators thank you so very much for working together. We will immensely be pleased to have your media support in the coming years for bringing forth the activities and achievement of our contribution to the growth of domestic tourism in the county before the industry and the public at large. Technology has changed the entire scenario of operations and media should also be prepared for it.

As already stated, all the Associations grow with the support of Media and ADTOI and TravelScapes have a special bond in supporting each other. You will continue to grow by adapting to the technological changes that come from time to time. On behalf of ADTOI, I wish TravelScapes many many more years to count with the industry to help its growth.



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ENCALM FUELS INDIA'S ASCENT IN AIRPORT EXPERIENCES

*Before ascending to the clouds Encalm unveils a collection of bespoke services at the airports, including the culturally rich 'Atithya,' the luxurious 'Encalm Lounge,' and the indulgent 'Encalm Spa.' the trailblazing company sets a new standard in traveller-centric experiences. Under **Vikas Sharma CEO of Encalm Hospitality's** guidance, Encalm is pioneering the redefinition of airport hospitality, setting new benchmarks and creating unforgettable lounge and experiences for travellers across Indian airports. Encalm excels in crafting opulent and cozy airport experiences. From exclusive meet and assist services to airport assistance, Encalm is dedicated to curating delightful moments for their guests*

By *Aanchal sachdeva*

Vision for transforming air travel post-pandemic

Encalm Hospitality envisions playing a pivotal role in redefining the air travel experience as the aviation industry adapts post-pandemic. Our focus is on crafting an immersive journey that aligns with the evolving needs and expectations of modern travellers. By leveraging innovative services, cutting-edge technologies, and sustainable practices, we aim to set new standards for excellence in hospitality within airport environments.

India's essence in airport elegance

The design, architecture, and philosophy of Encalm Hospitality are intricately woven to reflect the achievements, ambition, and imagination of India. Our airport services are not merely functional; they are an ode to the rich Indian heritage blended seamlessly with contemporary aesthetics. Each space is curated to resonate with the vibrancy and diversity that defines India, creating an environment that is both culturally rich and visually captivating. Encalm Prive's design, right from the big leaf at the center to other natural elements.



Our airport services are not merely functional; they are an ode to the rich Indian heritage blended seamlessly with contemporary aesthetics

Encalm's guest-centric hospitality

Incorporating the timeless Indian philosophy of "Atithi Deva Bhava" (The guest is God), Encalm Hospitality ensures that every guest feels genuinely welcomed and valued throughout their journey. Hospitality is ingrained in our organisational ethos, instilling warmth, respect, and personalised attention in every interaction. This cultural notion extends across all our services, from Atithya to lounges and spa & wellness offerings, fostering an environment where every traveller is treated as an honoured guest.

Encalm's future innovations

Our approach involves continuous anticipation of trends and the delivery of services that go beyond conventional offerings. We are investing in cutting-edge technologies like Temi Robots — which are AI enabled robots, relaxation and health enablement services like Encalm Spa, and unique experiences that enhance the overall travel journey, providing a holistic experience for every traveller — in the form of Privé and Encalm's transit hotel that we are working upon. Moreover, we will be soon launching Encalm Lounges in Hyderabad and Goa. Our transit hotel at Hyderabad Airport is another step towards Encalm's future plans where it intends to evolve as a hospitality player, as a whole.

Leadership approach of Encalm

As the CEO, I have implemented strategies at Encalm Hospitality to foster a culture of progressiveness, adaptability, and sustainability within the organisation. This includes a collaborative leadership style that encourages innovation and adaptability. Teams are empowered to explore new avenues, and continuous learning and development are prioritised to keep our workforce at the forefront of industry trends. Sustainability is integrated into our operations, reflecting a commitment to environmental responsibility and positioning Encalm as an industry leader poised for growth in a sustainable and progressive manner.



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NCL unveils 2025-26 fall-winter sailings

Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) unveiled its new fall and winter 2025/26 voyages, marking a positive trend with strong November sales driven by increasing demand for cruising. NCL President David J. Herrera attributes the robust bookings to guest satisfaction and the appeal of diverse and extended itineraries. The 2025/26 season includes debut sailings to new destinations, such as Norwegian Sun exploring Asia, Norwegian Viva homeporting in Galveston, Texas, and more. The itineraries cover 450 global destinations, featuring Africa, Asia, South America, the Caribbean, and beyond. Noteworthy offerings include Norwegian Sun's



Asian voyages with stops in Kyoto, Japanese ports, and Southeast Asia; Norwegian Spirit's Australia and New Zealand sailings; Norwegian Dawn's exotic Africa cruises; Norwegian Viva's Western and Eastern Caribbean itineraries; Norwegian Escape's New Orleans homeporting; and Norwegian Jade's Panama Canal experiences.

VFS Global renews Global Visa Services for Norway

VFS Global was honoured with the global tender by The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, securing the provision of visa and residence permit services in 52 countries worldwide. The renewed agreement encompassed VFS Global's continued representation of the Government of Norway across the Americas, Australasia, China & Hong Kong, Europe & CIS, Middle East & North Africa, Russia, Belarus & Armenia, and South Asia. Having collaborated with the Norwegian government since 2014, VFS Global adeptly handled nearly 1.5 million applications, establishing a track record of success. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed anticipation for the ongoing smooth and professional collaboration, acknowledging the effectiveness and productivity of their partnership. Chris Dix, Head of Business Development at VFS Global, expressed delight in the extension of their role as the sole service provider for the Government of Norway, highlighting the company's commitment to delivering top-quality services globally.



Sanjeev Joshi elected as SITE India Chapter President

SITE (Society for Incentive Travel Excellence) India Chapter Sanjeev Joshi was elected as the President of SITE India Chapter, effective January 2024. The chapter, a prominent association in the incentive travel and motivational events industry, took pride in welcoming Sanjeev Joshi to the esteemed position of President. Sanjeev with his wealth of experience and leadership, played a pivotal role in steering the chapter's vision and initiatives, contributing to its continued growth and success within India. The SITE India Chapter Board had also announced a dynamic team of officers who led the chapter in 2024, including Immediate Past President Barun Gupta, Vice Presidents Naveen Rizvi,



Anil Dwivedi, Rohit Chopra, Vikrant Gulani, and Kiran Bhandari. These distinguished professionals brought a wealth of experience and expertise to their respective roles and were committed to furthering SITE India Chapter's mission of promoting excellence in incentive travel and motivational events within India.

Arab Aviation Summit scheduled in February

The 2024 edition of the Arab Aviation Summit, a pivotal event in the regional aviation and tourism sector, is set to place in Ras Al Khaimah from February 27 to 28, 2024, themed 'Exploring The Future of Travel.' In its 11th iteration, the summit, in collaboration with Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA), aims to drive global change, foster innovation, sustainability, and enhance passenger experiences. Industry leaders, policymakers, and innovators will gather to share knowledge, forge partnerships, and set benchmarks for the regional

and global aviation and travel industry. Discussions will focus on the digital revolution's impact, integrating artificial intelligence in aviation and tourism, and the industry's commitment to a greener future with ESG considerations, carbon emission reduction, and sustainable aviation fuels. The summit will redefine concepts of destinations, discuss evolving consumer expectations, and explore strategies for talent and leadership development. A 'Future Investment Frontiers' segment will delve into financial dynamics, business prospects, and emerging opportunities.





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IATO addresses permit hurdle for Taiwanese tourists into Sikkim

Rajiv Mehra, President of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) informed about issues faced by Taiwanese nationals visiting Sikkim. They encountered problems entering as the Sikkim Permit issued by INDIA-TAIPEI ASSOCIATION, Taipei, was not accepted by the Foreigners Registration Office (FRO) at Rangpo Checkpost. The FRO in Rangpo had instructions to deny entry to individuals with Republic of China or Peoples Republic of China passports unless they had clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs or Ministry of External Affairs. IATO addressed this issue with the Joint Secretary (Foreigners) of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Commissioner of the



Bureau of Immigration, urging them to intervene. After considering IATO's request, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Bureau of Immigration directed officials at Rangpo Check-post to accept the Inner Line Permit issued by the India-Taipei Association, ensuring smooth entry for Taiwanese tourists into Sikkim.



Cordelia Cruises inaugurated new office in Noida

Cordelia Cruises expanded its reach by inaugurating a new office in Noida. This initiative aimed to bolster accessibility and engagement with cruise enthusiasts in North India, playing a crucial role in fostering the overall growth of the country's cruise industry. With a legacy of hosting over 400,000 passengers and introducing a unique blend of Indian hospitality and top-notch amenities, Cordelia Cruises solidified its position as a frontrunner in the cruise sector. The newly opened Noida office served as a strategic hub for

connecting with the burgeoning market in North India. It provided a convenient point of contact for cruise enthusiasts, reflecting Cordelia Cruises' recognition of the potential for industry growth in regions like North India. Jurgen Bailom, President and CEO of Waterways Leisure Tourism Pvt Ltd, Cordelia Cruises, expressed delight in the new office opening, emphasising the company's dedication to providing unparalleled hospitality and amenities while contributing to the growth of the Indian cruise industry.

DreamSetGo records 30% growth, 7,500 sports travellers

DreamSetGo, presented its inaugural year-end report, "DreamSetGo's Sports Travel Index 2023." The platform facilitated over 7500 sports travellers across 14 global events in 2023, indicating a 30% surge since the pandemic and a growing appetite for sports travel and luxury experiences. DreamSetGo anticipates a 200% growth in premium sports travel in 2024, attributing it to mega events like the ICC Men's T20 World Cup and the Olympic Games

Paris 2024. The report identifies luxury offerings like hospitality tickets and exclusive experiences as top choices, driven by the rise of luxury Indian consumers with growing disposable incomes. Millennials, aged 35-50, prioritise experiences, reflecting in the uptake of luxury sports travel. The UK topped as the most booked global sports destination in 2023, with the USA, Caribbean, and Australia predicted to gain popularity in 2024.



Global Destinations 'Wanderlust Marketing' to represent Kavya Spa and Resort Kathmandu

Kavya Resort & Spa, a luxurious retreat in Nagarkot, Kathmandu appointed 'Wanderlust Marketing,' a specialised division of Global Destinations, as its representative in India. Nestled in the Himalayas, Kavya Resort & Spa offers a harmonious blend of Nepalese tradition and modern sophistication. The resort, situated in the serene village of Nagarkot, provides a captivating experience with snow-covered peaks, stunning sunrises, and warm hospitality. Global Destinations, through its 'Wanderlust Marketing' vertical, aims to showcase unique travel providers globally, offering bespoke experiences to discerning travellers. TJ Grundl-Hong, Managing Principal of



Kavya Resort & Spa, emphasised India as a priority market, citing a significant increase in Indian guests and their length of stay in 2023. Pranav Kapadia, Founder of Wanderlust Marketing, expressed pleasure in adding Kavya Resort & Spa to their portfolio, recognising the rising demand for experiential luxury travel among Indian travellers seeking unique, meaningful, and sustainable experiences.



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By Aanchal Sachdeva & Ananya Trivedi

Asego pioneers digital transformation in Indian travel assistance and insurance *Empowering partners with proprietary software*

Dev Karvat delves into Asego's vision for digital transformation in the Indian Travel Assistance and Insurance sector. As pioneers, Asego is set to lead the charge with its upcoming proprietary software, promising improved business intelligence and enhanced operational efficiency. This leap aims to amplify partner growth, elevate customer experiences, and redefine industry standards, unlocking new avenues for growth through additional ancillary service revenue.

