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Travel Scapes

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Varun Malhotra
Publisher & CEO

Dear Readers,

Following the resounding success of our recent Versatile Excellence Travel Awards (VETA), we are thrilled to announce our upcoming grand networking event scheduled during the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024 in Dubai. As we continue to push the boundaries of excellence in travel trade media, we are committed to delivering top-notch content, events, and awards that mirror the industry's ever-evolving landscape and spark creativity and innovation.

Our mission is to expand our footprint and influence on a global scale by fostering strategic partnerships and alliances that allow us to reach new audiences and magnify our impact. With the rapid growth of MICE tourism in recent years, we have something exciting in store that promises to revolutionise the emerging MICE industry.

Both domestically and internationally, the MICE sector is experiencing a significant upsurge, and we eagerly anticipate ATM as a pivotal platform for further growth and collaboration within the industry. We are confident that our participation will yield fruitful outcomes for all involved.

Moreover, we are delighted to showcase outbound destinations, with Taiwan capturing our attention with its captivating offerings. Our feature on Taiwan aims to provide readers with an in-depth look at this remarkable destination.

Furthermore, Indian states are seizing the opportunity to showcase their offerings globally through platforms like ATMs. Concurrently, the Great Indian Travel Bazaar (GITB) promises to captivate industry professionals with the timeless allure of Rajasthan. We are excited to highlight the critical attractions of Rajasthan, showcasing its regal charm and cultural richness.

We aim to bring-forth more exciting and innovative initiatives by Versatile Media!

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

Happy reading!

Varun Malhotra

TravelScapes

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As the curtains rise on the much-anticipated Great India Travel Bazaar (GITB) 2024, Rajasthan Tourism is poised to charm visitors with its vibrant culture, heritage, and hospitality. According to Daleep Singh Rathore, Deputy Director of Tourism, Govt of Rajasthan



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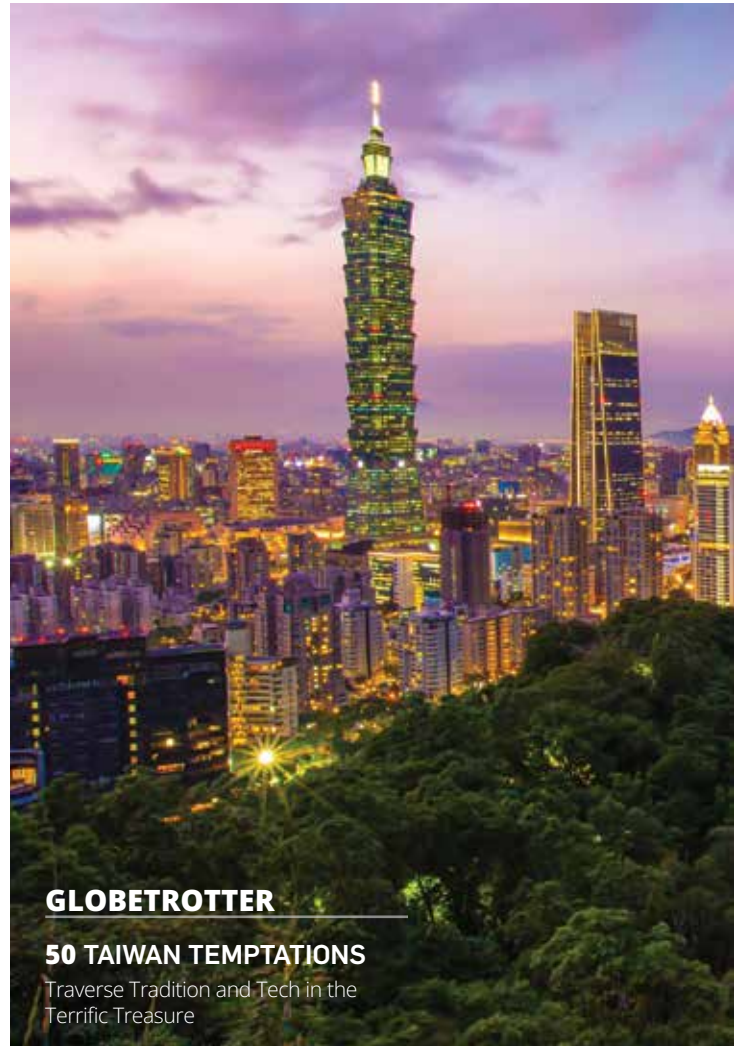
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Palace on Wheels to introduce destination weddings

Rajasthan Tourism

Department is innovating to promote destination weddings, with the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC) paving the way for Palace on Wheels to host such events. The iconic train, renowned for its luxury, will soon offer couples the opportunity to exchange vows on board, with the option of pre- and post-wedding photoshoots.

Deputy Chief Minister of Tourism Diya Kumari highlighted the significant growth potential of this decision, envisioning a surge in destination weddings in Rajasthan. Beyond enhancing the allure of Rajasthani culture and Vedic traditions, hosting weddings aboard the Palace on Wheels will also attract foreign tourists, serving as cultural ambassadors for Rajasthan and India.

Rajasthan, with its majestic forts and palaces, has long been a magnet for couples seeking a regal wedding backdrop. However, the potential of this state for destination weddings is yet to be fully realized. Despite boasting over 120 forts, palaces, and havelis, only a fraction of them currently host such events, leaving ample room for growth in this lucrative segment.

Rajasthan's allure for destination weddings extends beyond national borders, with celebrities and even Hollywood stars flocking to the state for their fairy-tale celebrations. The opulent ambience of Rajasthan's forts and mansions infuses weddings with a royal charm, creating unforgettable experiences reminiscent of tales of yore.

'Karnataka Tourism Society' hosts inaugural B2B Meet

The inaugural edition of Destination Showcase Events, organised by the Karnataka Tourism Society, occurred in Bengaluru on March 26, 2024. D Venkatesan, Regional Director for Southern India at India Tourism, inaugurated the event, joined by esteemed guests, including Mohd Farouk, Director of India Tourism in Bengaluru; Janardhan, Joint Director of Karnataka Tourism; and Yuvaraj, General Manager of Jungle Lodges and Resorts.

For the first time, the spotlight was on Chikmagalur and Sakleshpur, two picturesque destinations nestled in the lush Western Ghats of Karnataka, as the exclusive themes of the B2B Tourism Showcase. The event aimed to introduce industry professionals and stakeholders to the untapped potential of these Coffee Tourism destinations, unveiling their rich cultural heritage, breathtaking landscapes, and diverse offerings.

The KTS 'Chikmagalur and Sakleshpur Tourism Showcase' facilitated collaboration, networking, and partnerships while emphasising sustainable tourism practices and community engagement.



K Syamaraju, President of Karnataka Tourism Society, expressed, "This showcase offers a unique opportunity for travel agents, tour operators, hospitality professionals, and other stakeholders to explore the hidden treasures of Chikmagalur and Sakleshpur. By uniting industry leaders and highlighting the distinct offerings of our regions, we aim to unlock their full potential and drive sustainable growth."

In addition to immersing themselves in the scenic wonders of Chikmagalur and Sakleshpur, delegates had the chance to interact with leading hotels and resorts, sample authentic cuisine, and network. The event featured 24 prominent properties, making it a pivotal tourism promotion activity for the destination.

UP Tourism to host 6th Uttar Pradesh Travel Mart

The Government of Uttar Pradesh's Department of Tourism, in partnership with FICCI, announced the 6th edition of the Uttar Pradesh Travel Mart (UPTM) to be held from April 25 to 29, 2024, in Gorakhpur (UP).

A Curtain Raiser event, including a joint Press Conference, occurred at The Taj Mahal Hotel in Lucknow on March 12. Key dignitaries participated, including Jaiveer Singh, Minister of Tourism & Culture of Uttar Pradesh; Mukesh Kumar Meshram, Principal Secretary and DG Tourism-GoUP; Prakhar Mishra, Director of Tourism; and Prateek Hira, Chair of FICCI's Tourism Committee.

Minister Jaiveer Singh expressed the state's ambition to become a leading destination for foreign tourist arrivals, leveraging its top position in domestic tourism. He emphasised Uttar Pradesh's safety for tourists and highlighted its unparalleled infrastructure.



Mukesh Kr. Meshram elaborated on the state's efforts in leveraging heritage sites and the success of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model for tourism development. He emphasised the importance of showcasing Uttar Pradesh to the world and harnessing the power of tourism through UPTM, highlighting the inclusive benefits of UP Tourism's Policy.

Prateek Hira, FICCI's Tourism Committee Chairman, provided insights into the upcoming event, which will host over 150 delegates worldwide, including Foreign Tour Operators, Domestic Operators, Travel Writers, and Bloggers. Hira highlighted plans for familiarisation trips to the state's Buddhist and Eco-Tourism sites, including Ayodhya, and outlined interactive sessions and B2B meetings during the Travel Mart. Hira emphasised FICCI's expertise in organising successful travel marts across India and highlighted the importance of the 6th UPTM in revitalising tourism in Uttar Pradesh post-pandemic.

Prakhar Misra, Director of Tourism of Uttar Pradesh, thanked the stakeholders and called for full support from the trade for a successful UPTM, scheduled to be held in Gorakhpur from April 25 to 29, 2024, in proximity to Kushinagar.

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Goa Tourism partners with FLY91 for sustainable travel

In collaboration with FLY91, a regional airline based in Goa, Goa Tourism signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote sustainable travel and regenerative tourism. This partnership highlights Goa's rich culture, heritage, wellness retreats, adventure tourism, and spiritual destinations across various platforms. Under the MoU, FLY91 pledged to support and promote the tourism priorities outlined by the Department of Tourism, Government of Goa. This includes promoting domestic and inbound tourism to Goa, organising activities to further sustainable tourism in the state, and bolstering the

government's initiatives to empower hospitality businesses. The State Department of Tourism, led by Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte, aims to transform Goa into a year-round travel destination beyond its beaches. Through partnerships like the one with FLY91, Goa seeks to attract high-end tourists seeking diverse and quality travel experiences. Suneel Anchipaka, IAS, Director of Tourism and Managing Director of Goa Tourism Development Corporation, highlighted the state's commitment to developing world-class infrastructure and promoting immersive travel experiences.

Asia's largest Tulip Garden to open in Srinagar

The opening of Asia's largest Tulip Garden in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, was anticipated on March 23, as reviewed by VK Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner (Kashmir). Officials from tourism, traffic, floriculture, and the municipal corporation attended the meeting and extensively discussed the arrangements for the grand opening. This year, the Tulip Garden, nestled at the foothills of Zabarwan Hills, is expected to showcase a spectacular display of 1.7 million flowers of various varieties.

The Div Com emphasised the

importance of facilitating online ticketing and implementing QR Code scanning facilities at different points for the convenience of tourists. Furthermore, he stressed using colourful lighting arrangements to enhance the garden's visual appeal. Sanitation and cleanliness were also prioritised, with the Srinagar Municipal Corporation tasked with conducting thorough cleaning drives and ensuring the provision of separate mobile toilet facilities.

Additionally, road repairs leading to the garden were instructed to ensure smooth access for visitors.



MP included in six Heritage Sites in UNESCO's Tentative List

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav took to social media to announce the joyous news of six significant heritage sites from the state making it to UNESCO's tentative list. Among the sites recognised are the majestic Gwalior Fort, the historic ensemble of Dhamnar, the revered Bhojeshwar Mahadev Temple, the captivating Rock Art Sites of Chambal Valley, the intriguing Khooni Bhandara in Burhanpur, and the sacred God Memorial of Ramnagar in Mandla.

Highlighting the journey towards recognition, Municipal Corporation Commissioner Sandeep Srivastava shared insights into the meticulous efforts undertaken since 2010 to bring the underground wonder of Khooni Bhandara to UNESCO's attention. After a thorough

inspection by a UNESCO team in 2013, necessary improvements were made, and an action plan was devised by the district administration, municipal corporation, and state government to ensure top-notch facilities for domestic and international visitors and researchers.

Reflecting on the achievement, BJP MLA Archana Chitnis expressed pride in Burhanpur's historical Khooni Bhandara gaining global recognition. She recounted the concerted efforts since 2006, emphasising the recent strides, including constructing an approach road and a railway overbridge to address infrastructure needs. Chitnis emphasised the need for Khooni Bhandara's permanent listing and the forthcoming action plan to cater to the influx of tourists and researchers, both local and international.

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交通部觀光署
Tourism Administration, MOTC

J&K approves new Film Policy to foster cinematic creativity

In a bid to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a flourishing centre of cinematic innovation, the J&K Administrative Council (AC), chaired by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, greenlit the Jammu and Kashmir Film Policy-2024 during a meeting.

The spokesperson highlighted that this policy aims to elevate J&K as a nucleus of cinematic creativity and productivity, supplanting the existing J&K Film Policy-2021. Key provisions of the new policy include expeditious administrative support, the establishment of single-window cells for streamlined processes, facilitation of film shooting permits, financial assistance packages, and the promotion of both governmental and non-governmental entities involved in cinema publicity. Furthermore, there's a concerted effort to develop a nationally competitive filmmaking infrastructure.

Additionally, the policy outlines establishing crucial bodies such as the Film Development Council, J&K Film Division, Script Screening Committee, Divisional Location Permission Committee, Film Development Fund, and mechanisms for branding and promoting activities through film festivals.

The spokesperson emphasised that films, TV serials, and web series seeking subsidies must adhere to a minimum shooting duration of 20 days per the new policy's guidelines. Furthermore, the criteria for subsidy claims have been clearly defined. Notably, the maximum subsidy for regional language productions in J&K stands at Rs 1.25 crores, as specified in the policy.



Historic surge in tourist numbers at Assam's Kaziranga National Park

Assam's Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR), renowned for its unparalleled population of one-horned rhinoceroses, witnessed an extraordinary rise in visitor numbers during the 2023-2024 season. Forest officials reported a staggering influx of over 3.27 lakh tourists this year, significantly increasing from the approximately 3.15 lakh visitors recorded during the previous financial year of 2022-23. According to officials, the park continues to draw visitors who express satisfaction with their experiences.

KNPTR encompasses three administrative divisions: the Eastern Assam Wildlife Division, the Bishwanath Wildlife Division, and the Nagaon Wildlife Division. Tourism across all three divisions has seen a notable uptick, indicating the growing popularity of non-conventional tourist sites.

Data reveals that 2022-23, the Eastern Assam Wildlife Division welcomed 3,10,458 visitors, while the Nagaon Wildlife Division and Bishwanath Wildlife Division saw 2,610 and 1,728 visitors, respectively. In 2023-24, these numbers rose to 3,20,961 visitors for the Eastern Assam Wildlife Division, 3,484 for the Nagaon Wildlife Division, and 3,048 visitors for the Bishwanath Wildlife Division.

This UNESCO World Heritage Site, renowned for its breathtaking landscapes, diverse wildlife, and iconic species, reopened for tourism in mid-October 2023 after the monsoon season. Among the key attractions were Jungle Safari and Elephant Safari options. Additionally, new opportunities for cycling trails in Karbi-Anglong and trekking routes in the Panbari forest range and Chirang further enhanced the park's appeal.

Surge in tourist arrivals in Nainital

As temperatures soar in the plains of North India, neighbouring Nainital in Uttarakhand emerges as a sought-after destination for tourists seeking relief from the scorching heat. The picturesque lake city is witnessing a remarkable surge in tourist footfall, much to the delight of shopkeepers and traders experiencing a booming business.

Tourists flock to renowned sites such as Snow View Point, Himalaya Darshan, Kilbury, Eco Cave Park, Zoo, Sarita Taal Water Botanical Garden, and Sankat Mochan Mandir, among other popular spots, to



enjoy the serene surroundings and escape the heatwave.

The district's tourism association is fully geared to cater to the influx of visitors. Digvijay Bisht, Chairperson of the Hotel

Association, noted that Nainital is blessed with pleasant weather, attracting tourists from across the country. However, he highlighted a challenge tourists face due to the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, which has resulted in difficulties in accessing cash.

In response to ensuring a hassle-free experience for tourists, district authorities are taking proactive measures. Prahlad Narayan Meena, Senior Police Superintendent, assured that checking posts have been instructed not to inconvenience tourists, ensuring smooth travel experiences during their visit to Nainital.

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As we charge at breakneck speed towards an ever-more digitalised society, the hospitality industry stands out as a successful hybrid that balances the implementation of technology innovation for improved operations while preserving the human need for connection, authenticity, and green hospitality. After a period of harvesting low-hanging fruit, hospitality groups are increasingly looking for more innovative and meaningful ways to implement, measure and communicate their sustainability practices. Some are going even further, not content with being net zero but aiming to become net positive, exemplified by 'regenerative tourism' practices. In addition, guests are increasingly being educated on sustainable practices. It is no longer about doing good but showing travellers and guests how to do it. With GITB 2024 scheduled in May, TravelScapes decided to collate ideas from the experts in the Hospitality industry on Green Hospitality, observing the upsurge in hospitality

By Aanchal Sachdeva



HOSPITALITY

BEYOND SUSTAINABILITY TO NET POSITIVITY



PAWAN CHAUDHARY
HEAD OF ENGINEERING, NOVOTEL
JAIPUR CONVENTION CENTRE

Shifts in consumer behaviour and travel patterns, the green hotel concept shaping up in 2024

In 2024, the green hotel concept is anticipated to undergo a significant advancement spurred by a convergence of several key factors. One aspect involves a deeper commitment to green features, including enhanced

integration with nature, intelligent energy practices, and a focus on water conservation initiatives. Moreover, hotels are increasingly targeting eco-conscious travellers by offering wellness programs, minimalist luxury accommodations infused with local elements, and incorporating technology-driven sustainability features into their operations.

