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TravelScapes

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MICE TOURISM

A CRESCENDO OF SUCCESS
IN THE INDIAN LANDSCAPE

TRAVELSCAPES

CELEBRATED THE JOY AND MERRIMENT
OF THE DIVINE FESTIVAL OF DIWALI IN
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Varun Malhotra
Publisher & CEO

Dear Readers,

As the year draws to a close, we reflect on another journey filled with triumphs and collaborative successes. However, amidst the celebrations, let's take a moment to express our gratitude to the late Mr. Prithviraj Singh Oberoi for his sincere and enduring contributions to the hospitality and travel industry—an inspiration to many, his legacy echoes through the industry. Our festivities embraced the spirit of Diwali, providing a delightful opportunity for industry connections to come together in celebration. Amidst the vibrancy, the travel landscape witnessed remarkable transformations, with Indian states, the aviation sector, and hospitality entities showcasing innovative approaches to bolster tourism. The resounding success of WTM London 2023 underscored India's diverse offerings, captivating a global audience.

The burgeoning MICE sector emerged as a pivotal force, with new convention centres dotting the country and hospitality brands pioneering inventive solutions for the ever-evolving traveller. The upcoming 14th Conventions India Conclave in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, from December 7 to 9, 2023, promises a platform for MICE exhibitors and suppliers to showcase their offerings, coupled with valuable networking opportunities. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman at ICPB, underscores the unique opportunity that the mega convention offers to MICE exhibitors and suppliers. It provides an exclusive platform for them to showcase their products and services while fostering valuable networking opportunities.

Our cover story delved into insightful conversations with industry experts such as Pradeep Biswal, Davinder Juj, Rajesh Chakraborty, Manuj Ralhan, JP Menon, Gurmeet Singh Randhawa, and Maneesha Bajpai (General Manager of Svelte Hotel), exploring the rapid evolution of the MICE industry and the forefront of innovation in hospitality. Alexander Lee, Chief Commercial Officer of Jumeirah Group, shared illuminating perspectives on how Jumeirah continues to blend tradition with novel offerings, setting new standards for travellers.

Turning our gaze to other Asian destinations, Malaysia and Uzbekistan took center stage this month. Malaysia Tourism orchestrated a compelling FAM event, enlightening trade partners on outbound travel offerings. Meanwhile, Island Ife Travel, a renowned DMC for the Maldives, provided valuable insights into the dynamic shifts in outbound travel.

As we bid adieu to another year, we anticipate the continued growth and innovation that will shape the future of the travel industry. Cheers to the exciting journeys ahead!

Keep travelling, keep exploring!

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

Happy reading!

Varun Malhotra

TravelScapes

VERSATILE MEDIA

PUBLISHER & CEO

Varun Malhotra
varun@versatilemedia.in

DIRECTOR

Pranav Khullar
pranav@versatilemedia.in

EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL HEAD

Aanchal Sachdeva
aanchal@versatilemedia.in

CREATIVE WRITERS

Nandini Mahajan
nandini@versatilemedia.in

Ananya Trivedi
ananya@versatilemedia.in

DIGITAL MARKETING SPECIALIST

Ritika Verma
ritika@versatilemedia.in

ADVERTISING SALES

HEAD OF SALES & MARKETING

Nisha Verma
nisha@versatilemedia.in

AGM SALES & MARKETING (MUMBAI)

Aarti Rajkhewa

CONSULTANT

Anindya Malhotra, Jitin Mann

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

ART DIRECTOR

Rakesh Kumar

ADMIN HEAD

Arvind Kumar

EXECUTIVE-CIRCULATION

Suraj Singh and Rohit Rajput

ACCOUNTS

Chandan Kumar Jha,
Shahanawaj Salmani and Rohit Negi

Editorial & Marketing Office: Versatile Media: 207, Satya Mansion, Commercial Complex, Ranjeet Nagar, New Delhi-110008 Contact: 011 - 45530380/83 varun@versatilemedia.in All information in TravelScapes is derived from sources we consider reliable. It is passed on to our readers without any responsibility on our part. Opinions/ views expressed by third parties in abstract or interviews are not necessarily shared by us. Material appearing in the magazine cannot be reproduced in whole or in part(s) without prior permission. The publisher reserves the right to refuse, withdraw or otherwise deal with all advertisements without explanation. All advertisements must comply with the Indian Advertisement Code. The publisher will not be liable for any loss caused by any delay in publication, error or failure of advertisement to appear. Owned and published by: Varun Malhotra, Editor & Publisher, EB-63, Maya Enclave, Hari Nagar, New Delhi - 110064 and printed at in-house facility.

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"A legacy is etched into the minds of others and the stories they share about him."

We express our sorrow at the passing of Mr. P.R.S Oberoi, the esteemed Chairman Emeritus of The Oberoi Group. Recognised as an inspiration in the hospitality sector and honoured with the Padmabhushan, his lasting legacy and steadfast dedication to excellence have established a benchmark for luxury. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family, colleagues, and all the dear ones affected by the loss during this challenging period.



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Goa Tourism showcases charm at WTM London

Goa Tourism participated in the WTM London from November 6 to 8, 2023, showcasing its diverse facets beyond pristine beaches. The state offers relaxation, adventure, and cultural experiences, gaining popularity in eco, hinterland, heritage, sports, festival, cuisine, and cultural tourism. Tourism Minister Rohan A. Khaunte emphasised on sustainable tourism and invited industry professionals to explore Goa's pavilion at WTM London. The presentation includes Goa's roadmap, homestay policies, and creative sector collaborations. The roadmap focuses on infrastructure projects, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 'Travel for Life,' endorsed by PM Narendra Modi, promoted responsible travel, contributing to Goa's growth and



environmental conservation. The UK and European markets are recognised as pivotal, with emphasis on workcation, MICE tourism, adventure, weddings, festivals, and safety initiatives.



Kerala emerges as a global tourism hotspot

During the Tourism Investors Meet, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan urged investors to join Kerala's journey towards becoming a global economic powerhouse by investing in its thriving tourism sector. Highlighting impressive statistics, Vijayan noted a record 1.88 crore domestic tourist arrivals in 2022 and a remarkable 171.55% growth in international arrivals in the first half of 2023. The revenue from Kerala's tourism sector tripled from INR 11,335.96 crore in 2020 to INR 35,168.42 crore in 2022. Despite challenges like Ockhi, Nipah, floods, and COVID-19, Kerala remains a resilient tourist destination. Vijayan emphasised the state's readiness for tourism investments, boasting four international airports, extensive infrastructure, and a skilled workforce. He encouraged investors to contribute to Kerala's transformation into the perfect tourism investment destination, ensuring rich dividends and fostering employment in allied industries. Vijayan highlighted new initiatives like 'Keravan Kerala' for caravan tourism, heli-tourism, and cruise tourism, positioning Kerala as a global wedding destination.



Evoke Experiences unveils Rann Utsav- The Tent City

Evoke Experiences launched the highly anticipated Rann Utsav – The Tent City in November. This year's celebration boasts over 400 luxurious tents, welcoming around 500,000 guests to the grand festivities in Dhordo village. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a fervent supporter of Rann Utsav, showcased the beauty of the White Rann on his social media. Reflecting on Dhordo's cultural heritage, he

envisions the village as a global attraction. Bhavik Sheth, COO of Evoke Experiences, expressed gratitude for hosting Rann Utsav. Dhordo earned the title of "Best Tourism Village" by the United Nations. The village stands out as the sole Indian recipient of this prestigious recognition. Rann Utsav – The Tent City epitomised their crowning achievement, inviting travellers to explore the cultural richness of rural Kutch.

The Shillong Cherry Blossom Festival, an incredible success

The Shillong Cherry Blossom Festival concluded in a crescendo of cultural vibrancy and natural beauty at the RBDSA Sports Complex. The final day, graced by Honourable Tourism Minister Bah Paul Lyngdoh, transformed into a pulsating hub of musical magic. The grand finale featured an eclectic lineup including Sanam, Ronan Keating, Jonas Blue, and local talents. Minister Lyngdoh lauded the festival's success, citing a significant tourist influx and diverse music genres. The convergence of music, nature, and culture

was praised, with plans for an exchange program with Japan's Cherry Blossom ambassador. Sanam expressed gratitude for Shillong's exceptional festival, while local talents showcased Meghalaya's rich musical heritage. The festival, amidst Meghalaya's cherry blossoms, offered a colorful backdrop to the two-day musical extravaganza, uniting international and local artists. Additionally, the event supported local entrepreneurs and provided a platform for global and local artists to shine together.



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Travel period
23rd Nov 2023 - 31st Mar 2024



Nashik unveils 4th 'My City My Heritage' walk by IndiGoReach

In a celebration of Nashik's rich heritage, IndiGoReach, the CSR arm of IndiGo, and InterGlobe orchestrated their fourth 'My City My Heritage' walk in the city in November. This event, a pivotal part of the nationwide campaign, aimed to raise awareness about the profound significance of heritage and culture in India. Nashik, chosen for its historical and cultural prominence, hosted the Heritage Walk led by Amruta Uplekar, a conservation architect. The captivating itinerary included iconic landmarks like

Kalaram temple, Godavari Ghat, and Sarkarwada. Enthusiastic participation from the local community, government officials, and leaders of IndiGo and InterGlobe Foundation marked the event's success. Beyond the Heritage Walk, IndiGoReach engages in CSR programs in Nashik, focusing on sustainable agriculture and enterprise development for rural women. The Nashik-centric initiative showcases a concerted effort to preserve and celebrate the city's heritage.

HP focuses on road safety amid tourism boost

Following the aftermath of devastating floods, Himachal Pradesh is striving to boost its tourism sector, with a key focus on road safety to accommodate the anticipated surge in visitors. Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh emphasised the critical role of top-tier road infrastructure, stressing the need for exceptional road quality and a robust transportation network. Singh, speaking at a road safety awareness seminar organised by key departments, highlighted the importance of pedestrian

awareness and safety protocols during construction. He urged collaborative efforts to identify and rectify accident-prone spots. Singh advocated for public awareness campaigns and the integration of modern tools, including Artificial Intelligence, into safety planning. The state has witnessed a remarkable tourism surge, prompting the government to enhance air connectivity through heliports and airport expansions in Shimla. In the first half of 2023, over one crore tourists visited the state.



Gwalior added to UNESCO's Creative Cities Network

Gwalior and Kozhikode stood out as the sole Indian cities among the 55 global additions to UNESCO's Creative Cities Network. Gwalior, designated the City of Music, showcased a strong commitment to culture and creativity in alignment with UNESCO's development strategies. Spearheaded by the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board in collaboration with various stakeholders, the project emphasised innovative practices in human-centered urban planning. Gwalior's inclusion, celebrated

during the Tansen Sangeet Samaroh, marked a milestone in preserving the city's living cultural heritage. Principal Secretary of Tourism and Culture, Sheo Shekhar Shukla, expressed gratitude for the global recognition, foreseeing heightened international tourism and the showcasing of Gwalior's architectural and heritage treasures. The designation was lauded as a significant achievement for Madhya Pradesh, with a vision for overall sustainable development through music.

India resumes e-visa for Canadians

India resumed e-visa services for Canadian nationals starting November 22, 2023. The Indian High Commission in Ottawa confirmed the reinstatement of the e-visa facility for eligible Canadian citizens. While India had previously restored certain visa categories such as entry, business, medical, and conference visas, tourist visas for Canadians remain pending. External Affairs Minister S

Jaishankar explained the temporary suspension was due to challenges faced by Indian diplomats in Canada, linked to security concerns. With an improved security situation, the decision to gradually resume visa services aligns with the logical progression of easing tensions. The diplomatic discord had led New Delhi to request Ottawa to reduce its diplomatic presence in India.

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Coimbatore: + 91 99527 17750

Hyderabad: +91 40 4020 0301

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Varanasi illuminates during Dev Deepavali, draws 10 lakh tourists

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath initiated Dev Deepavali, the festival of lights by kindling a diya at Namoo Ghat, in Varanasi. The city and its ghats were adorned with tricolour spiral lights, enhancing the ethereal beauty of the surroundings. Approximately 10 lakh tourists converged upon the ghats to witness the festival, including ambassadors, delegates, and their families from 70 countries. A series of 85 ghats on the northern bank of the Ganges were embellished with 12 lakh lamps, and a total exceeding 21 lakh lamps illuminated the ghats, ponds, and lakes of Kashi, with active public participation. A mesmerising laser show unfolded at Chet Singh Ghat, breathing life into the history of religion through the centuries-old monuments lining the banks of Kashi's ghats. Tourists relished the fireworks and devotional songs dedicated to Lord Shiva along the Ganges. The Kashi Vishwanath Temple was adorned with 11 tonnes of flowers.



Annual Jhiri Mela attracts thousands of devotees to Jammu

Thousands of devotees, including women and children from both within and outside Jammu and Kashmir, gathered at Jhiri village on the outskirts of Jammu for the commencement of the annual 10-day-long farmers fair. It was inaugurated by the Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar. The Jhiri Mela, held during 'Kartik Purnima,' draws eight to ten lakh devotees annually to pay homage at the Baba Jitto temple,

commemorating the sacrifice of the farmer who protested the oppressive demands of landlords 500 years ago. The fair, a post-harvest event for farmers, gains significance for its religious and cultural aspects. The government set up awareness stalls to inform visitors about new schemes, and technologies, and showcases handicrafts, handloom products, and cultural and sports activities, enhancing the overall experience.

Punjab Govt introduces 'Mukhyamantri Teerth Yatra' pilgrimage scheme

On the occasion of Guru Nanak Dev's 'Parkash Purb' in Dhuri, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, accompanied by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, inaugurated the 'Mukhyamantri Teerth Yatra' scheme. Aligned with the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev, the initiative aimed to enable individuals to visit sacred sites nationwide, promoting universal love and brotherhood. Mann highlighted the challenges preventing many from undertaking such pilgrimages and emphasised the scheme's role in facilitating pilgrims' journeys. The launch event saw the announcement that 300 pilgrims from Amritsar, 220 from Jalandhar, and over 500 from Dhuri would travel to Sri Hazur

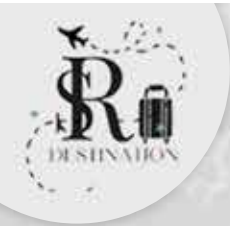


Sahib in Nanded, Maharashtra. Over 50,000 pilgrims are expected to benefit from the three-month program, with 13 trains and 10 buses scheduled for regular departures. The pilgrimage will include visits to various sacred places, such as Sri Hazur Sahib, Sri Patna Sahib, Varanasi, Mathura, and Ajmer Sharif.

Damoh in Madhya Pradesh to have India's largest tiger reserve

Damoh district in Madhya Pradesh is poised to host India's largest tiger reserve, according to an announcement by a forest department representative. The central government formally approved the consolidation of the Noradehi Sanctuary with the RDurgavati Sanctuary in Damoh district, resulting in the creation of an expansive tiger reserve covering 2,300 square kilometres. The focal point of this reserve would be the Jabera area in Damoh district, with officials anticipating a positive impact on tourism and regional development. MS Uikey, the Forest Divisional Officer in Damoh, highlighted that the upcoming tiger reserve will serve as a secure habitat for the existing population of 16 tigers in the area. The merger is also anticipated to attract more tigers, thereby enhancing the conservation significance of the region.