Asego's 24-year legacy in travel protection *Beyond claims processing, comprehensive real-time assistance*

Asego, a stalwart in the travel protection space for over 24 years, places Travel Assistance services at the forefront of its legacy. Going beyond mere claims processing, Asego offers comprehensive real-time assistance services, including 24X7 global medical support, roadside assistance, family protection, and insurance. The company's holistic approach underscores its dedication to ensuring the well-being and security of every Indian traveller.

Mitigating travel uncertainties with tailored solutions *Identifying and addressing common travel concerns*

Travel inherently involves the unknown, and Asego recognizes the uncertainties that can cast a shadow on the overall experience. From weather-related disruptions to unexpected natural calamities and the challenges of crowded transportation hubs, Asego is committed to identifying and mitigating these risks. The company's offerings extend beyond medical emergencies to cover risks such as emergency medical evacuation, loss and damage of gadgets, cyber security issues, identity theft, credit/debit card fraud, and more. Asego's carefully curated standalone products allow travellers to customize protection plans according to their needs.

Safe offbeat adventures, specially crafted coverages for Gen Z travellers *Tailored coverages for high-risk activities*

Asego acknowledges the surge in travellers seeking offbeat adventures, such as cruise trips, adventure sports, and self-drive trips. To address the inherent risks associated with these activities, Asego has curated exclusive coverages for Gen Z travellers. These coverages safeguard high-risk activities, adventurous pursuits, and



Asego's services extend beyond mere claims processing. We offer comprehensive real-time assistance services, including 24X7 global medical support, roadside assistance, and family protection, along with insurance

emergency medical expenses in case of personal accidents, emergency evacuations, and more.

Protection, ensuring safety amidst serene landscapes *Dispelling misconceptions and offering dedicated coverage*

While cruise enthusiasts often assume that regular travel insurance suffices, Asego dispels this misconception. The company emphasizes the need for a dedicated cruise protection cover, especially as regular travel insurance does not cover passengers while on a cruise. Asego's exclusive cruise cover goes beyond reimbursement for trip cancellations, extending to cover emergency evacuations and subsequent medical care expenses in case of serious injuries onboard.

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*Recognised as a leading DMC for Vietnam, SR Destinations emerged as a comprehensive agency catering to the B2B sector in Indian markets. By establishing partnerships worldwide, they bring the best to their customers. With a successful track record in organising group tours, our commitment to excellence, supported by an expanding network of global partners, is the key to their success. **Rakshit Kansal, Company Director of SR Destinations** shares visionary perspective, diverse destinations and much more*

By Aanchal Sachdeva, Ananya Trivedi



Our vision for SR Destination is to bring people the real authentic experience of the places that we deal in and to bring more and more places like that in our list

Visionary Perspective SR Destination Perspective

SR Destination was started with a thought of providing people what they usually miss when they travel anywhere and that is "Local authenticities". Meaning what's on internet or anywhere what is famous is known to everyone but very few know the hidden gems of the place, the culture, the food, the art and much more. So, our vision for SR Destination is to bring people the real authentic experience of the places that we deal in and to bring more and more places like that in our list.

Diverse Destinations, Seamless Experiences

Firstly whatever destination we serve to our client is explored by us personally and we make sure that the tour plan given to the client matches his expectations. We also visit a place keeping in mind the interest of all age groups and their preferences accordingly. That's why based on the client mindset and age group we can design the tour plan differently. Yes, there is a very diverse range of options available when it comes to giving options for the destinations but we are trying to add more to the diversity. We are trying to bring new places and new experiences for the people to enjoy and travel more.

Tracking Travel Trends

Media has always been a big support when it comes to stay updated, so yes that's the first one. Apart from that we always try to bring in new updates from our local suppliers sitting right at the core of that particular destination. We try to meet as much people as we can to be connected and updated for the new opportunities and changes. Also, travel trade events like OTM and SATTE and others are always a great source of learning new things and making connections with people from different spheres that always helps us to rethink and reorder things in a much more better way for our clients.

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Minor hotels announces Anantara Palais Hansen Vienna Hotel in Austria

Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas, under the umbrella of Minor Hotels, is set to add Anantara Palais Hansen Vienna Hotel to its portfolio in March 2024. The hotel is located in Vienna's city center, occupying a historic palace on Schottenring. Originally built in 1873, the palace has undergone various transformations before being turned into a luxury hotel in 2013. With 152 classically decorated rooms and suites,

including the largest Presidential Suite in Vienna, the property offers Michelin-starred dining, meeting spaces, and leisure facilities. An extensive renovation is planned to introduce Anantara's hallmarks and experiences, encompassing guest rooms, lobby, meeting areas, dining venues, and spa. Vienna, known for its cultural richness, will provide an ideal backdrop for Anantara's luxury and hospitality experience.

Aramness Gir expands wildlife beyond Central India

Aramness Gir revolutionising wildlife adventure tourism by extending beyond Central India's big cats. Gir National Park, home to over 600 Asiatic lions, introduced 40 specially designed Bolero jeeps, enhancing the safari experience. Partnered with expert naturalists, Aramness Gir offers visitors not only incredible wildlife sightings but also insights into conservation efforts. The eco-village-styled lodge, designed by Nicholas Plewman Architects and Fox Browne Creative, complements the natural setting. With 18 elegant kothis featuring private plunge pools, Aramness Gir provides a sublime blend of traditional and contemporary elements. Lodge Manager

Parikshit Rathore emphasised the commitment to offer a safari experience that goes beyond the ordinary, ensuring encounters with nature are not only memorable but deeply enriching, inviting adventurers on an unforgettable journey where Asiatic lions' conservation legacy meets luxury.



Banyan Tree debuts in Dubai

Banyan Tree inaugurated its first property in Dubai on December 2, 2023, coinciding with the UAE's 52nd Union Day. Situated on the Bluewaters Dubai shoreline, the property features 178 rooms, suites, residences, and a four-bedroom villa. The accommodations, designed by BLINK Design, offer a blend of sophistication and local touches, along with ocean views and Banyan Tree amenities. Banyan Tree Residences Dubai adds 96 fully furnished private apartments, complementing the resort's offerings. The

destination boasts seven dining venues, including Alizee, Demon Duck, and TakaHisa, offering diverse culinary experiences. The resort provides extensive facilities, including meeting spaces, outdoor event venues, three swimming pools, a fitness center, beauty salon, Banyan Tree Spa, and a retail outlet. The partnership between Accor, Banyan Tree Group, and Ennismore brings a unique luxury lifestyle experience to Dubai, following a similar model in Banyan Tree Doha and Banyan Tree AlUla.

Cygnett Hotels & Resorts launches new property in Ayodhya

Cygnett Hotels & Resorts announced the signing of its newest property, Cygnett Collection KK Hotel Ayodhya, located in the historically significant city of Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh. Positioned in the heart of Ayodhya, the Cygnett Collection KK Hotel Ayodhya caters to both business and leisure travellers, offering 41 opulent rooms with modern amenities. The property features an all-day dining restaurant, C Pavilion, serving diverse world cuisines, and a banquet hall, Summit Columbia, equipped for social and corporate events. With Ayodhya emerging as a global tourism hub and spiritual center,



Cygnett Hotels & Resorts aims to provide exceptional hospitality experiences. The brand is committed to offering world-class hospitality across various regions, with a focus on comfort, service, and delectable cuisine.



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The Fern Hotels & Resorts expands footprints in Rajasthan

The Fern Hotels & Resorts inaugurated The Fern Residency, Ajmer, its latest property in Rajasthan. Positioned near the Ajmer Sharif Dargah and Anna Sagar Lake, the hotel boasts 31 well-appointed rooms and suites, catering to both business and leisure travellers. This addition marks The Fern's 14th hotel in Rajasthan, complementing its presence in Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Alwar-Sariska, Bambora-Udaipur, Nawalgarh, and Sawai Madhopur. The Fern Residency, Ajmer emphasised a blend of modern comfort and timeless elegance. Guests can enjoy



amenities such as high-speed Wi-Fi, LED televisions, and air conditioning. The hotel features an all-day dining multi-cuisine restaurant, banquet halls, a spa, laundry services, a travel desk, and a 24-hour front desk. With a rooftop lake-view bar opening soon, the hotel aims to provide a remarkable stay experience for its guests.

IHCL launches third Taj property in Dehradun

The Indian Hotels Company revealed the signing of a Taj-branded hotel in Dehradun, Uttarakhand, marking its third presence in the city through a Brownfield project. Suma Venkatesh, Executive Vice President, Real Estate and Development, IHCL, expressed the company's strategy to expand into vital commercial and leisure destinations in India, citing Dehradun's potential for growth due to its tourism, education, and software industries. The 215-key hotel, strategically located off Rajpur Road connecting Dehradun to Mussoorie, will offer various facilities, including dining options, banqueting spaces, a spa, swimming pool, and fitness center. IHCL is collaborating with La Roche Hotels & Resorts for the development of this property, and the partners expressed their enthusiasm for bringing the iconic Taj brand to the foothills of Dehradun.



Niraamaya Wellness Retreats signs management agreement with INKURE Real Estate

Niraamaya Lifestyle Resorts expanded its footprint to Munnar through a management agreement with INKURE Real Estate Investment Company. This strategic move marks Niraamaya's sixth wellness retreat in Kerala, solidifying its status as a premier wellness destination in southern India. With 100 rooms and suites strategically located for easy access from Kochi Airport, the retreat in Kanthalloor, near Munnar, promises luxurious amenities such as a restaurant, bar, fitness center, swimming pool, and

comprehensive spa facilities. Known as the Kashmir of Kerala, Kanthalloor offers a tropical haven with orchards laden with various fruits. The collaboration aims to unlock the potential of this undiscovered region and create a perfect destination for discerning travellers, enhancing the local tourism landscape. The property, set against Munnar's tea plantations, will provide exquisitely designed accommodations with breathtaking views and a focus on exceptional luxury and leisure experiences.



Courtyard by Marriott expands its presence in Gorakhpur

Courtyard by Marriott Gorakhpur, marks its debut in the historically rich city of IndiaGorakhpur. The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath, officially inaugurated the 97-room hotel located in Gorakhpur's city center, just a short drive from Mahayogi Gorakhnath Airport. The property, well-connected to transportation hubs, offers picturesque views of Ramgarh Tal Lake. Embodying the brand's commitment to enhancing travel

experiences, the hotel caters to both leisure and business travellers. Courtyard by Marriott Gorakhpur features spacious rooms, including suites, a signature restaurant—Spice Kitchen, offering a diverse buffet and à la carte menu, an Asian dining option named 'Asian Bowl' and a coffee shop called 'Coffee & Crust'. Leisure facilities include a Kid's Club, fitness center, and an outdoor pool. The hotel also boasts versatile event venues and a dedicated wedding studio.