Furthermore, there is a notable shift towards adapting to new travel patterns. This entails catering to bleisure travellers who seek a blend of business and leisure experiences, emphasizing local cultural immersion, and transforming convention centres into sustainable meeting hubs. By embracing these emerging trends, a hotel can position itself as a frontrunner in sustainable hospitality, appealing to environmentally conscious travellers and aligning with the evolving preferences of a new generation of guests.

Navigate potential challenges and seize opportunities in green hospitality

Green hospitality is a growing trend. While upfront costs pose challenges, hotels can benefit from cost savings, attract eco-tourists, and strengthen their brand image. Strategies include phased green initiatives, guest engagement, transparent communication, and partnerships for sustainable amenities and experiences. By embracing green practices, hotels can navigate challenges and position themselves for success in the evolving hospitality landscape.

Green Practices of Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre

Nestled in the vibrant heart of Jaipur, Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre isn't just a haven for meetings and events; it's a champion for sustainability. The hotel implements many eco-conscious practices that minimise its environmental footprint while enhancing the guest experience.

Embracing Renewable Energy

Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre is leading the charge towards a greener future by installing Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations. This initiative encourages guests with electric cars to choose a more sustainable mode of transportation. Additionally, the hotel utilises energy-efficient heat pumps for heating and cooling, reducing dependence on traditional and often less eco-friendly methods.

Water Conservation at its Core

Recognising the importance of water preservation, Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre implemented a multifaceted approach. Our state-



of-the-art wastewater treatment plant cleans wastewater for reuse in non-potable applications such as gardening. This conserves valuable freshwater resources and helps maintain lush green landscapes within the hotel grounds. Our in-house water bottling plant reduces plastic waste and transportation emissions.

Sustainable Choices Throughout

A commitment to sustainability extends to every detail at Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre. The hotel utilises 100% LED lighting throughout the property, resulting in significant energy savings. Guests are presented with wooden key cards as an eco-friendlier alternative to traditional plastic cards. We are promoting paperless transactions, providing e-bills, and crafting guest amenities from sustainable wood whenever possible.

A Commitment to the Future

Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre's dedication to sustainability goes beyond individual practices. It reflects a commitment to a greener future for the tourism industry and the environment. By implementing these innovative and impactful measures, the hotel sets a positive example for others, inspiring a more responsible and sustainable approach to hospitality.



RUCHI UBERAI
MANAGING DIRECTOR, AMRITARA
HOTELS & RESORTS

Shifts in consumer behaviour and travel patterns, the green hotel concept shaping up in 2024

As we look towards 2024, the green hotel concept is expected to transcend traditional boundaries, becoming a fundamental aspect of the hospitality industry's DNA. With a significant shift in consumer behaviour and travel

patterns, travellers increasingly prioritise sustainability, opting for accommodations that align with their environmental values.

Hotels are responding to this trend by embedding eco-friendly practices at every level of operation. This includes energy-efficient buildings, reduced water usage, waste management systems, and incorporating renewable energy sources. The farm-to-table approach is gaining momentum, with hotels investing in local and organic food sources, reducing carbon footprints and supporting local communities.

Moreover, green certifications are becoming a standard expectation, pushing hotels to meet stringent environmental standards. This shift is about reducing impact and creating positive contributions, with hotels engaging in local conservation efforts and community outreach programs.

Technology is pivotal in this evolution, offering innovative solutions to track and reduce energy consumption, manage resources more effectively, and enhance the overall guest experience. Hotels leverage data analytics to understand and predict consumer behaviour, tailoring their sustainability efforts to meet the expectations of a new generation of travellers.

By 2024, the green hotel concept will likely be integral to the travel experience, driven by consumer demand for more sustainable, responsible, and meaningful travel options. This evolution reflects a broader societal shift towards sustainability, with the hospitality industry playing a crucial role in promoting environmental awareness and action.

Navigate potential challenges and seize opportunities in green hospitality

Amritara Hotels and Resorts family firmly believes that the future of hospitality is intrinsically linked to sustainable practices, and our initiatives are designed to align with the increasing demand from



environmentally conscious travellers.

At Amritara, our approach to green hospitality is holistic, encompassing waste reduction and local community engagement. We focus not only on minimising our ecological footprint but also on creating positive impacts. For example, we take great pride in our commitment to sustainability at Amritara Shalimar Spice Garden, located in Thekkady, Kerala.

We uphold this commitment by embracing the farm-to-table concept and producing spices in-house. This ensures quality for guests who value fresh, organic, and locally sourced food and enhances their overall travel experience. In addition to serving our guests, we also explore opportunities to sell surplus produce to them.

Moreover, we recognise the importance of transparency and communication in this journey. We're committed to sharing our sustainability milestones and practices with our guests, inviting them to participate actively in this green movement.

To reduce plastic usage, we have implemented initiatives such as transitioning from plastic bottles to glass bottles and utilising dispensers to minimise single-use plastics. By prioritising reusable and eco-friendly alternatives, we strive to minimise our environmental impact while enhancing the guest experience.

In essence, as we move into 2024, Amritara Hotels and Resorts strives to transform the green hotel concept into a comprehensive, immersive experience that aligns with the values and expectations of modern travellers. We're adapting to change by ensuring that our guests enjoy a luxurious and authentic experience that is ethically and environmentally responsible.



BHAGWATI PANT
GENERAL MANAGER, THE
CENTRUM LUCKNOW

Shifts in consumer behaviour and travel patterns, the green hotel concept shaping up in 2024

Sustainability in the business world is essential to achieving growth and satisfying customers. The old style of business, where growth at any cost was the prime goal, is a passe in the current. Increasingly, consumers are mindful of global warming and

the environmental challenges due to carbon emission, waste, and the excretion of other hazardous chemicals. Modern travellers seek green businesses and pay more for eco-friendly products and services. One in three consumers prefer sustainable brands, and the travel industry is noting. We believe one of the foremost tourist attractions will be businesses that adhere to eco-friendly measures that reduce the carbon



footprint and manage its negative imprint on the environment.

We believe most of the hotels have already adopted practices that help them to go green, like installing solar panels, restricting or eliminating single-use plastic in any form, using LED lighting, planting a rooftop garden to offset the hotel's carbon footprint, encouraging guests to reuse of towels & linens, promoting use of eco-friendly cleaning products, avoiding use of chemicals in the hotel, training of staff on sustainable, limiting use of papers, and last but not the most minor procurement of raw materials from local vendors.

Feel good will be the key driving force in selecting a hotel as travellers seek destinations away from extreme weather conditions like hurricanes, flooding and increasing temperatures, all of which are byproducts of global warming. Hotels must embrace sustainable practices and promote those values in communities for a lasting impact. Going green is not only a great choice on moral and ethical parameters but also a prudent step in financial calculations, as it helps cut costs on water bills, electricity, maintenance staff, cleaning products, and more.

To summarise, going green is not an option but necessary to help businesses, the environment, communities, and more. I firmly believe the catchphrase of 2024 will be RRR (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle). Let us nurture nature to have a nurturing future.

Navigate potential challenges and seize opportunities in green hospitality

The hospitality world and modern travellers are conscious of global warming and the challenges mother nature is facing today; hence, more and more hotels are adopting and implementing green initiatives to become sustainable. Any hotel single-handedly cannot reverse or impact global warming; however, every small step in the correct direction counts. Hotels will face several challenges in embracing sustainability as a core value; however, finding ways and solutions will help them make a tangible difference and contribute to a greener world.

Although the rewards are impactful and plentiful, there are a few things hotels should consider when going green. To overcome challenges and create opportunities, hotels will have to take a holistic approach, and based on that, strategies should be derived and actioned. Setting realistic and attainable goals should be the focus; however, providing staff training, education, and guidance is also paramount. Every journey starts with the first step. Similarly, the journey of going green should start with doing an audit of the hotels to find opportunities and areas of improvement, after which a unified task plan should be designed to drive the hotel towards sustainability.

Several strategies can be implemented to enhance the hotel's sustainability and reduce its environmental footprint. Integrating intelligent technologies can optimise hotel operations and significantly elevate sustainability practices. Secondly, energy efficiency measures play a crucial role, including using energy-saving lighting systems, motion sensors to regulate air conditioning in unoccupied areas and optimising HVAC systems. Additionally, investing in training and education for the hotel staff is essential, as they are the key drivers of the sustainability

policies and strategies. Cultivating a culture where sustainability is ingrained as a core value is paramount.

Implementing a towel and linen reuse program engages and educates guests and contributes to reducing water, energy, labour, and sewer usage. Transitioning to eco-friendly key cards eliminates plastic waste and promotes environmental consciousness among guests. Similarly, replacing plastic bottles with glass bottles in rooms and restaurants significantly reduces plastic waste, considering the detrimental impact of single-use plastic on the environment.

Effective waste management practices, such as composting food waste, can notably impact combating climate change, as approximately 8% of greenhouse emissions stem from wasted food. By incorporating these strategies into its operations, the hotel can take meaningful steps towards sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Adopting and implementing these strategies enables hotels to achieve their sustainability goals and greatly diminish their negative environmental impact. The aforesaid practices are genuinely helpful in promoting a sustainable and responsible hotel industry. By embracing sustainability, we as an industry can show the world the path to a greener and healthier environment.



RAJNISH RAI
COO AND FOUNDER, ULTRA RESORTS
AND HOTELS PVT. LTD

Shifts in consumer behaviour and travel patterns, the green hotel concept shaping up in 2024

The vision of the green hotel concept is as simple as it sounds, provided the stakeholders are committed to promoting it through various sustainability measures and helping protect the environment through eco-friendly green practices. This commitment makes it easier to

involve the consumer as their awareness level is high. Implementing eco-friendly products, energy and water-saving measures, and waste reduction at any green hotel becomes seamless. Discerning travellers understand and support the cause, and 2024 will see a substantial increase in the numbers opting for this concept.

Navigate potential challenges and seize opportunities in green hospitality

Sustainable and Green practices do have their advantages and limitations. Initial investments, high cost, limited resources, and scarce knowledge remain hindrances. Still, cost efficiency through cost-saving measures, guest retention, and carbon offsetting measures is a big plus for all travellers who are varied and conscious of environmental impact.

RAJASTHAN TOURISM SETS THE STAGE FOR GITB 2024

Spotlight on Destination Weddings

As the curtains rise on the much-anticipated Great India Travel Bazaar (GITB) 2024, Rajasthan Tourism is poised to charm visitors with its vibrant culture, heritage, and hospitality. According to **Daleep Singh Rathore, Deputy Director of Tourism, Govt of Rajasthan**, this year's GITB focuses on destination weddings and tourism, transforming the exhibition venue into a glorious showcase of matrimonial splendour. State tourism boards, including Rajasthan Tourism, will embellish their booths with the opulent adornments of traditional wedding attire and jewellery, taking visitors through the rich cultural heritage of India. Rajasthan's unwavering commitment to hospitality allows foreign buyers and wedding planners to board the Palace on Wheels from New Delhi to Jaipur, commencing on May 4. This symbolic voyage symbolises the fusion of tradition and modernity, offering a glimpse into the opulent allure of Rajasthan's wedding tourism offerings. Complementing the GITB spectacle, the 'Wed in India' expo will unfold alongside, offering a kaleidoscopic panorama of wedding tourism. A collaborative effort between Rajasthan Tourism, the Ministry of Tourism (MOT), and the Government of India (GOI), the 'Wed in India' Expo will convene a congregation of domestic and international wedding planners, state tourism boards, and media houses promoting wedding tourism products. From engaging panel discussions to illuminating case studies and an exclusive round-table session, the 'Wed in India' Expo promises an immersive exploration of the evolving landscape of destination weddings. Set against Rajasthan's regal splendour, this conference catalyses innovation and collaboration, forging new pathways for future wedding tourism in India

By Aanchal Sachdeva

GITB 2024 is approaching; how has the Rajasthan tourism sector prepared to welcome international and domestic delegates amidst changing global travel preferences?

GITB is one of the premier travel and tourism events, bringing together travel agents, tour operators, and hospitality industry players from all over the world. The event provides an opportunity to showcase Rajasthan's tourism potential and help establish it as a preferred destination for travellers globally.

The Department is working on a manifold approach. On one side, the department focuses on promotion and marketing; on the other, it caters to the long-standing demand of the Tourism Trade. Rajasthan has established itself as a premier wedding destination with its rich cultural heritage, magnificent palaces and forts, vivid hues, and gracious hospitality. The state features a diverse

array of heritage buildings, each offering a distinctive and captivating wedding theme, such as traditional Rajasthani, royal, or desert themes. It is noteworthy that Rajasthan boasts a remarkable 75% of India's total heritage properties, and with attentive and well-trained staff, guests are assured a comfortable and delightful stay, complemented by the opportunity to savour the exquisite Rajasthani cuisine.

Rajasthan boasts diverse attractions, from historical forts and palaces to wildlife sanctuaries and cultural festivals. What efforts has the tourism department made to promote lesser-known destinations or experiences within the state at GITB 2024?

Thanks to its rich culture, history and architecture, Rajasthan has always been a popular tourist destination. Rajasthan has the

potential to become a tourism magnet with the following prospects:

Unique Culture and Heritage: Rajasthan's culture and heritage are unique and unparalleled, with magnificent forts, palaces, and temples. The state's rich history, folklore, and art forms, such as puppetry, folk dances, and music, have always attracted tourists.

Rural Tourism: Rural tourism is an emerging trend in Rajasthan. Tourists can experience the rural way of life, including farming, handicrafts, and local cuisine. Homestays and farm stays in villages allow tourists to interact with locals and learn about their customs and traditions.

Rajasthan, spreading across the area of 3,42,000 sq km across the north-west zone, brings the ultimate wilderness across its distinct reserves and sanctuaries. Every year, thousands of nature lovers oomph for this



“ We promote our efforts to minimise the environmental impact of tourism, preserve Rajasthan's natural and cultural heritage, and enhance the overall tourism experience. ”

unique landscape once ruled by the royal Rajputs.

Rajasthan is the largest state in India in terms of area. It has tremendous wilderness richness. If we talk about sand dunes or deserted land, the regions are simply limitless. On the other hand, the same land also boasts rich semi-evergreen forests, which simply provide the perfect home for variant animal species.

The vast size and latitudinal variations (1700 m above the sea level) have brought the varied vegetations, contrasting the barren or dry scrub grasslands of deserts and the dry deciduous thorn forests of the oldest Aravali Hills to the wet marshlands of Bharatpur. Rajasthan wildlife tour is a benevolent experience as it lets you steep deep into the lush foliage of the significant sanctuaries and wildlife reserves, which is heaven for the royal tigers along with the abundance of species like leopards, village dogs, assess, calves and goats.

Recently, there has been a growing interest in experiential tourism and immersive cultural experiences. Can you highlight any innovative tourism products or initiatives that will be highlighted at GITB 2024 to cater to this evolving traveller demand?

Rajasthan's tourism department is committed to providing every tourist with an unforgettable experience encompassing art, creativity, culture, and cuisine. The department is continuously working towards this goal. In this regard, MICE tourism is a sector that combines tourism and business, providing tourists with the pleasure of sightseeing while

also being suitable for the state. The meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) Market is one of the fastest-growing segments in the travel trade. Trends indicate that travel agents, tour operators, hotel companies, and cruise companies are all eyeing the Rajasthan MICE market as one with great potential for future growth. The sheer size of this market and its tremendous capacity make it both significant and lucrative. Rajasthan is not only about an aristocratic ambience; it makes business sense, too. The State offers unparalleled luxury in heritage accommodation, great sightseeing and entertainment, and famed traditional hospitality. Moreover, a good tourism infrastructure provides connectivity, transportation, convention receptions, banquets and gourmet facilities. Rajasthan offers a wide choice of convention centres. You can choose from well-connected cities like Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur to small venues, which could be historical or even wildlife sanctuaries, depending on your liking. Interesting venues with suitable facilities and proper management. All technical requirements are looked into along with professional services. Main centres like Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur are air-linked, while the other venues are easily accessible by rail and road. Looking into the potential of MICE, the state government, in its Budget 2023-24 Rajasthan Government announced that MICE centres for international-level conventions and exhibitions would be set up in Jaipur, Udaipur and Ajmer, which have gained fame as wedding destinations across the country.

Sustainability and responsible tourism are increasingly important considerations for travellers. How is Rajasthan Tourism incorporating eco-friendly practices and community engagement initiatives into its tourism strategies, especially in light of GITB 2024?

Rajasthan Tourism actively integrates sustainability and responsible tourism into its strategies, particularly in preparation for GITB 2024. The department promotes eco-friendly practices such as waste management, water conservation, and renewable energy adoption in hotels and tourist sites. Community engagement initiatives involve local communities in tourism planning and development, ensuring their voices are heard and benefits are shared.

The Tourism Department and stakeholders are collaborating to promote reduce, recycle, and reuse practices here.

We promote our efforts to minimise the environmental impact of tourism, preserve Rajasthan's natural and cultural heritage, and enhance the overall tourism experience. Through these initiatives, Rajasthan demonstrates its commitment to sustainable tourism practices and responsible travel.

What are Rajasthan Tourism's fundamental goals and aspirations for GITB 2024, and how does the department envision the event contributing to the long-term growth and sustainability of the state's tourism industry?

GITB is a platform which offers business opportunities to Indian travel trade and foreign tour operators to interact and arrive at real business during the event. The event is also significant in that we must constantly evaluate ourselves concerning world development and move forward according to the global demand of tourists. This event exemplifies effective coordination between the state government, FICCI and travel trade partners. Rajasthan has a distinct identity in the tourism sector, with an influx of tourists annually. The Department is committed to providing a safe and comfortable environment for tourists and extending all support to the tourism Industry. This has resulted in a fast revival of the state industry.