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MICE

TOURISM

A CRESCENDO OF SUCCESS IN THE INDIAN LANDSCAPE

In the ever-evolving landscape of the travel industry especially hospitality sector, MICE is the heartbeat that propels the industry forward. Within this dynamic symphony, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) emerges as the gateway to success, the ultimate catalyst of the Indian economy. MICE empowers travel professionals to sculpt their masterpieces, forge invaluable connections, stay at the forefront of technological trends, and elevate their visibility. In India, the MICE industry has not only flourished but soared to unprecedented global heights. It's a testament to the immense diversity that underpins the travel network, offering a multitude of business prospects. We invite businesses to embark on a transformative journey with TravelScapes as we ignite the MICE Revolution in our upcoming issue setting the stage for a new era of possibilities

By Aanchal Sachdeva

PRADEEP BISWAL , GENERAL MANAGER, INDANA PALACE JAIPUR

MICE Tourism attracts travellers globally

Indian Mice tourism contributes approx 9% of the world GDP & every year it's growing by 20%. India is increasingly being the preferred destination for the MICE events and large number of mega convention centers are being opened in Delhi, Mumbai, Jaipur, Uttar Pradesh and Goa. More than 50 international & domestic airlines are now connected to India. Compared to the outbound segment India is still cementing cracks to traction inbound MICE. From large convention centres to art galleries, or beachfront locations, the diverse venue options can be attractive to event organisers. Offering dedicated event planners' expertise in logistics, catering, technology, and entertainment, can help streamline the process for organisers. Implementing sustainable practices, such as eco-friendly facilities, waste reduction, and responsible sourcing of materials, can attract environmentally conscious event planners. Offering cultural experiences and leisure activities including guided city tours, culinary experiences, or opportunities for team-building exercises in unique local settings is also a huge draw. Providing seamless transportation options, including airport transfers and local transportation for attendees, can make event planning more convenient. Collaborating with local hotels and

accommodation providers to offer special MICE packages, including group rates, room blocks, and additional amenities, can simplify lodging arrangements for event organisers.

Key source markets for MICE tourism in India

Key source markets like the US, UK (international conferences, Events), Middle East especially Saudi & Qatar, UAE business ties, cultural connections, SE Asia, and Countries like Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia are in good flight connectivity make them accessible destinations for business travellers. Japan and South Korea have been increasingly involved in MICE tourism in India, participating in conventions, seminars, and corporate meetings. India also has a substantial domestic MICE market, with a growing number of corporate events, conferences, and exhibitions taking place within the country. Marketing strategies for MICE tourism include digital marketing, trade show participation, roadshows, advertising, partnerships with travel agencies, and destination-specific promotional campaigns.

Demand for offbeat and wellness-centric destinations

Health and safety measures are two prime responsibilities of the Indian Govt. Hotels &



Resorts have introduced wellness packages like spas, yoga and meditation classes, healthy diets, lot of outdoor activities. Some hotels and resorts have added fitness centres, wellness coaches, and health-focused amenities to their offerings. Travel entities are increasingly offering personalised and tailor-made itineraries to cater to the specific preferences and needs of travellers interested in wellness and offbeat experiences such as nature hikes, wildlife encounters, and cultural immersions. To adapt to the changing landscape during the pandemic, some travel entities provided virtual wellness experiences allowing travellers to connect with destinations from their homes.

DAVINDER JUJ, GENERAL MANAGER, EROS HOTEL NEHRU PLACE

MICE Tourism attracts travellers globally

Eros Hotel offers certain unique offerings in these segments to attract domestic and international travellers such as the design of the venue to cater to large groups and events. Our team is trained to handle MICE tourism and provide the best experience. We offer local and outstation tours to make your stay more enjoyable. Our venue is equipped with the latest technology to make your event a success. With large capacity to accommodate guests our open lawns provide a beautiful backdrop for your event.

Key source markets for MICE tourism in India

To derive the maximum from our key markets, we participate with online platforms like Cvent, Hotel Planner, and Specialised Designed Promotions aiding to reach a wider audience. We also run time-bound online campaigns targeting various segments.

Our hotel is located in the heart of Delhi, which is one of the key source markets for MICE tourism. Mumbai and Bangalore are also important markets for us. Cvent is a widely used technology that provides secure, high-quality software solutions with mobile check-in, lead generation and retrieval, and hotel and transportation

“ TO HARNESS THE POTENTIAL OF WELLNESS TOURISM, VARIOUS REGIONS IN INDIA ARE BEING DEVELOPED AS UNIQUE DESTINATIONS FOR HOLISTIC WELLNESS EXPERIENCES

planning. Hotel Planner is another online platform that provides a wide range of services, including hotel reservations, event planning, and group travel. Specialised Designed Promotions is a marketing agency that specialises in creating customised campaigns for hotels and resorts.

We also run time-bound online campaigns targeting various segments. These campaigns are designed to provide the best deals and offers to our guests. Our campaigns are targeted towards different segments, including corporate clients, families, and couples.

Demand for offbeat and wellness-centric destinations

The country has a rich heritage of wellness practices, including Ayurveda, Yoga, and



Naturopathy, which have been passed down through generations. To harness the potential of wellness tourism, various regions in India are being developed as unique destinations for holistic wellness experiences. Kerala, known for its authentic Ayurveda treatments, stands out as a centre for wellness tourism deeply rooted in local traditions. Travel entities are offering a range of services, including spa treatments, yoga classes, meditation sessions, and healthy food options. Many hotels and resorts are also offering customised packages that cater to the specific needs of wellness tourists.

RAJESH CHAKRABORTY, CLUSTER GENERAL MANAGER-OPERATIONS & GENERAL MANAGER, TAJ HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTRE, AGRA

MICE Tourism attracts travellers globally

The Taj Hotel & Convention Centre in Agra offers three modern boardrooms, tailored to meet the needs of closed-door events and high-profile meetings. These state-of-the-art spaces are fully customisable to suit any event requirements.

Plush carpets, a fully integrated audio-video system, in-house power backup for any setup requirement, statement lighting & décor, dedicated areas, multiple smaller breakaway rooms for group activities during conferences, and a dedicated porch and lobby for the banquets make it a one-stop convention centre for MICE tourism.

The hotel is conveniently situated very near to the Taj Mahal. Guests can enjoy panoramic vistas of the iconic landmark from the hotel - a unique feature that especially attracts international travellers.

Last but not least, our grandiose Convention Hall is the prime product in offering within the fraternity, most meaningful to its proximity to Delhi NCR. Direct air connectivity to Mumbai, Bangalore, and Ahmedabad certainly enabled a spike and rebound in MICE transactions. The connectivity via the efficient expressway

“ WITH A TAILOR-MADE PRODUCT LIKE OURS, WE HAVE SURELY RAISED EXPECTATIONS IN THE VICINITY

also acts as a key ingredient to entice MICE travellers around the year. Our multiple indoor halls are just the right space for any niche conference. With a tailor-made product like ours, we have surely raised expectations in the vicinity.

Key source markets for MICE tourism in India

The embellished destinations for MICE tourism in India are the metros - Delhi, Bombay, Chennai and Hyderabad. The emerging markets include Agra, Udaipur, Ahmedabad and Varanasi. Exhibitions, shows, and digital marketing have been successful marketing efforts that foster MICE tourism in India.



Demand for offbeat and wellness-centric destinations

Travel entities are moulding their offerings to be healthier - especially in terms of food & beverages. Additionally, hotels are responding to the wellness trend by expanding their range of health and fitness amenities. Wellness services including yoga, Zumba, and fitness trainers are now prevalent. Wellness Weekend and other wellness-themed days are being celebrated as well.

MANUJ RALHAN, GENERAL MANAGER, NOVOTEL JAIPUR CONVENTION CENTRE & JAIPUR EXHIBITION & CONVENTION CENTRE

MICE Tourism attracts travellers globally

MICE Tourism has become increasingly popular in recent years as businesses recognise the value of hosting meetings, conferences, and other events outside of their home turf. We offer all the amenities and conveniences necessary for a successful event, as well as a variety of activities and entertainment options for attendees to enjoy.

The Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre aims to elevate the exhibition & convention scene across the entire country. We redefine the standards of exhibitions and convention space by offering great spaces backed by excellent service. We have the infrastructure and are very capable of handling large-scale MICE events, Socials, Weddings, Concerts, and more. Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre and Jaipur Exhibition Convention Centre is spread over a vast 42-acre land and is a specular space to watch for. The Grand Ballroom - Mugdha can host both small and large groups with its 740 retractable auditorium-style seats. The venue also features 13 breakout meeting rooms, a VIP lounge, two green rooms, and a big lawn. Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre is set to redefine the MICE and social space in India.

Key source markets for MICE tourism in India

India's key source markets for MICE tourism include countries in the Middle East and Africa,

“ NOVOTEL JAIPUR CONVENTION CENTRE STRIVES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ITS GUESTS AND DOES ITS BEST TO EXCEED THEIR EXPECTATIONS

South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Europe. Our focus for the first couple of years is domestic. Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Jaipur are our key source markets. We target these regions through marketing campaigns, such as organising trade shows, exhibitions, and conferences, as well as providing incentives to tour operators and travel agencies.

Pharma, manufacturing industries, apparel, automobiles, paint, cement companies, IT industry, BFSI, jewellery, PSU and Governments, associations, exhibitions, weddings, and lifestyle events are among our target customers for the MICE business. Inbound MICE business is another area we intend to emphasise since it seems there is an increasing demand for this niche. We will begin exhibiting at trade shows for ATM Dubai, ITB Berlin, SATTE and OTM Mumbai in 2024.

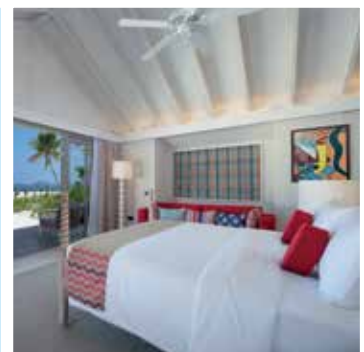


Demand for offbeat and wellness-centric destinations

Travel companies are offering more offbeat, wellness-centric destinations in their tour packages. They are also providing more options for customising trips, such as adding curated experiences or opting for unique activities. To entice individuals to travel, they are also providing discounts and other rewards. Additionally, we have selected a small number of unique local experiences that are exclusive to Jaipur. We offer pottery classes, which provide a calming therapy. We are a pet-friendly hotel, and pets are one of the best forms of therapy, we allow our guests to bring their own pets with them.

CORA CORA[®] Maldives

CORA CORA MALDIVES IS A TRULY INNOVATIVE CONCEPT RESORT AND UNLIKE ANYTHING THE MALDIVES HAS EVER SEEN, GIVING GUESTS THE UNMISSABLE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE THE MALDIVES LIKE NEVER BEFORE.



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1 Comprising of **100 villas and suites**, each one has been expertly designed to reflect the spirit of the Maldives and is prevalent in all of the nine accommodation categories.

2 It's freedom time and at Cora Cora Maldives the Premium All Inclusive - **Gourmet Meal Plan[®]** is present in every detail of the resort, giving guests the unmissable opportunity to experience an array of dining possibilities.

3 **MOKSHA[®] Spa & Wellbeing Center** believe that everyone deserves a special place to just BE themselves. A place to energise and replenish, to chill out and have fun, to explore and discover for kindness and selfcare.

4 Cora Cora Maldives is the first resort in the Maldives to showcase a licensed art gallery and museum **Dutch Onion[®]**. With over 400 incredible local artefacts in the collection, guests can explore the rich history of the Maldives.

CORACORARESORTS.COM

JP MENON, GENERAL MANAGER, COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT, MADURAI

MICE Tourism attracts travellers globally

To enhance the overall guest experience, we prioritise delivering distinctive and personalised encounters. For group bookings, we provide personalised room amenities, ensuring that every guest feels special and valued. Our culinary offerings stand out as a highlight, bringing the authentic essence of Madurai to the dining table. We incorporate local traditions into our services, extending from a warm welcome to amenities provided throughout the stay, culminating in a memorable check-out experience.

Our modern infrastructure and thoughtful hotel design, coupled with an easily accessible location, serve as advantageous elements for attracting MICE tourism. For corporate events, we offer hassle-free, transparent event packages, providing clarity on deliverables and associated costs.

Madurai, renowned as the temple city and a hub for spiritual tourism, is also a sought-after wedding destination. In response to this, we proudly introduce "Namma Veettu Kalyanam," offering traditional Tamil wedding experiences tailored to resonate with domestic guests. This initiative aligns with the cultural richness of Madurai, providing an authentic and memorable backdrop for weddings.

With a focus on simplifying processes and enhancing the success of special events, our hotel stands as a beacon for those seeking not just accommodation but an enriching and culturally immersive experience in the heart of Madurai.

Key source markets for MICE tourism in India

The key source markets for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) tourism in India primarily revolve around major metropolitan areas, with Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, and Chennai standing out as the top five contributors. Primarily, Madurai holds significance as a Cultural centre and a growing market host to some of the top industrial/ tech giants, making it an emerging hub for MICE events.

Digital marketing plays a crucial role in reaching the corporate audience, utilising online platforms and targeted advertising to showcase our MICE offerings. Social media platforms serve as dynamic channels for engagement and promotion, allowing us to connect with potential clients and showcase the unique experiences our hotel provides. Networking remains a key strategy in our marketing efforts, involving active participation in industry events, trade fairs, and forums.

The success of our marketing efforts lies in the synergy between digital strategies, active presence on social media, participation in trade fairs, and, most importantly, the establishment of strong relationships within the industry. By focusing on these key source markets and tailoring our marketing efforts to align with the preferences and needs of clients in these regions, we aim to position ourselves as the preferred choice for MICE tourism, offering not just accommodation but a comprehensive and enriching experience for corporate events and gatherings.



Demand for offbeat and wellness-centric destinations

Post-pandemic, the travel landscape witnessed a notable surge in demand for offbeat and wellness-centric destinations. Madurai, being an offbeat location with a rich cultural tapestry, experienced a significant uptick in domestic tourism.

In response to the specific demands of travellers in Madurai, our focus centred on highlighting these distinctive elements. For visitors exploring the spiritual charm of Madurai, including the iconic Meenakshi Temple and other significant religious sites, we introduced the Temple City Package. Recognising the city's status as a regional culinary hub, we tailored experiences for true food enthusiasts. The Madurai Thali showcased the popular delicacies of the local cuisine.

GURMEET SINGH RANDHAWA, GENERAL MANAGER, RADISSON GOLF RESORT PAHALGAM

MICE Tourism attracts travellers globally

The resort is situated adjacent to the 18-hole Pahalgam Golf Course, one of the most prominent golf destinations in Kashmir, with 122 rooms featuring modern design and authentic Kashmiri craftwork. The state-of-the-art conference and banquet spaces offer opportunities for on-site meetings and social events. We offer MICE-friendly venues such as a Banquet hall and spacious lawns, which facilitate meetings, conferences, and social functions right amidst the beauty of Pahalgam.