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14th c. Hill Fort–Kesroli, Rajasthan (Ranawat)



15th c. Neemrana Fort-Palace, Rajasthan (Chauhan)



17th c. The Tower House, Kerala (Dutch)



17th c. Deo Bagh, Gwalior (Maratha)



17th c. The Bungalow on the Beach, Tamil Nadu (Danish)



19th c. The Baradari Palace, Punjab (Sikh)



19th c. The Ramgarh Bungalows, Uttarakhand (British)



19th C. Tijara Fort-Palace, Rajasthan (Naruka-Kachchwaha)



19th c. Walkwood Garden, Tamil Nadu (Scottish)



20th c. The Piramal Haveli, Rajasthan (Marwari)



20th c. Neemrana's Three Waters, South Goa (Portuguese inspired)



21st c. The Glasshouse on the Ganges, Uttarakhand (Post-colonial)



21st c. Neemrana's Coconut Alley, Tamil Nadu (Tamil)

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Kuda Villingili Maldives wins Best Honeymoon Hotel 2023

Kuda Villingili Maldives earned the esteemed title of The Best Honeymoon Hotel 2023, as conferred by the White Awards. This prestigious recognition, following meticulous evaluation by independent experts in the wedding industry, underscores the resort's outstanding service quality, captivating ambiance, and overall excellence in delivering an unforgettable experience for couples embarking on their honeymoon journey. Nestled in the North Malé Atoll, Kuda Villingili Resort Maldives offers an idyllic tropical retreat with spacious beach and water villas, seven restaurants

presenting 11 distinct cuisines, and a 30-minute speedboat ride from Male'. Going beyond a honeymoon haven, the resort provides comprehensive wedding packages, featuring ceremonies against the backdrop of the azure ocean, private sunset cruises, floating breakfasts, and romantic beach dinners. Recognised by the White Awards, Kuda Villingili stands as a leader in Maldivian hospitality, showcasing a commitment to excellence in crafting unparalleled honeymoon experiences through luxurious accommodations, exceptional service, and a breathtaking natural setting.



IHG® signs Holiday Inn Resort in Karjat

IHG® Hotels & Resorts inked a management agreement with XECO Media LLP to introduce a new Holiday Inn Resort in Karjat, Maharashtra. Expected to launch in 2027, this addition will contribute 150 keys to IHG's state portfolio, strategically reinforcing the brand's dedication to offering diverse and exceptional hospitality experiences across India. Nestled in the picturesque town of Karjat, equidistant from Mumbai and Pune, the resort will blend modern comfort with natural beauty. Boasting breathtaking landscapes and lush surroundings, Holiday Inn Resort Karjat aims to attract adventure enthusiasts, hikers, and leisure travellers seeking an easy getaway from both



cities. Sudeep Jain, Managing Director, South West Asia, IHG Hotels & Resorts, expressed enthusiasm for expanding the essential brand to Karjat, while Naqisa Silva Choudhary, CEO of XECO Media LLP, highlighted the partnership's potential to deliver a comfortable and welcoming guest experience, leveraging IHG's global expertise and the Holiday Inn brand's worldwide recognition.

Dubai's Al Habtoor hosts a Meet & Greet in Mumbai

Al Habtoor Group renowned for its expertise in luxury hospitality, revealed its latest venture, Al Habtoor Tower, at an exclusive Meet and Greet Event in Mumbai, India. Attended by influential figures in the Indian real estate industry, the event underscored the group's commitment to introducing a new benchmark of luxury and innovation to Dubai's evolving real estate landscape. The 82-storey Al Habtoor Tower, strategically positioned in Dubai, is poised to redefine urban living with a focus on luxury. The event offered a glimpse into the grandeur of the new project,

emphasising its distinctive features. With an anticipated completion in three years, the tower promises unparalleled panoramic views of the Dubai skyline, creating a unique and extraordinary living experience. Mohammed Al Habtoor, CEO and Vice Chairman of Al Habtoor Group, announced the project, stating, "Our Al Habtoor Tower project aims to meet the growing demand for luxury homes in Dubai, offering living experiences that exceed expectations. The Mumbai event provided just a glimpse of what this iconic tower will bring to Dubai."



Hyatt Place launches in Bodh Gaya, Bihar

Hyatt Hotels Corporation introduced Hyatt Place Bodh Gaya, marking the debut of the Hyatt Place brand in Bihar and the ninth property of its kind in India. Developed by Saraf Hotel Enterprise, this 74-room hotel, located in the peaceful surroundings of Bodh Gaya, is a short drive from Gaya airport. Reflecting Hyatt's commitment to care and featuring minimalist design, the property is strategically situated near key attractions such as the UNESCO World Heritage site Mahabodhi temple and the

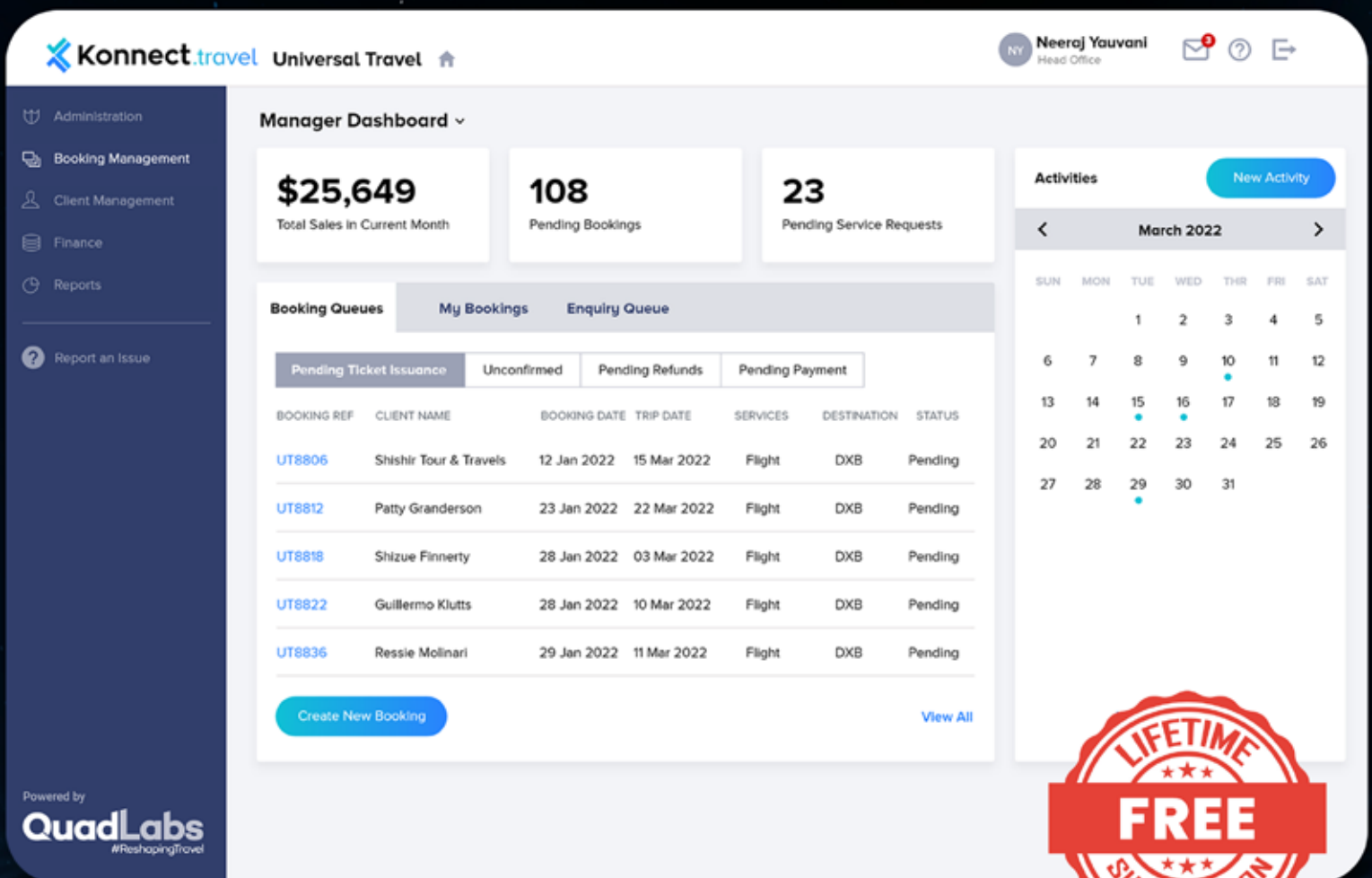
sacred Bodhi tree. The hotel's amenities include the Gallery Café, The Market for grab-and-go options, a meditation room, and a library lounge offering insights into the city's significance. Dhruva Rathore, Vice President of Development, India & South West Asia, Hyatt Hotels, highlighted the importance of Bodh Gaya in religious tourism, while Varun Saraf, Managing Director, Saraf Hotels Enterprises, expressed excitement about their ongoing collaboration spanning over 45 years.



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

Booking Queues My Bookings Enquiry Queue

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

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FROM TRENDS TO TAILORED TALES

HOSPITALITY'S MANIFESTO FOR 2024, RESHAPING STAYS AND RESHAPING STORIES

By Aanchal Sachdeva & Ananya Trivedi

SONAVI KAICKER , CEO, NEEMRANA HOTELS



Hospitality Trends 2024

A notable trend is the surge in demand for offbeat properties that bring travellers closer to nature. Neemrana's Glasshouse on the Ganges, a Himalayan hideaway enveloped in lush greenery with a breathtaking view of the River Ganges, coupled with a wellness spa within the property. Similarly, Neemrana's Three Waters in South Goa encompassing 3 villas is all about its river, the sea, and a healing spring. Like, the 14th-century Hill Fort-Kesroli in Alwar, offers guests a historical and heritage-driven experience. Neemrana's commitment to sustainability is evident across its properties, with initiatives like reusable glass bottles, food composting machines, EV charging stations, and eco-



Neemrana is more than a temporary abode; it's a heartfelt connection to culture, heritage, and a personalised touch for each and every guest

friendly guest amenities showcasing a dedication to environmentally friendly practices. We sourced Christmas plants at all the hotels across India for our guests to carry home. We shall be launching our own collection of amenities for Single Lady travellers in January, 2024 across the Neemrana chain.

Neemrana is set to launch Neemrana's Blue Cottage in Ramgarh, Uttarakhand catering to families or close friends seeking extended stays alongside Ramgarh bungalows.

In summary, the hospitality industry in 2024 is marked by a quest for meaningful and diverse experiences.

Tailored Travel Experiences

While there's a growing clamour for personalised and unique travel experiences today, the fact is,

Neemrana has been pioneering this approach since its inception.

Neemrana is more than a temporary abode; it's a heartfelt connection to culture, heritage, and a personalised touch for each and every guest. Our restored ruins, steeped in historical architecture, offer a glimpse into the glorious past of India. The personalised candlelight experiences for couples exemplify our commitment to making special moments truly exceptional. From customised flooring designs to unique crockery patterns and tablecloths designed by Aman Nath, myself and the design team, every detail is meticulously crafted in-house. We refrain from copying and implementing, ensuring that every nuance reflects our authentic identity.