In addition to generating tourism revenue, GITB 2024 will also help create numerous employment opportunities and support local businesses. The hospitality industry will significantly benefit from this event, with increased demand for hotel rooms, food and beverage, and other related services. Furthermore, the increased exposure of Jaipur to the global tourism market will help establish the city as a premier tourist destination and encourage further investment in the tourism infrastructure. We are optimistic about the economic growth potential led by the Great India Travel Bazaar (GITB) 2024 for the tourism industry in Rajasthan.

THE ART OF HARMONIZING QUALITY AND AFFORDABILITY WITH CREATIVE TRAVEL

The world of travel is rapidly expanding, and amidst the many adventurers, some stand out as true inspirations – those who redefine the very meaning of exploration. Rajeve Kohli, Joint Managing Director of Creative Travel, is one such luminary. His visionary leadership has catapulted Creative Travel to the very forefront of experiential travel. As more and more millennials seek authentic experiences and transformative encounters, Creative Travel, with over four decades of experience, leaves an indelible mark across the Indian subcontinent by offering unique and immersive cultural experiences. From the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas to the vibrant tapestries of Rajasthan, Kohli unveils the essence of experiential travel

By Aanchal Sachdeva

Creative Travel balances providing high-quality experiences and maintaining competitive pricing for its clients

The balance between cost and competitiveness is not unique to us or our industry. There is a customer at every price point—that is basic economics. Every business must decide what price point they want to deliver, determining their market size. It is also a fact that you cannot be everything to everyone. You can be a Selfridges or a Tesco, but you can't address both customer bases simultaneously. Based on that, we decided long ago that we would prefer to be smaller, address a niche, and do that well. The target market also recognises businesses that target specific audiences for what they do and deliver. That particular customer is looking for a specific service provider and is willing to pay for a desired level of service. This basic business logic defines what we can charge and what perceived value we deliver. We do not feel the pressure to compete on price alone. We have to be competitive, but we do not need to be the cheapest. It is easy to be affordable. It is hard to deliver quality and consistency. So, everything we do is defined by these principles.

Creative Travel ensures its itineraries cater to diverse traveller interests and preferences

For over 47 years and over two generations, our family has showcased India and her region in ways like a few others. I often say that working in a family company can give you a very different perspective on life. I see how we work with our team members, clients and partners. The focus is never only on numbers. Our work is about helping travellers create stories. Our father started his journey from humble beginnings, and we are proud of the teamwork that has made Creative Travel one of South Asia's most respected travel brands.

Delivering the finest cultural experiences does not happen by accident. Each country has unique touchpoints that we have made it our business to know intimately. We invest a



lot in training our people and in new products and techniques. Our focus has always been to showcase these destinations through unique experiences and engaging moments that take the traveller deeper into the culture, showcasing our diversity and people in ways that guarantee to send our travellers back with memories to last a lifetime.

We always aim to make our service delivery as personal as possible. We want our travellers to feel welcome, that they have a friend along the journey, and that they are someone we genuinely care about. Small things matter.

We plan programs to ensure that they are as customised as possible. We plan the trip based on a detailed analysis of what the traveller likes. Every visitor has different interests. Our country's diversity allows us to create a program to meet any passion. We have to know our business to do that.

The inspiration behind the Jungle Sutra initiative and travellers' reception to it

We saw a gap and an opportunity where

JungleSutra came from. JungleSutra is amongst the Indian Subcontinent's premier wildlife and experiential travel curators. What drives us at JungleSutra is our mission to showcase our region through a very different set of eyes, which we believe sets us apart from others. We showcase India's more commonly sought-after wildlife and introduce lesser-known species while experiencing the region's authentic cultural and historical aspects through tailor-made and curated itineraries. A JungleSutra journey is aimed at the discerning traveller looking to explore the exotic world of India's finest wildlife & cultural experiences in authentic style & luxury.

The Indian Subcontinent is a fantastic wildlife destination, even though all who think of wildlife first think of Africa. Very few people know that Indian wildlife boasts a higher diversity than other parts of the world. The Indian Subcontinent's wildlife sanctuaries hold some of the world's finest wildlife stock. We also aim to showcase India's strong culture, history, and natural experience. JungleSutra also has a robust social initiative and seeks to engage local communities in activities that give back to the areas we visit. Our journeys combine the region's natural, cultural, artistic and historical aspects, making any visit holistic and complete.

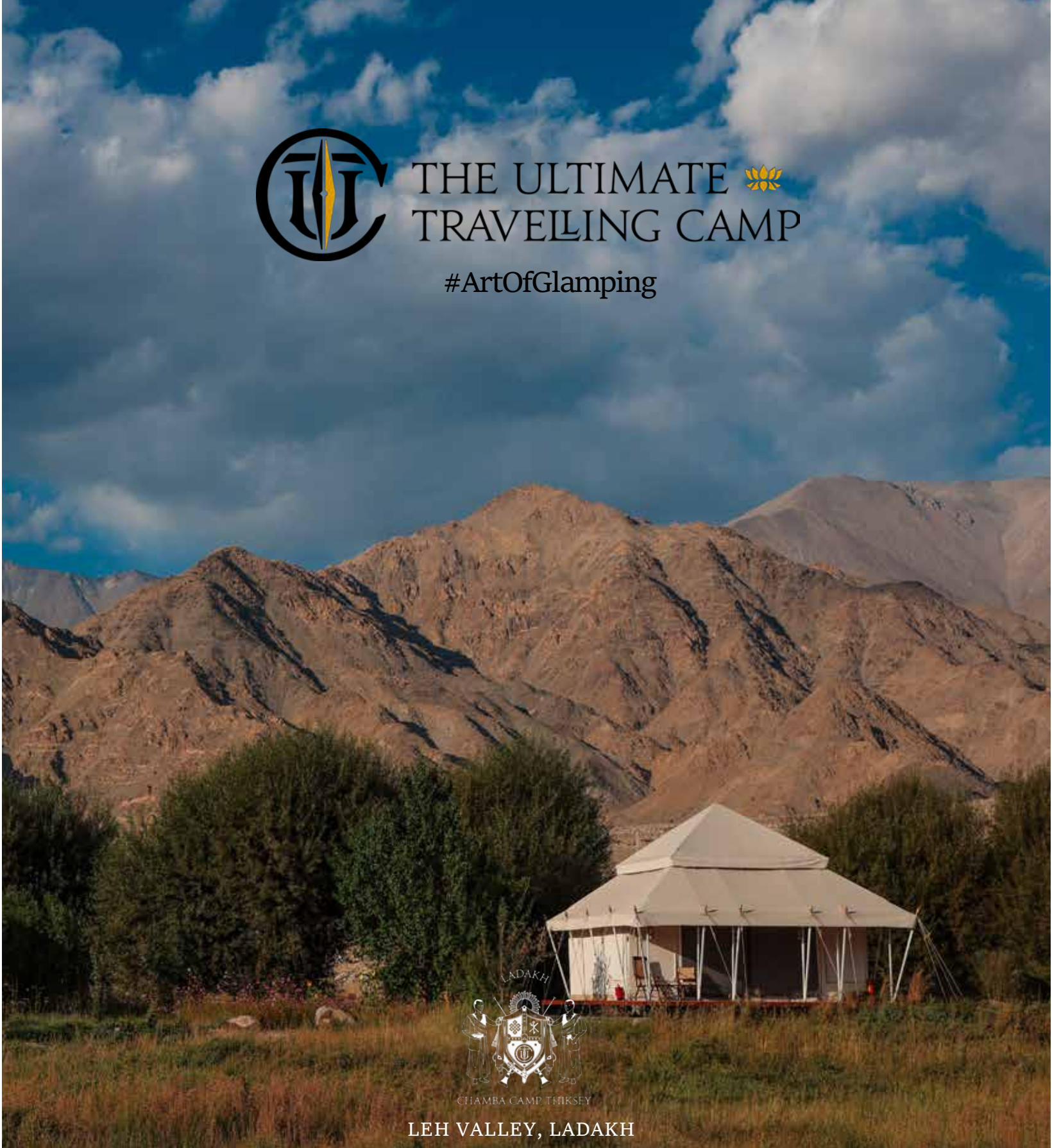
Creative Travel stays innovative and ahead of industry trends in the dynamic travel market

Growth for the sake of growth doesn't make sense. We focus on strategic growth and retaining stability in a successful business. Innovation is a constant effort and a hard one to do. The lack of national support by the government in promoting the destination makes it very hard for all of us in the inbound industry. A lot of energy goes into maintaining a business rather than growing it. That is our fate, and so be it. However, our mission to be the best at what we do and be a responsible business will never be compromised.



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Rajasthan

and its timeless royalty

Rajasthan beckons with its tales of courage, luxury, and timeless royalty. Each fortress whispers secrets of battles won and lost, and every palace echoes with the footsteps of kings and queens who once ruled with an iron fist and a velvet glove. The landmarks are not just architectural marvels but living testaments to the rich history and culture of Rajasthan. From the vibrant bazaars of Jaipur to the sun-kissed ramparts of Jodhpur, Rajasthan offers a kaleidoscope of experiences to be explored. Rajasthan has been a melting pot of diverse cultures and traditions, from the grandeur of the Rajput rulers to the splendour of the Mughal dynasty. Its forts, such as the imposing Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur and the romantic Amber Fort in Jaipur, stand as silent sentinels to its glorious past. The intricate architecture of its palaces, like the City Palace in Udaipur and the Hawa Mahal in Jaipur, reflects the wealth and power of its rulers. But beyond its tangible treasures lies Rajasthan's true essence—the warmth of its people, whose hospitality is legendary

By *Aanchal Sachdeva*

Crafting Wonders at Udaipur's Artisan Workshops

Discover the time-honoured crafts and artistic traditions of Rajasthan with a visit to the artisan workshops in Udaipur. Witness skilled artisans at work, from master potters shaping clay on a wheel to talented artisans intricately carving marble and crafting vibrant textiles, and even try your hand at creating your masterpiece under their expert guidance.



Camel Safari in Pushkar

Experience the timeless charm of Rajasthan with a camel safari through the quaint streets and tranquil countryside of Pushkar. Traverse the picturesque dunes and rustic villages, encountering vibrant local markets, ancient temples, and breathtaking sunsets along the way.



Traditional Rajasthani Cuisine

Indulge your taste buds with the tantalising flavours of Rajasthani cuisine, renowned for its bold spices and mouthwatering dishes. From the fiery heat of Laal Maas to the sweet decadence of Ghevar, savour the diverse culinary delights of the region and experience the true essence of Rajasthan's gastronomic heritage.



Hot Air Ballooning over Jaipur

Take to the skies and marvel at the breathtaking beauty of Jaipur from a bird's eye perspective with a hot-air balloon ride over the Pink City. Drift serenely above its iconic landmarks, bustling bazaars, and majestic forts as the colours of sunrise or sunset paint the sky, creating a magical and unforgettable spectacle.



Astrology and Palmistry Session

Unravel the cosmos' mysteries and uncover your destiny's secrets with an astrology or palmistry session in Jodhpur or Jaipur. Consult with experienced astrologers and palmists who will analyse your birth chart or read the lines on your palm to provide insights into your personality, relationships, and prospects, offering a unique and enlightening experience.



EXOTIC INDIA

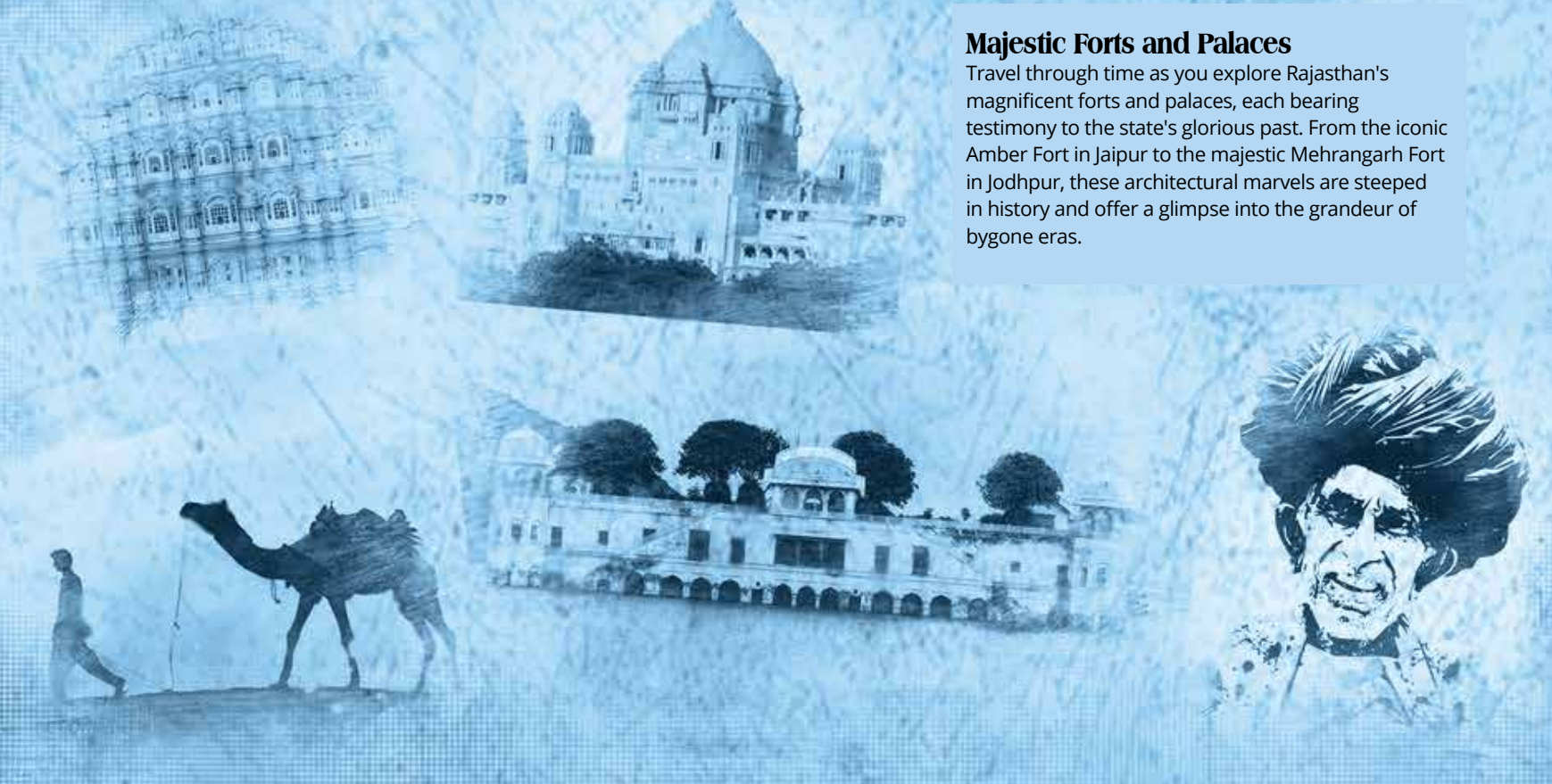
Desert Safari in the Thar

Delve into the heart of Rajasthan's rugged landscape with a thrilling desert safari in the vast expanse of the Thar Desert. Experience the mesmerising beauty of the golden sands as you ride on camelback or in a 4x4 vehicle, immersing yourself in the rich culture and heritage of the desert communities.



Majestic Forts and Palaces

Travel through time as you explore Rajasthan's magnificent forts and palaces, each bearing testimony to the state's glorious past. From the iconic Amber Fort in Jaipur to the majestic Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur, these architectural marvels are steeped in history and offer a glimpse into the grandeur of bygone eras.





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SAUDI TOURISM AUTHORITY GALVANIZES INDIAN TRAVEL TRADE WITH 4-CITY NETWORKING EVENTS

Kicking off the year with impressive inbound numbers and ambitious growth targets, Saudi tourism is on an upward trajectory, aiming to position India as its top source market with a goal of welcoming 7.5 million visitors within the next seven years.

Demonstrating unwavering commitment to the Indian market, the Saudi Tourism Authority (STA) orchestrated a series of dynamic networking events across four bustling cities – Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, and Delhi – exclusively for members of Indian travel trade associations. The esteemed STA delegation, in collaboration with key stakeholders, engaged with over 500 travel agents and tour operators, nurturing strategic partnerships and fostering long-term business alliances within India.

In synergy with leading Destination Management Companies (DMCs), STA spearheaded sales missions across all four cities, further amplifying its dedication to fortifying partnerships and expanding its footprint in the Indian travel market. Additionally, STA's presence at prestigious trade shows such as OTM in Mumbai and SATTE in Greater Noida set the stage for a year replete with promising opportunities. With a robust delegation comprising 20 influential Saudi stakeholders and esteemed associates, STA actively engaged with Indian travel agents and tour operators, paving the way for fruitful collaborations.

The remarkable surge in visits in 2023 – a notable 50 percent increase over the previous year – underscores the effectiveness of STA's strategic initiatives and focused roadmap, setting a solid foundation for sustained growth and success in the Indian market.

The trade shows, held in February, served as platforms to unveil the full spectrum of Saudi's tourism offerings. Central to these engagements was the vibrant Saudi Pavilion, an embodiment of



cultural richness and hospitality, attracting scores of visitors. Attendees were transported to the heart of Saudi Arabia through an immersive experience zone, featuring life-sized screens showcasing a myriad of experiences. Guests were treated

to traditional Saudi coffee and dates, epitomising the essence of Hafawah, while also indulging in crown weaving with flowers from the Asir region and personalised Arabic calligraphy.

Amidst meetings, MoU signings, and partnership initiations with

members of Indian travel trade associations, tour operators, and event planners, STA shed light on the diverse array of events on the Saudi calendar, from showcasing electronic visa options for Indian travellers to highlighting Giga projects, newly launched hotels, and enhanced air connectivity, positioning Saudi Arabia as a premier tourism destination.