Key source markets for MICE tourism in India

J&K has lately come up with an abundance of MICE opportunities in Pharma, Agriculture, Medical, Insurance, Banking and PSUs business. We are also aiming at key cities such as Hyderabad, Chennai, Bengaluru, Gujarat Maharashtra and Delhi NCR for possible

“ J&K HAS LATELY COME UP WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF MICE OPPORTUNITIES IN PHARMA, AGRICULTURE, MEDICAL, INSURANCE, BANKING AND PSUS BUSINESS

opportunities through our regional sales offices and regular visits to these states/travel trade fairs

Demand for offbeat and wellness-centric destinations

Yes, wellness and offbeat destinations were in huge demand and will continue to remain so. The travellers are seeking such unique experiences during their stay or are options for such spaces. Travel and hospitality brands



are ensuring to inculcate such experiences in their offerings, be it spas or coming up with packages that suit such curated experiences. For us at Radisson Golf Resort Pahalgam, we are naturally blessed with natural surroundings and the resort offerings blend in seamlessly.

SVELTE HOTEL AND PERSONAL SUITES FUSES THE OLD-WORLD CHARM WITH MODERN FACILITIES

MANEESHA BAJPAI , GENERAL MANAGER, SVELTE HOTEL & PERSONAL SUITES

Svelte Hotels differentiate itself from other competitors in the hospitality industry

A glimpse at the history of Svelte Hotel and Personal Suites Saket. The hotel opened in 2007 with a vision to provide leisure and travel a niche of its own. Svelte Hotel and Personal Suites Saket offers a distinctive "At Home" experience coupled with uncompromising luxury and panache. It was part of India's premier all suite business hotel, a first-of-its-kind property. The hotel was designed to offer a personalised Svelte experience with its contemporary and stylish accommodation and innovative in-room cook 'n' dine concept, combined with unrivalled business and recreational facilities. With signature services like "On-call Chef and Butler services for in-suite dining" Svelte Hotel and Personal Suites Saket started as a concept hotel, perfect for the long stays and business travellers who desired for "Home" like comfort and individualistic lifestyle. Changing with times, we have now combined the old-world charm with



SVELTE HOTEL AND PERSONAL SUITES SAKET OFFERS

A DISTINCTIVE "AT HOME" EXPERIENCE COUPLED WITH UNCOMPROMISING LUXURY AND PANACHE

modern facilities. The hotel now offers three categories of rooms; Superior, Premium and Executive Suites.

Svelte Hotels' approach towards community engagement and corporate social responsibility

Since we are an independent hotel, we are connected with many NGO's to fulfill our external social responsibility. Staff welfare and sustainability are our top priorities.



Svelte Hotels enhances the digital experience for guests

As digital media has taken the world by storm, we at Svelte are also in the running to digitalise as much as is essential. We have tried to strike a balance between contemporary and traditional, keeping up with our old-world charm philosophy. We believe no technology can replace human-ness.



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NAVIGATING PARADISE WITH ISLAND LIFE TRAVEL

FROM MALDIVES TO THE WORLD, ISLAND LIFE TRAVEL SHOWCASES A UNIQUE APPROACH TO SEAMLESS OUTBOUND EXPERIENCES

*Island Life Travel, the distinguished destination-specific DMC for the Maldives strategically focuses on destination uniqueness, dedicated training, and proactive market analysis propelling them beyond the competition. **Mazin Mohamed, CEO of Island Life Travel** shares tales of success, growth, and the art of differentiation in the ever-evolving landscape of outbound travel. With offices spanning Gurgaon, Mumbai, Malaysia, Dubai, and the Maldives, Island Life Travel stands as a testament to remarkable growth since its inception in August 2019. He delves into the strategic prowess of Island Life Travel, from its commitment to seamless travel experiences and staying abreast of evolving trends to the innovative campaigns that have fueled its impressive year-on-year growth*

By Aanchal sachdeva



focus on volume, ensuring our services remain relevant and appealing to outbound travellers.

Can you provide examples of successful outbound travel campaigns or projects Island Life Travel has executed, and how they contributed to the overall growth of the company?

Since its inception in August 2019 with a team of 4 individuals, Island Life Travel has achieved remarkable growth. Currently boasting offices

Through these strategies, Island Life Travel successfully differentiates itself in the outbound travel market, leveraging the strengths of its offline business model to provide a unique and valuable service to its customers.

How do you collaborate with other stakeholders in the travel industry, such as airlines, hotels, and tour operators, to provide comprehensive outbound travel solutions?
Island Life Travel strategically collaborates with

Currently boasting offices in 5 locations - Gurgaon, Mumbai, Malaysia (KL), Dubai, and Maldives - our dedicated team of 20+ destination experts has played a pivotal role in driving a year-on-year growth rate of 35-40%

How does Island Life Travel ensure a seamless travel experience for outbound travellers, considering the diverse range of destinations and preferences?

Island Life, as the exclusive destination-specific DMC for the Maldives, prioritizes the USPs of the destination and our products rather than focusing solely on price points. Our operations, reservations, sales, post-sales and Airport team undergo thorough training across processes. We are dedicated to delivering a seamless travel experience to all our guests, regardless of the resort they have chosen to stay at.

How do you stay updated on the latest travel trends and destination preferences to provide relevant and appealing services to outbound travellers?

We stay abreast of the latest travel trends and destination preferences through regular analysis and study of the market. This proactive approach enables us to promote the right products at the right time, with a strategic

in 5 locations - Gurgaon, Mumbai, Malaysia (KL), Dubai, and Maldives - our dedicated team of 20+ destination experts has played a pivotal role in driving a year-on-year growth rate of 35-40%. This expansion and consistent upward trajectory reflect the success of our outbound travel campaigns and projects, demonstrating their substantial contribution to the overall growth and success of Island Life Travel.

What strategies do you employ to differentiate Island Life Travel from competitors in the current outbound travel market?

Island Life Travel distinguishes itself from online competitors in the current outbound travel market through a dedicated offline business model. Our strategic approaches include:

- Highly Trained Team
- Seamless Travel experience
- Strategic market Expansion
- Focusing on USPs
- Constant team efforts improving our services

key stakeholders in the travel industry to deliver comprehensive outbound travel solutions. Our approach encompasses:

- Direct Contracts with Resorts and City Hotels: With a portfolio boasting over 125 resorts and 60 city hotels, we establish direct contracts, ensuring a diverse and exclusive range of accommodation options. Our ongoing efforts to generate substantial booking numbers aim to justify and strengthen these partnerships.
- Participation in Trade Shows: As an active member of MMPRC (Maldives Marketing & Public Relations Corporation), we actively participate in prominent trade shows worldwide, including OTM, SATTE, ITB Asia, MATTA, WTM, and various road shows with the Maldives Tourism Board. This engagement facilitates networking, industry exposure, and the forging of strategic alliances.

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A CREATIVE ODYSSEY IN UZBEKISTAN

SAMARKAND

Uzbekistan, a magical land in Central Asia, is like a treasure chest of wonders. The stunning blue domes in cities like Samarkand and the charming historic streets of Bukhara, each tells tales from the Silk Road's ancient days. In the heart of East-Central Uzbekistan lies a city that whispers tales of civilizations past, where every cobblestone bears witness to the ebb and flow of time. Welcome to Samarkand, a city that stands as a living testament to over two and a half millennia of rich history and cultural convergence. Samarkand, a living chronicle of culture and heritage, invites you to leave not just with souvenirs but with a piece of its soul. As you bid farewell to the azure domes and labyrinthine streets, know that the magic of Samarkand will linger, a timeless echo of a journey into the heart of Uzbekistan's captivating past

By Nandini Mahajan

SAMARKAND'S RICH TAPESTRY

At the city's core is the Registan, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that was once a bustling square resonating with markets, caravanserais, and the echoes of royal proclamations. The Registan encapsulates the essence of Samarkand's rich history, inviting visitors to step into the bygone eras that have shaped this extraordinary city.



SIGHTSEEING EXTRAVAGANZA

Immerse yourself in the winding streets of Samarkand, where every corner unfolds a fragment of the city's enigmatic past. From the majestic Bibi Khanum Madrasah to the celestial wonders of the Ulugbek Observatory, the serene spiritual ambience of the Khodja Akhrar Ensemble, and the ancient allure of Afrasiab.



REGISTAN RENDEZVOUS

Immerse yourself in the awe-inspiring beauty of the central courtyard, surrounded by architectural wonders. Witness the magic of traditional music and dance at the Registan courtyard, a spectacle that breathes life into the night.

DINE LIKE ROYALTY

Indulge your taste buds with the city's finest delights at Kishmish Azerbaijan Cuisine, experience the perfect blend of tradition and modernity at Filetto Restaurant, and immerse yourself in the charm of Uzbek hospitality at the historic Old Havuz Restaurant. Discover a culinary oasis where local and international flavors harmonize at Restaurant Samarkand, and satisfy your palate at Karimbek, a haven for food enthusiasts offering a delightful fusion of local and global cuisines.



LUXURIOUS RETREATS: WHERE ROYALTY FINDS ITS HOME

Samarkand's hospitality extends beyond its historic sites, with opulent accommodations that redefine luxury. Savitsky Plaza provides a perfect blend of comfort and elegance with sweeping cityscape views. Lia! by Minyoun Stars of Ulugbek combines modern luxury with Uzbek charm. The Luxury Guesthouse offers a sanctuary of indulgence. Samarkand Regency Amir Temur invites guests to experience regal comfort in a luxurious haven.



FOLKLORE FUSION MUSIC

Uzbekistan's folklore fusion music is a rhythmic journey across ancient landscapes. Traditional melodies intertwine with contemporary beats, creating a harmonious tapestry of past and present. The dombra's twang echoes through bustling markets, blending with modern instruments in a spirited dance. This musical alchemy, rooted in heritage, invites you to experience Uzbekistan's cultural heartbeat—a fusion where folklore and rhythm seamlessly unite.

SAMARKAND: THE ROYAL WEDDING DESTINATION

Amidst the timeless splendours, Samarkand emerges as a regal canvas for celebrating love. Exchange vows in the embrace of historic monuments, where the azure domes of countless madrasas and mausoleums cast a mystical radiance—creating an enchanting setting for memorable wedding photography. The intricate majolica and carvings on these landmarks leave an indelible impression, ensuring a lasting memory for all.



Immerse Yourself in Asia's Alluring Seas



Genting Dream
ex Singapore

Resorts World One
ex Hong Kong

Experience endless entertainment
the moment you board.



Crystal Life Spa



35 F&B Concepts



Zouk &
Zouk Beach Club



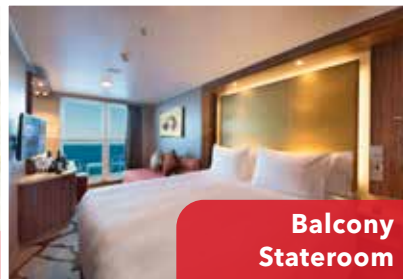
6-Slide Waterpark



Shopping



Rock Climbing



Balcony
Stateroom



The Palace

Belair sets foot in the international market, partners with Egypt Air

Belair, the Global Travel Company, increases its market share internationally by collaborating with EgyptAir, the state-owned flag carrier of Egypt. After an agreement and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) were signed in London with Egypt Air, Belair is ready to reach new heights in the international market. This important milestone was reached in the distinguished presence of Egypt Air's executive team, demonstrating the dedication and cooperation between the two organisations. This is a critical juncture in Belair - the worldwide Travel Company's trajectory towards worldwide expansion and success as it demonstrates the company's strategic global market expansion with the resounding backing of its partners.



Iris Reps collaborates with Malaysia Tourism, represents two hospitality brands at IITM Pune

Iris Reps represented two prestigious companies at the IITM Pune event: Berjaya Tioman Resort and Taaras Beach & Spa Resort Redang, which are partnered with Malaysia Tourism. These resorts added some fascinating new options. To provide guests with a thorough experience, the Taaras Beach & Spa Resort Redang has introduced a new 4-day, 3-night Singapore Redang Direct flight package. The package includes meals, return flights, and exciting activities. In the meanwhile, Berjaya unveiled wedding packages at the Tioman Resort designed for couples looking for a charming and dreamy setting for their big day. For couples looking to exchange vows in a special place, this programme offers an enchanted environment and first-rate services.



ATM 2024 to showcase luxury travel trends and projections

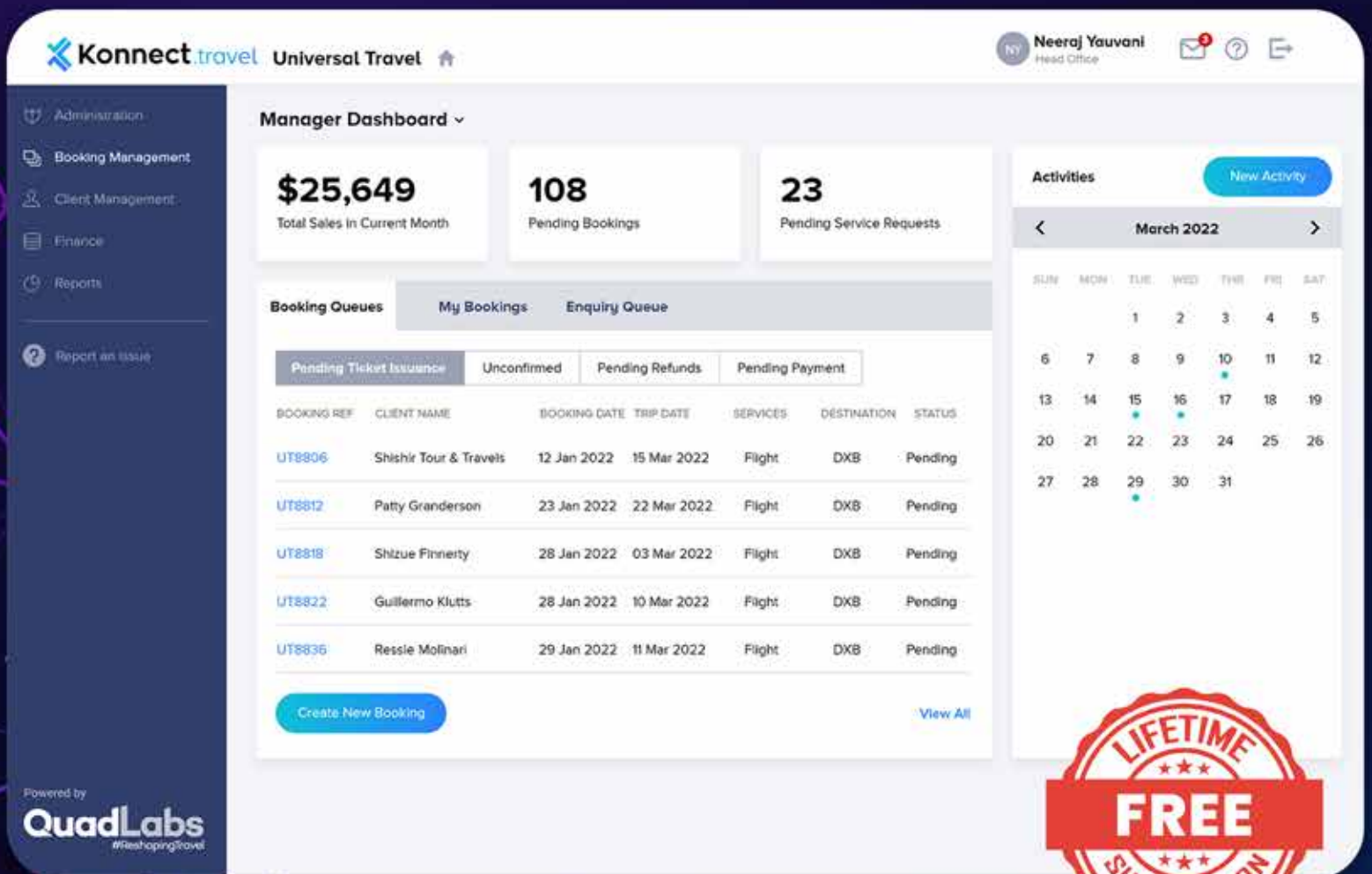
Arabian Travel Market 2024 to focus on luxury sub-themes, emphasising responsible and eco-friendly travel. ATM 2024 boasts renowned brands like Kerzner International, Jumeirah, and Hyatt, reflecting the region's commitment to luxury tourism. With a \$1.28 trillion global luxury travel sector and a 7.7% CAGR predicted, the event explores future trends, innovative technologies, and ethical choices. Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director, sees luxury travel as a transformative lens aligning with the industry's future. The

31st edition of ATM, themed 'Empowering Innovation: Transforming Travel Through Entrepreneurship,' continues to foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and innovation in the travel sector. The event will also emphasise environmental responsibility, aligning with the UAE's sustainability goals and the UN's SDGs. With over 40,000 attendees and strategic partners like Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism, Emirates, IHG Hotels & Resorts, and Al Rais Travel, ATM 2024 promises to be a global platform for shaping the future of travel and tourism.