A demonstration of immense personalisation lies in our rooms. Whether it's the intimate Sutra Mahal ideal for honeymooners, each room at each Neemrana property boasts distinct sizes, interiors, and even shapes. While the flagship Neemrana Fort-Palace is a dream locale with its 14-tiered layout and one-of-a-kind architecture, the 19th-century Tijara Fort-Palace has emerged as a sought-after venue for NRI weddings. While the world catches up to the demand for personalised and unique travel experiences, Neemrana continues to lead the way with its timeless charm and unwavering dedication to personalised hospitality.

MANISH DAYYA, GENERAL MANAGER, SOFITEL MUMBAI BKC



Hospitality Trends 2024

The global traveller has become an acutely aware traveller, and we see more guests preferring eco-certifications while booking. In fact, even platforms like Booking.com are



Our hotel was recently awarded the prestigious Green Key India certification, making us the first hotel in the country to hold this certification

building 'sustainable travel' search filters into their systems, as a response to increasing demand for the same. Sofitel Mumbai BKC, and our parent company, Accor, is deeply committed to sustainability – in fact, our hotel was recently awarded the prestigious Green Key India certification, making us the first hotel in the country to hold this certification. We will remain

further driven by our guests, to ensure that we remain committed to the cause of eco-conscious travel and hospitality, through 2024 and beyond.

Tailored Travel Experiences

While Sofitel Mumbai BKC was launched 11 years ago as a business hotel, we quickly moved into the blesuire sector thanks to our focus on personalised service and attention to detail that definitely leaves memories with our guests and keeps them coming back. I believe a lot of why we are able to personalise unique experiences for our guests comes from the brand pillars we are always focused on, namely French Elegance, Exceptional Service, Culinary Excellence, Luxury Accommodations and Local Heritage. An emphasis on driving forward messaging and experiences inspired by our brand pillars is what I believe helps us address the growing need for travel experiences that are not cookie-cutter but thoughtful.



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BARUN GUPTA, GENERAL MANAGER, EXPOINN SUITES & CONVENTION



“

Our convention center boasts a diverse range of flexible spaces designed to accommodate a variety of events, from conferences and conventions to trade shows and weddings

Hospitality Trends 2024

Continued emphasis on stringent hygiene measures, contactless services, and advanced air purification systems to ensure guest safety. Increasing adoption of eco-friendly initiatives, such as energy-efficient operations and reduced single-use plastics, in response to growing traveller interest in sustainability. Utilisation of AI and data analytics for personalised guest experiences, facilitated through mobile apps for seamless check-ins, room customisation, and concierge services. Introduction of more flexible booking policies, including lenient cancellations and adaptable reservation dates, to accommodate changing travel plans. Transformation of hotel spaces to cater to digital nomads and remote workers, offering coworking facilities and extended stay packages. Collaboration with local communities to curate unique activities, culinary offerings, and partnerships with local artisans, catering to the growing demand for

genuine cultural immersion. These trends reflect the industry's adaptability to current realities, ensuring hotels meet the changing expectations of travellers and stay competitive in a dynamic market.

Tailored Travel Experiences

It is with great pleasure that I share with you the seamless integration of our hotel with a state-of-the-art convention center. Our integrated facilities offer a comprehensive experience, catering to both business and leisure travellers with the utmost sophistication. Our convention center boasts a diverse range of flexible spaces designed to accommodate a variety of events, from conferences and conventions to trade shows and weddings. With cutting-edge audio-visual equipment, customisable seating arrangements, and adaptable spaces, we ensure that each event hosted at our venue is a resounding success. Guests attending events at our convention center can enjoy the

convenience of staying on-site in our modern and luxurious hotel rooms. Whether they seek a relaxing retreat after a day of meetings or a comfortable space to unwind, our accommodations are designed to meet the needs of both business and leisure travellers.

Our integrated approach extends beyond physical proximity. With seamless connectivity between the hotel and convention center, guests can transition effortlessly between their accommodations and event spaces. This convenience enhances the overall experience, allowing attendees to focus on the purpose of their visit without the hassle of commuting. Recognising the importance of business services, we provide comprehensive support for corporate events. This includes dedicated event planning professionals, high-speed internet, and cutting-edge audio-visual technology to ensure that presentations and conferences run smoothly. To enhance the appeal of hosting events with us, we offer exclusive packages and incentives for conference organisers. These may include discounted room rates, complimentary meeting spaces, and personalised catering options to create a truly memorable and cost-effective experience.

Our integrated facility goes beyond business services, offering a range of amenities for leisure travellers as well. From wellness centers and fine dining restaurants to recreational spaces, we provide a well-rounded experience that caters to the diverse needs of our guests.

NARESH ARORA, FOUNDER AND CEO, TRULYY INDIA HOTELS & RESORTS



“

Our goal is to create a home away from home, where guests feel seen and cared for

Hospitality Trends 2024

At our hotel, we recognise the increasing desire for personalized and unique travel experiences. To meet this demand, we've revamped our approach, prioritising individual preferences and

tailoring services accordingly. From personalised check-ins to curated amenities, we're committed to going beyond the conventional to ensure each guest enjoys a distinctive stay. Our staff is trained to anticipate and exceed expectations, creating an atmosphere that fosters genuine connections

and makes every guest feel special. We understand that one size doesn't fit all in travel, and our focus is on providing an unparalleled, bespoke experience that aligns with the evolving preferences of our discerning guests.

Tailored Travel Experiences

In our hotel, we've embraced the art of tailoring experiences to match the uniqueness of each guest's journey. It's not just about providing a room; it's about curating moments that resonate with individuals. From crafting personalised welcome amenities based on guest preferences to offering insider tips on local hidden gems, we strive to add a human touch to every stay. Our goal is to create a home away from home, where guests feel seen and cared for. We're not just adapting to the growing demand for personalised experiences; we're embracing it with a genuine warmth that turns a visit into a cherished memory.

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DISCOVER PARADISE IFURU ISLAND MALDIVES

WHERE NATURE MEETS LUXURY IN THE HEART OF MALDIVES

*With a passion for crafting unparalleled experiences, **Rochelle Kilgariff**, General Manager of **Ifuru Island Maldives** infuses the resort with an air of sophistication and warm hospitality. A masterful navigator of paradise, she leads a dedicated team in curating a tapestry of opulence against the backdrop of turquoise waters and powder-soft beaches. In a tête-à-tête with **TravelScapes**, she crafts moments that linger in the hearts of guests like whispers of sea breeze. At **Ifuru**, every note resonates with the essence of tropical bliss*

By Ananya Trivedi



In our pursuit of offering unique and exciting activities, we understand the constant desire for new and shareable moments

Immersive adventures: Exploring Skydiving

The island offers a wide variety of activities, including traditional excursions typical of properties in the Maldives. However, what sets us apart is the unique experience of skydiving. Recently, we had guests who not only checked off this thrilling activity from their bucket list but did it twice in one morning. Skydiving at our resort is truly a memorable and exhilarating adventure.

Crafting the perfect blend of adventure and relaxation

Ifuru Island stands as one of the top ten largest islands, providing ample space and a stunning natural environment. With 147 villas along the sunset coast, the island offers both seclusion and connectivity. Enjoy scenic walkways, venture on a jungle run, or relax at the Social House a space designed for shared communication and connection. The island's fitness facilities and recreational activities are truly remarkable, enhancing the overall experience.

Harmony in hospitality

We have this stunning venue nestled at the far end of the island, our cherished secret spot. It's an ideal location for both sunrise and sunset yoga sessions, providing a serene and picturesque backdrop. Additionally, we offer some thrilling options like the ice bath challenge. In our pursuit of offering unique and exciting activities, we understand the constant desire for new and shareable moments. The ice bath challenge is one such distinctive offering that not only provides an invigorating experience but also creates

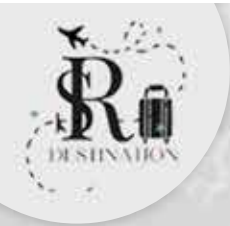
Instagram-worthy memories. We believe in providing experiences that captivate and leave a lasting impression in this ever-evolving world of excitement.

Setting sail into serenity

We're on the edge of the Raa atoll, and pod of dolphins pass by every day. Our dive club and school use a nice traditional boat, adding character. Travelling around, you mainly see dolphins and not much else – just three natural islands, no resorts. It's a return to nature, and is all about the sunsets. Most people remember the best holidays for a great sunset. Enjoying the peace, the waves, and the sunset makes up as the most romantic time.

Cinematic delight under the stars

The island offers a unique experience, letting guests choose between shared activities or private moments. The venue we are in, Social House, accommodates 300 guests, providing cover and a beautiful view for everyone to enjoy. It's a spot where people can connect, communicate, and engage in conversation, all while taking in a gorgeous sunset. Social House, the restaurant doubles as an event venue. We recently hosted a special presentation here. The restaurant can transform into a cinema for group movie nights based on guest preferences, from old classics like *Breakfast at Tiffany's* to newer films. There's something for everyone, even those who just want a cute night with *Minions* – a crowd-pleaser, certainly.



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IFURU ISLAND MALDIVES

A SYMPHONY OF SUN, SAND AND SERENITY

Situated in Raa Atoll, Ifuru Island Maldives is a hidden gem and Maldives' closely guarded secret. Featuring 147 sunset beach suites and villas, each providing breathtaking sunset views, Ifuru Island stands as an independently owned sanctuary. Guests can indulge in a premium all-inclusive package, enjoying curated amenities that exceed expectations. It fosters a playful and social atmosphere, intentionally designed to make every moment unforgettable. The luxury premium all-inclusive resort offers 147 elegant beach suites and villas, including those with all sunset views, direct beach access, and personal pools. Six dining options, including two signature restaurants and four bars, created a culinary journey for guests to indulge in the resort's 24-hour, premium all-inclusive, dine-around experience. What makes Ifuru truly extraordinary, is its distinctive 24-hour premium package, encompassing all-inclusive amenities with a one-of-a-kind twist—exclusively yours! Ifuru Island offers a wealth of experiences and activities to suit every guest



Villa Chronicles



Culinary Chronicles

Luxurious Retreats: Villa Chronicles

Sunset Sky Suite, Sunset Beach Suite, Sunset Beach Villa, Sunset Beach Villa with pool, Sunset 2-bedroom Beach Villa with Pool are the villa categories that guests can enjoy while staying at Ifuru Island Maldives. Boasting expansive interiors adorned with contemporary and sophisticated furnishings, along with upscale modern amenities, these accommodations offer direct entry to immaculate sandy shores and crystal-clear turquoise waters, creating a dynamic and enjoyable atmosphere. All 147 Sunset Suites and Villas are oriented to capture the stunning sunset views.

Culinary Chronicles

Ifuru Island Maldives offers a culinary celebration uniting food, culture, and communal joy. One can enjoy 6 diverse dining options, including 2 signature restaurants and 4 bars like The Social House, The Palm Grill, and Waterfront. Curated by skilled chefs, the gastronomic journey blends local Maldivian ingredients with international flavours, promising a delightful adventure. "Exclusively Yours!" presents a detailed dining experience with 2 signature restaurants, a social all-day diner, a beach club, and Hubba Hubba as the central hub. Introducing "Ifuru Eats," their unique Drop-off Take Away option, a phone call away for late-night snack cravings delivered to your doorstep.