In a bid to streamline travel experiences for Indian visitors, Saudi has streamlined its visa process, offering convenient options such as e-visas and visa-on-arrival, extending to individuals with US, UK, and Schengen visas, along with stamped proof of entry from the issuing country. Visa applications can be conveniently processed at Tasheer Centers across India and through the official platform visa.mofa.gov.sa.

Air connectivity has witnessed a significant surge, with capacity reaching 2.8 million seats in 2023, marking an impressive 31 percent increase since 2019. Flights from 12 major Indian hubs to Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam further bolster Saudi's tourism efforts, unlocking a realm of exploration for travelers.

STA has an array of consumer campaigns lined up for the year, including destination awareness campaigns focusing on luxury, summer initiatives in March and April, and winter initiatives later in the year. The Living Wonders of Arabia and the Women Wonder campaigns are set to be launched imminently. Earlier this year, STA unveiled the 'Go Beyond What You Think' campaign video featuring football icon Lionel Messi, reflecting the vision of positioning Saudi Arabia as an enticing destination and dispelling myths surrounding the country.

With an ambitious lineup of consumer campaigns, monumental giga projects, and strategic trade partnerships poised for rollout in the forthcoming months, STA is primed for yet another monumental year ahead.



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an odyssey, where rejuvenation is an art, and every space echoes
the symphony of a life well-lived.

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Karnataka TAAI hosts annual meeting

The Karnataka Chapter of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) convened its annual meeting at the ITC Welcomhotel in Bangalore on March 7, 2024. The gathering saw the participation of esteemed members from the National Committee of TAAI, including Jyoti Mayal, President; Jay Bhatia, Vice-

President; and Lokesh Bettaiah, Honorary Secretary General. Additionally, present at the meeting were Chapter Chairman S.V. Chidambaresh, Amarnath N, Honorary Secretary, and K.S. Balaji, Honorary Treasurer. The event also welcomed numerous members from the airline fraternity and TAAI associates.



MyBhutan forges strategic alliance with BRANDit

BRANDit, a prominent marketing and PR representative specialising in tourism boards and luxury hotels, reveals its collaboration with MyBhutan, a distinguished boutique destination management company headquartered in Bhutan. This partnership signifies a significant endeavour to cater to the preferences of Indian travellers, presenting MyBhutan's array of unique cultural experiences nestled in the Himalayas. Teaming up with BRANDit enables MyBhutan to extend its outreach beyond tier I cities, delving into tier II and III cities. Leveraging BRANDit's prowess in the dynamic Indian market, they will devise strategies tailored to the ever-evolving outbound segment, amplifying MyBhutan's influence and presence nationwide.

Matthew DeSantis, Founder & CEO of MyBhutan, expressed his enthusiasm to partner with BRANDit, a seasoned expert in tourism marketing. They anticipate introducing the Indian market to a deeper, more meaningful exploration and connection with Bhutan through our curated experiences.

Lubaina Sheerazi, CEO and co-founder of BRANDit remarked that with luxury-seeking Indian travellers increasingly gravitating towards meaningful and experiential holidays, the immense potential exists to cultivate heightened interest in Bhutan within this market. Armed with their expertise and profound understanding of the outbound market and travel industry, they are excited to introduce MyBhutan as a premier destination management company from Bhutan and bolster their presence in the Indian market.



Tourism and Hospitality Specialists



Trip.com expands collaboration with Amadeus to include mobility solutions

Trip.com extended its partnership with Amadeus by integrating Amadeus Mobility into its suite of solutions. This move broadens the range of Amadeus content offered beyond Air and Hotel Distribution to encompass Mobility, enhancing the travel experience on Trip.com and Trip.Biz platforms. Leveraging Amadeus technology and functionality, customers on each platform will enjoy a seamless and integrated end-to-end travel journey.

The incorporation of Amadeus Mobility will benefit both leisure and business travellers. It will provide access to various mobility options, including car rental offers via Amadeus Cars Web Services. It will feature real-time rates from over 50 car rental providers across over 40,000 locations worldwide.

Simon Song, CEO of Car Rental and Ride-Hailing at Trip.com Group, expressed enthusiasm about the expanded collaboration, stating that at Trip.com, they aim to continuously enhance their offerings to meet the evolving needs of their customers and elevate their shopping experience. They are delighted with the growing relationship with Amadeus – a trusted technology partner.

Joerg Schuler, Executive Vice President of Hospitality Media & Distribution at Amadeus, commented that they recognise the evolving needs of travellers and the importance of providing access to comprehensive travel content, including mobility. Through their partnership, they were thrilled to enable Trip.com and Trip.Biz to cater to all travel segments, including business and leisure.

One Rep Global to represent Waldorf Astoria Dubai Palm Jumeirah



One Rep Global announces its exclusive partnership with Waldorf Astoria Dubai Palm Jumeirah. Situated against the iconic backdrop of Palm Jumeirah, this collaboration sets new standards for luxury, offering discerning Indian travellers an unparalleled fusion of breathtaking views, lavish accommodations, and immersive recreational activities.

Perched on the renowned

Palm Jumeirah, Waldorf Astoria Dubai Palm Jumeirah exceeds expectations by presenting an oasis of luxury with panoramic vistas of the Arabian Gulf and the Dubai Skyline. Guests can indulge in recreational offerings, including a 200-meter private beach, two temperature-controlled swimming pools, tennis courts, water sports activities, and a dedicated Kids Club—ensuring a captivating escape for guests of all ages.

Hemant Mediratta, Founder & CEO of One Rep Global, expressed his excitement, stating, Nestled on Palm Jumeirah, this sanctuary seamlessly combines exclusivity and leisure.



Bhanwar Singh Palace, Pushkar

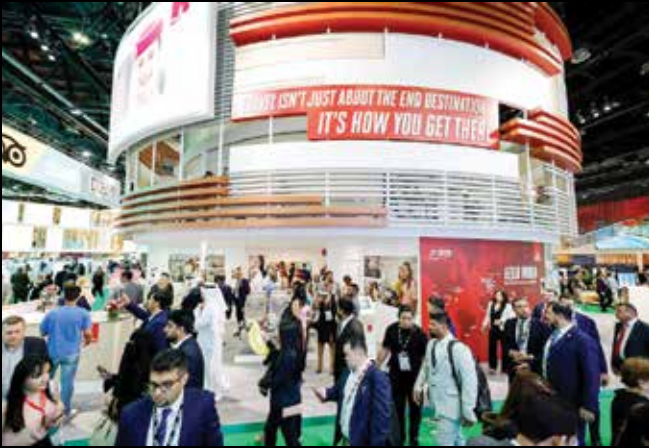


Bhanwar Singh Palace Jaipur



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ATM 2024 to spotlight sustainability and innovation in Aviation

Arabian Travel Market (ATM), scheduled from May 6-9, 2024, at the Dubai World Trade Centre, will serve as a platform for leading international airlines and aircraft manufacturers to discuss the latest innovations and solutions shaping the aviation industry. Over the four-day industry showcase, key discussions will revolve around sustainability and the pivotal role of startups and innovators in propelling the industry forward.

Themed 'Empowering Innovation: Transforming Travel Through Entrepreneurship', the 31st edition of ATM underscores the significant contributions of startups and innovators in revolutionising the travel and tourism sector. In line with this theme, ATM has collaborated with Aviation X Lab and the Intelak programme, dedicated to fostering innovation and providing a platform for startups in the travel industry.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market, highlighted the focus on entrepreneurship for ATM 2024, stating that this edition would showcase entrepreneurs across various sectors, including aviation, accommodation, hospitality, and attractions while exploring how innovative sustainable trends would evolve. The partnerships with Aviation X Lab and the Intelak programme underscore their commitment to promoting entrepreneurship.

Curtis further emphasised the importance of sustainability in the aviation sector, citing the International Energy Agency's data on the industry's carbon emissions. Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) emerged as a viable solution for reducing these emissions, with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) estimating its potential to contribute significantly to emissions reduction by 2050.

Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer, highlighted the airline's focus on sustainability and its initiatives to integrate sustainable materials onboard. Aviation industry leaders from Cirium, Riyadh Air, and IATA will convene to discuss the latest innovations shaping the aviation industry.

Held in partnership with Dubai World Trade Centre, ATM 2024 boasts strategic partnerships with the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), Emirates, IHG Hotels & Resorts, and Al Rais Travel, reaffirming its position as a premier event in the travel and tourism industry.

BLS International secures contracts from MOFAT

BLS International Services Ltd inked three contracts with Hungary's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. These exclusive agreements mark a significant step in enhancing visa services, showcasing our dedication to efficiency and excellence in Jordan, Canada, and Algeria.

The establishment of new Visa Application Centres in Jordan, Canada, and Algeria, courtesy of BLS International, heralds a new era in the visa application process. Collaborating closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, the company is expanding its global footprint to include eight countries: Bangladesh, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Oman, and Qatar. These centres are equipped with cutting-edge technology and staffed by seasoned professionals, ensuring a smooth, efficient, and transparent visa processing



journey for all applicants.

Shikhar Aggarwal, Joint Managing Director of BLS International, stated that these new contracts would enable them to extend their advanced visa services to Jordan, Canada, and Algeria, underscoring their commitment to making cross-border travel more accessible and hassle-free. By launching new Visa Application Centres equipped with state-of-the-art technology and staffed by a dedicated team, they are setting new benchmarks in the industry for efficiency, transparency, and customer satisfaction.

Qrius Connect to represent The Farm at San Benito

The Farm at San Benito, an eco-luxury health and wellness resort based in the Philippines, appointed Qrius Connect as its representative in India for marketing and PR mandates. As a CG Hospitality member, CG Corp Global's hospitality arm, The Farm at San Benito, is renowned for its eco-luxury, holistic medical wellness retreat in scenic Lipa City, Batangas. Situated amidst 52 hectares of verdant greenery, the resort offers a rejuvenating escape surrounded by pure air and revitalising energy. Through the collaboration with Qrius Connect, the resort aims to enhance brand awareness, market share, and overall sales and marketing activities in India. Jennifer Sanvictores, Global Head of Sales and Marketing, expressed that this collaboration would enhance their presence in India, strengthening their brand's visibility. It will also introduce its transformative healing retreats to a broader audience, highlighting The Farm at San Benito's



commitment to a science-based, evidence-guided approach to holistic health on a global scale. Nishant Gulliya, CEO of Qrius Connect, stated that this partnership with The Farm at San Benito marks an exciting new chapter for Qrius Connect. He believes that The Farm's unique blend of luxury, nature, and transformative programs resonates deeply with the growing wellness consciousness in India, and they are eager to unlock its potential for a discerning audience seeking a profound journey of rejuvenation and wellness.

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Yatra welcomes Dr Anup Wadhawan as Independent Director

Yatra Online, Inc. operating through its Indian subsidiary, Yatra Online Limited ("Yatra"), one of India's corporate travel services provider and a well-known player in the online travel industry in India in terms of gross booking revenue and operating revenue for Fiscal Year 2023, announced the appointment of Dr Anup Wadhawan as an Independent Director of the Company. Dr Wadhawan's appointment was effective from April 1, 2024, for three consecutive years.

Dhruv Shringi, full-time Director and CEO of Yatra Online Limited is pleased to welcome Dr Wadhawan to their Board of Directors. His vast experience and proven leadership will be invaluable as they pursue their strategic objectives. He believes his expertise and dedication will significantly benefit their board.

Dr Wadhawan expressed a feeling of honour and that it presents an exciting opportunity to contribute to a company leading the way in transforming the travel industry. He believes they



will achieve significant growth and success, delivering exceptional value to customers and stakeholders.

Dr Wadhawan serves as an Independent Director on the Boards of several companies, including Cred Avenue Securities Private Limited, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company Limited, and Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company Limited. He is also an Advisory Board Member of the Association of Small & Medium Knowledge Industries (ASMKI) and GoodGovern, a corporate governance entity.



IRIS Reps partners with Sea Cliff Resort & Spa, Zanzibar

IRIS Reps announced the latest addition to our esteemed family- Sea Cliff Resort & Spa, Zanzibar. This exciting collaboration follows the resort's recent triumph at the 2023 World Luxury Awards, where it was lauded for its outstanding hospitality and service excellence.

The accolades received by Sea Cliff Resort & Spa at the World Luxury Awards underscore its unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional experiences for families, couples, and spa enthusiasts alike. With victories in coveted categories such as Luxury Family Resort, Luxury Honeymoon Resort, and Luxury Seaside Resort, Sea Cliff continues to set the benchmark for luxury hospitality.

Patrick Beck, the General Manager of Sea Cliff Resort & Spa, expressed his excitement about entering the Indian market, recognising its immense potential. Alefiya Singh, Director of IRIS Reps, outlined her vision for the future of Sea Cliff Resort & Spa. They are optimistic about the potential of this exceptional property. Their team is committed to leveraging innovative marketing strategies to showcase Sea Cliff Resort & Spa and amplify its presence in key markets,

Red Dot Representation secures mandate for Kenya's Wild Whispers

Red Dot Representation, an emerging Representation firm in India, achieved a significant milestone by winning a mandate for Kenya's Luxury DMC, Wild Whispers. This collaboration will enable Red Dot Representation to enhance its portfolio of luxury safari experiences across East Africa. Through this partnership, Red Dot will spotlight the vibrant luxury tourism offerings of East Africa, showcasing Wild Whispers' expertise in curating immersive journeys throughout the region.

Aman Shah, CEO of Wild Whispers in Nairobi, Kenya, expressed his enthusiasm about the alliance with Red Dot Representation. Red Dot Representation's dedication to showcasing high-end travel experiences to Indian and international travellers perfectly aligns with its mission of offering unmatched luxury safaris across Africa.

Prabhakar Kamat, Vice-President of Red Dot Representations, commented that their collaboration



with Wild Whispers underscores their commitment to delivering exceptional travel experiences to their luxury clientele in East Africa. With the mandate for Wild Whispers, they enhance their ability to curate tailor-made tours that cater to all luxury holiday requirements, reinforcing their position as the preferred choice for travellers seeking extraordinary adventures in the region.

Red Dot looks forward to showcasing the beauty and adventure of East Africa through its partnership with Wild Whispers, inviting travellers to unforgettable journeys.

Neeraj Chopra joins forces with DreamSetGo

Neeraj Chopra, India's celebrated javelin ace and reigning Olympic Champion, announces his exclusive collaboration with DreamSetGo, a premium sports travel and experiences platform, for his travel and hospitality arrangements at the Olympic Games Paris 2024. It extends DreamSetGo's strategic partnership with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) as the Official Travel Partner for the Indian delegation travelling to Paris.

Monish Shah, Founder and CEO of DreamSetGo, expressed his enthusiasm about the partnership with IOA, stating that Collaboration with Neeraj Chopra and the Indian Olympic Association would be an incredible honour. Our athletes work extremely hard throughout the year to put India on the global stage. At DreamSetGo, their teams will ensure only the best travel and hospitality experiences for Indian athletes, their families, and delegates so that they can focus solely on the excitement of the games.

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BANYAN GROUP TURNS THIRTY

The Banyan Tree evolves into "The Banyan Group"!

Banyan Tree toasts to three decades of unforgettable experiences at Ditas, Mumbai. The exclusive cocktail soirée was an evening of elegance and insight, with Tekla Maira, Regional Director of Sales- India, Banyan Tree Group graciously sharing the evolution of "Banyan Group", its latest developments, and its vision for the future. From indulgent dining to enriching networking, it was an event to

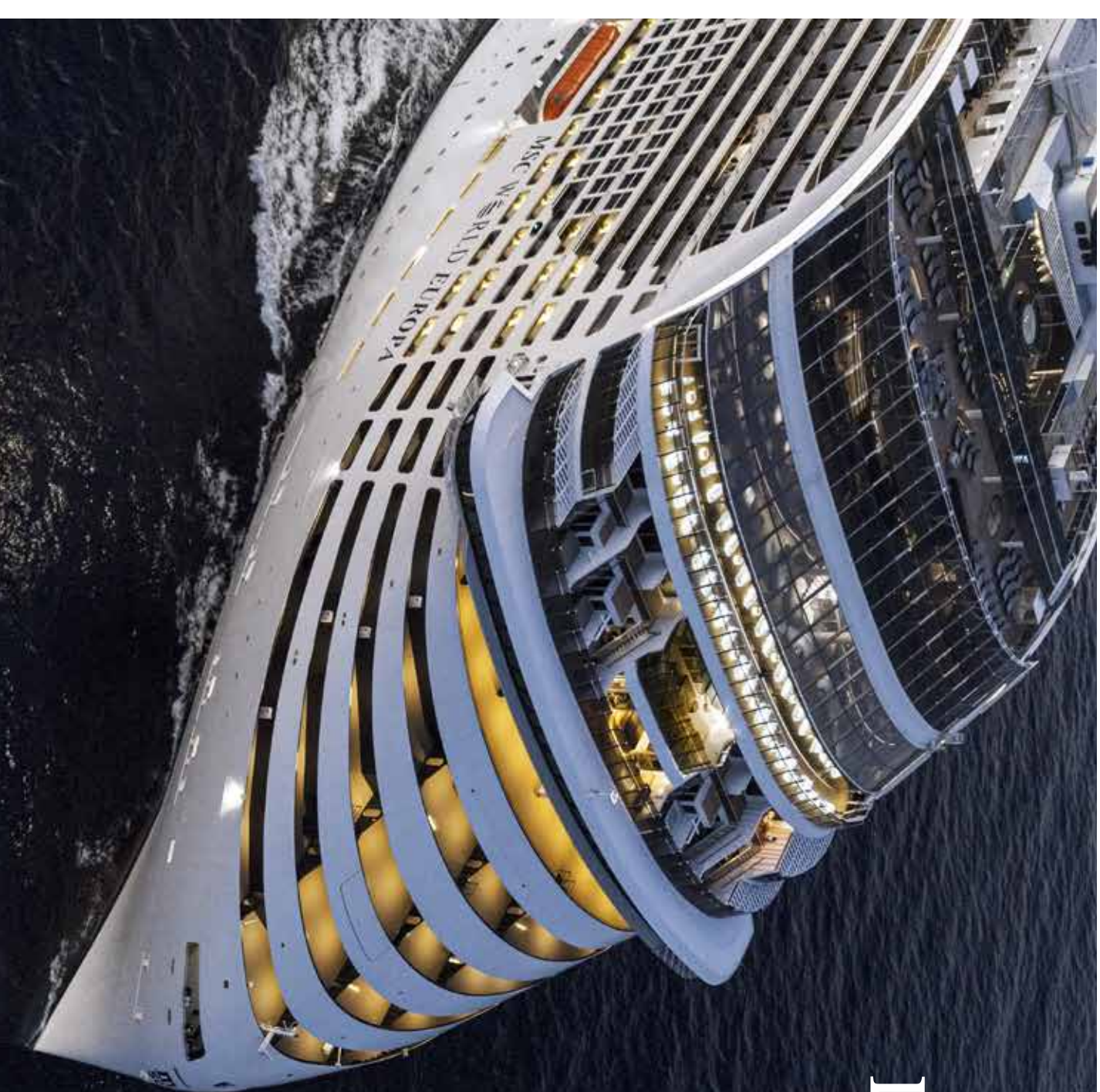
remember! Maira illuminated the evolving preferences of modern travellers, emphasising the allure of luxury living. As they pass the milestone journey, Banyan Tree remains committed to crafting extraordinary, design-driven encounters. Their dedication to sustainable travel and regenerative tourism sets them apart as they pave the way for innovative guest experiences. Here's to 30 years of passion, purpose, and unparalleled hospitality!