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Konnnect.travel Universal Travel | Neeraj Yauvani, Head Office

Manager Dashboard

- \$25,649** Total Sales In Current Month
- 108** Pending Bookings
- 23** Pending Service Requests

Booking Queues | My Bookings | Enquiry Queue

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

Activities: March 2022

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RAKTDA and OMRAN signed MoU for cross-destination tourism promotion

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by the Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) and the Oman Tourism Development Company to jointly launch and pursue cross-destination tourism promotion and marketing initiatives between the Musandam Governorate, Sultanate of Oman, and the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates. Dr. Hashil Obaid Al

Mahrouqi, CEO of OMRAN Group, and Raki Phillips, Chief Executive Officer of the RAK Tourism Development Authority signed the agreement at WTM London, UK. Raki Phillips, CEO, RAK Tourism Development Authority, said, "This first of its kind agreement is built upon a formidable synergy between Ras Al Khaimah and the neighbouring Musandam Governorate. We look forward to working together with OMRAN on cross-destination promotions which will not only showcase each of our destinations' distinct tourism offerings, but also raise awareness among international visitors about the wide range of tourism attractions in the Middle East."



IATO urges PM for Inbound Tourism revival

The Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) penned a letter to the Prime Minister, urging intervention to revive inbound tourism. Highlighting a drastic decline since 2019, the letter cites reasons such as the withdrawal of incentives for tour operators, insufficient trained manpower in Indian Embassies, and a lack of overseas marketing support. The communication draws attention to Union Tourism

Minister G. Kishan Reddy's revelation that only 85.9 lakh Foreign Tourist Visitors (FTVs) visited in 2022, compared to 3.14 crore in 2019. IATO President, Rajiv Mehra, emphasised the urgency of financial support, proposing a 5% incentive on foreign exchange earnings for marketing and promotion, deployment of trained officers, and the establishment of a National Tourism Board for effective revival.



One Above and Fushifaru Island Resort collaborate for Educational Network in Surat

In Surat, One Above Global DMC and Fushifaru Island Resort arranged a fantastic networking event that attracted about 35 esteemed business partners. The event gave the Surat travel agents the perfect opportunity to learn about Fushifaru Maldives' newest offerings and emphasise the resort's unique qualities. Fushifaru Maldives cordially welcomes adventure lovers with a wide selection of additional activities, including exhilarating snorkelling excursions,

captivating sunset fishing, and informative guided island tours. Rahim Aslam, Co-Founder of One Above DMC said, "We are excited to introduce our partners to the resort's unique offerings, including its stunning accommodations, diverse dining experiences, thrilling adventures, and a host of complimentary activities. It is our pleasure to be part of this evening, which strengthens our commitment to providing extraordinary travel experiences in the Maldives."

TAAI signs MoU with West Bengal Tourism Department

The West Bengal Tourism Department aimed to unlock the state's tourism potential by integrating it with cultural heritage, promoting folk art, craft, and diverse tourism narratives. TAAI expressed its commitment to collaborate with the state to maximise tourism prospects, create jobs, ensure sustainability, and drive economic growth. Acknowledging the Tourism Secretary's support for the State's Tourism Policy and industry status for Tourism & Hospitality, TAAI seeks inclusion of Travel Agents and Tour Operators. The partnership encompasses studying tourism policies, addressing concerns, identifying traffic bottlenecks, promoting projects, facilitating events, organising meetings, and enhancing business



opportunities. TAAI pledges efforts to boost international connectivity to Kolkata and position it as a key gateway to Eastern India, demonstrating mutual dedication to fostering tourism development and collaboration. The MoU was signed by TAAI President Jyoti Mayal and Nandini Chakravorty, Secretary - Tourism, Govt. of West Bengal, in the presence of TAAI National Managing Committee and Regional/Chapter Chairpersons.

NCL unveils the all-new Norwegian Aqua

Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) to introduce the next evolution of the Prima Class with the debut of the all-new Norwegian Aqua, the first ship of the extended Prima Plus Class, which is slated to depart in April 2025. Norwegian Aqua is currently taking reservations for its first-ever Caribbean cruises. The seven-day itineraries depart from Port Canaveral, Florida, which is one of the world's busiest cruise ports. Cruises stop in the stunning island resorts

of Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic; Tortola, British Virgin Islands; St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands; and Great Stirrup Cay, NCL's island in the Bahamas. "Norwegian Aqua is a true testament of fusing what represents the future of our Brand as the first ship in the Prima Plus Class, and our commitment to pushing the boundaries in guest-first experiences that will make new waves at sea," said David J. Herrera, President of Norwegian Cruise Line.



InterGlobe Enterprises and Archer Aviation Inc. signs MoU

With the aim of working together to establish and run an all-electric air taxi service in India, subject to the necessary governmental permits and clearances, InterGlobe Enterprises and Archer Aviation Inc. announced that they have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU). In order to create a proposed partnership that will improve urban mobility by offering a low-cost, environmentally friendly, and

safe electric air taxi service that is competitively priced with ground transportation, Rahul Bhatia, Group Managing Director of InterGlobe, and Nikhil Goel, Chief Commercial Officer of Archer signed the MoU. The parties plan to finance and construct infrastructure, train pilots and other personnel required for these activities, and operate Archer's aircraft in collaboration with a limited number of domestic commercial partners.



Resorts World Cruises celebrates arrival in Nha Trang and Da Nang

Resorts World Cruises' sailings to Vietnam, which depart on specific Sundays from Hong Kong, officially began. Arrival of the Resorts World One cruise ship at Nha Trang and then on to Da Nang. The popular UNESCO sites of Nha Trang and Da Nang are now accessible to tourists who opt for the 5-night trip to Vietnam. Michael Goh, President, of Resorts World Cruises said, "As the only cruise line to homeport year-round in Hong Kong, we are providing more itineraries with the inclusion of Nha Trang and Da Nang in Vietnam as a destination, complementing



our current cruises to Sanya, Okinawa and also soon to the Philippines in 2024. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude towards the Vietnamese authorities for their support in making this deployment a reality, as we continue to work hand-in-hand to rejuvenate the cruise sector for the country and across the region."

RezLive.com successfully participated in WTM London 2023

RezLive.com announced the successful conclusion of its participation in the World Travel Market (WTM) London in November. The organisation was able to establish crucial connections and broaden its global network by interacting with both new and current agents during the event. RezLive.com had the honour of interacting with a wide range of business people during WTM, including hotel partners and travel agents. The company had

the opportunity to present its state-of-the-art solutions, exchange industry insights, and look into joint venture options with travel-related partners. Jaal Shah, Global Managing Director of Travel Designer Group, stated, "WTM London 2023 was a phenomenal experience for RezLive.com. Engaging with industry professionals, establishing partnerships, and exchanging ideas have been pivotal in shaping the future of our travel solutions."



WTM LONDON 2023 TRIUMPHS, MARKS A REMARKABLE 23% INCREASE FROM 2022

ELITE LUNCHEON WITH JONATHAN HULL, HEAD OF SALES, WORLD TRAVEL MARKET PORTFOLIO AS HE HOSTS IN STYLE

Jonathan Hull, Head of Sales at World Travel Market Portfolio, graciously gathered the who's who of the travel industry at The Leela Palace in Chanakyapuri, expressing heartfelt gratitude for the triumph of WTM London 2023. Engaging in a conversation with TravelScapes, he delved into the dynamic landscape of company participation at WTM 2023, shed light on India's burgeoning role as a key market, and provided enticing glimpses of the anticipated revelations awaiting attendees at WTM 2024

By Aanchal Sachdeva, Ananya Trivedi



WTM London participation overview

London was truly exceptional. We surpassed our 2019 show in terms of participation, boasting nearly 4000 exhibiting companies at the event. These were not just mainstays, but various companies sharing with national tourist organisations, totalling just under 4000. With over 43,000 attendees, the show was phenomenal. Although we saw a 23% increase compared to the previous year, our main metric was 2019 pre-COVID. However, we are pleased to note that business levels have now returned to, and slightly exceeded, the 2019 levels this year.

Visitor turn out at WTM London

Over 43,000 people attended, marking a remarkable 23% increase from 2022, precisely 22.9% to be exact. In the meetings held during these few days, numerous comments highlighted the robust presence of buyers at WTM this year.

Indian market takeaways from WTM

During our meetings, a major destination management company shared that they had buyers interested in Indian and South Asian

products from various countries, including Sweden, Romania, Germany, Spain, and, of course, the core UK buyer. These buyers are looking to promote outbound travel from their respective countries into India. It's evident that India is on the rise, with a phenomenal tourism product catering to the preferences of modern-day travellers. The growing interest from the trade underscores the wealth of experiences that India can offer to consumers.

WTM 2024 plans

Looking ahead to next year, we anticipate a larger WTM London, not to mention the expanded Arabian Travel Market, WTM Latin America, and WTM Africa. Our luxury portfolio and MICE portfolio, featuring IBTM and ILTM, are also expected to thrive. This reflects the industry's strength in meeting consumer demand, making it an exciting sector to be a part of. Post-COVID, the industry's growth has been substantial, driven not only by pent-up demand but a sustained interest in experiences and face-to-face interactions. India, with its wealth of products and skilled professionals, is poised to benefit significantly from this positive trend.





VFS GLOBAL PIONEERING SEAMLESS JOURNEYS AMIDST GLOBAL SHIFTS

FACILITATING A SEAMLESS VISA APPLICATION PROCESS WITH STRATEGIC COLLABORATIONS AND SHAPING THE FUTURE THROUGH INNOVATION AND TECH-DRIVEN TRANSFORMATION

The architectural brilliance of VFS Global as the extended arm of embassies and consulates, ensures a seamless and accessible visa application process. Prabuddha Sen, COO-South Asia, VFS Global expresses in length about the technological odyssey with VFS Global, for us to witness the unwavering commitment to innovation and efficiency. After speaking with him, we gathered insights into the intuitive chatbot services and the game-changing Visa at Your Doorstep (VAYD) initiative, revolutionising the applicant experience. VFS Global plays a pivotal role in promoting tourism, business, and cultural exchange between India and other countries. VFS Global, as the gears behind the scenes, contributes to the swift movement of travellers, aligning with the demands of a rapidly growing outbound tourism market

By Aanchal sachdeva

VFS Global adapted to the changing landscape of travel and immigration

At VFS Global, we take pride in being trailblazers in visa processing and outsourcing services, solidifying our position as industry leaders. Our forte? Innovation. It's the cornerstone of our success, and it's why over 70 client governments trust us implicitly.

The upheaval caused by COVID-19 may have briefly interrupted the global travel scene, but as resilient as ever, the industry witnessed a remarkable resurgence in 2021 and 2022. Notably, this surge in travel has prompted an extension of the travel period in India, marking a significant trend.

Innovation is embedded in our DNA. We introduced groundbreaking products like Visa at Your Doorstep (VAYD), a service that garnered widespread acclaim from applicants. Additionally, our Digital Document Check (DDC) ensures precision in the information provided by applicants, elevating the overall experience.

Our commitment to excellence and cutting-edge solutions remains unwavering, ensuring that the journey, both for our clients and applicants, is seamless and efficient. That's why we are trusted by governments that work with us.

VFS Global collaborates with various governments and diplomatic missions

At VFS Global, we're not just in the business of visa processing; we're the architects of a seamless and accessible application process.

We are located across 19 cities in India, addressing this very issue and revolutionising the accessibility of visa services. Gone are the days of a mere 2-3-hour submission window at embassies. We've stretched that timeline substantially to 6-8 hours daily, providing extended hours during peak seasons.

Our Visa Application Centres (VACs) are not

By streamlining the process, we contribute to the swift movement of travellers, aligning with the demands of a rapidly growing outbound tourism market

just spaces; they're well-situated, spacious, and comfortable havens equipped with modern amenities.

However, a crucial point to note, while we orchestrate the front-end administrative tasks, from collecting application forms to required documentation and even biometric enrolment if needed, the decision-making power regarding visa issuance rests solely with the embassies and consulates.

It is this efficiency in our services that this year itself we bagged global contracts including the global tender for Sweden which has been renewed for 37 countries.

The Department of Home Affairs, Australia, has awarded the global biometric collection service across seven regions to VFS Global. The agreement spanning Australian biometric collection centres (ABCC) at 165 locations worldwide includes new geographies in addition to existing locations operated by VFS Global.

VFS Global incorporates technology to streamline the visa application

At VFS Global, our commitment to technological advancement is unwavering. Our IT systems across all Visa Application Centres (VACs) undergo continuous upgrades, ensuring seamless processing even during high application volumes. To mitigate any technical glitches, we deploy dedicated support teams, guaranteeing zero downtime.

We've embraced technology, incorporating

intuitive chatbot services to enhance the online customer journey.

The technology at our VACs ensures integrated front and back-office operations, optimizing Turn Around Time (TAT) and boosting customer satisfaction. Not to mention, our game-changing Visa at Your Doorstep (VAYD) initiative allows applicants to complete the entire submission process from the comfort of their homes or preferred locations.

We've also revolutionised the document submission process with Digital Document Check (DDC), enabling applicants to upload supporting documents seamlessly from home. This not only ensures accuracy but adds a layer of user-friendly convenience.

VFS Global contribute broader goals of promoting tourism, business, and cultural exchange

In terms of volume growth, India has seen an impressive surge, recording a staggering 140% increase in visa applications in 2022 compared to 2021. And the momentum continues, the first half of 2023 witnessed another 20% growth.

According to a recent McKinsey report, India's outbound tourist market, a powerhouse before the pandemic, has bounced back remarkably. We've already recovered 61% of our pre-pandemic market, hosting 13 million outbound tourists in 2022 – a speedier recovery than most Asian countries.

We're the gears behind the scenes, ensuring seamless visa processing and handling all non-judgmental tasks efficiently. By streamlining the process, we contribute to the swift movement of travellers, aligning with the demands of a rapidly growing outbound tourism market.