Waterfront-Aerial

Dive into Paradise



Relax, Rejuvenate and Rejoice

Nestled amidst lush tropical palms and gardens, their luxurious oasis offers a haven of tranquility and relaxation. Located on the private island in the northern jungle gardens, the Island Spa is the ideal destination for indulgent treatments and specialised programs. Immerse yourself in the ultimate options for self-pampering at Xanadu Spa, where you can unwind and explore inner peace, balance, and harmony.

Dive into Paradise

Dive to witness a world of colourful coral reefs and marine life. The Raat Atoll, celebrated for its outstanding diving opportunities, showcases its splendour at Ifuru Island. Beyond the underwater wonders, partake in a myriad of experiences such as Island Hopping, Dolphin Watching, Sunset Cruises, and Cultural Immersion. Whether it's adventure, relaxation, or cultural exploration one seeks, Ifuru Island promises a tailored experience for every traveller.

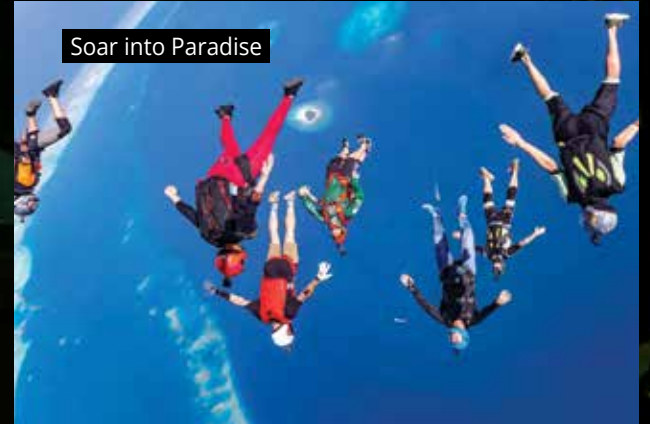
Soar into Paradise: Skydive Maldives

Welcome to Skydive Maldives – the gateway to breathtaking aerial adventures in paradise! Nestled amidst the turquoise expanse of the Indian Ocean, Skydive Maldives specialises in tandem skydiving, inviting both thrill-seekers and seasoned jumpers to embark on a journey of adrenaline and awe. With a team of highly experienced staff, their top priorities are safety and enjoyment. Discover the Maldives from an entirely new perspective as participants experiencing the unparalleled thrill of freefall with Skydive Maldives.

Ifuru_Eats



Soar into Paradise





New York City Tourism + Conventions revamps, NYC Travel Trade Academy

New York City Tourism + Conventions unveiled the relaunch of its NYC Travel Trade Academy, featuring Hindi subtitles. This strategic move aimed to strengthen New York City's presence in vital Indian markets and increase visibility in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. The initiative simplified the comprehension of NYC products, targeting the Indian market, recognized as a significant and expanding source of visitors. Makiko Matsuda Healy, Senior Vice President of Tourism Market Development, emphasised the city's commitment to providing

comprehensive training for industry partners. The refreshed Travel Trade Academy is an online program with six modules, educating participants on key locations across the city's boroughs. Successful completion grants participants the title of "Destination Specialist of New York City," enhancing their ability to cater to evolving consumer demands for diverse and personalised NYC experiences. Webinars, featuring language flexibility and subtitles, complement the self-guided course, ensuring accessibility for a broader audience.

Bahrain to host 9th UNWTO's World Forum on Gastronomy

Bahrain is poised to make history as the inaugural Middle Eastern host of the 9th UNWTO's World Forum on Gastronomy in 2024. This landmark event underscores Bahrain's rich cultural heritage and burgeoning tourism industry, positioning the kingdom as a global hub for gastronomy tourism. The announcement, made during the 8th World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism in San Sebastian, Spain, signifies a significant milestone for Bahrain, showcasing its commitment to fostering international collaboration in gastronomy and tourism. The 2024 forum, scheduled at Exhibition World Bahrain in Sakhir, aims to promote responsible agricultural practices, emphasising the importance of



community preservation and cultural heritage. Participants can anticipate engaging activities, including visits to local producers, culinary classes, and immersion in Bahrain's gourmet excellence. This unique blend of cultural exploration and gastronomic discovery is expected to create an unforgettable experience, contributing to Bahrain's transformative period in 2024 and highlighting its position as a multifaceted and comprehensive travel destination.



Vietnam welcomed 11.2 million foreign tourists in 2023

Vietnam witnessed a notable surge in international tourism, with over 1.2 million foreign visitors, reflecting a 10.9% increase and a remarkable 2.1-fold rise from the same period in the previous year. The Vietnam National Authority of Tourism, operating under the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, highlighted that South Korea maintained

its position as Vietnam's primary source market, contributing 3.2 million arrivals, constituting 28.5% of the total. Looking ahead, the Ministry outlined a target of 12 to 13 million foreign tourists. This robust growth in international tourism underscores Vietnam's appeal as a preferred destination and signals a positive trajectory for the country's tourism sector.

Tourism Australia launches new annual travel list

Tourism Australia joined forces with prominent Australians to introduce its annual travel list, "Australia Recommends: 15 Places to Come & Say G'day in 2024," aimed at inspiring Indian travellers to explore Australia authentically. The destinations featured are derived from Tourism Australia's highly engaging social media posts and endorsed by well-known Australians such as Rose Byrne, King Stingray, Magdalena Roze, and Curtis Stone. Leveraging Tourism Australia's vast social media reach of over 19 million followers globally, the list reflects the destinations that captivate global interest. The collaboration with



Australian personalities, part of Tourism Australia's Friends of Australia advocacy program, ensures that the experiences are genuinely 'Aussie-approved.' Nishant Kashikar, Country Manager – India & Gulf, emphasised the significance of local endorsements, stating that the goal is to spotlight Australia's wonders, encouraging Indians to embrace Aussie way of life.

Kairat Sadvakassov appointed as Kazakh Tourism Chairman

Kazakhstan's government announced the designation of Kairat Sadvakassov as Chairman of the Kazakhstan Tourism Board - Kazakh Tourism National JSC, effective from December 29, 2023. With over 20 years of diverse experience in destination management across public and private sectors and a prestigious degree from New York University, Sadvakassov assumed this role following his tenure as Vice-deputy Chairman at Kazakh Tourism National JSC since 2017. The Board expressed confidence in his capacity to enhance market presence in key source markets such as India, China, Russia, and Germany. Sadvakassov's vision includes innovative initiatives like "Indian Friendly" and



"China Friendly," and the introduction of experiences like "Winter Wonderland Experiences." Galimzhan Seilov, Senior Manager for Business Meetings, emphasised India's significance as a key market, highlighting visa-free travel and increased popularity of Kazakh cities among Indian travellers. The government anticipates Sadvakassov's dynamic leadership to propel the Kazakhstan Tourism Board to new heights and strengthen international ties.

Warner Bros. World™ Abu Dhabi to showcase holiday shows & performances

Warner Bros. World™ Abu Dhabi enchant visitors with the return of its beloved Winter Spectacular. From December 8, 2023, to January 7, 2024, families revelled in a festive atmosphere filled with captivating shows, character meet-and-greets, and joyful performances. Warner Bros. Plaza took center stage, hosting the grandest theatrical production in the



park's history, featuring Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and an ensemble of 50 international singers, dancers, and acrobats in 'The NutQuacker.' This spectacular show, infused with heartwarming moments and accompanied by immersive effects, projection mapping, and festive music, was an unforgettable experience. Cartoon Junction offered a unique holiday treat with Scooby-Doo and The Mystery Inc. ganged in winter attire, while Daffy Duck's Holiday Dance Party invited guests to showcase their moves. Bedrock transformed as The Flintstones greet guests in authentic Stone Age style.

GNTO promotes Christmas markets to Indian travellers

The German National Tourist Office India anticipated welcomed Indian travellers to Germany's highly awaited Christmas markets during the winter. Germany, renowned for its focus on sustainability and offering unique experiences, proves to be an ideal destination for those seeking a memorable holiday season. The Christmas markets, integral to German festive culture, enchant visitors with beautifully adorned stalls, traditional culinary delights, and handcrafted gifts in cities like Berlin, Munich, Cologne, and Frankfurt. Embracing sustainability, Germany aims



to implement eco-friendly practices and promote locally sourced organic goods this year. Beyond the festive villages, travellers could explore a winter wonderland committed to eco-friendly enjoyment, featuring snow walks, torchlight hikes, and shared Christmas traditions.

Nusuk Roadshow observes participation of partners & travel agents

The inaugural roadshow of the Integrated Government Platform "Nusuk" in India, chaired by Minister of Hajj and Umrah Dr. Tawfig AlRabiah, concluded successfully. The event, attended by key representatives from Umrah partners and travel agents, aimed to address challenges and foster collaboration with Indian and Saudi travel and Umrah companies. With a focus on Saudi Vision 2030, the roadshow explored trade opportunities, incentivising the private sector for a seamless

Umrah experience. Over 1000 private sector representatives from both countries attended, acquainting Indian partners with Nusuk's services, streamlining visa processes, accommodations, and flights for pilgrims. Fahd Hamidaddin, Managing Director of Nusuk, emphasised India's importance and commitment to deepening ties with Indian trade partners for bespoke Umrah experiences. The platform aims to enhance accessibility for Indian travellers, simplifying the journey and promoting cultural exploration in Saudi Arabia.



Tourism Seychelles restores normalcy

Seychelles lifted the state of emergency on December 7, demonstrating confidence in restoring normalcy after nearly 12 hours. Authorities emphasised their commitment to proactive control and prioritising safety following the industrial area explosion and landslip/flooding on the main island. Agencies collaborated to ensure the well-being of residents and tourists, with the Tourism Department confirming no harm to tourists. The National Emergency Operation Center, Seychelles Red Cross, and government agencies conducted thorough assessments, assuring Seychelles' safety. Minister Sylvestre Radegonde reassured the public, stating the government's extensive measures and ongoing efforts to address hazards. Emergency services promptly assisted affected areas, and the Tourism Department monitored on-site situations. The Minister thanked industry partners for supporting those affected and pledged regular updates on recovery and safety measures through official channels, expressing confidence in Seychelles rebuilding stronger with community support.



Sri Lanka welcomes more than 1.5 lakhs in 2023

Sri Lanka's tourism revenue surged to \$205.3 million, marking more than a twofold increase compared to November 2022, as per the data presented by Foreign Affairs Minister Ali Sabry in parliament. Anticipating a spike in tourist arrivals in 2024, Minister Sabry cited the influx of additional airlines into the country. November witnessed the highest monthly tourist arrivals in 2023, with 151,496 international visitors,

contributing to the cumulative arrivals of 1.27 million for the first 11 months of the year, as reported by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority. Tourism stands as a key foreign revenue source for Sri Lanka, prompting the government's strategic move in late November to waive visa fees for nationals from China, India, Indonesia, Russia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Japan, aiming to stimulate tourism in the upcoming season.