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Niraamaya Wellness Retreats expands in Kumbakonam, TN

Niraamaya Group signed a management agreement with Abode Upon Arasalaru Resorts & Spa Pvt. Ltd for a new 5-star retreat in Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu. This marks the third edition this year, reaffirming Niraamaya's dedication to offering diverse and exceptional premier wellness experiences in leisure destinations nationwide.

Allen Machado, Chief Executive Officer of Niraamaya Wellness Retreats, expressed excitement about the expansion into Tamil Nadu and stated that the signing reinforces our commitment to local culture and sustainable luxury. With Kumbakonam being a famous tourist landmark throughout the seasons, they aim to become the first choice for travellers seeking a serene

stay at this blissful retreat.

The Niraamaya Wellness Retreats Kumbakonam will feature 63 rooms and suites within easy reach of Thiruchirappilly and Chennai International Airport. This retreat promises many amenities, including multiple restaurants, a highly functional fitness centre, swimming pools, private pool villas, and comprehensive spa and mindfulness facilities.

Ramesh, Group Chairman of Abode Upon Arasalaru Resorts & Spa Pvt. Ltd stated that it is a significant partnership for their group, which they are incredibly proud of. It will bring significant positive changes that will benefit Kumbakonam and its surrounding areas.

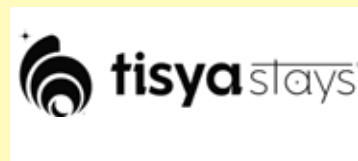


Tisya Stays partners with Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy®

IRIS Reps announces an exciting collaboration between Tisya Stays and Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy®. The collaboration will meld Marriott's esteemed hospitality heritage with Tisya Stays' contemporary luxury offerings.

Gagan, one of Tisya Stays' Co-founders, expresses enthusiasm about this partnership, their joining with Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy marks a significant milestone for Tisya Stays. They are committed to delivering a unique fusion of modern comfort and timeless luxury, ensuring their guests create unforgettable memories."

Founded by Shikha and Gagan, Tisya Stays specialises



in premium vacation rentals. It promises a blend of contemporary elegance and traditional charm, inviting guests to embrace authenticity without compromise.

They strive to inspire guests to unwind, immerse themselves in local culture, and relish in authentic experiences—melding international luxury with the distinct charm of each destination, added Alefiya Singh, Director at IRIS Reps.

Marriott unveils debut of The Ritz-Carlton Jaipur

Marriott International, Inc. signed a landmark agreement with Gurnani Resorts & Hotels to unveil The Ritz-Carlton brand in Jaipur, Rajasthan. Scheduled to open its doors in January 2028, the 250-key resort promises to infuse the 'Pink City of India' with its renowned service and timeless elegance. This marks the esteemed brand's inaugural venture into North India.

Rajeev Menon, President of Asia Pacific, excluding China at Marriott International, said that the Ritz-Carlton Jaipur to their Marriott Bonvoy portfolio strengthens their footprint in Jaipur, where they currently operate five hotels. Their partnership with Gurnani Resorts & Hotels underscores their unwavering commitment



to India's rapidly expanding economy.

The Ritz-Carlton Jaipur is anticipated to feature 250 modern guest rooms and suites, including The Ritz-Carlton Lobby Lounge, a luxury spa, and six diverse dining options. Mohan Das Gurnani, Chairman of Gurnani Group, stated that bringing The Ritz-Carlton to their heritage capital city of Jaipur reflects their commitment to delivering unparalleled luxury.

Accor signs agreement for Sofitel Jaipur Jawahar Circle

Accor announces a partnership agreement with EBU Estate Developers Private Limited to develop Sofitel Jaipur Jawahar Circle, a luxury hotel that will redefine hospitality in Jaipur. Scheduled to open in 2028, the new hotel promises an unparalleled experience in the vibrant city.

Located at Jaipur's Jawahar Circle, the hotel will feature 275 meticulously designed rooms, ensuring the utmost comfort for guests. As part of the renowned Sofitel brand, known for its French luxury and international presence, the hotel will enhance Jaipur's tourism

landscape, offering French gastronomy and joie de vivre through its four distinct restaurants and bars. Its extensive MICE facilities will accommodate up to four significant events, cementing Jaipur's status as a premier destination for weddings, corporate meetings, and social events.

Sébastien Bazin, Chairman and CEO of Accor, stated that they are excited to bring the Sofitel brand to Jaipur. Accor aims to open 30 new properties in the country in the next 3 to 5 years, continuing our commitment to delivering meaningful experiences.



Kuda Villingili Resort Maldives achieves Green Globe Certification

Located in the idyllic landscape of the Maldives, Kuda Villingili Resort proudly announces its attainment of the esteemed Green Globe Certification, showcasing its steadfast dedication to sustainable practices and responsible tourism. This certification underscores the resort's commitment to reducing its ecological footprint through various initiatives, including energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, and community engagement.

Kuda Villingili Resort has implemented innovative solutions to minimise its environmental impact, such as integrating solar panels into its infrastructure and adopting an integrated approach to waste management. Moreover, the resort prioritises sustainability in its design elements, utilising recycled materials and promoting plastic reduction measures throughout its operations.

Beyond environmental conservation, Kuda Villingili Resort embraces social responsibility by supporting local livelihoods and preserving Maldivian culture. General Manager Deepa Manuel expresses excitement about partnering with Green Globe, emphasizing the resort's dedication to providing exceptional experiences while minimising environmental impact.

As a Green Globe Certified resort, Kuda Villingili invites guests to immerse themselves in the beauty of the Maldives while contributing to sustainable tourism. Whether indulging in luxury accommodations or enjoying world-class dining, guests can rest assured that their stay aligns with the highest standards of environmental responsibility.

Fortune Hotels expands presence in Palampur, HP

Fortune Hotels, a distinguished member of ITC's renowned hotel group, unveiled Fortune Park Palampur in Palampur, Himachal Pradesh. This marks the upscale hotel chain's sixth establishment in the state, reaffirming its commitment to providing luxury accommodations in captivating destinations. Scheduled for an opening in the Summer of 2024, Fortune Park Palampur features an array of amenities, including an all-day dining restaurant and bar, a terrace microbrewery, state-of-the-art banquet halls, meeting rooms, a fitness centre, a swimming pool, and a serene spa meticulously crafted to ensure a rejuvenating stay for patrons.

Samir MC, Managing Director of Fortune Hotels, stated that they had witnessed immense success with their leisure hotels in this region, expanding their footprint with their sixth property in the state. By venturing into Palampur, a burgeoning market for branded hotels, they aim to cater to the evolving needs of travellers.



Pride Premier Hotel debuts in Amritsar

Pride Hotels Group announces its maiden venture into Punjab with the unveiling of Pride Premier Hotel in the historic city of Amritsar. Pride Premier promises an upscale yet affordable luxury experience within the esteemed Pride Hotels Group portfolio. Pride Premier, Amritsar, sets a new standard for upscale luxury with its 55 meticulously appointed rooms designed to offer guests comfort and convenience. The hotel features an a 3000-square-foot Banquet

Hall, and a Conference room accommodating up to 50 attendees.

Atul Upadhyay, Executive Vice President of Pride Hotels Group, remarked that with the introduction of our premier brand, they invite guests to indulge in unparalleled luxury. This momentous occasion signifies their debut in Punjab and underscores their steadfast commitment to curating extraordinary hospitality experiences in culturally rich destinations.

ITC Hotels expands into North East with Welcomhotel Gangtok

ITC Hotels marks its entry into the North East region with the signing of Welcomhotel Gangtok. Set against the majestic backdrop of Mount Kanchenjunga, India's highest peak and the third highest in the world, this 60-key property promises breathtaking views from every room. Leveraging the culinary expertise of ITC Hotels, Welcomhotel Gangtok will feature two Food and Beverage outlets: 'Mayal', the all-day dining restaurant, and a pool café and bar. With a seating capacity of 150, 'Mayal' will entice diners with authentic Sikkimese delicacies, set amidst both indoor and outdoor spaces offering panoramic views of the valley.

Strategically located near Gangtok's iconic MG Market and the Flower Exhibition Centre, Welcomhotel Gangtok is slated to open its doors in early 2025, offering guests a new dimension

to their Sikkim experience. Gangtok is the perfect gateway to the North and East, attracting domestic and international tourists with its pristine landscapes and cultural richness. From the tranquil waters of River Teesta to the majestic Ban Jhakri Falls, visitors can explore various attractions, including the Rumtek Monastery, Nathula Pass, Tsomgo Lake, and Tashi Viewpoint.

Anil Chadha, Chief Executive of ITC Hotels, expressed his delight at bringing the Welcomhotel brand to Sikkim, India's first organic state renowned for its biodiversity. He emphasised the company's commitment to expanding its presence in the Eastern and North-Eastern regions, promising guests enriching experiences that blend local heritage with the leisurely splendour of Sikkim.



Yasawa Island Resort Fiji unveils exorbitant renovation

Yasawa Island Resort & Spa, Fiji, a renowned independent luxury resort announces the completion of a million-dollar renovation project, revealed by Director/Owner James McCann. This extensive renovation, spanning six months and set to conclude this month, marks a significant milestone for the resort.

Located on a single island encompassing 7,000 acres, Yasawa Island Resort & Spa boasts 18 spacious bungalows, accompanied by a small Fijian village as its only neighbour and accessible via a 30-minute private air transfer from Nadi International Airport. The resort celebrates its latest achievement with a stunning transformation of its public spaces and the interior and exterior of its villas.

They were thrilled to unveil the exciting renovation, blending style and sustainability, as they continue to welcome new and returning guests in 2024 and beyond, shared Interior Design Consultant Erin McCann, echoing the sentiments of the Fijian family behind the resort.

Erin McCann further reveals the resort's pursuit of EarthCheck certification, highlighting its commitment to social corporate responsibility and ecological sustainability—a testament to its dedication to its surroundings and community.

The renovation emphasises sustainability, showcasing a newly refurbished main complex adorned with a natural stone fountain and indigenous granite accents, enhancing the resort's entrance and lobby.

Leisure Hotels introduces Bedzzz Xclusiv, Morjim, Goa

Leisure Hotels Group (LHG), renowned for its experiential resorts across North India and Uttarakhand unveils its latest venture, Bedzzz Xclusiv, in Morjim, Goa.

Following the successful launches of Bedzzz in Rishikesh and Varanasi, Bedzzz Xclusiv opens its doors on March 6. It promises travellers an immersive experience blending comfort, social engagement, and vibrant ambience. Bedzzz embodies an affordable "Sociotel" experience, while Bedzzz Xclusiv elevates the concept

with mixed-use open and covered spaces, promoting the 'Stay, Play, Vacay' ethos. Features like a bar and swimming pool exceed the standard Bedzzz offerings.

Vibhas Prasad, Director of Leisure Hotels Group, expresses excitement about the launch. Bedzzz Xclusiv, Morjim, Goa signifies a significant milestone in its nationwide expansion journey, catering to the modern youth-minded traveller. With its vibrant ambience and curated activities, it's set to meet India's growing demand for experiential travel.

Centara Hotels & Resorts achieves GSTC Certification for twelve properties

Centara Hotels & Resorts, received certification approval from Bureau Veritas to meet global standards for sustainable travel and tourism, known as GSTC criteria.

Twelve of Centara Hotels & Resorts' properties have been granted GSTC certification. Centara aims to achieve full accreditation for all properties by 2025. The twelve hotels recognised for meeting the GSTC criteria in 2024 include Centara Reserve Samui, Centara Kata Resort Phuket, Centara Ao Nang Beach Resort & Spa Krabi, Centara Watergate Pavillion Hotel Bangkok, Centara Q Resort Rayong, Centara Sonrisa Residences & Suites Sriracha, Centara Mirage Beach Resort Dubai, Centara Life Maris Resort Jomtien, Centara Life Cha-Am



Beach Resort Hua Hin, COSI Samui Chaweng Beach, COSI Pattaya Wong Amat Beach, and COSI Krabi Ao Nang Beach.

Centara's certification underscores its commitment to sustainable and green practices. The company aims to be more aware of its environmental impact and align its values with a more mindful and ecologically conscious future.

Hilton marks entrance into Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Hilton unveils the Hilton Saigon in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, marking the debut of its flagship brand in the city. Located in the financial and residential hub, Hilton Saigon offers breathtaking views of the Saigon River from every room, promising an unparalleled experience for guests.

Alan Watts, President of Asia Pacific, Hilton expressed his confidence about Hilton Saigon upholding their legacy of delivering exceptional service and hospitality to create a memorable stay for every guest.

Conveniently located 30 minutes from Tan Son Nhat Airport, Hilton Saigon is

surrounded by famous cultural sites and historical landmarks. The hotel's 228 guest rooms and suites offer sleek, contemporary interiors with subtle botanical inspirations and stunning views of the Saigon River, allowing guests to immerse themselves in the city's essence.

Alexandra Jaritz, Senior Vice President of Brand Management, Asia Pacific, Hilton, expressed excitement about Hilton Saigon's role in showcasing Ho Chi Minh City's vibrant culture and hospitality. Hilton Saigon joins a portfolio of 14 Hilton hotels in Vietnam, further solidifying Hilton's commitment to expanding its presence in the region.





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KAVYA HOTELS & RESORTS

THE HIMALAYAN HAVEN

Hitesh Golchha, Executive Director of Kavya Resort & Spa, introduces the essence of Kavya, drawing from the Sanskrit word meaning 'poetic inspiration'. Situated in the serene village of Nagarkot, its enchanting ambience and picturesque views promise guests an unparalleled retreat from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Here, the mountains' rugged allure converges with the Kathmandu Valley's tranquil beauty, enveloping visitors in a spellbinding embrace. The splendid property emerges as a sanctuary nestled amidst the Himalayas, embodying a fusion of refinement, sophistication, and opulence against breathtaking natural vistas. Kavya's core mission is to inspire guests to become the best versions of themselves, starting with cleansing the mind through meditation. This approach sets Kavya apart, offering simplified meditation tools even for those who struggle with stillness. Kavya is presented as a unique wellness destination rooted in authenticity, sustainability, and personalised experiences

By Aanchal Sachdeva

Conceptualising Wellness: Inspiring Transformation

Kavya's core concept centres around inspiring guests to tread on a journey of holistic well-being. Guests are offered an array of transformative experiences through a meticulously crafted wellness program, including meditation, yoga, ayurveda, and outdoor activities such as mountain biking and hiking. These offerings, set against the backdrop of the majestic Himalayas, aim to rejuvenate the mind, body, and soul, fostering a sense of inner peace and serenity.

Architectural Harmony: Melding Tradition with Modernity

At the heart of Kavya's charm lies its architectural design, which seamlessly blends Nepalese tradition with contemporary sophistication. Drawing inspiration from a modern Nepali village, the resort's structures are crafted from locally sourced materials such as mud, wood, and copper, creating a harmonious fusion of luxury and authenticity. Each villa, adorned with unique village silhouettes, offers guests an immersive natural experience while prioritising sustainability to minimise ecological impact.

The Pillars of Wellness: Meditation, Yoga, and Lifestyle

At Kavya, wellness begins with meditation, progressing through various levels of depth. The journey extends to yoga, physical activities like mountain biking and hiking, and lifestyle practices such as Ayurveda. Hitesh emphasises that true wellness encompasses a holistic approach beyond massages or treatments.

Location and Architectural Design

Situated just 45 minutes from Kathmandu, Kavya offers breathtaking views of the Himalayan range from every room. The architectural design is a modern interpretation of traditional Nepali materials, creating a harmonious blend of mud, wood, and copper.



Villas are strategically built on natural terraces, preserving the landscape's integrity.