In essence, our mission is clear – facilitating travel by making the visa journey as smooth and efficient as possible.



Archer Hospitality unveils The Astor Goa in Candolim

Situated in the coveted Candolim neighbourhood in North Goa, The Astor Goa unveiled an all-suite luxury boutique resort that redefines the meaning of experiential luxury. The Archer Hospitality Company, which has a successful partnership with The Astor Kolkata, a renowned historical hotel in Kolkata, is expanding its portfolio strategically by introducing its flagship brand to Goa. With its chic and sophisticated amenities, this boutique hotel is certain to become a preferred travel

spot for contemporary visitors. Everything is below ordinary. Goa is a highly sought-after travel destination for individuals of all age groups due to its remarkable natural beauty and diverse customs. Vikram Puri, Managing Director, The Archer Hospitality said, "The Astor Experience is truly unique and we are excited to bring this to the heart of Goa. The state enjoys a robust demand for high-end luxury from Indian and International travellers. The hotel promises to meet the needs of these smart luxury travellers."

Phuket welcomes Le Méridien Phuket Mai Khao Beach Resort

Le Méridien Phuket Mai Khao Beach Resort welcomes a new era of culturally-infused hospitality to Phuket's stunning sunset coast. The resort provides guests with a serene tropical sanctuary to unwind in style, nestled within the breathtaking beauty of Sirinat National Park and its golden beaches on Mai Khao Beach. "With its stunning seafront location and outstanding facilities for couples, families and out-of-town events, this sophisticated resort is set to become a popular choice for domestic and international travellers who want to discover a different side of this popular island," said Jakob Helgen,

Area Vice President – Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia & Myanmar, Marriott International. In addition to freshly designed pool access rooms, private cabana rooms, two-bedroom suites, and private pool suites, the resort offers family accommodations.



Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre sets foot in the pink city

Accor announced the opening of its 24th Novotel hotel in India with the opening of the Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre (NJCC). NJCC is poised to transform Indian hospitality and become the preferred destination for foreign visitors, whether they are on business or vacation. The hotel is near the Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre (JECC), which is regarded as South Asia's best purpose-built, state-of-the-art venue for exhibitions, conferences, and entertainment. The capacity of Accor to plan MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions)

events will significantly grow. Accor's strategic alignment has enabled them to better cater to the needs of business and conference visitors by offering a comprehensive solution that combines excellent housing with first-rate event facilities. "The Jaipur Exhibition Convention Centre represents a valuable expansion that is poised to fuel the growth of the Accor in India, further solidifying our position as a leading provider of large-scale exhibition and convention venues in the country," said Puneet Dhawan, South Asia's Vice-President Operations, Accor in India.

Minor Hotels plans three hotels in Paris

Minor Hotels, an international hotel owner, operator, and investor is set to make its debut in the French capital with the upcoming addition of 3 four-star hotels. Three NH Hotels will open in 2024, according to the company's plans; one of the locations will undergo renovations in 2025 and become the NH Collection. "Our team has been searching for the right opportunities in this key market for some time, so we are pleased to announce that, together with Swiss Life AM, Minor Hotels will arrive in Paris



not with one but with three hotels. We believe this is an amazing opportunity to grow with two of our brands in the second most visited city in the world and home to the 2024 Olympics," says Dillip Rajakarier, CEO of Minor Hotels and Group CEO of Minor International.

Sanjay Kumar Gautam from Oberoi Group joins Onora Hospitality as CFO

Sanjay Kumar Gautam, previously the Associate Vice President (Finance) at the Oberoi Group, took on the position of Chief Financial Officer at Onora Hospitality Pvt Ltd. Onora Hospitality manages three distinctive brands – jüStA Hotels & Resorts, Bookmark Resorts, and NUO – overseeing a network of 23 boutique luxury hotels and resorts, boasting over 600 keys in 9 states.

With a wealth of over 20 years of experience in accounting and finance, Sanjay, a Chartered Accountant since 2002, contributed his expertise to various reputable multinational corporations in the manufacturing industry before joining the Oberoi Group in 2011. Onora Hospitality's Founder & CEO, Ashish Vohra said, "The single biggest



challenge that most brands face during their expansion drive is managing growth and the most important factors for achieving this are to manage costs as well as the backend processes. In my opinion, Sanjay's exposure at the Oberoi Hotels' Centre of Excellence will help us immensely as he brings that vision and understanding. Under his guidance, we are now moving our entire accounts to a cloud-based system so as to work with our hotels, vendors and employees better.

DS Group and IHG Hotels launch InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road

After a significant makeover, InterContinental Hotels & Resorts announced the spectacular opening of InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road. Located in the 'Pink City,' this lavish hotel redefines the elegance of India's past and perfectly captures the lively and unique charm of Jaipur. The InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road, which formerly stood as the Crowne Plaza, is a testament to IHG Hotels & Resorts' commitment to expanding its collection of opulent and lifestyle properties globally. The newly constructed InterContinental is ready to offer amazing experiences and joyous occasions for both business and pleasure tourists, thanks to major restorations and enhancements. Nalin Mandiratta, Regional General Manager & General Manager – InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road, said, "We want to uplift every guest who stays with us and help them feel the best version of themselves. From our service style through to the new interiors and our food and beverage offerings, we are committed to delivering an exceptional experience for the modern luxury traveller."

WOW Resorts and JW Marriott Residences signs an agreement

The renowned JW Marriott and WOW Resorts have entered into a significant collaboration. Together, they proudly announce the unveiling of a jewel in the crown of Al Marjan Island, Ras Al Khaimah (RAK), and UAE – the JW Marriott Al Marjan Island Resort & JW Marriott Residences Al Marjan Island. This remarkable project, which is expected to cost USD 1.3 billion when it is finished, will shine brightly in Marriott International's luxury offering and serve as a monument to the company's legendary status on Al Marjan Island, a popular vacation and investment spot. Bhupender 'Bruce' Patel, CEO

and founder of WOW Resorts, conveyed his profound pride in the forthcoming property and stated, "With the demand for waterfront living on the rise, we are committed to optimizing and elevating the experiences of all our cherished guests and residents as we embark on this remarkable project in the UAE, set on the enchanting Al Marjan Island. This is a prime investment destination in the region as well as key markets like India. India's proximity to the UAE and large segment of HNWIs makes this beautiful property an attractive proposition for families to invest in."



Amora Beach Resort Phuket opens its doors in Thailand

Owned and operated by Amora Hotels & Resorts, Amora Beach Resort Phuket first opened its doors in 1999 as a four-star resort, and after extensive refurbishment costing THB 500 million (US\$14 million) as part of its repositioning into a five-star modern lifestyle resort, the hotel re-positions in December 2023. In addition to renovated rooms and suites across 13 categories, the beachfront resort introduces the new-concept Nora Beach Club, Amora Wellness

Center with massage and fitness facilities, Isla restaurant, a kids' club, two pools, a beachfront events lawn, the Amora Grand Ballroom and four meeting rooms. Chaowaphat Siriphatrawan, Amora Hotels & Resorts' Owner/Director said, "With strong demand returning, the repositioning of Amora Beach Resort Phuket is a timely one, considering the Tourism Authority of Thailand's re-focus on luxury tourism and new market opportunities, particularly to islands such as Phuket. Travellers are now willing to pay a lot more for hotel room rates in Phuket, which has currently achieved a new peak, and Amora is stepping up our game to provide exceptional experiences and high-quality services and products that make it well worth their while and keep them coming back."



Sarovar Hotels & Resorts debuts in Pavagadh, Gujarat

Vikrama Sarovar Portico, the newest addition to Sarovar Hotels & Resorts' portfolio, is set to have its grand inauguration in the historic Gujarati city of Pavagadh. Vikrama Sarovar Portico is a beautifully built hotel that provides a perfect balance of luxury and outstanding service for pilgrims, leisure travellers, and business travellers. It is situated near the revered Maha Kalika Mata Mandir and nestled against the picturesque Pavagadh hills. The hotel's architecture blends in well with the rich history of the city, creating an unforgettable experience that embraces both tradition and contemporary. It is also conveniently located near a well-known UNESCO World Heritage Site. Vikrama Sarovar Portico has twenty-six beautifully furnished rooms, suites, and villas, all of which have been



thoughtfully designed to offer the highest level of luxury. "We are pleased to unveil Vikrama Sarovar Portico in the culturally vibrant city of Pavagadh. This new addition reflects our commitment to providing exceptional hospitality experiences in every part of the country," said Ajay K. Bakaya, Managing Director, of Sarovar Hotels & Resorts and Director - of Louvre India.

Fortune Hotels signs two properties in Tamil Nadu

Fortune Hotels announced its newest signings, a brownfield resort located in the picturesque area of Uthandi, Chennai and an over 100-room conversion hotel in Hosur, just an hour's drive from Bangalore. The two strategically located hotels, scheduled to open in a few months, add strength to the Fortune Hotels portfolio of 64 alliances across 54 cities in India. Samir MC, Managing Director, Fortune Hotels, said, "It is good to be on the path of expansion as envisaged by

us early on. Both the Hosur & Chennai properties are poised to be fantastic additions to our portfolio thereby strengthening our footprint in the enchanting state of Tamil Nadu. The choice of these locations was driven by their immense growth potential and strategic advantages. With these key additions, we once again demonstrate our dedication to providing guests with exceptional experiences in newer locations while maintaining the legacy of our existing properties."



Kuda Villingili Resort Maldives welcomes Shilpa Shetty for a post-Diwali retreat

Famous Bollywood actor Shilpa Shetty and her family set out on an enchanted post-Diwali retreat at the exquisite Kuda Villingili Resort in the Maldives. Nestled amidst the luxurious backdrop of pristine beaches and turquoise waters, Kuda Villingili offered Shetty and her family an unmatched retreat that felt like a home away from home, with its idyllic setting and first-rate amenities allowing the

family to relax and enjoy the lap of luxury. Documenting her blissful experience on Instagram, Shilpa Shetty expressed her appreciation for the warm reception, diverse breakfast choices, and her newfound love for mango sticky rice. The resort's staff, known for their discreet hospitality, played a crucial role in ensuring a serene and secluded stay tailored for high-profile guests.



IHCL announces the launch of a Vivanta hotel in Kochi, Aluva

The Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) announced the official launch of a new collaboration for a Vivanta hotel in the centre of Kochi, Aluva, marking a noteworthy milestone of a Mumbai event, KM Abdul Latheef, Managing Director of Hotel Pearl Dunes Pvt Ltd, and Suma Venkatesh, Executive Vice President, Real Estate & Development of IHCL, shared the news. Expressing her excitement, Suma Venkatesh stated, "IHCL's renowned Vivanta

brand is making its debut in Kochi with this new agreement. This marks our seventh establishment in the city, underscoring its significance. We are thrilled to further solidify our collaboration with KM Abdul Latheef through this second hotel." The 95-key hotel in Aluva is well-located, with easy access to the airport and other tourist attractions. Its amenities include a 4,500-square-foot banquet area, an all-day restaurant and bar, a gym and a spa.



WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO WAKE UP IN HISTORY ?

Choose your century and your kingdom...



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



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



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



17th c. Deo Bagh, Gwalior (Maratha)



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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

Heritage is a many-splendoured thing.

It's the foundation on which India's future will sit and rise – or, if not maintained, it will sink ! Neemrana is committed to restoring all our royal and noble heritage that merits holding India's skyline with pride.

'The King is dead', they say in England 'Long live the king !' But here, with 565 royal families and many colonisers – we can only say Long live the Legacies of all those who built !

Come, stay at Neemrana and share in this mission...



NEEMRANA HOTELS

+91 124 4666 166, reservations@neemranahotels.com, www.neemranahotels.com

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TRAVEL THE CHARMS OF GOA WITH TROPICAL TALES OF TISYA

Tisya Stays is a recognised vacation rental and property management company that places an immense emphasis on meeting the needs of travellers looking for leisure and luxury. Tisya Stays can uphold its steadfast commitment to offering exceptional facilities while embracing its solitude, harmony, and spiritual tranquillity because of its unquestionable elegance and customised amenities



CASA Y'NA

A blend of modern elements, minimalist furniture and colourful décor

Nestled amidst Goa's serene nature, Casa Y'na offers an opulent lifestyle experience to indulge your senses. You may relish pristine nature to the fullest while having access to cutting-edge facilities and fast internet. The villa's architecture combines luxurious elements with contemporary design. The eclectic interiors feature a special and intriguing blend of modern, minimalist furniture and colourful décor. Casa Y'na is a 3-bedroom luxury villa with a private pool, an interesting bar and a common but very beautiful lush green garden. Every room has air conditioning and fast Wi-Fi. The main street market and Candolim Beach are five minutes away by car. The villa is close to several popular eateries and nightclubs. Yazu, for pan Asian food, Banyan Tree(seafood/Asian), Mosaic (Italian) and Republic of Noodles are some of them.





SHANGRI-LA

A commitment to unconventional hospitality with an air of grandeur

With four enormous bedrooms that are elegantly nestled in soft linen and decorated in Indian style with innovative modern facilities, the Shangri-La is the perfect option for that much-needed vacation for friends, families, and business travellers. The exposed wooden beams will remind you of the beauty of the small Goan village of Pilerne, while the lavish bathroom with dressing scenes, swim-up bar and living area gives off an air of grandeur. The villa is close to many famous sights like the Like-Museum of Goa, Goa Brewing Company, Aguada Fort, Reis Magos Fort, Dr. Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary (The Pilerne Lake is home to several migratory water birds.) and many more. Nearby restaurants will include Mezmiz, Kismoor, Sua Casa, Morgans Place, and Urrak to name a few.



AMANASSA

The epitome of luxury and sophistication

Amanassa is a type of luxury property offered by Tisya Stays, including three villas named Amanassa 1, Amanassa 2, and Amanassa 3. Amanassa, the height of opulence and class, lies tucked away in the centre of North Goa. The villa has a huge private pool next to a cabana furnished with mahogany furniture, and it has four spacious bedrooms with minimalist and classic designs. The three-story home is divided into three floors. On the main floor is the spacious master bedroom with a luxurious marble bathtub and powder room. With a large swimming pool on the ground floor, the villa is self-contained and nicely distributed across three floors, including a patio. The quality of electricity, wifi, water and air-conditioning is of the highest order as is the arrangements of security. The villa is a 10-minute drive to Anjuna and Vagator Beaches.





FGIC inks MoU with Civil Aviation Authority at Dubai Airshow 2023

At the Dubai Airshow 2023, the Federal Geographic Information Center (FGIC) and the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) signed a MoU to enhance collaboration in geospatial information development. The agreement, witnessed by key officials, focused on establishing a national geospatial information platform aligned with international standards. It aimed to facilitate access to accurate data at the state level, supporting sustainable development goals in the UAE. The MoU emphasised joint initiatives, strategic planning, and unified standards

for geospatial information. The partnership underscores the commitment to strengthen the UAE's position in civil aviation and geographical data, promoting efficiency and shared spatial data access. H.E. Hamed Khamis Al Kaabi, Director General FGIC, emphasised the collaboration's importance in realising national strategic directives and contributing to comprehensive development. The FGIC's project, the Union Atlas, aligns with these goals, offering interactive maps and data to boost innovation and scientific research across various sectors.