Curators explore Noor Riyadh 2023 themes in Riyadh

Noor Riyadh commenced its third edition in the Saudi capital Riyadh, dazzling the city with over 120 artworks by 100 artists from 35 countries until December 16. Themed 'The Bright Side of the Desert Moon,' the festival, led by curators Jérôme Sans, Pedro Alonzo, Fahad Bin Naif, and Alaa Tarabzouni, explored light as a unifying force. Spread across five hubs, including King Abdullah Financial District and Salam Park, the festival showcases Riyadh's diverse

landscapes. Mexican curator Pedro Alonzo emphasises Noor Riyadh's uniqueness, prioritising the local public's experience. Reflecting on Riyadh's evolution, French curator Jérôme Sans sees the festival as mirroring the city's rapid transformation. Noor Riyadh aligns with Riyadh Art's mission to create a "gallery without walls," contributing to Saudi Arabia's cultural economy. The third edition follows Riyadh being chosen as the host city for World Expo 2030.



Singapore Tourism partners with Ananya Panday

The Singapore Tourism Board teamed up with Bollywood actress Ananya Panday to present unique and unexpected experiences that are exclusively 'Made in Singapore.' An upcoming 4-episode vlog series featuring Ananya aims to unveil a fresh, exciting, and fun perspective of Singapore, enticing viewers to explore the city. The series will highlight how ordinary experiences are transformed into extraordinary moments in unexpected ways. Expressing her enthusiasm,

Ananya Panday shared her love for traveling and the remarkable experiences she had in Singapore, making it an unforgettable journey. GB Srithar, Regional Director at STB, emphasised Singapore's appeal as a top destination and expressed delight in collaborating with Ananya to showcase the city's renewed experiences. The travel vlog series invites viewers to rediscover passions, reconnect with themselves, and create lasting memories in Singapore's extraordinary offerings.





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SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD APPOINTS MARKUS TAN AS REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR INDIA, MIDDLE EAST, SOUTH ASIA, AND AFRICA

Singapore Tourism Board organised a networking evening in December summarising key highlights from 2023, showcasing Singapore's broader destination story, and outlining differentiated experiences for Indian travellers in 2024.

The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) announced the appointment of Markus Tan as the Regional Director for India, the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa (IMESA), effective January 1, 2024. Based in Mumbai, Tan will lead STB's initiatives to promote both Leisure and Business Travel and Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (BTMICE) in the IMESA region. His role encompasses overseeing travel promotions, public relations, marketing, and driving developmental efforts to elevate Singapore's standing as a premier travel and business destination. With 18 years of dedicated service to STB, Tan brings a wealth of experience to his new role. Previously serving as the Director for the World Expo, he spearheaded the conceptualisation, development, and operation of the Singapore Pavilion at Osaka World Expo 2025. From 2015 to 2022, he held the position of Regional Director for North Asia, based in Tokyo, Japan, where he played a pivotal role in enhancing Singapore's appeal as a destination in Japan and the Republic of Korea. Tan's international experience includes a significant role

in Guangzhou, China, as Area Director, Southern China, and Hong Kong and Macau, where he made substantial contributions to the transformation of these regions into key pillars of Singapore's global tourism success. Having served in various BTMICE-related roles, including Deputy Director, BTMICE Planning & Marketing, Tan possesses a deep understanding of the market. Tan succeeded GB Srithar as Regional Director, who expressed confidence in Tan's ability to navigate Singapore's tourism business across the growing IMESA region. GB Srithar speaking on the leadership handover, said, "I am thrilled to pass on the baton to Markus to lead Singapore's tourism business across the IMESA region. Over the course of my tenure in this role, we have witnessed India's steady growth into a true global powerhouse, with an outbound tourism market that is brimming with opportunities. With his robust expertise in the industry and building on the strong affinity that Indian travellers have for Singapore, I am confident that he is in good stead to steer the organisation through this new era of travel and tourism."

Tan, expressing enthusiasm about his new role, stated, "I am excited to take on the role of STB's Regional Director in IMESA. India is a nation of rich culture, diversity, and, particularly in this historic moment of its explosive global growth, incredible business opportunities."



MEET IN INDIA

INDIA'S MICE REVOLUTION UNVEILED BY AMARESH TIWARI

Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman of ICPB, illuminates the way forward crafting a dynamic tomorrow for India's Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions. Delving into the intricate threads of critical sector MICE, Tiwari unveils strategic initiatives to propel India's MICE industry into the global spotlight, navigating challenges, fostering economic growth, and redefining the nation's role in the international congress arena. Explore the intricate tapestry of goals, from doubling market share post-COVID to envisioning top-tier global rankings, and witness the innovative strategies poised to reshape India's presence on the global MICE stage

By Aanchal Sachdeva

MICE is a crucial aspect of the Indian tourism, travel and hospitality industry and has the potential to generate numerous jobs and significantly contribute to local GDPs of all of our Indian state.

The global MICE industry is estimated to be upwards of \$900 bn and India's share has been estimated to be less than 1% despite the natural and cultural advantages of India and being one of the highest growing economies. MICE sector has the strongest direct correlation to the GDP more than any other tourism sector. Each INR100 spent on MICE in India could have an indirect impact of another INR160. We must target more than 1 lakh crore direct economic and 1.6 lakh crores indirect benefit to all our states.

Thus our first objective post-Covid, in medium term would be to double the MICE share to 2.5% of the world and then doubling it over medium to long term. Our goal is to have 3 Indian cities in the top 100 in the medium term post Covid and 6-10 cities in top 100 in the medium to long term.

We need to recognise MICE tourism as a distinct business segment and create "Meet In India" Brand a sub-brand to the main brand "Incredible India". We need to create a global mice bidding fund with a corpus for ₹ 500 crores to enable our entrepreneurs undertake techno economic bids for events which have a bid cycle of 2 years plus.

Institutional Support for MICE Events

ICPB as bureau acts as an agent, representative, marketer, leader and co-ordinator for MICE Industry. The MOT and MOC will work with states to develop Data Collection and analysis mechanism for MICE Industry.

We also need to incentivise Indian corporates to undertake domestic MICE and to prevent Indian MICE events from going abroad offering a 200% weighted income tax expense benefit to Indian companies which will be beneficial. We need to enable IGST for our hotels which will complete the end to end GST chain. Also our GST rates are one of the highest in the world and to revive we should move immediately to a



commerce, and participation at international MICE trade shows like IMEX Frankfurt, IMEX Las Vegas, IBTM Barcelona, AIME Melbourne, IT&CMA Bangkok and others.

- Release of advertisements in leading International medical / academic journals (New England Journal, The Lancet, The Journal of the American Medical Association and MICE publications (print & digital).
- Welcome dinner & cultural program at prestigious international conferences
- Support of MoT for site inspection of venues by international conference organisers way
- MOT to support fam tours for conference planners inclusive of financial assistance and logistic arrangements
- Permit reception counters at airports to receive international delegates arriving for MICE

“ We need to create city convention bureaus in each of our main cities which will work with ICPB as their hub to carry out a global bidding activity. In order to achieve this, Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Commerce need to work together with India Convention Promotion Bureau as National Convention Bureau. Secretariat of ICPB should be strengthen to handle the pressure of NCB and fund should be allocated for Bidding, Research and Marketing

12% GST rate for all MICE related events with full set offs and gradually to below 10% in the medium term with full set offs.

Of the Special Tourism Zones being planned by tourism ministry we look forward to a mega tourism zone which should be fully integrated world class MICE city.

India Convention Promotion Bureau recommends "INDIA MICE BOARD"

- Focused marketing of India as a preferred MICE destination through allocation of budget in Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of

- Allowing free entry of delegates at ASI monuments as a part of pre and post conference tours
- Permitting one event per international conference at an iconic outdoor venue like ASI monuments in different cities
- MOT to request all Central Government Ministries to bring one international congress to India
- iMICE to be organised professionally under ICPB annually to showcase MICE assets of India to potential global buyers

KALEIDOSCOPIC KERALA

*Captivating Culture and
Coastal Charms*

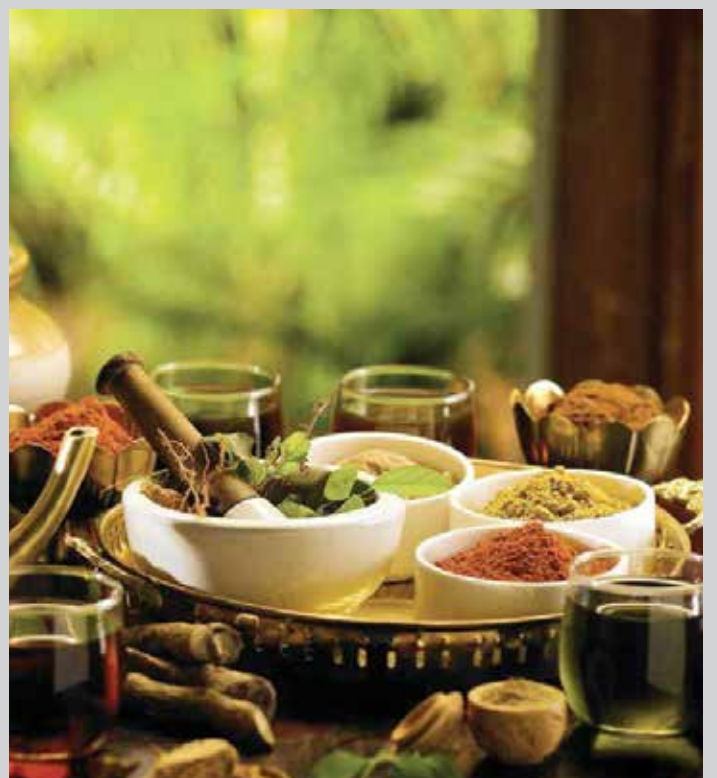
BREATHTAKING BACKWATERS

Renowned for its enchanting backwaters, Kerala cradles serene lakes, canals, and rivers. A houseboat journey through these tranquil waters promises a unique, peaceful experience, immersing visitors in the pure beauty of nature. This network of liquid serenity unveils a captivating tapestry, inviting all to unwind amid Kerala's breathtaking landscapes.



AYURVEDIC WELLNESS

In the heart of Kerala, Ayurveda thrives as an ancient beacon of natural healing. This vibrant hub invites visitors to delve into rejuvenating Ayurvedic treatments, offering a sanctuary for those in pursuit of holistic well-being and relaxation. In this tranquil haven, centuries-old wisdom and therapeutic practices intertwine, promising a transformative journey towards balance and vitality.



Nestled in the lush embrace of southwestern India, Kerala is a land where nature weaves its magic in vibrant hues. Known as "God's Own Country," this coastal gem is a canvas of emerald backwaters, golden beaches, and swaying coconut palms. Rich in cultural tapestry, Kerala hosts traditional festivals and captivating dances like Kathakali. Beyond its visual splendour, Kerala invites seekers of tranquillity with serene backwaters and Ayurvedic wellness. Here, simplicity dances hand in hand with nature's grandeur, offering a sensory symphony that captures the essence of a place where every sunrise brings a new chapter in this captivating tale. Welcome to Kerala, a treasure trove of simplicity and natural splendour

By Ananya Trivedi

EXOTIC INDIA

KERALA'S ETHEREAL ESCAPES

Cradled in the embrace of the Western Ghats, Kerala harbours enchanting hill stations such as Munnar and Wayanad. These havens showcase sprawling tea and spice plantations, hills veiled in mist, and a refreshing climate—forming an idyllic sanctuary for nature enthusiasts and those seeking adventure amidst the scenic beauty of these elevated landscapes.