Authentic Experiences: From Dining to Adventure

Beyond its wellness offerings, Kavya provides guests with many unforgettable experiences to enrich their stay. From exhilarating helicopter tours to iconic mountains like Everest to cultural excursions to UNESCO World Heritage sites, the resort offers many opportunities for exploration and discovery. Culinary delights featuring mountain cuisine crafted from organic produce tantalise the taste buds, while curated activities such as mountain biking and hiking promise authentic encounters with nature. It offers a diverse range of mountain cuisines sourced from high-altitude regions worldwide. Guests can also indulge in farm-to-fork dining, picking fresh produce from the organic garden.

Personalised Wellness Packages

Guests can choose from various wellness packages tailored to their needs, whether it's

a brief stay for relaxation or a transformative retreat focusing on meditation and mindfulness. With three to fifteen-day options, Kavya aims to provide tools for self-improvement and long-lasting lifestyle changes.

Sustainability Practices

The emphasis is on Kavya's commitment to sustainability, focusing on practical and efficient solutions. The property avoids plastic usage, minimises food waste, and operates with energy-efficient systems. Sustainability at Kavya is a buzzword and a deeply ingrained practice rooted in efficiency and environmental responsibility.

Target Audience and Future Expansion

Kavya targets individuals seeking meaningful experiences and well-being, transcending social classes to appeal to a mindset of self-discovery and growth. While there are no immediate plans for expansion, Golchha envisions Kavya as a haven for those craving authenticity and personal transformation.



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In the fast-paced world of corporate events and meetings, the choice of venue can make all the difference between a successful gathering and a forgettable one. With the convergence of business and leisure becoming increasingly important, there's a need for venues that seamlessly blend both worlds. Enter Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC), an unmatched duo that redefines the concept of a perfect business and leisure destination.



Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC): A Testament to Convention Excellence

Nestled majestically within Hyderabad's corporate enclave, HICC stands tall as a symbol of unwavering commitment to excellence in the world of conventions. Yet, its charm extends far beyond its strategic location.

A Tapestry of Modernity

HICC boasts over 6480 square meters of impeccably designed, pillar-less space - a canvas waiting to be painted with your corporate vision. Here, technology and infrastructure harmonize to create a canvas on which your event can unfurl with the precision of a masterstroke. Equipped with state-of-the-art audio-visual facilities and lightning-fast Wi-Fi, the centre becomes a dynamic stage for your corporate narrative.

Sustainability Redefined

In an era where sustainability is no longer an option but a responsibility, HICC proudly carries the mantle of eco-friendliness. The venue is designed with a conscience, featuring energy-efficient lighting, water-saving technologies, and a commitment to responsible environmental practices.



Culinary Artistry

In the world of successful events, culinary experiences are often the unsung heroes. HICC's diverse culinary offerings, ranging from international delicacies to local flavors, ensure that your attendees are treated to a gastronomic journey that is nothing short of exceptional.

Seamless Connection

HICC offers a unique proposition by being directly connected to Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre. This symbiotic relationship facilitates the seamless transition between work and relaxation without ever leaving the premises.

Opulent Retreat

Our meticulously designed rooms and suites offer a luxurious escape for your guests. Modern amenities blend seamlessly with captivating views of either the serene outdoor poolside surrounded by lush greenery or the vibrant cityscape, creating an ambiance of unrivalled comfort.

Rubin Cherian

General Manager

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC

"Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and HICC transcend the concept of venues; they are an experience meticulously woven to perfection. As a meeting organizer or a corporate traveler, you can trust that your event or stay with us will be a seamless blend of sophistication and relaxation. With world-class infrastructure, opulent accommodations, and unparalleled convenience, we emerge as the ultimate business and leisure destination in Hyderabad."



Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre: Where Business Meets Leisure:

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre doesn't merely serve as a hotel; it orchestrates an experience that perfectly complements HICC's prowess, making it the quintessential destination for corporate travellers and meeting planners alike.



Leisure Escapes

Recognizing the importance of recharging, Novotel pampers its guests with a wellness centre, an inviting outdoor pool, and an array of recreational activities that serve as a perfect antidote to a productive day.

Culinary Bliss

Dining at Novotel Hyderabad is an adventure in itself. From the tantalizing flavours served at Food Exchange to the perfect place to unwind at The Bar, the cozy charm of Le Cafe, and the innovative cuisine at the new Pan-Arabic delight, HYBA, we promise a culinary journey that transcends ordinary dining. Permit To Grill offers comfort food for those seeking solace in familiar flavors, while Under The Mango Tree provides intimate dinners for special occasions. Whether you're craving international delicacies or local favorites, Novotel Hyderabad offers a spectrum of dining experiences to cater to every palate.

Convenience Redefined

What sets Novotel Hyderabad apart is its seamless connection to HICC, eliminating the need for transportation between meetings and accommodations. Your attendees can effortlessly navigate between business and leisure, saving precious time and energy.

The Harmonious Advantage

The true brilliance of Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and HICC lies in their seamless collaboration, a feat that offers meeting planners and corporate travelers unparalleled advantages.

Efficiency Beyond Compare

With both venues harmoniously under one roof, logistical intricacies dissolve into simplicity. Meetings, exhibitions, and accommodations can be effortlessly coordinated, streamlining the planning process, and saving invaluable time.

Limitless Possibilities

The flexibility of HICC's spaces, combined with Novotel's lavish amenities, opens the door to limitless event customization. Whether it's an intimate board meeting or a grand international conference, we have the canvas to paint your vision.

Service Excellence

Our devoted teams at Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and HICC are dedicated to delivering excellence. From the initial planning stages to the flawless execution of your event, we work in close collaboration to ensure your vision transforms into a reality.



Shiiv Parvesh
Executive Chef

"In crafting memorable dining experiences, we aim to tantalize the taste buds and create moments of culinary delight," Chef Shiiv Parvesh, Executive Chef, Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC, shares. "Our culinary philosophy revolves around the fusion of global influences with local flavors, resulting in a gastronomic journey that captivates and satisfies."



Bhavani Dutta
Director of Human Resources

"In our endeavor to create an unparalleled experience, the people behind Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC play a pivotal role," emphasizes Bhavani Dutta, Director of Human Resources. "At

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC, our people are at the heart of everything we do. We believe that exceptional service stems from a motivated and empowered team. Through continuous training, personalized development plans, and a culture of inclusivity and respect, we strive to create an environment where every team member can thrive. Our commitment to nurturing talent not only enhances guest experiences but also fosters a sense of belonging and pride among our staff. At Novotel Hyderabad, we don't just provide jobs; we cultivate careers."



Prithvi Anand
Director of Sales & Marketing

Adding to the above sentiment, Prithvi Anand, Director of Sales & Marketing, highlights, "Serving as the bridge between vision and execution, we at Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC are dedicated to crafting tailored experiences that exceed expectations. Our commitment to understanding your unique requirements ensures that every event, from intimate gatherings to grand conferences of 6000 delegates, is executed with finesse, leaving a lasting impression on attendees. With our unwavering focus on client satisfaction and meticulous attention to detail, we strive to elevate the standard of corporate events, making Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC the preferred choice for discerning organizers seeking excellence."



Mahiul Islam
Director of Operations

In words of Mahiul Islam, Director of Operations, "At Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC, operational excellence is not just a goal; it's our promise. Behind the scenes, our dedicated team works tirelessly to ensure seamless coordination and flawless execution of every aspect of your event or stay. From maintaining impeccable facilities to delivering impeccable service, we pride ourselves on our unwavering commitment to excellence. With a relentless pursuit of perfection and a passion for hospitality, we aim to create memorable experiences that exceed expectations, setting the stage for unparalleled success and satisfaction at Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC."

"Why settle for the ordinary when the extraordinary awaits you? Choose Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and HICC for your next corporate event and experience the seamless fusion of business and leisure at the heart of Hyderabad. Your success is our commitment, and your satisfaction is our ultimate reward." wraps up Rubin Cherian, General Manager.





Galleria Al Maryah Island & Emirates Environmental Group furthers sustainability

The Galleria Al Maryah Island partnered with the Emirates Environmental Group to further its sustainability efforts by successfully planting 3,000 Acacia and Ghaf trees as part of its "Embrace Nature, Inspire Change" campaign. The tree planting event, held on March 8, 2024, at Alsamha School in Abu Dhabi, marks a significant step towards achieving the campaign's environmental goals. The newly planted trees, including the resilient Ghaf and water-conserving Acacia trees, are expected to mature over the next three to five years. This initiative is projected to absorb

approximately 17.69 metric tonnes of CO₂, contributing significantly to carbon emission reduction efforts.

Mark Ruffley, CEO of Al Maryah Retail Company, expressed enthusiasm to enrich the community and protect the environment. He stated that planting 3,000 Acacia and Ghaf trees represent their commitment to creating a greener, more sustainable community in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi community. The Ghaf tree, known for thriving in desert conditions, holds cultural significance as a symbol of stability and peace in the UAE's desert landscape.

Middle East leads Chinese tourism revival

The Middle East is leading the recovery of Chinese tourism, with projections suggesting a near-doubling of outbound travel from China in 2024 compared to the previous year. This resurgence is a significant step towards returning to pre-pandemic levels, with estimates indicating that the number of Chinese tourists will be only 22% below the record numbers seen in 2019 when they spent over \$250 billion overseas.

ATM 2024, anticipates doubling the number of Chinese exhibitors compared to the 2019 edition, highlighting the region's rapid recovery in attracting Chinese visitors. The Middle East has become a favoured destination for Chinese travellers, with Dubai, Saudi Arabia, AlUla, Egypt, and Jordan among the top choices. This preference is expected to drive



a significant increase in Chinese participation at ATM 2024, with new exhibitors and anticipated representation from destinations like Macao, the China Cultural Centre in the UAE, and the Hong Kong Tourism Board.

At ATM 2024, a dedicated conference session titled 'Capitalising on China's Predicted Tourism Surge,' in collaboration with Huawei will delve into changing trends, cultural preferences, and the role of mobile marketing in the Chinese tourism.



Hokuriku Shinkansen Extension unveils new adventures

Started from March 16, 2024, Japan's travel landscape is expecting a significant transformation with the extension of the Hokuriku Shinkansen from Tokyo to Kanazawa and beyond, granting unparalleled access to scenic landscapes and cultural treasures.

Situated on the northwestern part of Japan's main island of Honshu, the Hokuriku region boasts year-round allure, from spectacular cherry blossom destinations to vibrant autumn hues and snowy winters. The extension of

the high-speed rail line introduces six new stations, opening doors to a wealth of experiences awaiting exploration (as illustrated on the map with dotted lines from Komatsu to Tsuruga).

Japan beckons travellers to venture beyond its urban hubs and delves into the picturesque wonders of the Hokuriku region. With seamless connectivity, adventurers embarking on this journey will immerse themselves further in Ishikawa and Fukui prefectures, savouring an unforgettable voyage through Japan's hidden treasures.

BTEA launches 'Ramadan in Bahrain' Guide

Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) unveiled an enticing guide titled "Ramadan in Bahrain," marking the festive spirit of the Gulf tourism capital Manama for 2024. Sarah Ahmed Buhiji, CEO of BTEA, expressed the authority's dedication to sustaining tourism momentum year-round, collaborating with the private sector to launch initiatives during Ramadan.

Throughout Ramadan, venues across the kingdom will host various entertaining events, including Marassi Galleria, Al Liwan, The Avenues, Souq Al Baraha, and Seef Mall-Seef District.

The Bahrain National Theatre will be the "Manama



Nights" epicentre, featuring musical performances and traditional games.

Other notable events include the "Emirates Arabian Horse Global Cup (Bahrain Breeders Show)" at Bahrain Royal Equestrian and Endurance Federations, "Musagaf Evenings" in Manama Souq, "Roast Camp" at Budaiya Botanical Gardens, "Layali Chill" at Bahrain Bay, and "Ramadan Nights" at District 1, showcasing Geragoon and traditional performances.



SeaWorld® Yas Island sets Guinness World Record

SeaWorld® Yas Island in Abu Dhabi achieved a significant milestone by earning a coveted spot in the Guinness World Records™ as the 'Largest Indoor Marine-Life Theme Park' globally. Presented to Mohamed Abdalla Al Zaabi, Group CEO of Miral, and the leadership team of SeaWorld Abu Dhabi, this recognition comes within a year of the park's grand opening. The park spans an impressive 183,000 square meters across five indoor levels.

SeaWorld Abu Dhabi, an endeavour by Miral, offers guests an immersive journey into the marine world, blending entertainment, education, and conservation. It boasts eight immersive realms, including the Abu Dhabi Ocean, One Ocean, MicroOcean, Endless Ocean,

Tropical Ocean, Rocky Point, and Polar Ocean (the Arctic and Antarctica realms).

The park prioritises animal welfare, adhering to the highest standards set by globally recognised animal welfare organisations and becoming the first facility in the region certified by Global Humane, the world's largest certifier of animal welfare.

Thomas Kaferle, General Manager of SeaWorld® Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, expressed delight at receiving the Guinness World Records™ recognition, emphasising their dedication to delivering an exceptional entertainment experience combined with interactive education. The park offers over 15 interactive experiences, thrilling rides, animal encounters, and presentations.

San Francisco Tourism rebounds

San Francisco Travel

Association revealed the remarkable performance of San Francisco's tourism sector in 2023 during its annual Marketing Conference at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The city welcomed 23.1 million visitors, a 5.2% increase from the previous year. Visitor spending surged 18% to \$8.8 billion, contributing to total visitor-related expenditures of \$9.3 billion.

The city's robust convention calendar, featuring global events like Dreamforce and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Summit, fueled significant hotel occupancy and room night gains. Average hotel occupancy rose by 3.2% to 64.2%, with an average daily rate of \$243.80, up 7.2% year-over-year.

International visitation was pivotal in San Francisco's tourism recovery, witnessing a remarkable 26% growth. Notably, visitors from China emerged as the top spenders, contributing \$633.4 million. San Francisco International Airport (SFO) served over 50 million passengers, up 18.7% from 2022, with new routes and increased connectivity enhancing its appeal.

Looking ahead, San Francisco Travel forecasts continued growth in visitation and spending



in 2024, driven by leisure and business travel. Visitor volume is expected to reach 23.7 million, with international visitors contributing \$5 billion of the projected \$9.45 billion in spending. Hotel occupancy is forecasted to get 65%, with an average daily rate projected to grow to \$251.91.

While events at Moscone Center are expected to have a reduced impact in 2024 due to pandemic-related challenges, the city's reputation for innovation continues to attract business and technology meetings. San Francisco's visitor economy is anticipated to surpass pre-pandemic levels in terms of both volume and spending by 2027.

SFO also anticipates continued growth, with projections to serve nearly 54 million passengers in 2024. San Francisco's tourism sector demonstrates resilience and optimism, positioning the city as a leading destination.

Jamaica honoured as 'Global Destination of the Year'

Jamaica has been acclaimed as the Global Destination of the Year at the prestigious travel trade show ITB in Berlin. The Pacific Area Travel Writers Association (PATWA) conferred the honour. Accepting the award on behalf of Jamaica, Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett expressed gratitude, stating that Jamaica is renowned for its food, music, and love, and they are humbled to be acknowledged for the experiential offerings that create lasting memories for our visitors.

Jamaica's tourism sector garnered numerous accolades for its authentic and distinctive offerings. Last year, the island was recognised as the 'Caribbean's Best Culinary Destination' at the World Culinary Awards. Additionally, Jamaica clinched 33 World Travel Awards, including the prestigious 'Caribbean's Leading Destination' title.

Minister Bartlett remarked that the recognition from PATWA is a testament to Jamaica's commitment to excellence in tourism products and services. It is the perfect backdrop for romance, including engagements, weddings, and honeymoons.

These accolades coincide with Jamaica's remarkable tourism



performance last year, with over 4 million international visitors and earnings of US\$4.2 billion. Minister Bartlett also announced that Jamaica welcomed one million visitors and earned \$1 billion in gross foreign exchange earnings in the first two months of the year, underscoring the robust growth trajectory of the country's tourism sector.

Saudi Arabia celebrates 100 million tourists milestone

Saudi Arabia celebrated the remarkable achievement of welcoming 100 million tourists in 2023, seven years ahead of schedule at the ITB Berlin.

Returning to ITB for the second consecutive year, Saudi Arabia brings a delegation of over 55 partners led by His Excellency Ahmed Al-Khateeb, Minister of Tourism and Chairman of the Saudi Tourism Authority (STA). The delegation includes leaders from the broader Saudi tourism ecosystem, encompassing destination management companies, hotels, and airlines. Following the previous year's success of winning the "best exhibitor" award, Minister Al-Khateeb inaugurated Saudi's most immersive and dynamic stand yet, showcasing the kingdom's world-class destination offerings.

Saudi Arabia's historic milestone of welcoming international tourists in 2023



positions it well ahead of its original target outlined in Vision 2030. To celebrate this achievement, Minister Al-Khateeb hosted a celebratory reception titled "Breaking Records, Building Bridges," bringing together global tourism leaders at ITB Berlin. The event highlights Saudi Arabia's remarkable growth and development in the tourism sector.

Minister Ahmed Al-Khateeb said that Saudi Arabia's expanded participation at ITB Berlin reflected its tremendous growth.



Taiwan adjusts tourism targets

Taiwan is re-evaluating its tourism objectives due to challenges in cross-strait travel. Chou Yung-hui, the Director-General of the Tourism Administration, expressed concerns over a potential shortfall of 2 million foreign visitor arrivals this year.

Chou noted that if China continues prohibiting group tourist visits to Taiwan, the tourism target may need to be revised downward to 10 million. Last month, Taiwan decided to maintain the three-year ban on group tourists bound for China, citing tensions with Beijing and

the absence of Chinese tourist groups visiting Taiwan.