Jamaica crowned as leading Global Tourism destination

Jamaica reaffirmed its status as a premier global tourism destination by clinching eight prestigious awards at the 2023 Travvy Awards in Fort Lauderdale. The accolades, six gold and two silver, included distinctions such as Best Tourism Board and Best Destination in the Caribbean. Director of Tourism Donovan White, for the Jamaica Tourist Board, hailed this unprecedented achievement, expressed gratitude to travel advisor partners for their votes. The 9th annual Travvy Awards, organized by TravelPulse and AGENTatHOME, recognised outstanding contributors to the travel industry, as voted by Northstar's travel advisor professionals. In addition to its Travvy triumph, Jamaica



was crowned 'Caribbean's Best Culinary Destination' at the 2023 World Culinary Awards in Dubai. With the surge in awards, Jamaica witnessed heightened interest from Indian travellers, supported by new air routes, including American Airlines' Miami to Ocho Rios service, and increased United Airlines flights from Delhi to Newark.



Saudi Tourism Authority joins WTM London as Global Travel Sponsor

Saudi Tourism Authority (STA) partnered with RX Global, the organiser of WTM, entering a two-year partnership for the WTM Portfolio. As the 'Global Travel Partner,' STA will be integral to WTM London, WTM Africa, WTM Latin America, and Arabian Travel Market (ATM). This marks the third consecutive year of STA's significant role in WTM, with previous features as the 'Premier Partner' at WTM London in 2021 and 2022. Announced on November 8, 2023, the partnership,

running from November 2023 to September 2025, positions Saudi Arabia as the world's fastest-growing year-round tourism destination. The formal signing at WTM London signifies a strategic alliance, emphasising Saudi's progress and enticing global visitors through promotional activities at WTM events. CEO of STA Fahd Hamidaddin anticipates leveraging the partnership for growth and enhancing engagement with international trade partners at WTM shows in 2023, 2024, and beyond.

Ras Al Khaimah unveils Feline character campaign

Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority introduced a destination promotion campaign featuring a charming feline character for the ultimate #PurrrfectVacation. Inspired by a real cat named Leo, who found a home in RAK after being rescued, the campaign portrays the Emirate as an ideal place for relaxation and exploration. Crafted by award-winning creature animation studio FABLEfx, known for projects like Netflix's The Great, the campaign showcased the cat's leisurely adventures across beaches, sunsets, and mountains. CEO Raki Phillips highlights the



strategic choice of a mascot, citing research showing mascot-led campaigns have a 37% advantage in market share. The "All About You" campaign targets key markets, using the lovable cat to evoke affinity and attract new visitors with its emotive backstory.

Germany's Eco-Tourism boosts Indian tourism

India's tourism to Germany surged by 496% from January to August 2023 compared to the same period in 2021, showcasing robust post-pandemic recovery. While still 15% below 2019 levels, there's an 85% rise from 2022. The German National Tourist Board (GNTB) disclosed that India, with 541,579 overnight stays in H1 2023, solidified its position as a vital Asian market for German tourism. To sustain growth, GNTB relaunched

the 'Simply Feel Good' campaign, focusing on eco-friendly travel to align with conscientious travellers. The 'Embrace German Nature' initiative, emphasised diverse natural wonders enhancing awareness through collaborations with influencers and digital campaigns in India. These efforts, catering to eco-conscious and culturally inclined Indian travellers, reflected a successful fusion of Germany's offerings with evolving preferences.

Germany
Simply inspiring



Kazakh Tourism appoints Prashant Chaudhary as MICE Tourism Ambassador

Prashant Chaudhary appointed as the MICE Tourism Ambassador for India by Kazakhstan, signifying a strategic effort to bolster relations and tap into the growing MICE tourism sector. Chairman of Kazakh Tourism, Kairat Sadvakassov, expressed excitement about Chaudhary's appointment, anticipating his influential role in positioning Kazakhstan as a premier MICE destination. Chaudhary, in response, expressed his honour in representing Kazakhstan, emphasised the country's unique venues and cultural experiences for seamless event planning. Aligned with Kazakh Tourism's global expansion, this move aims to present Kazakhstan as an appealing destination for



both business and leisure travellers. Sadvakassov highlighted the surging Indian market, projecting a doubling of arrivals in the current year, facilitated by recent visa-free travel for Indian citizens and improved air connections. Kazakh Tourism, as the national tourism organization, focuses on spotlighting Kazakhstan's cultural richness, natural beauty, and diverse experiences for global travellers.

WTM London 2023 attendance surges by 22%

World Travel Market London experienced a notable 22% surge in attendance, with 43,727 participants from November 6 to 8, 22% higher than 2022's 35,826. The event featured 4,560 qualified buyers, facilitating 29,077 pre-booked meetings for future industry planning. The media presence increased by 31%, with 1,976 representatives. Exhibitors rose by 23% to 3,875, making the event 5.3% larger than the 2019 pre-pandemic show. WTM London, equipped with digital tools, recorded 99,355 business connections in 2023. The Ministers' Summit, involving 53 ministers, occurred on Day One, emphasising tourism transformation through education. The conference showcased innovations, including the WTM Global Travel Report and new stages named Discover, Elevate, and



Innovate. Key deals, such as Jet2.com and the Moroccan National Tourism Office, were signed, while debates covered over-tourism, event tourism, and diversity. TV documentary maker Louis Theroux concluded with reflections on global cultural interactions. WTM London 2024 is scheduled for November 5-7.

Thailand announces visa exemption for Indian travellers

Effective from November 10, 2023, to May 10, 2024, Thailand grants a 30-day temporary visa exemption for Indian passport or travel document holders, fostering tourism. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) welcomed Indian tourists at Suvarnabhumi Airport, marking the initiation of this initiative. The TAT Governor Thapanee Kiatphaibool, emphasised the Thai government's commitment to simplifying visa procedures, particularly during the high

season. The visa exemption aims to attract Indian tourists, with an expectation of 1.6 million arrivals in 2023, generating approximately 65.6 billion Baht. TAT plans joint promotions with local operators for various market segments and increased participation in Indian trade shows in 2024. The promotion also emphasised sustainable and high-value travel experiences for diverse segments, including corporate, incentive, and wedding travellers.



Hong Kong Disneyland presents 'A Spectacular Celebration of World of Frozen'

In anticipation of the grand opening of the world's first "Frozen" themed land 'World of Frozen' global guests, including Robert Iger and Josh D'Amaro, joined the festivities immersed in the enchanting realm of Arendelle. Michael Moriarty, Managing Director of Hong Kong Disneyland Resort, played a key role as special guests, including Jennifer Lee, witnessed the magic. Iger emphasised the

franchise's success, rooted in storytelling, shaping Disney's legacy. D'Amaro lauded the immersive experience crafted by Imagineers and Disney Animation, transporting visitors to a world of cherished memories. The celebration along the scenic Bay of Arendelle featured the Royal Choir and Elsa's Ice Magic, setting the stage for the opening of World of Frozen at Hong Kong Disneyland.



Miral Destinations unveils Yas and Saadiyat developments

Miral Destinations participated in the World Travel Market London 2023 from November 6 to 8. With a vast audience of over 35,000 industry professionals from 184 countries, Miral Destinations showcased Abu Dhabi's award-winning destinations, emphasising leisure, culture, and entertainment offerings. During the event, they inked a memorandum of understanding with UK market players to enhance collaborations and promote Yas Island Abu Dhabi.

Miral also celebrated the winners of the 'Take ME to The Best Beach' competition, a testament to their partnership with luxury tour operator IF ONLY. Liam Findlay, CEO of Miral Destinations, expressed pride in the international success of their campaigns and highlighted their commitment to presenting tailored experiences and strategic partnerships, further solidifying Yas Island and Saadiyat Island's positions in the global travel and tourism landscape.

BTEA launches camping season in the Sakhir Desert

Following a three-year hiatus prompted by the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Kingdom of Bahrain, renowned for its cultural richness and vibrant heritage captivated residents and visitors alike with the eagerly awaited annual camping season. Commenced on November 10, 2023, and extending its allure until February 29, 2024, amidst the expansive and captivating landscapes of the Sakhir Desert, this season promises a jubilation of nature, culture, and community. Far beyond a mere winter retreat, Bahrain's

camping season embodies a cultural legacy passed down from the kingdom's Bedouin forebears, exalting the splendour of nature and fostering communal bonds among families and friends. The tranquil ambience of the Sakhir Desert metamorphoses into a secure and expansive canvas for diverse activities, ranging from barbecues and bonfires to mesmerising stargazing. The brisk winter breeze enhances the camping experience, crafting an ideal setting for creating enduring memories.



Malaysia initiates visa free entry to Chinese, Indians

Started December 1, Malaysia offers visa-free entry to Chinese and Indian citizens for up to 30 days, as announced by Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim during a speech at the People's Justice Party Congress. The visa exemptions, set to last until December 31, 2024, aim to boost tourism, acknowledging China and India as the country's fourth and fifth-largest tourist contributors. According to Malaysia's

Home Affairs Ministry, tourist arrivals from January to June this year totaled 9.16 million, with 498,540 from China and 283,885 from India. This contrasts with the pre-pandemic period in 2019, where 1.5 million arrivals from China and 354,486 from India were recorded. The move reflects Malaysia's strategic effort to revive its tourism industry and strengthen ties with these key visitor markets.



ONE ABOVE GLOBAL DMC AND HERITAGE AARAH ISLAND RESORT HOST PRE-DIWALI FESTIVITIES IN MUMBAI DRAWING TOGETHER ABOUT 200 INFLUENTIAL INDIVIDUALS FROM THE TOURISM SECTOR





UZBEKISTAN CELEBRATES THREE DECADES OF BILATERAL TIES AND SHARED HERITAGE

UZBEKISTAN TOURISM SHEDS LIGHT ON INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE TOURISM AND THE GROWING INTEREST FROM INDIAN TRAVELLERS

Uzbekistan and India share a rich tapestry of diplomatic ties that spans centuries. Recognising India as a nation with a profound history and unique culture, the Uzbek people have fostered centuries-old relations, deeply rooted in sincere friendship, cultural exchanges, and robust economic ties. The 30th-anniversary milestone, marked on March 18, 2022, commemorates the signing of the Protocol on Diplomatic and Consular Matters, solidifying India as one of the first countries to recognise Uzbekistan's independence. The foundation of Uzbek-Indian relations rests on mutual respect, goodwill, and the shared interests of both nations. Uzbekistan's First Secretary, Ikboljon O. Soliev, shares insights into its rich historical tapestry and how the diplomatic relations between Uzbekistan and India, tracing back to March 18, 1992, have evolved into a robust partnership that transcends mere political alliances

By Aanchal sachdeva

Uzbekistan's appeal to Indian travellers

Uzbekistan, strategically located in Central Asia, boasts diverse climates throughout the year, catering to various traveller preferences. From the snow-capped mountains to spring blossoms and summer leisure, the country offers a tapestry of experiences. Key destinations include Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Andijan, Ferghana, and Namangan.

Collaborating with Blink Brand Solutions, the Uzbekistan Mission in New Delhi actively promotes tourism, engaging in social media campaigns and tourism roadshows. The Mumbai Roadshow on November 23, 2023, witnessed enthusiastic participation from nearly 100 local travel agents, signalling a growing interest in exploring Uzbekistan.

Exploring Uzbekistan's key attractions

Uzbekistan's capital, Tashkent, uniquely blends modernity and history, exemplified by the Chor-Su Bazaar, a marvel of the East. Samarkand, with its historical significance as a capital for Amir Temur, showcases iconic sites like Guri Amir. Bukhara, known for minarets, majestic mosques, and the Arc Citadel, stands as a flourishing city. Khiva, an open-sky museum, captivates with its culture, traditions, and cuisine.

Andijan, Ferghana, and Namangan in the southeast, part of the Ferghana Valley, offer a unique experience with warm hospitality, local produce, and distinct cuisines.

Streamlined visa process

The visa procedure to Uzbekistan is streamlined and swift. Visitors can apply for paper-type entry visas glued to their travel documents or through an electronic visa system, known as E-Visa. E-visas, valid for 30 days, are issued within two business days and sent via email.

Diversification of traveller segments

India's interest in exploring Uzbekistan has diversified, with wedding tourism gaining significant traction. Uzbekistan offers opportunities for destination weddings at scenic locations such as Zamin Mountainous Resorts, Registan Square photoshoots in Samarkand, or snowy summits at Amirsoy Recreation and Resort near Tashkent.

The Mumbai Roadshow emphasized these unique destinations, urging Indian travel agents not to overlook these new and exciting places.

Expanding air connectivity

Uzbekistan Airways, the national carrier, operates between Tashkent and Delhi with 4-6 flights per week. Indigo, a popular Indian airline, launched regular flights between Delhi and Tashkent on September 22, 2023, making travel more accessible. Discussions are underway to introduce flights from Uzbekistan to Goa and increase flights between Mumbai and Uzbekistan.

Nurturing bilateral bonds through tourism

As Uzbekistan and India continue to nurture their diplomatic ties, tourism emerges as a significant bridge, fostering cultural exchanges and people-to-people connections. The focus on tourism highlights Uzbekistan's commitment to welcoming Indian travellers and sharing the rich tapestry of its history, culture, and landscapes. The collaborative efforts between the nations pave the way for a promising future in tourism, strengthening the bonds between Uzbekistan and India.

UZBEKISTAN'S VIBRANT SHOWCASE AT MUMBAI'S PREMIER ROAD SHOW

UZBEKISTAN, CENTRAL ASIA'S HIDDEN GEM BECKONS CAPTIVATING MUMBAI'S TRAVEL CONNOISSEURS

By Aanchal sachdeva



In a captivating debut, the Central Asian jewel, Uzbekistan, unfurls its cultural riches at Mumbai's Sofitel Hotel. The maiden India roadshow, held on December 5, 2023, drew a stellar response from Mumbai's leading travel agencies, marking a significant milestone in promoting Uzbekistan as an enticing destination in the Indian outbound travel market.

The event, graced by Ikboljon Soliev, Counsellor - First Secretary of The Republic of Uzbekistan Embassy in India, kicked off with a warm welcome speech. An exclusive assembly of 75 top trade buyers and media representatives immersed themselves in an exhaustive presentation that showcased Uzbekistan's diverse tourism offerings. From FIT and family travel to meetings and incentives, Uzbekistan's charm unfolded, promising excitement for the Indian traveller.

A highlight of the evening was an engaging interactive session led by First Secretary Soliev, addressing queries about Uzbekistan's attractions, visa procedures, accommodation options, and more. Sadriiddin L Suyarov, Attachee at the Uzbekistan Embassy in India, added to the event's distinguished presence.

Celebrating 30 years of diplomatic ties since Uzbekistan's independence in

1991, First Secretary Soliev expressed the desire for stronger tourism bonds between the nations. Despite distinct landscapes and cultures, Uzbekistan beckons with a brief two-hour flight connecting the capitals. First Secretary Soliev also articulated that initiating the Uzbekistan Tourism Roadshow in Mumbai is a testament to their eagerness to welcome more Indian travellers to explore the rich tapestry of Uzbekistan. With centuries of shared history and culture between Uzbekistan and India, they aim to propel tourism between our nations. Despite the pandemic-induced disruptions, Uzbekistan recorded approximately 29,000 visitors in 2019, and they anticipate quadrupling this number in the next three to four years.