COASTAL CULINARY ODYSSEY

Kerala's cuisine is a delightful fusion of flavours, combining aromatic spices with fresh ingredients. The state is famous for its seafood, coconut-based dishes, and a variety of vegetarian options. The traditional Sadhya, a feast served on a banana leaf, and the spicy delicacies like Kerala biryani are must-try culinary experiences.



TIMELESS TRADITION

Embodied in vibrant cultural expressions such as Kathakali and Mohiniyattam, Kerala showcases a lively heritage. Its tapestry is woven with colourful festivals and time-honoured rituals, each thread narrating a story of history and diversity. The state's cultural richness is a dynamic portrait, reflecting the essence of its traditions that continue to thrive and enchant through the ages.

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GREECE



TANZANIA



SOUTH AFRICA



KENYA

AFRICA FOREVER

QATAR

PEARL OF ARABIA

Where traditions meet tomorrow's timeless splendour

A jewel of the Gulf, Qatar emerges as a captivating tapestry of modernity and tradition, where the golden sands of its expansive deserts meet the shimmering skyline of futuristic architecture. Nestled on the Arabian Peninsula, this nation seamlessly blends ancient heritage with cutting-edge innovation. Doha, its pulsating capital, stands tall with iconic landmarks like the futuristic skyscrapers of West Bay and the cultural treasures of Souq Waqif. Qatar's rich tapestry is woven with a deep appreciation for arts, sports, and hospitality, making it a vibrant mosaic where history whispers through the wind and the promise of tomorrow echoes in every sunset

By Ananya Trivedi





COASTAL BLISS AT KATARA BEACH

Katara Beach, a serene coastal haven in Doha, unfolds as a sun-kissed paradise along the Arabian Gulf. Ivory sands stretch beneath azure skies, inviting leisurely strolls or blissful relaxation. For adventure enthusiasts this beach, offers diverse range of activities like water skiing, kayaking, parasailing, wakeboarding and more. The rhythmic waves serenade, while iconic skyline views paint the backdrop. Katara Beach is where tranquillity dances with urban elegance, creating a coastal masterpiece in Qatar.

TIMELESS TREASURES AT THE MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART

Located along Doha's waterfront, the Museum of Islamic Art stands as an architectural masterpiece and guardian of centuries-old treasures. Majestic arches frame a collection that spans Islamic civilizations, weaving stories through intricate artefacts. This cultural sanctuary invites exploration, where art and history converge, casting a timeless spell that resonates through the corridors of Islamic creativity.



GLOBETROTTER



SKYLINE TRANQUILITY WITH DOHA CORNICHE

Doha Corniche, a picturesque waterfront promenade, unfolds as a vibrant tapestry of urban charm along the sparkling Arabian Gulf. Walk through palm-fringed esplanade, embracing breathtaking views of the city skyline. This iconic stretch invites leisurely moments, where sea breezes mingle with the energy of Doha, creating an unforgettable fusion of serenity and modern allure.



CULINARY MOSAIC

Qatar's culinary scene is a delightful fusion of Middle Eastern flavours and international influences. From succulent kebabs and aromatic biryanis to contemporary gourmet creations, the diverse palate caters to every taste. Explore traditional Qatari dishes like machboos and indulge in luxurious dining experiences, embodying a gastronomic journey that mirrors the nation's rich cultural tapestry.



SANDSATIONAL THRILLS

Embark on an adrenaline-charged odyssey amidst Qatar's mesmerising sandscapes. Dune Bashing in the Desert is a wild ride where sleek 4x4s conquer towering golden dunes, creating a heart-pounding symphony of roars. Feel the exhilarating rush as one surfs the sands, leaving a trail of excitement in the vast, sun-kissed expanse. Adventure awaits in every rise and fall.



BUSTLING BAZAAR: SOUQ WAQIF

Scented spices, vibrant textiles, and the hum of commerce converge in Souq Waqif, an enchanting marketplace in the heart of Doha. This living testament to Qatari heritage exudes authenticity with its historic charm and bustling stalls. Explore winding alleys, discovering treasures that unveil the soulful spirit and timeless allure of this vibrant Arabian market.



LUXURY OASIS AT PEARL QATAR

The Pearl-Qatar, a man-made marvel in Doha, beckons with an opulent tapestry of modern living. This luxurious island sanctuary seamlessly blends upscale residences, high-end shopping, and waterfront elegance. Stroll along pristine marinas, indulge in gourmet delights, and witness the fusion of Arabian charm with contemporary sophistication, defining The Pearl as the epitome of Qatar's exclusive cosmopolitan lifestyle.

A person is rock climbing a large, overhanging rock formation. The climber is silhouetted against a bright, golden sunset sky. The climber is wearing a blue shirt, dark pants, and a helmet, and is using ropes and gear. The background shows a desert landscape with other rock formations under the same sunset light.

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CHAMPIONS ★ OF THAILAND 2 ★

TAT AND TRAVELBULLZ

IGNITING EXCITEMENT IN NORTH AND EAST INDIA

Following the resounding success of the Champions of Thailand Promotion in May 2023, the Tourism Authority of Thailand, in collaboration with TravelBullz, responded to popular demand by relaunching a captivating campaign in December 2023. The initial edition of Champions witnessed the participation of over 20 top sellers from India's leading travel agents and tour operators, embarking on an Incentive FAM trip to explore the vibrant landscapes of Thailand. This immersive experience not only celebrated the achievements of the industry leaders but also laid the foundation for a renewed focus on promoting Thailand as a premier destination. The campaign strategically centres on showcasing the allure of Thailand while driving bookings and engagement, particularly on niche products that embody the rich tapestry of the country's offerings. 'Champions of Thailand 2' marks a deliberate effort to target travel agents in North and East India exclusively, aiming to capture a significant market share and elevate the promotion of Thailand Holidays and experiences in these regions. The collaboration between TravelBullz and the Tourism Authority of Thailand has proven immensely successful in the past, with a remarkable response to the earlier edition. Anticipating a surge in demand and bookings, the primary objective remains to create awareness and generate incremental business for Thailand within the holiday and leisure segment from India. The relaunch of 'Champions of Thailand 2' is a strategic move to specifically engage travel agents from North and East India. This geographical focus aligns with the broader goal of expanding Thailand's appeal and attracting more visitors from these regions.

Organised by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and TravelBullz at its New Delhi Office in conjunction with TravelBullz, this exclusive campaign is open solely to travel agents residing in North and East



India. The emphasis on these regions reflects a targeted approach to tailor the campaign to the preferences and interests of travellers from these areas. The selection process for the 'Champions of Thailand 2' winners will be conducted through a lucky draw, with the campaign taking place at the TAT New Delhi Office. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), India, in collaboration with TravelBullz, will oversee the selection process, ensuring fairness and transparency. The stakes for the winners are enticing, with a minimum of five lucky agents winning a 4-night familiarisation (FAM) trip to Thailand. It is an all-inclusive FAM trip for the winners. However, the hotel & land arrangements as well as the air tickets will be jointly hosted by Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and TravelBullz, enhancing the allure of this rewarding experience.

'Champions of Thailand 2' stands as a testament to the successful synergy between the Tourism Authority of Thailand and TravelBullz. By targeting specific regions and engaging travel agents, the campaign not only aims to create awareness but also seeks to foster a deep appreciation for the diverse offerings of Thailand, ultimately driving incremental business and establishing the country as a premier holiday destination for travellers from North and East India.



K.D.SINGH
Founder & President TravelBullz



Siriges-a-nong Trirattanasongpol
Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand
(TAT) New Delhi Office

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PUNJAB'S GLOBAL RISE: TOURISM TRIUMPHS AHEAD

2024 LIFESTYLE GAME-CHANGERS, UNVEILING TOMORROW'S TRENDS

Embarking on a transformative journey, Punjab's tourism sector, under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister S. Bhagwant Singh Mann, is set to redefine adventure tourism. **Rakhee Gupta Bhandari, IAS-Principal Secretary Tourism & Cultural Affairs, Govt of Punjab** shares pioneering policies and global recognitions to cultural celebrations, to show how Punjab is gearing up to be the adventure and cultural hub of 2024.

Strategies to shape Punjab Tourism 2024

Punjab hosted its first Tourism Summit and Travel Mart which will go on to be a key determinant of its tourism landscape both on the demand and supply end, and posed the most significant challenge the state has dealt with in this sector post the covid-slowdown. The stakeholders in the tourism value and service delivery chain were onboarded and sensitised about the challenges the state faces in domestic and international markets. Three months into the aftermath of the Summit, we can state with certitude that it has been a resounding success.

The year of strong deliberation has thus managed to narrow down the state's priorities as 'Sustainability' and 'Responsible Tourism', aligning with global environmental concerns. The region intends to invest in eco-friendly initiatives while engaging its cultural and natural assets as part of a Sustainable Tourism approach.

Digital marketing and personalised customer experiences can also be



Rakhee Gupta Bhandari, IAS-Principal Secretary Tourism & Cultural Affairs, Govt of Punjab

prioritised, recognising the significance of staying connected with travellers in an increasingly online world.

Travel Sector Projections 2024

As we step into 2024, several emerging trends are likely to significantly impact Punjab's tourism sector. Firstly, the continued integration of technology will demand a robust online presence, encouraging Punjab to invest in user-friendly platforms, virtual experiences, and innovative digital marketing strategies. This shift aligns with the global trend of personalised and contactless travel experiences.

Sustainability will remain a key focus, with Punjab embracing eco-friendly initiatives, promoting responsible tourism, and showcasing its cultural and natural heritage. This commitment to environmental consciousness responds to the growing demand for green travel options and aligns with lessons learned from global challenges.

Punjab tourism shall prioritise the regional focus on local and authentic experiences which will continue to flourish, with collaborations between the tourism industry and local businesses fostering community engagement and economic growth.

Additionally, niche and experiential tourism are key focus areas for Punjab in the years to come, as evidenced by its policy concentration too. Wellness, Water and Adventure Tourism are all recognised as significant industry shifts, with more investors and stakeholders sensitised about the potential for the same in Punjab.

By combining innovation, cultural preservation, and a commitment to responsible tourism, Punjab can navigate the evolving landscape and position itself as a resilient and sought-after travel destination in 2024.

Punjab's Adventure Lifestyle: 2024's Next Big Trend

In a groundbreaking move to propel Punjab into the forefront of adventure tourism, the state government has unveiled the Punjab Adventure Tourism Policy

2023. This visionary initiative aims to capitalise on Punjab's diverse topography, including the foothills of the Shivalik Range, wetlands, forests, and rivers, offering a playground for adrenaline enthusiasts. Activities such as rappelling, river crossing, ziplining, forest walks, camping, hot air ballooning, helicopter rides, bungee jumping, and water sports are set to transform picturesque locations like Chamrour, Phangota, Thana Dam, Chohal Dam, and Siswan Dam into must-visit destinations.

As for Punjab's broader tourism vision showcased at the Punjab Tourism Summit and Travel Mart held in SAS Nagar Mohali, the event witnessed a record turnout of over 2000 delegates.

Moreover, Punjab's commitment to celebrating its rich cultural heritage through 24 fairs and festivals throughout the year showcases a unique blend of adventure and tradition. The Rangla Punjab festival in Amritsar, scheduled for January, promises to be a cultural extravaganza, featuring delicious Punjabi cuisine, vibrant cultural performances, and displays of local arts and crafts.