Taiwan has experienced a notable recovery in tourism, recording nearly 1.9 million visitors as of March 15. This represents an 85 per cent rebound compared to the same pre-pandemic period 2019.

Notably, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Macau remain the top destinations for visitors to Taiwan.

Chou announced plans to expand the Taiwan Pass, initially designed for foreign visitors, to include local tourists to further stimulate tourism.



Bhutan pushes for increased air connectivity with India

His Excellency Dasho Tshering Tobgay, the Prime Minister of Bhutan, emphasised the need for enhanced air connectivity between India and Bhutan to facilitate tourism growth during an exclusive interaction titled 'India-Bhutan Tourism: Expanding Horizons', organised by FICCI.

PM Tobgay stressed the need to improve access to Bhutan by air. He outlined his plan to target 150,000 Indian tourists in the coming years. He encouraged collaboration between Indian tour operators and the Bhutanese govt to

design special tourist packages catering to Indian preferences. He highlighted Bhutan's visa-free entry policy for Indian tourists, emphasising the ease of travel. He also intended to allow Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the tourism sector, further facilitating growth and development.

Dr Jyotsna Suri, Past President of FICCI, emphasised Bhutan's potential for tourism growth, citing its stunning landscapes and unique cultural heritage. She also highlighted the importance of infrastructure development and trust-building between the two.



Thailand's economic growth boosted by tourism

Thailand's economy experienced a slow expansion in February, driven by growth in the service sector and an uptick in tourist arrivals. Despite a decrease in exports from the previous month, the country recorded a current account surplus of USD 2 billion in February, a significant improvement from last month's deficit of USD 0.2 billion, according to the BOT.

Tourism played a crucial role in Thailand's economic

performance, with 8.73 million foreign tourist arrivals recorded up to March 24, marking a 44 per cent year-on-year increase. The government targeted attracting a record 40 million foreign visitors this year, surpassing the 28 million visitors in 2023.

Assistant Governor Chayawadee Chai-Anant emphasised that tourism will continue to support the economy in March.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR DEAL ACTIVITY DOWN BY 22.5% YOY DURING JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2024, REVEALS GLOBALDATA

The travel and tourism sector, a global industry, saw the announcement of 93 deals* worldwide during the first two months of 2024, marking a year-on-year (YoY) decline of 22.5% compared to the announcement of 120 deals during the same period in 2023, as revealed by GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

An analysis of GlobalData's Deals Database reveals that the number of mergers and acquisitions (M&A) and venture financing deals declined while private equity deals volume showcased improvement during the period.

The number of M&A deals declined by 25.8%, whereas venture financing deals volume registered a YoY decline of 22.2%. Meanwhile,

private equity deals volume increased from four during January-February 2023 to six during January-February 2024.

Aurojyoti Bose, Lead Business Fundamentals Analyst at GlobalData, comments: "The dent in deal-making sentiment across sectors and geographies amid the volatile market conditions has also taken a toll on deal activity in the travel and tourism sector. As a result, the sector saw the announcement of less than 100 deals during the first two months of 2024."

Most regions and key markets also registered a decline in deal volume during January-February 2024 compared to the same period last year.

For instance, the deal volume in North

America, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and the South and Central American regions declined, while the Asia-Pacific region showcased marginal improvement.

Meanwhile, key markets such as the US, the UK, and France registered a decline in deal volume during January-February 2024 compared to the same period last year, whereas India, South Korea, and Australia witnessed some improvement.

Bose concludes: "Despite this downturn, areas of resilience and opportunity exist, particularly in regions like Asia-Pacific. As markets evolve, identifying pockets of growth and innovation becomes paramount for industry stakeholders."



EXPERIENCE THE 2024 SOLAR ECLIPSE

JOURNEY THROUGH 13 STATES

On April 8, 2024, North America will witness a celestial spectacle as the solar eclipse graces the skies, traversing Mexico, the United States, and Canada. Travel enthusiasts have a unique opportunity to bask in the cosmic wonder from 13 states along its path—a rare event not to be missed until 2044. Look forward to the finest locations to capture this extraordinary moment



DALLAS, TEXAS

Eclipse Times: 12:23 p.m. to 3:02 p.m. (CDT), totality starting at 1:40 p.m. (CDT).

Where to Watch: Dive into history at Dinosaur Valley State Park, where ancient footprints adorn the Paluxy Riverbed.

Where to Eat: Indulge in authentic Mexican delights at El Bolero Cocina Mexicana, complemented by their signature Cotton Candy Margarita.

What to Do: Immerse yourself in Dallas' vibrant Arts District, home to captivating performances and cultural treasures.



POTEAU, OKLAHOMA

Eclipse Times: 12:28 p.m. to 3:06 p.m. (CDT), totality beginning at 1:45 p.m. (CDT).

Where to Watch: Climb 'The World's Tallest Hill,' Cavanal Hill, for unrivalled panoramic views.

Where to Eat: Experience classic American fare at Myers Drive-In, a local gem since 1972.

What to Do: Explore the natural wonders of Ouachita National Forest at Lake Wister State Park.



LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

Eclipse Times: 12:33 p.m. to 3:11 p.m. (CDT), totality starting at 1:51 p.m. (CDT).

Where to Watch: Seek natural solace at Pinnacle Mountain State Park for uninterrupted eclipse views.

Where to Eat: Savor Southern flavours at Dizzy's Gypsy Bistro or indulge in street eats at The Boil Co. Food Truck.

What to Do: Embark on a journey through history with Little Rock's Civil Rights Tour.



PADUCAH, KENTUCKY

Eclipse Times: 12:42 p.m. to 3:18 p.m. (CDT), totality beginning at 2:00 p.m. (CDT).

Where to Watch: For optimal eclipse viewing, traverse the Greenway Trail or relax at Shultz Park, which overlooks the Ohio River.

Where to Eat: Sample local delights at the historic Coke Plant, now home to Pipers Tea & Coffee House and Dry Ground Brewing Company.

What to Do: Immerse yourself in art at the

National Quilt Museum and explore Paducah's history through the Wall-to-Wall Floodwall Murals.

Initiate on a Midwest Adventure: Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio



CAPE GIRARDEAU, MISSOURI

Eclipse Times: 12:39 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. (CDT), totality starting at 1:56 p.m. (CDT).

Where to Watch: Experience the eclipse amidst the breathtaking scenery of Trail of Tears State Park.

Where to Eat: Indulge in local favourites at BG's Deli, a Cape Girardeau staple for over 40 years.

What to Do: Follow the Gone Girl Driving Tour and explore filming locations from the blockbuster movie.



SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, ILLINOIS

Eclipse Times: 12:42 p.m. to 3:18 p.m. (CDT), totality beginning at 1:59 p.m. (CDT).



Where to Watch: Marvel at the eclipse against the dramatic backdrop of Garden of the Gods or enjoy live music at Shawnee Cave Amphitheater.

Where to Eat: Sample the best Southern Illinois cuisine on the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail.

What to Do: Soar through the treetops on the Shawnee Bluffs Canopy Tour.



Where to Watch: Enjoy eclipse views from Battery Park overlooking Lake Champlain.

Where to Eat: Dine on fresh seafood at Shanty on the Shore.

What to Do: Explore Church Street Marketplace for shopping and dining.



ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA

Eclipse Times: 2:02 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (EDT), totality starting at 3:16 p.m. (EDT).

Where to Watch: Experience the eclipse amidst the stunning scenery of Erie Bluffs State Park.

Where to Eat: Indulge in milkshakes at Sara's and enjoy sunset views at Presque Isle State Park.

What to Do: Explore sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets at Presque Isle State Park.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Eclipse Times: 1:45 p.m. to 4:20 p.m. (EDT), totality beginning at 3:06 p.m. (EDT).

Where to Watch: Witness the iconic Indianapolis Motor Speedway spectacle.

Where to Eat: Delight in farm-to-table dishes at FARMbloomington or catch live blues at Slippery Noodle Inn.

What to Do: Explore Indiana's rich history at the Slippery Noodle Inn, a Blues music hotspot.



LANCASTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Eclipse Times: 2:16 p.m. to 4:37 p.m. (EDT), totality starting at 3:26 p.m. (EDT).

Where to Watch: Experience the eclipse amidst the sweeping landscapes of Weeks State Park or Milan Hill State Park.

Where to Eat: Indulge in baked goods at Polish Princess Bakery or seasonal brews at Copper Pig Brewery.

What to Do: Catch a film at the retro Rialto Theater.



BUFFALO, NEW YORK

Eclipse Times: 2:04 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. (EDT), totality starting at 1:56 p.m. (EDT).

Where to Watch: Witness the eclipse from Niagara Falls State Park, just minutes from Buffalo.

Where to Eat: Sample Buffalo wings at Anchor Bar, the birthplace of this iconic dish.

What to Do: Visit historic sites like the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site.



CLEVELAND, OHIO

Eclipse Times: 1:59 p.m. to 4:29 p.m. (EDT), totality starting at 3:13 p.m. (EDT).

Where to Watch: Capture the moment at Edgewater Park with the iconic Cleveland skyline.

Where to Eat: Savor unique BBQ flavours at Mabel's BBQ or explore music history at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Museum.

What to Do: Catch a baseball game at Progressive Field Stadium, home to the Cleveland Guardians.

Discover the Beauty of the Northeast: Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine



MAINE

Eclipse Times: 2:22 p.m. to 4:40 p.m. (EDT), totality starting at 3:32 p.m. (EDT).

Where to Watch: Witness the eclipse against the backdrop of Katahdin at Baxter State Park.

Where to Eat: Try Maine blueberry pie at the Appalachian Trail Cafe.

What to Do: Embark on the Thoreau-Wabanaki Trail for outdoor adventures.

Don't miss your chance to witness this once-in-a-lifetime event. Plan your journey now and prepare for an unforgettable cosmic adventure across 13 states in North America.

BURLINGTON, VERMONT

Eclipse Times: 2:14 p.m. to 4:37 p.m. (EDT), totality starting at 3:26 p.m. (EDT).



EXPANDING FOOTPRINT: ONE ABOVE'S MARCH EVENT SERIES BOOSTS PRESENCE IN BANGALORE

One Above, a leading Global DMC, made significant strides in establishing a stronger foothold in the dynamic Bangalore market with three consecutive events throughout March. Rahim Aslam, Founder and Director of One Above, emphasised Bangalore's pivotal role as a destination hub for adventurous travellers seeking novel experiences.

These events were a testament to One Above's unwavering commitment to the Bangalore market. The inaugural event, a networking dinner in collaboration with Sarova Hotels and Resorts Kenya, energetically showcased the diverse attractions of Kenya to Bangalore agents, extending beyond wildlife experiences. Subsequently, a networking dinner hosted by Cinnamon Hotels featured Shaista Khan presenting compelling offers for the Maldives and Sri Lanka to an audience of over 90 travel agents. Concluding the series, the UTEN Bengaluru Roadshow provided One Above with a platform to exhibit its diverse portfolio and introduce trending destinations, sparking enthusiasm among Bangalore agents and reaffirming its dedication to offering a variety of travel experiences.



INTERGLOBE AIR TRANSPORT AND MANTA AIR SHOWCASE DIRECT FLIGHT BENEFITS TO MALDIVES WITH BANGALORE ROADSHOW

InterGlobe Air Transport and Manta Air showcase seamless travel experience to Dhaalu region, offering comfort, convenience, and cost savings for holidaymakers

InterGlobe Air Transport, in collaboration with Manta Air, organised a roadshow in Bangalore on March 18. Partnering with Kandima Resort, RIU Hotel, and Niyama Islands, Manta Air showcased its offerings and highlighted the advantages of flying to Dhaalu Airport in the Maldives. The event, attended by 60 agents, aimed to familiarise the travel fraternity with the product and its benefits.

Among the distinguished attendees were Ahmed Maumoon, Deputy CEO of Manta Air, GM-Sales for InterGlobe Air Transport, Nayan Srivastava, and representatives from the partnering resorts.

Agents provided positive feedback, indicating potential success during the summer holiday. In addition to targeting leisure and honeymoon travellers, Manta Air aims to attract inventive groups.

The airline operates three weekly flights between Dhaalu Airport and Bangalore, scheduled every Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday. Utilising ATR72-600 aircraft, Manta Air prioritised passenger comfort

by redesigning the interior. The aircraft features 64 seats, including 16 luxurious Sapphire Class (premium economy) seats and 48 spacious Comfort Class (economy) seats, offering seating pitches of 36 inches and 32 inches, respectively.

Manta Air's direct flight to Dhaalu Airport eliminates the need for additional domestic or seaplane flights to reach resorts in the Dhaalu region. This streamlined process saves costs and reduces travel time by 4-5 hours, allowing guests more time to enjoy their holiday.

Passengers travelling on this flight benefit from convenient and exclusive check-in, immigration, and customs processes, as it is the only international flight operating to Dhaalu Airport. The airline offers baggage allowances of 20kg in economy and 25kg in premium economy, along with 7kg of hand luggage.

Moreover, passengers are treated to complimentary in-flight meals, including sandwiches and refreshments, without additional charges, enhancing the overall travel experience with Manta Air.



GLOBETROTTER

TAIWAN

TEMPTATIONS

TRAVERSE TRADITION AND TECH IN THE TERRIFIC TREASURE

In East Asia's heart, Taiwan is an island nation brimming with cultural treasures, natural wonders, and culinary delights. Renowned for its vibrant cities, stunning landscapes, and warm hospitality, Taiwan offers visitors a unique blend of tradition and modernity. With a history spanning thousands of years, Taiwan has been shaped by diverse influences, including indigenous cultures, Chinese dynasties, and colonial powers. In addition to its natural beauty and cultural attractions, Taiwan is known for its technological innovation, world-class museums, and thriving arts scene. Whether you're marvelling at the iconic skyline of Taipei 101, browsing contemporary art galleries, or hiking through lush mountain trails, Taiwan never fails to captivate and inspire. With its friendly locals, safe environment, and efficient transportation network, Taiwan is a destination that welcomes visitors with open arms

By Aanchal sachdeva

TAIPEI 101'S SKYWARD SPLENDOUR

Reach new heights of luxury and sophistication at Taipei 101, where world-class dining, shopping, and entertainment await. Ascend to the observation deck for panoramic views of the bustling city below, indulge in designer shopping at exclusive boutiques, and dine in style at the top-floor restaurants overlooking the glittering skyline.



MARBLE MAJESTY OF TAROKO GORGE

Take yourself on a soul-stirring journey through Taroko Gorge, where towering marble cliffs and cascading waterfalls create a natural wonderland unlike any other. Lose yourself in the serene beauty of this breathtaking landscape as you hike along winding trails and soak in the awe-inspiring vistas.



REDISCOVERING SERENITY AT BEITOU HOT SPRINGS

Soothe your body and soul in the healing waters of Beitou Hot Springs, a natural oasis amidst lush green mountains. Relax in rejuvenating outdoor pools or pamper yourself with a luxurious spa treatment, surrounded by the tranquil beauty of this serene retreat.



ILLUMINATING NIGHTS AT TAIWAN'S LANTERN FESTIVALS

Ignite your sense of wonder at Taiwan's mesmerising lantern festivals, where thousands of glowing lanterns light up the night sky in a dazzling display of colour and light. Release your own lantern into the heavens and make a wish, or simply bask in the beauty of this ancient tradition that celebrates hope and joy.

GLOBETROTTER



ALISHAN FOREST RAILWAY, THE MISTY MARVEL

Take the magical journey aboard the Alishan Forest Railway, traversing misty forests and ancient tea plantations as you ascend to the breathtaking summit of Alishan. Immerse yourself in the awe-inspiring spectacle of sunrise over a sea of clouds, a truly unforgettable experience that will stay with you forever.



JIUFEN OLD STREET CHARMS

Step back in time as you explore the enchanting alleyways of Jiufen Old Street, a quaint mountain village steeped in history and charm. Wander through narrow lanes lined with traditional teahouses and artisan shops, soaking in the nostalgic atmosphere and stunning coastal views.

TREASURES OF THE NATIONAL PALACE MUSEUM

Immerse yourself into the depths of Chinese history and culture at the National Palace Museum, home to a treasure trove of priceless artefacts and masterpieces. Discover ancient ceramics, exquisite jade carvings, and rare calligraphy scrolls, gaining insight into the rich heritage of Taiwan and beyond.



REFLECTING ON THE SUCCESS OF THE MICE INDUSTRY APPRECIATION NIGHT HOSTED BY SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD AND SINGAPORE AIRLINES

The MICE Industry Appreciation Night, hosted by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and Singapore Airlines, was a resounding success. Held on March 23, the event aimed to foster connections and express gratitude to corporate clients in the MICE sector.

Recognising the significance of MICE in driving destination tourism revenue, particularly in competitive environments like Singapore, the event targeted corporates seeking high-quality MICE experiences. The networking event in Delhi effectively reached key decision-makers, paving the way for potential collaborations and partnerships.

The success of the MICE Industry Appreciation Night underscores the importance of collaboration and fresh approaches in navigating the competitive landscape of destination tourism. Special thanks are extended to Kean Bon LIM, Area Director for India, South Asia, and Africa, and Markus Tan, Regional Director for India, the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa (IMESA), for their invaluable support, which enabled the exploration of new avenues for MICE lead generation beyond traditional business development initiatives. A standout moment of the soirée was the commendation of 10 exceptional collaborators who have propelled MICE tourism to Singapore. Their unwavering dedication and innovative methodologies have been instrumental in augmenting Singapore's stature as a premier MICE hub.

The event organised by the Singapore Tourism Board and Singapore Airlines for orchestrating such a triumphant and purposeful gathering emitted a sense of motivation.