Assuring cooperation for seamless travel, First Secretary Soliev declared Uzbekistan's continued presence in the Indian market. The roadmap includes participation in industry events, trade and media familiarization tours, and ongoing engagement with the travel fraternity. The roadshow crescendoed with raffles and lucky draws, leaving six winners delighted with Uzbekistan's iconic ceramics, traditional arts, and an all-inclusive tour package.



MALAYSIA

Mystical

WHERE TRADITION MEETS A SYMPHONY OF DIVERSITY

As I stepped off the plane in Malaysia, I was instantly embraced by a whirlwind of scents, colours, and cultures that set my heart aflutter. The tropical breeze carried the sweet aroma of street food wafting through the bustling markets, where vibrant sarongs and batik textiles caught my eye. Malaysia, a land where old-world charm coexists with modern marvels, is a sweet blend of diversity. From the towering Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur to the lush jungles of Tambun, this enchanting nation beckons with its promise of adventure and discovery. Embark on an expedition through this multicultural paradise, where the whispers of history blend seamlessly with the vibrant beats of the present

By Ananya Trivedi

MALAYSIA'S MOSAIC: STREET ADVENTURES THROUGH BUS JOURNEY

The bus journey from Port Dickson to the Lost World of Tambun in Penang was a thrilling odyssey. As the wheels rolled, diverse landscapes unfolded, painting a vivid picture of Malaysia's beauty. As the sun set during our journey on the road, the anticipation grew with each passing mile, eager to explore the wonders awaiting the legendary Lost World of Tambun.



ENCHANTING ESCAPADES AT LOST WORLD OF TAMBUN

Nestled in Penang, the enchanting Lost World of Tambun offered an odyssey through limestone formations, thrilling rides, and an endearing petting zoo. Meeting baby hippo Jakhoo was a highlight. The realm beckons thrill-seekers with a variety of adventures. Leaving, I knew a part of me remained, enchanted by the magic of this place.



BUBBLING BLISS AT THE BANJARAN HOT SPRINGS OASIS

I immersed myself in an unparalleled sanctuary at Banjaran Hot Spring Retreat. Surrounded by lush tropical rainforests and towering limestone hills, the ambience was sheer tranquillity. Exploring natural caves where one can meditate eliminating all the noise of the outside world, each moment felt like a surreal escape into a haven of serenity and indulgence, leaving an imprint of pure relaxation.

LUXURY PERSONIFIED AT LEXIS HIBISCUS PORT DICKSON

Arriving after an overnight flight at Lexis Hibiscus Port Dickson, I was captivated by the overwater villas forming a magnificent hibiscus. The serene ambience and personal haven feel of each villa with private plunge pools and endless ocean views offered an opulent escape where luxury harmonises with nature. The gentle sea breeze and lull of waves below created a peaceful atmosphere.





FROM MISS SHOPHIA HUNT SPREE TO MEDIA SOIRÉE

Miss Shophia Shopping Hunt 5.0's premiere marked the trip's zenith—a sprawling treasure hunt from The Top to Gurney Plaza Mall. A town-wide foot exploration turned the day into an exhilarating journey. The enchanting media dinner in the evening, adorned with captivating performances and a delectable feast, provided a magical finale to the day's events.



EXPERIENCE ENDURING HISTORY AT PINANG PERANAKAN MANSION

The Pinang Peranakan Mansion is like a captivating storybook. Its carved designs, old furniture, and colourful tiles took me back in time. Each room shares stories about the Peranakan people and their way of life. Our guide, Stan Lee, pointed out many interesting details, making me feel like history was right there with us, alive and vivid.

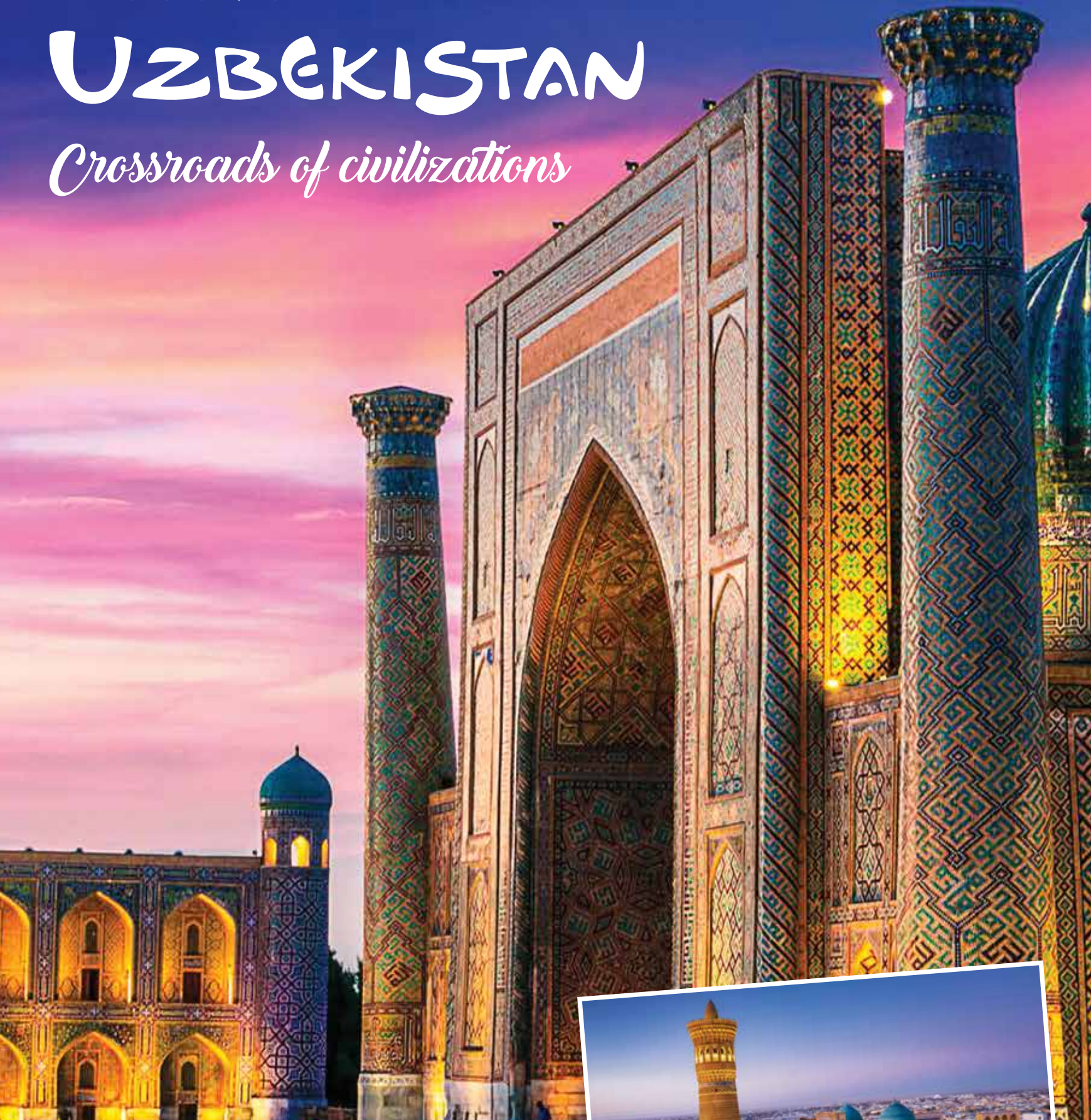


MALAYSIA'S DIVERSE CULINARY FUSION FEAST

Malaysian food is a flavourful adventure! From savoury satay to spicy laksa, each dish bursts with unique tastes. Chendol, a dessert, turned out to be my personal favourite. It is a delightful mix of sweet and creamy flavours. This cool treat features green rice flour jelly noodles, swimming in rich coconut milk and palm sugar syrup, topped with crushed ice, the combination of textures.

Discover UZBEKISTAN

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For more information, please contact:

Tourism Committee at the Ministry of Ecology, Protection of Environment and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Email: info@blinkbrandsolutions.com | **Phone:** +91 98350 69443

Add: 107B, Amir Temur Street, Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan





ALIGARH WELCOMES FORTUNE HOTELS, THE SYMPHONY OF LUXURY AND COMFORT

Discover Luxury redefined as Fortune Hotel, a member of ITC's hotel group makes its grand debut in Aligarh, offering unparalleled comfort and unforgettable experiences. This elegant hotel is likely to wow all visitors with its warm hospitality and flawless services. It is designed to be the ideal place for city dwellers as well as energetic business and leisure tourists to celebrate, engage, and unwind.

Fortune Park Aligarh, which promises to be the city's most popular destination, has 65 trendy, well-appointed rooms with modern decor. Every guest stay is guaranteed to be exceptional thanks to first-rate amenities, a wide selection of food and beverage options, opulent event rooms, and a committed hotel staff. A trip to Zodiac, an all-day multi-cuisine restaurant, is essential for city dwellers who want to satisfy their palates. Nakshatra is a gorgeous soon-to-open rooftop restaurant with a fashionable discotheque that is reportedly the first in the city. It is the perfect place for anybody wishing to party, rejoice, or just relax with family and friends.

Samir MC, Managing Director, Fortune Hotels said, "We are delighted to add another Fortune to our growing footprint in Uttar Pradesh and thank the promoters for recognizing the Fortune Advantage and bestowing their trust in us. Aligarh is not just a heritage city but also an established educational hub, an agricultural trade centre and an emerging industrial zone which is home to thousands of manufacturers, exporters, and industrial suppliers. This unique disposition of the bustling city draws both tourists and business travellers to it and we look forward to hosting them all."

The hotel is conveniently close to the industrial area and the renowned Aligarh Muslim University. It is situated on Grand Trunk Road, right off the RTO office, and



is well-connected to the future Noida International Airport via Aligarh-Pallwal Road. Notable tourist destinations including Khereshwar Mandir, Aligarh Clock Tower, and Jama Masjid are all conveniently located near the hotel.

Sanjeev Kumar Gupta & Sharad Mittal, Managing Partner, Sudharaj Hospitality said, "We are excited to partner with Fortune Hotels and bring the ITC Hotels lineage and branded hospitality services to the city of Aligarh. We look forward to extending a warm stay and an exquisite cuisine experience to our guests and aim to make Fortune Park Aligarh a notable address in the historic city of Aligarh. We have found able partners with Fortune Hotels and look forward to further strengthening our association."



VISITBRITAIN'S TRADE MISSION SHOW IN INDIA EXHIBITS BRITAIN'S BEST

British Suppliers present Britain as the ultimate destination for Indian buyers

In a remarkable showcase of the allure of Britain as a premier travel destination, VisitBritain successfully hosted its first trade mission to India in over three years, affirming the country's status as a must-visit locale. The three-day extravaganza, named Destination Britain India, unfolded from November 19 to 21 in Delhi, drawing together a myriad of British industry suppliers from diverse regions to engage with 75 prominent buyers from India.

The focal point of the event was a series of meticulously arranged one-on-one business meetings, uniting a diverse array of participants, including hotels, retailers, visitor attractions, tour operators, transport providers, and local destinations from across Britain. Patricia Yates, the CEO of VisitBritain, expressed her delight at orchestrating this flagship trade event, emphasising its timely significance for British tourism suppliers and destinations. She noted the event's pivotal role in propelling bookings to Britain.

She said, "Working with the travel trade in India is crucial to ensuring they are ready to sell Britain, as well as broadening travel itineraries to encourage visitors to explore further and stay longer."

The trade mission was not solely about business transactions; it featured networking receptions, product seminars, and presentations from entities like West Midlands Growth Company, Marketing Manchester, and Visit Cumbria. These sessions provided valuable insights into the latest market developments and trends, enhancing the overall experience for the participants. VisitBritain took the opportunity to spotlight its 'See Things Differently' campaign under



the GREAT Britain initiative, urging visitors to explore more of Britain, traverse the seasons, and seize the moment to embark on fresh and exciting experiences. The record-breaking spending by Indian visitors in the UK, reaching £764 million in 2022 and surpassing 2019 levels by 2%, reinforced the significance of the Indian market. Forecasts indicate that India is poised to become a £1 billion inbound visitor market by 2024, establishing itself as one of the UK's fastest-growing major tourism markets. The revival and growth in airline

seat capacity from India to the UK added to the positive momentum, with September 2023 witnessing a remarkable 53% increase compared to the same month in 2019.

Beyond the success of the Destination Britain India trade mission, VisitBritain remains committed to closely collaborating with industry stakeholders and partners in the Indian market, steadfastly promoting Britain's outstanding tourism offerings and unique experiences that set it apart on the global stage.





JUMEIRAH'S LUXURIOUS LEGACY BLENDING LAVISH LIVING AND LAUDABLE ECO-LEADERSHIP

ALEXANDER LEE HIGHLIGHTS A QUARTER-CENTURY
OF JUMEIRAH EXCELLENCE AND THE GROUP'S
COMMITMENT TO LUXURY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND
UNPARALLELED EXPERIENCES

By Aanchal Sachdeva

Jumeirah Hotels and Resorts stand as a beacon of luxury on the global hospitality landscape. Established in Dubai in 1999, the brand has cultivated over 25 years of expertise, setting itself apart through a commitment to unparalleled experiences. The distinctive edge lies not only in opulent physical spaces but in a holistic approach to service, dining, and wellness. **Alexander Lee, the Chief Commercial Officer of Jumeirah Group**, sheds light on the brand's evolution and its continuous investments in enhancing the guest experience. The focus extends beyond mere renovations to comprehensive training, ensuring a seamless blend of luxury and hospitality

Continuous innovation: Elevating the guest experience

Jumeirah's dedication to innovation is evident in its ongoing enhancements. Recent endeavours include renovations at a few properties, introducing seven royal villas at Mina A'Salam, and refining the beach and resort experience at Jumeirah Beach Hotel. The brand remains at the forefront by adding new restaurant concepts, a testament to its commitment to continuous improvement.

Innovation, coupled with substantial investments, positions Jumeirah above competitors. Lee emphasises that this commitment to innovation is integral, creating a guest experience that transcends conventional luxury.

Embracing Sustainability: Jumeirah's Pledge to a Greener Future

As the UAE gears up to host the COP 28 Global Conference, Jumeirah aligns itself with the broader sustainability narrative. Designating 2023 as the "Year of Sustainability," the brand embarks on a transformative journey encompassing sustainability and broader Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) topics. Early initiatives focus on swift changes, including eliminating single-use plastic within resorts and establishing water bottling plants for managing freshwater supplies. Sustainable food supply chains and hydroponic farms showcase Jumeirah's commitment to reducing its environmental footprint.

Strategic Growth: Future Plans and Aspirations

While Jumeirah currently has no active plans for expansion in the Indian market, Lee outlines broader growth ambitions. The vision includes increasing the number of hotels globally, with ongoing plans for new properties in Dubai, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland. The ambitious growth strategy spans diverse geographies, encompassing North America, Central Europe, Asian and Indian markets, and Greater China. While India is not part of recent plans, Lee indicates openness to opportunistically evaluating projects for potential expansion in the future.

Jewel in the Crown: Jumeirah's Beachfront Properties

The Madinat Jumeirah Complex, featuring Jumeirah Mina A'Salam, Jumeirah Al Qasr, Jumeirah Dar Al Masyaf, and Jumeirah Al Naseem, stands as one of Jumeirah's largest and most popular destinations. Indian tourists, in particular, gravitate towards Jumeirah Dar Al Masyaf. This collection of discreet garden summer houses offers unparalleled privacy, each with a dedicated butler. The recent addition of an Indian restaurant further enhances its appeal.