Punjab's Tourism made an indelible mark on 15th Convention at the Adventure Tourism Association of India's (ATOAI) held in Gujarat from December 7-19, 2023. A moment of pride arrived as Punjab was recognised by the Adventure Tourism Association of India (ATOAI) as the "FRIEND OF ADVENTURE" State.



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SriLankan Airlines doubles daily flights to Mumbai

SriLankan Airlines expanded its services between Colombo and Mumbai, offering double daily flights. This initiative aimed to enhance convenience for travellers commuting between India's financial hub and Sri Lanka. The introduction of two additional flights, UL 142 and UL 144 departing from Mumbai to Colombo at 3:10hrs and 20:45hrs, respectively, and UL 141 and UL 143 departing from Colombo to Mumbai at 23:45hrs and 17:10hrs, respectively, represents a 50% capacity boost on the Mumbai route. This augmentation not only reinforces SriLankan's presence in India but also provides passengers with increased options for connecting flights to popular destinations in the Far East, Europe, and Australia. Dimuthu Tennakoon, Head of Worldwide Sales and Distribution at SriLankan Airlines, emphasised the airline's commitment to the Indian market, coinciding with Sri Lanka's introduction of free visas for Indian visitors, with the hope of encouraging more travellers from Mumbai to explore the vibrant destination.

Vistara introduces direct flights between Delhi and Bali

Vistara advances global connectivity by launching direct services between Delhi and Bali and introducing Mumbai-Doha flights. The daily non-stop flights between Delhi and Bali, operated on Vistara's A321LR aircraft, offer exclusive direct connectivity, enhancing the travel experience with three-class seating, in-seat power, advanced In-Flight Entertainment (IFE), live TV, and onboard Wi-Fi. The inaugural flight on December 1, 2023, signified Vistara's commitment to meeting diverse customer needs in both leisure and corporate travel. Additionally, Vistara expanded its network with the introduction of



Mumbai-Doha direct flights from December 15, 2023, utilising the A321 neo aircraft, marking the airline's 50th destination and reinforcing its presence in the Gulf region. Vinod Kannan, Vistara's CEO, emphasised the airline's excitement about being the sole provider of direct connectivity between Delhi and Bali.

Jazeera Airways unveils new social media platforms

Jazeera Airways organised an event in Mumbai to officially unveil its new social media platforms for India. Andrew Ward, Vice President of Marketing and Customer Experience, emphasised the centrality of social media and influencer partnerships in Jazeera's marketing strategy. The launch of Jazeera India Facebook and Jazeera India Instagram underscored the airline's commitment to engaging with influencers, customers, and trade partners through locally relevant content. Romana Parvi, Regional Manager-South Asia, expressed gratitude to loyal

travel agents and outlined Jazeera's vision for expansion to new destinations and additional Indian gateways. Jazeera Airways, connecting India to 64 global destinations, has prioritised affordability, safety, and comfort. The airline, with a fleet of 22 aircraft, welcomed sustainability measures, including eco-friendly in-flight food service ware, contributing to a net-zero emissions goal by 2050. Despite challenges such as overcapacity, Jazeera eyes growth in 2024 with plans for new initiatives and destinations in countries like Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Eastern Europe.



Marriott and Singapore Airlines elevate partnership benefits

Marriott International and Singapore Airlines (SIA) strengthened their strategic partnership, offering enhanced benefits for members of Marriott Bonvoy and KrisFlyer. Eligible members enjoy a status match, receiving elite status according to the tiers of both programs. This expansion builds on the two-way points and miles transfer benefits announced in January 2023, allowing conversion of Marriott Bonvoy

points into KrisFlyer miles and vice versa. Marriott Bonvoy Elite members can accelerate KrisFlyer membership upgrades with just a few SIA flights, and KrisFlyer members can achieve an accelerated status match with Marriott Bonvoy through qualifying hotel stays. Exclusive promotions will be launched periodically, providing members with opportunities to earn both miles and points through hotel stays and flights.





Cathay Pacific with Axis Bank to offer travel rewards

Cathay Pacific collaborated with Axis Bank, a major private sector bank in India, to provide an instant INR 4,000 discount on online ticket bookings via Cathay's official website using Axis debit or credit cards. The exclusive discount code "CXAXIS4000" is applicable for all travellers departing from India (Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, and Chennai). Cathay members also received a bonus of 1,000 miles on bookings, limited to the first 250 eligible bookings. Axis Bank extends support

with exclusive travel offers on the Multi-Currency Forex card, applicable to non-members as well. This partnership ensures added benefits such as zero issuance fee for online applications, discounts on initial card loads for select currencies, and redemption post-flight booking completion. Valid from December 31, 2023, for travel until December 31, 2024, the collaboration aims to enhance the overall travel experience for customers of both Cathay Pacific and Axis Bank.

Vietjet expands into Indochina routes

Vietjet is expanding into Indochina with new routes connecting Ho Chi Minh City to Vientiane and Hanoi to Siem Reap. Commencing on February 25, 2024, the Ho Chi Minh City-Vientiane route will operate four weekly flights, reducing travel time to 1 hour 45 minutes. The Hanoi-Siem Reap route, inaugurated with seven return flights weekly, enhances connectivity between the capitals of Vietnam and Cambodia. This expansion aims to provide affordable

and seamless travel options, encouraging exploration of the rich cultural tapestry of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. To mark Vietjet's birthday, passengers who booked from December 18 to December 24, 2023, could enjoy e-vouchers worth up to VND 1,000,000. Additionally, Vietjet offers complimentary Sky Care insurance and a points program for gift redemption. With around 450 daily flights across 125 routes, including India, Vietjet maintains a robust international network spanning Asia and Australia.



Turkish Airlines unveils major airbus fleet expansion

Turkish Airlines took a monumental step in its expansion strategy, announcing the acquisition of an impressive fleet comprising 355 cutting-edge Airbus aircraft. The substantial investment includes 250 sought-after A321s and 105 highly efficient A350 widebody aircraft. The order includes 60 firm A350-900 orders, 20 A350-900 purchase rights, 15 firm A350-1000 orders, and 5 firm A350-Freighter orders, along with 5 purchase rights. Turkish Airlines aims to

strengthen its position as a global leader with one of the most extensive flight networks, connecting Türkiye to diverse destinations. The fleet expansion aligns with the airline's vision for sustainable growth and reinforces its role as an aviation hub. The Chairman of the Board, Prof. Dr. Ahmet Bolat, emphasised the order's significance in enhancing operational capabilities, achieving environmental goals, and contributing to Türkiye's prominence in aviation.



Air India unveils India's first Airbus A350

Air India celebrated the arrival of its first Airbus A350-900 aircraft, registered VT-JRA, signalling a pivotal moment in the airline's transformative journey. The aircraft, adorned with a bold new livery, made its way from Toulouse, France, to New Delhi. Air India proudly becomes the first Indian airline to operate the A350, with Senior Commander Capt. Monika Batra Vaidya, one of the inaugural Indian pilots trained on the A350, onboard as an observer. Campbell Wilson, CEO & MD of Air India, highlighted the A350's role in the airline's resurgence, offering



world-class long-haul travel experiences and contributing to sustainability goals. Commercial operations are set to commence in January 2024, feature a three-class cabin configuration and cutting-edge amenities. The A350 arrival aligns with Air India's recent global brand identity rollout showcasing excellence in aviation.

ON THE MOVE



MEENAKSHI PRABHAKAR

APPOINTED AT: The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences

PROMOTED TO: Director - Human Resources

The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences appointed Meenakshi Prabhakar as the Human Resources Director. With 31 years of HR expertise, she brings invaluable insights. Meenakshi armed with a strong skill set, is poised to play a crucial role in enhancing HR strategies across The Leela Family.



STUART DE SAN NICOLAS

APPOINTED AT: Minor Hotels Properties in the Maldives

PROMOTED TO: Cluster General Manager
Stuart De San Nicolas appointed as Cluster General Manager for Anantara Kihavah Maldives Villas, Avani+ Fares Resort, and NH Collection Maldives Havodda. With 30 years of global hospitality experience, he brings leadership from esteemed properties and a commitment to elevating guest experiences.



VAIBHAV GUPTA

APPOINTED AT: The Astor Goa

PROMOTED TO: General Manager
The Astor Goa proudly appointed Vaibhav Gupta as the new General Manager, leveraging his 18 years of global hotel operations expertise. A seasoned professional from prestigious brands like Oberoi, Accor, Radisson, Shangri-La, and The Oberoi, he excels in guest service, operational efficiency, and cost-saving measures.



VIKAS NAGAR

APPOINTED AT: Pilibhit House - IHCL SeleQtions,

PROMOTED TO: Hotel Manager

Vikas Nagar has been appointed as Hotel Manager at Pilibhit House - IHCL SeleQtions, Haridwar, showcasing 18 years of luxury hospitality expertise. Renowned for strategic vision and adept leadership, Vikas will oversee hotel operations, emphasising Taj's renowned warmth and hospitality.



MANALI KHATAVKAR

APPOINTED AT: Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach & The Bheemili Resort

PROMOTED TO : Marketing and Communications Manager
Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach and The Bheemili Resort announced Manali KhataVKar as the Marketing & Communications Manager. Her expertise in marketing, digital strategies, and PR aligns with the hotels' objectives, ensuring excellence & unparalleled guest experiences.



MOHD AAMIR

APPOINTED AT : ZANA – Luxury Escapes and Country Inn Hotels & Resorts

PROMOTED TO: Head – Revenue and E-distribution

Espire Hospitality Group announced Mohd Aamir as Head of Revenue and E-distribution, leveraging his 15+ years of expertise with brands like MakeMyTrip, Agoda, Bloom Hotel Group, and Lebua Hotels. In this role, Aamir will spearhead strategic initiatives for revenue optimisation and e-distribution channels.



JOHN RAFFOUL

APPOINTED AT: Cheval Maison – The Palm Dubai

PROMOTED TO : General Manager

John Raffoul assumed the role of General Manager at Cheval Maison – The Palm Dubai, a serviced apartments property on Palm Jumeirah. Joining during a period of exceeding expectations since its April launch, Raffoul, recognised in Hotelier Middle East Awards, is set to leverage his expertise to enhance the property and create exceptional experiences.



MIELLE BATLIWALA

APPOINTED AT: Sarovar Hotels & Resorts

PROMOTED TO: The Assistant Vice President - Human Resources
Mielle Batliwala joins Sarovar Hotels & Resorts as Assistant Vice President, Human Resources, bringing over two decades of HR expertise, with Marriott International. She will oversee talent management, employee relations, compensation, and performance across the group. Mielle, recognised for her achievements, also engages in philanthropy.



NIKHIL MALHOTRA

APPOINTED AT: Novotel & Ibis Chennai OMR and Novotel Chennai Sipcot

PROMOTED TO: Director of Sales & Marketing

Nikhil Malhotra appointed as Director of Sales at Ibis New Delhi Airport and Ibis Jaipur Civil Lines and has previously worked with Hyatt Hotels Corporation, The Zuri Hotels, Alila Hotels, and The Leela. His tenure with Accor includes roles at Novotel Kolkata Hotel & Residences and spearheading sales at ibis Kolkata Rajarhat.



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