ERCO TRAVELS MARKS 25 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE WITH THE UNVEILING OF THE NEW LOGO

Erco Travels, a pioneering figure in India's inbound travel industry, celebrated its Silver Jubilee at Hotel Le Meridien, New Delhi. The event was a significant milestone for the company, highlighted by the introduction of its new company logo, symbolising its journey of growth, resilience, and dedication to the tourism sector.

The newly unveiled logo, a fusion of the Conch Shell or Shankh and Mandala art, encapsulates Erco Travels' core values of new beginnings, prosperity, harmony, and unity. This innovative design represents the company's evolution from humble beginnings to becoming a symbol of excellence in the travel industry.

Ravi Gosain, Managing Director of Erco Travels, expressed his heartfelt appreciation for reaching this significant milestone. He celebrated their 25th Anniversary, reflecting upon the remarkable journey that has brought us to this momentous occasion. Their new logo signifies our growth and our steadfast commitment to showcasing the beauty of India to travellers worldwide while embracing sustainable practices. He takes immense pride in leading the Indian inbound travel industry, and their focus on providing personalised experiences, their extensive network of partners, and their dedication to sustainable tourism sets them apart as industry leaders.

Erco Travels has long been recognised as a frontrunner in India's inbound travel

industry, setting benchmarks for excellence and innovation. With a dedicated team of professionals embodying the spirit of hospitality and a customer-centric approach, Erco Travels has garnered the trust and loyalty

of travellers globally.

Over the past 25 years, Erco Travels has continually adapted to meet travellers' evolving needs and preferences, offering a diverse range of tailor-made tours, luxury



Erco Travels, founded in 1999, stands tall as a premier travel agency headquartered in New Delhi, India. Renowned for its expertise in inbound tours and travel services, Erco Travels prides itself on delivering bespoke travel experiences tailored to the unique tastes and requirements of global adventurers. With a steadfast dedication to excellence, innovation, and sustainability, Erco Travels continues to redefine the boundaries of travel, ensuring memorable journeys for all.

experiences, and adventure packages. Their unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional service and unforgettable experiences has earned them numerous accolades and solidified their position as pioneers in the travel sector.

Looking forward, Erco Travels remains committed to promoting responsible tourism and showcasing India's cultural heritage and natural beauty to the world. With its new logo symbolising its continued growth and innovation, Erco Travels is poised to embark on the next chapter of its journey with confidence and determination.

Vietnam Airlines introduces Airbus A350 to Delhi route

Vietnam Airlines will introduce the Airbus A350 in May 2024, elevating the air travel experience between Delhi and Vietnam. This move expands Delhi's capacity and promises to redefine passenger comfort and satisfaction. The Airbus A350 promises travellers unparalleled comfort and serenity at 36,000 feet. With its world-class safety standards and optimised cabin altitude ensuring pristine air quality, the A350 represents a significant leap forward in air travel for Indian passengers. To enrich the onboard experience, passengers will be treated to a specially crafted Indian food menu, enhancing the culinary delight amidst the clouds.

Nguyen Trung Hieu, Country Manager India at Vietnam Airlines, expressed enthusiasm about expanding their presence in India, particularly in New Delhi. He emphasised Vietnam Airlines' reputation for hospitality and commitment to providing superior travel experiences, stating that introducing the A350 to Indian travellers is a testament to their dedication to enhancing travel experiences.

Abhishek Goyal, Executive Director of Aeroprime Group (India GSA for Vietnam Airlines), commented on the announcement, highlighting the airline's dedication to customer experience.

With its captivating natural beauty and vibrant traditions, Vietnam beckons Indian travellers to discover its marvels. As per Google Trends, Vietnam was the most sought-after destination for Indians in 2023, a testament to its allure. Vietnam Airlines operates 14 weekly flights from Delhi and Mumbai to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, providing seamless connections to China, Japan, Korea, Australia, and ASEAN countries from India.



Malaysia Airlines joins forces with Manchester United

Malaysia Airlines joined forces with the Manchester United football club as its Official Commercial Airline. This strategic move aims to extend Malaysia Airlines' renowned Malaysian Hospitality to Manchester United's massive global fanbase of over 1.1 billion followers. The partnership seeks to enhance brand recognition through co-branded marketing initiatives and deliver exceptional service and experiences synonymous with both brands.

Simultaneously, Malaysia Airlines announced the launch of flights to three exciting new destinations: Malé, Maldives (MLE); Da Nang, Vietnam (DAD); and Chiang Mai, Thailand (CNX). These new routes will enhance connectivity from Kuala Lumpur, with direct flights commencing in August and September 2024. With these additions, Malaysia Airlines aims to bolster its presence in key markets, positioning itself as a gateway to Asia and beyond. As a member of the oneworld® alliance, Malaysia Airlines already offers extensive connectivity to over 900

destinations worldwide.

During the same event at MATTA Fair 2024, Malaysia Airlines unveiled its new A330neo Business Class and Economy Class seats as part of its modernisation plan. Featuring the innovative Collins Aerospace Elevation Business Class seats, the cabin offers individual privacy doors and wireless charging pods, setting a new standard in passenger comfort. The Recaro CL3810 Economy Class seats provide ergonomic design and practical amenities, all adorned with Malaysia Airlines' signature songket motif, blending tradition with contemporary style.

Datuk Captain Izhah Ismail, Group Managing Director of Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG), highlighted the airline's resilience and financial strength, paving the way for product and service enhancements investments. He emphasised that the collaboration with Manchester United, expansion of new routes, and introduction of innovative cabin seats on the A330neo signify a new era for Malaysia Airlines.



SriLankan Airlines and Korean Air forge new codeshare alliance

Sri Lankan Airlines and Korean Air officially inaugurated a codeshare partnership, promising expanded travel opportunities and seamless connections between Colombo and Seoul passengers. Under this fresh alliance, SriLankan Airlines gains the privilege to codeshare on Korean Air flights between Singapore and Seoul Incheon, enabling passengers to book single tickets for travel between Colombo and Incheon via Singapore. Simultaneously, Korean Air will codeshare on SriLankan Airlines' services connecting Colombo with Seoul Incheon, Singapore, Chennai in India, and Male in the Maldives.

Richard Nuttall, CEO of SriLankan Airlines, stated their collaboration will significantly



enhance connectivity between Colombo and Seoul. The passenger traffic between these two vibrant cities has consistently surpassed expectations, and this partnership will bolster their presence in this route economically and efficiently, providing travellers with compelling reasons to choose SriLankan Airlines.

Presently, SriLankan Airlines operates a twice-weekly direct service between Colombo and Incheon. Leveraging Korean Air's expansive Far Eastern network through this codeshare arrangement, SriLankan Airlines passengers now have the option of daily flights between Colombo and Seoul via Singapore. Furthermore, Korean Air patrons gain access to SriLankan Airlines' comprehensive network in the Indian Subcontinent. SriLankan Airlines extensively covers India and the Maldives, operating nearly 100 weekly flights across nine Indian cities and 23 weekly flights to the Maldives, including triple-daily services between Colombo and Chennai and Colombo and Male.

United Airlines enhances accessibility for wheelchair users

United Airlines introduced a groundbreaking digital tool on its app and website, aiming to simplify the flight booking process for customers who use wheelchairs. This innovative tool assists passengers in finding flights that can accommodate the specific dimensions of their mobility devices. Additionally, United announced a new policy where eligible customers can request a refund of the fare difference if they need to pay more for a flight accommodating their wheelchair.

Last year alone, United and United Express transported over 200,000 checked wheelchairs. Collaborating with the airline's Accessible Travel Advisory Board, United worked closely with advocacy groups like the United Spinal Association and Numotion to develop these pioneering initiatives.

Linda Jojo, Executive Vice President and Chief Customer Officer for United, emphasised the importance of understanding customers' needs to ensure a positive travel experience. She highlighted that these tools and policies benefit passengers and empower United employees to assist customers better.



Qatar Airways' GCEO unveils its 2.0 vision

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Officer, Engr. Badr Al-Meer disclosed a series of significant developments aligned with his vision for Qatar Airways 2.0, aimed at revitalising the global airline and its diverse group of businesses. Innovation stands as a cornerstone of his roadmap for success, with forthcoming months set to feature exciting product unveilings as the airline prepares to introduce first-class cabins across select fleets.

In an exclusive interview, Engr's first since assuming the role of GCEO in

November 2023. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer shared insights into this transformative phase, stating, "This marks a new era."

Al-Meer elaborated on Qatar Airways' endeavour to pioneer a high-yielding first-class concept for its cabins. They sought to blend the experiences of commercial and private jet travel to create something novel. They are prepared seventy to eighty per cent, with only final colour selections pending. They hope to make an announcement soon.



British Airways unveils £7bn Transformation Plan

British Airways announced a comprehensive £7bn transformation plan, showcasing a series of initiatives to revolutionise the airline industry. At the inaugural 'In the Skies' showcase event in London, Chairman and CEO Sean Doyle revealed the extensive modernisation strategy, focusing on enhancing customer experience, modernising IT infrastructure, fostering pride among employees, and prioritising sustainability and on-time performance.

They are embarking on a journey to redefine British Airways for their passengers and their workforce, marked

by a transformative program that entails investing £7bn over the next two years to reshape their business, said Sean Doyle, Chairman and CEO of British Airways. Through this initiative, they're set to receive new aircraft, introduce upgraded cabins, elevate customer service, enhance operational efficiency, and address their environmental impact by implementing sustainability measures. They're also committed to overhauling their digital platforms, providing seamless services, and addressing customer pain points.

IndiGo reveals direct flights for Abu Dhabi and Kannur

IndiGo revealed its latest offering of direct flights connecting Abu Dhabi and Kannur, set to commence operations on May 09, 2024. Expanding its international footprint, the airline will facilitate daily non-stop flights between the coastal city of Kerala and the capital of the United Arab Emirates, providing seamless connectivity for travellers to immerse themselves in the rich socio-cultural diversity between the two nations.

Vinay Malhotra, Head of Global Sales at IndiGo, expressed enthusiasm about the new route. With this addition, IndiGo will now operate 56 weekly flights to Abu Dhabi from 8 cities in India, fostering travel, trade, and tourism between the two countries.



Their ongoing efforts aim to offer customers superior connectivity and enhanced accessibility, enabling them to explore new destinations with their expanding range of travel options. IndiGo remains steadfast in its commitment to providing affordable, punctual, courteous, and hassle-free travel experiences. Abu Dhabi recently emerged as a popular travel destination due to its recent developments.



Saudia redefines travel excellence with tailored services

Saudia, Saudi Arabia's national flag carrier, continues to elevate the travel experience by offering comprehensive services. From when travellers make their reservations to the final assistance upon arrival, Saudia ensures a seamless journey with meticulous attention to detail. With innovative features like the Fast Track service expediting airport procedures and a steadfast commitment to pet safety and comfort, Saudia maintains its reputation for delivering unparalleled service excellence at every journey stage. Saudia provides an extensive

selection of special meals to accommodate various dietary needs and preferences, ensuring a comfortable journey for all passengers. Options range from low-calorie and low-salt meals to Hindu, baby food, Asian vegetarian, and Western vegetarian choices. Additionally, specialised meals tailored for passengers with disabilities, such as those with visual impairments or autism, are available. Saudia is committed to ensuring a seamless travel experience for guests with disabilities.

Jazeera Airways appoints Barathan Pasupathi as New CEO

Jazeera Airways announced the departure of its current CEO, Rohit Ramchandran, after a successful seven-year tenure. Barathan Pasupathi (Bara), formerly the CFO of Jazeera Airways, will assume the role of CEO starting March 26, 2024. With over 30 years of experience spanning aviation, oil and gas, and supply chain management, Bara brings a wealth of expertise to his new position. His extensive background includes essential finance, management, and operational roles in airlines, as well as aircraft procurement and leasing. Marwan Boodai, Chairman of Jazeera Airways, praised Rohit's leadership during significant growth, highlighting his contribution to expanding the airline's fleet and route



network. He expressed gratitude for Rohit's handling of challenges, particularly amidst the pandemic, and welcomed Bara's appointment as a testament to continuity and strong leadership. Bara's previous roles include CEO of Jetstar Asia and CFO positions at Jazeera Airways and Sahaab Aircraft Leasing. He is renowned for his safety, operations, and customer service leadership.

Air Arabia enhances UAE-Saudi connectivity

Air Arabia recommenced its Sharjah to Giza in Saudi Arabia, effective June 4, 2024. This move marks a significant step in strengthening air connectivity between the UAE and Saudi Arabia. With three weekly flights, Air Arabia aims to facilitate seamless travel between Sharjah International Airport and King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Airport in Giza. Adel Al Ali, Air Arabia's Group Chief Executive Officer, emphasized the airline's commitment to meeting the needs

of its key markets, particularly within the UAE-Saudi Arabia corridor. By reinstating direct connectivity between Sharjah and Giza, Air Arabia aims to provide customers convenient access to essential destinations while maintaining affordability and quality service. Air Arabia's fleet, comprising 73 modern Airbus A320 and A321 neo-LR aircraft, ensures both comfort and efficiency for passengers. The cabin layout offers a generous seat-pitch.



Virgin Atlantic initiates routes to Bengaluru & Mumbai

Virgin Atlantic reaffirms its commitment to India by launching new daily services from London Heathrow to Bengaluru, which commenced operations on April 1, 2024. Additionally, the airline announced plans to introduce a second daily flight to Mumbai from October 2024. These developments underscore Virgin Atlantic's dedication to enhancing connectivity between the United Kingdom and India. Operating on Virgin Atlantic's state-of-the-art aircraft, the 787-9 Dreamliner, the new routes

offer passengers a range of travel options, including Upper Class, Premium, and Economy classes. Passengers can also enjoy seamless connectivity to North American destinations via London Heathrow, leveraging Virgin Atlantic's partnership with Delta Air Lines. In addition to direct services to Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, Virgin Atlantic has forged a strategic alliance with IndiGo, India's largest airline, offering seamless connectivity to 36 additional destinations within India.

ON THE MOVE



INNU LAMA

APPOINTED AT: Conrad Bengaluru
PROMOTED TO: Learning & Development Manager
 Conrad Bengaluru proudly welcomes Innu Lama as the new Learning & Development Manager. With 12+ years of expertise, she aims to enhance training standards, fostering growth for the team and enriching guest experiences. Innu's appointment signifies a commitment to excellence, reflecting Conrad Bengaluru's dedication to elevating hospitality.



AJINKYA SALUNKHE

APPOINTED AT: Fortune Select Global, Gurgaon
PROMOTED TO: General Manager
 Fortune Hotels announces Ajinkya Salunkhe as General Manager of Fortune Select Global, Gurgaon. With two decades of industry expertise, his leadership promises to elevate guest experiences and operational excellence. Salunkhe's illustrious journey, is marked by prestigious awards and roles.



MAYANK TUTEJA

APPOINTED AT: Preferred Hotels & Resorts
PROMOTED TO: Director of Sales—South Asia
 Mayank Tuteja, based in New Delhi, joins Preferred Hotels & Resorts as Director of Sales—South Asia. With over 16 years of hospitality experience, including roles at The Leading Hotels of the World and Hyatt, Mayank brings valuable expertise in sales and marketing to enhance the brand's presence and client relationships.



SHAKUN KHANDELWAL

APPOINTED AT: Preferred Hotels & Resorts
PROMOTED TO: Senior Sales Manager – South Asia
 Shakun Khandelwal joins Preferred Hotels & Resorts as Senior Sales Manager – South Asia in New Delhi. With 15 years of experience in sales & marketing roles across renowned luxury hotel groups in India, including The Leela and Marriott, Shakun's expertise will bolster the sales efforts and client relationships in the region.



MARLON ABEYAKOON

APPOINTED AT: NH Collection Maldives Havodda
PROMOTED TO: General Manager
 Marlon Abeyakoon joins Minor Hotels as General Manager of NH Collection Maldives Havodda, effective January 25, 2024. With over 25 years of luxury hospitality experience, including roles with Kerzner, Hilton, and Marriott, his expertise will elevate the NH Collection brand's debut in the Maldives.



ESTELLE VASSALLO

APPOINTED AT: Anantara Convento di Amalfi Grand Hotel
PROMOTED TO: General Manager
 Estelle Vassallo assumes the role of General Manager at Anantara Convento di Amalfi Grand Hotel, bringing two decades of hospitality expertise to this property overlooking Amalfi. Estelle's leadership at sister property Anantara Grand Hotel Krasnapolsky Amsterdam highlights her commitment to sustainable initiatives.



ANKUR RAJ

APPOINTED AT: Crowne Plaza Greater Noida
PROMOTED TO: Director of Revenue
 Ankur Raj assumes the role of Director of Revenue, leveraging 12 years of experience from brands like Marriott and Wyndham. With expertise in revenue management, he will drive budget planning, forecasting, and revenue optimisation strategies. Ankur's track record reflects a talent for expanding revenue-generating opportunities while reducing expenses.



ANKITA PALIT

APPOINTED AT: Crowne Plaza Greater Noida
PROMOTED TO: Crowne Meetings Director
 Ankita Palit joins as Crowne Meetings Director, leveraging 11+ years of sales expertise in hospitality, including roles at The Taj, Hyatt, and The Lalit. She specialises in MICE and spearheads revenue generation and business expansion in events, weddings, and outdoor catering. Ankita ensures seamless operations and client satisfaction.



NIKHIL SHARMA

APPOINTED AT: Radisson Hotel Group
PROMOTED TO: Managing Director & ASVP for South Asia
 Radisson Hotel Group proudly announces Nikhil Sharma's appointment as Managing Director & ASVP for South Asia, effective April 1, 2024. With extensive hospitality experience, Sharma will lead operations across 165+ hotels, driving revenue growth, nurturing partnerships, and ensuring operational excellence. His strategic foresight will fuel our continued success in the region.



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