Evolving Travel Preferences: The Post-Pandemic Paradigm

Post-pandemic, Jumeirah observes a notable trend—extended stays within destinations. The surge in remote and flexible



working allows guests to spend more time experiencing local cultures. Travellers now seek genuine, localised experiences, relying on expert concierge services for personalised activities, dining, and exploration. Jumeirah's luxury hotels play a crucial role in curating these unique experiences.

Unveiling Local Wonders: Concierge-Crafted Experiences

For the best local experience, Lee recommends engaging with Jumeirah's concierge. These local experts provide insights into neighbourhoods, family activities, and exclusive local stories. By tapping into the concierge's knowledge, guests can unlock a personalised and immersive journey, ensuring an unforgettable stay.

In conclusion, Jumeirah Group's legacy of luxury, sustainability, and personalised experiences remains unwavering. As the brand continues to innovate and expand its footprint, it sets a benchmark for the future of global hospitality.



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ICPB ORGANISES THE 14th CONVENTIONS INDIA CONCLAVE AT GANDHINAGAR, GUJARAT

The India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), is hosting its flagship event, the 14th Conventions India Conclave, from December 7 to 9, 2023, at the Mahatma Mandir Convention and Exhibition Centre in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Gujarat Tourism is supporting the event as the Host State for the 14th CIC. The Conclave's theme is "Sustainable MICE: Empowering Events Towards A 5 Trillion Economy." Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman at ICPB, highlighted the exclusive opportunity the mega convention presents for MICE exhibitors and suppliers to showcase their products and services to potential domestic and international buyers. In addition to networking, exhibitors will engage in pre-scheduled meetings with buyers, enhancing the collaborative aspects of the event. Bhupendrabhai Patel, Chief Minister of Gujarat, will inaugurate the Conclave, and Mulubhai Bera, as the Guest of Honour, will be present during the inaugural session.

The launch of the ICPB State Chapter Gujarat will take place during the event, aiming to actively promote Gujarat under the sub-brand 'Meet in Gujarat' and establish the state as a prominent MICE destination. The Governing Board of the State Chapter will be led by the Principal Secretary of Gujarat Tourism and include members from various sectors of the MICE industry in the state,



such as venues, hotels, DMCs, PCOs, as well as service providers like AV agencies and fabricators.

The agenda features engaging sessions highlighting India as a MICE destination, with a particular emphasis on Gujarat emerging as a significant player in the MICE sector. The program includes B2B meetings facilitating interactions between buyers and sellers, bringing together meeting planners from both international and domestic markets with suppliers from the Indian MICE industry. These meetings hold the potential to generate leads and contribute to the actualization of MICE business in India.



DIGNATARIES GRACING THE EVENT

Bhupendra Bhai Patel – Chief Minister of Gujarat,
G.Kishan Reddy – Union Minister of Tourism,
Mulubhai Bera, State Tourism Minister, Govt of Gujarat

KEY SPEAKERS AT THE EVENT

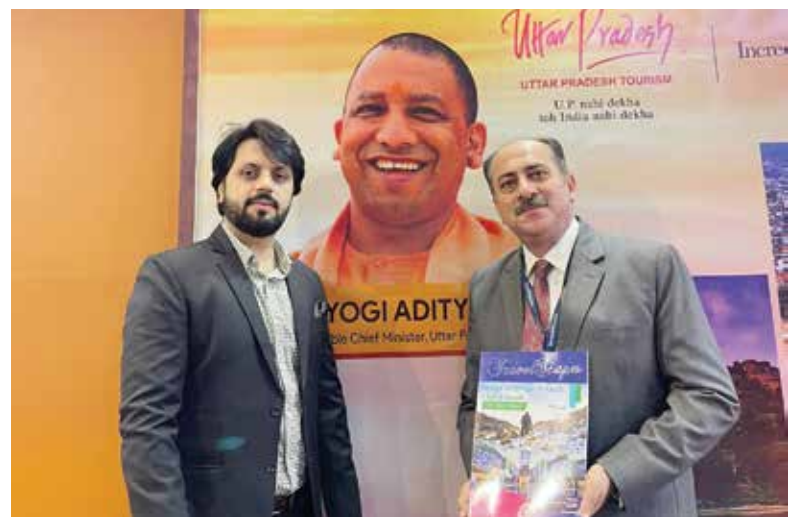
Rakesh Kumar Verma, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India
Hareet Shukla, Principal Secretary Tourism, Govt. of Gujarat,
Dr. Saurabh Zamsingh Pardhi, Managing Director, Tourism Corporation of Gujarat
Senthil Gopinath, CEO, International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA)
Nakul Anand, Executive Director - ITC Limited

KEY SESSIONS AT THE EVENT

Meet in India - India as a MICE Destination
Sustainable MICE: Nurturing Events, Empowering Future
Sustainability in the Tourism Industry
How to Brand India as MICE Destination



ESTABLISHING A NETWORK OF CONNECTIONS, TRAVELSCAPES ILLUMINATES THE SCENE AT WTM LONDON 2023





AIR INDIA LADDERS LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES

Air India established as the World's first airline to deploy 'Maharaja', a Generative AI
 Air India becomes the first airline in the world to virtual agent powered by Azure OpenAI service. Since its trial launch in March 2023, it has successfully deployed 'Maharaja,' a Generative AI satisfactorily addressed over half a million client issues and handled over 6,000 requests every day in four languages. The Maharaja AI Agent of Air India handles a wide range of consumer inquiries about 1,300 topics, including flight status, baggage allotment, packing limitations, check-in, frequent flyer benefits, airport lounge access, itinerary modifications, refunds, and more. To accommodate visitors from all over the world, Maharaja is fluent in Hindi, English, French, and German. More than 80% of the

more than 6,000 queries we receive every day are effectively addressed in a matter of seconds. Dr. Satya Ramaswamy, Chief Digital and Technology Officer, Air India, said, "We are dedicated to providing the best possible service and experience to our valued guests across channels. We also want to be very responsive to their changing preferences. After the emergence of Large Language Model-driven Generative AI capabilities, we are increasingly seeing a definitive shift in guest preferences to use chat interactions to get the information and support they need quickly and directly as compared to browsing several web pages. We have used several patent-pending innovations in our AI agent Maharaja with a combination of traditional machine learning techniques and the latest

in Generative AI to provide a pleasing and effective experience for our customers. Many more innovations are in the pipeline and will be made live in the months to come."

Air India strengthens international connections, partners with Alaska Airlines

Air India and Alaska Airlines formed an interline alliance. In addition to bolstering Air India's global reach, the partnership will enable travellers from New York JFK, Newark-New Jersey, Washington DC, Chicago, San Francisco, and Vancouver to effortlessly connect to and from 32 locations across the USA, Mexico, and Canada on Alaska Airline's network. Bilateral interlining, which permits both airlines to sell tickets on each other's network, is included in the agreement's scope. A Special Prorate Agreement between the two airlines has also been reached, enabling Air India to submit "through fares" for routes that traverse Alaska Airlines' network. On Alaska Airlines routes, passengers will additionally benefit from Air India's complimentary luggage allowance. Nipun Aggarwal, Chief Commercial & Transformation Officer, Air India, said, "The tie-up with Alaska Air will expand our international footprint in the US and Canada and even extend our reach to Mexico boosting our network expansion plans. It will help us offer more choices to our guests and mark a significant step forward in our mission to enhance connectivity."



SriLankan Airlines improves passenger BIA, adds self-service check-in

With the addition of self-service check-in and self-bag drop options, SriLankan Airlines is improving passenger services at Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA). With simplicity and efficiency at its core, this programme aims to completely revolutionise the travel experience. With the help of the new self-service kiosks, travellers will be able to check in quickly and move on to emigration with reduced waiting time during busy times. In the departure terminal of BIA, the self-service kiosks with self-bag drop that are easy to use and offer a streamlined check-in process

will be especially appreciated by experienced travellers. Deepal Pallegangoda, Senior Manager Airport & Ground Handling emphasized the significance of this development, stating, "As the official ground handler for all airlines operating out of BIA, SriLankan Airlines handles over 550,000 passengers and their luggage monthly. The introduction of these self-service facilities not only sets a new standard for airport convenience but also enables us to manage the check-in process more efficiently to meet the demands of our growing passenger numbers."



CSMIA recycles approx. 9,000 single-use plastic bottles in 10 months

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) in Mumbai has continuously led the way in advancing environmental and sustainable projects. On the Recycling Day, CSMIA was happy to announce an incredible accomplishment: by the end of October 2023,

8,890 empty bottles would have been recycled by the Reverse Wending Machines (RVMs) at the airport. To further strengthen this effort, CSMIA planned to install three more RVM units in November 2023. This accomplishment highlights the airport's goal of recycling and minimising waste from single-use plastics in order to reach zero waste going to landfills. The indirect carbon emissions connected to the production of PET bottles will be lowered as a direct result of CSMIA's efforts to integrate sustainability into every facet of its operations.



AirAsia to connect India to rest of the world

AirAsia remains committed to uniting India with the the world, even with millions of Indian passengers linking them to a huge network of 130 locations around Asia and the Asia Pacific region. With 10 direct connections from India to Malaysia and Thailand, AirAsia's extensive network comprises 104 weekly flights operated by short-haul carriers AirAsia Malaysia (flight code AK) and AirAsia Thailand (flight code FD). AirAsia X Malaysia (flight code D7), a medium-haul affiliate airline, operates eight weekly flights on two direct routes from New Delhi and Amritsar

to Kuala Lumpur. AirAsia Head of Regional Commercial (India), Manoj Dharmani, said, "Over the years, we have witnessed tremendous growth, connecting countless cities and regions in India to the world, and we are proud to share that AirAsia now serves 11 destinations in India. Our expansion in India has resulted in 104 weekly flights, making us a vital and reliable link between India and the globe. We look forward to serving the Indian market with the commitment to further enhancing connectivity and accessibility for our guests across the country."

ITA Airways participates in the WTM London 2023

ITA Airways took part in the World Travel Market which was held in London from November 6-8. Taking place at the ExCel Exhibition Hall, the event marked the 44th edition and provided the Italian carrier with an opportunity to present its brand, network, and winter news to influential figures in the European and global tourism business. Together with the Italian National Tourist Board, travel agencies from all throughout Italy, and ITA Airways, they had an exhibit. The local staff greeted visitors, tour operators, leisure brokers, and destination management organisations at the ITA Airways display (EUROPE N3 300). The primary announcement from the company was the launch of a nonstop route using the



new Airbus A220-100 from Milan Linate to London City. The route would run on three daily frequencies, increasing to four in January. As a result, ITA Airways would be able to provide its customers with 48 weekly round-trip flights to and from the British capital. Because of its efficiency and comfort requirements, the Fiona May-named A220-100 is the smallest jet liner among Airbus commercial aircraft.



Qatar Airways showcases its fleet at Dubai Airshow 2023

In the presence of Engineer Badr Al-Meer, the Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Airways Group, the airline displayed a number of its cutting-edge aircraft.

One of the most important air shows in the Middle East is the Dubai Airshow, which takes place from November 13–17. This event brings together experts, stakeholders, and leaders in the aviation sector from all over the world. Qatar Airways attracted attention to its unique fleet on the first day of the exhibition with its presentation of its latest generation Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, Airbus A350-1000, and Gulfstream G650ER. Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer, said, "Qatar Airways is proud to participate in this year's Dubai Airshow and present the leading aircraft in our state-of-the-art fleet. With the comfort of our passengers at the core of our operations, we have hand-picked our top-tier aircraft which display our latest technology and unparalleled luxury. We welcome all visitors of this exciting air show to our chalet to enjoy an unforgettable travel experience."

Jazeera Airways reports KD13.27 million in profit for first nine months of 2023

Jazeera Airways reported Group Net Profit for the first nine months of 2023 of KD13.27 million. Operating profit for the quarter was KD18.08 million, while total revenues increased 12.8% to KD158.9 from KD 140.8 million in 2022. The company's profit for the previous year also included a KD1.73 million one-time gain on the sale and lease-back of engines. With a 35.78% market share, the airline maintained its leadership, 17% more than at the same time in 2022. Jazeera's passenger count increased by 35.6% to 3.5 million, demonstrating continued robust growth. Additionally, throughout the nine months, the load factor increased to 79% from 76.4%



in the previous year. Marwan Boodai, Chairman, Jazeera Airways highlighted, "For the nine months period of 2023, despite the tough regulatory, geo-political and regional landscape, we carried a record number of passengers, delivered a strong load factor, and built an attractive network of destinations that resulted in Jazeera having the biggest market share in our home base of Kuwait."

IndiGo sets history, surpassed 2000 scheduled flights per day

For the third quarter of 2023, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) continues to see impressive increase in terms of passenger traffic. Compared to Q3 2019 (11.7 M), the airport saw a 109% rebound in passenger traffic this quarter. With a rising trend in both local and international passenger counts, CSMIA is firmly establishing itself as a

pioneer in aviation excellence and maintaining its significant place in India's aviation industry. Compared to Q3 2022 (9.6 M), Q3 2023 saw over 12.7 million passengers transit through the CSMIA, a 33% increase. During this time, CSMIA recorded a total of 60,861 domestic ATMs and 20,438 international ATMs, confirming its position as a key component of the aviation sector.



Lot Polish Airlines celebrates Poland's National Independence Day

In honour of Poland's National Independence Day, the Polish Embassy in New Delhi celebrated with 400 guests at a festive gala event. Among them were representatives from Indian ministries, the diplomatic community, Polish expats living in India, and important business partners. Star Alliance member LOT Polish Airlines, with roots dating back to 1929, was proud to be associated with this event. For Poland's National Independence Day, the Polish

flag carrier flew in renowned chefs from Poland, who enriched the Embassy's gala with some outstanding culinary creations, showcasing how tasteful a crossover of Polish and Indian delicacies can be. LOT Polish Airlines also informed guests about its excellent product and services from Delhi and Mumbai to Warsaw, operating modern Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft, as well as the airline's seamless connecting options to other parts of Poland.



Etihad Airways celebrated its 20th anniversary onboard

In honour of its 20th anniversary, Etihad Airways unveiled a number of improvements to the traveller experience. The airways introduced Etihad's new in-flight food menu, which features cuisine influenced by the airline's home country of the United Arab Emirates in addition to specially designed menus that highlight the locations it serves. Etihad's sustainable dinnerware, which is made with a closed-loop recycling system to reduce waste, will be used to serve the new menu to Economy patrons. The distinctive 2003 aircraft livery of Etihad Airways served as the inspiration for Etihad's vintage amenities line in First and Business class. "This is a time of celebration for Etihad and we're proud to share our goodwill with our guests. While it's our history that has inspired our



range of retro amenity kits, we're looking to the future as we add enhancements to continue to make the guest experience even better, rooted in our renowned Emirati identity," said Turkey Al Hammadi, Head of Product and Hospitality, Etihad. To coincide with the anniversary, Etihad has also re-launched its inflight magazine, Atlas. The magazine is packed full of travel and leisure information to whet the appetites of readers and inspire the next holiday booking.

SIA experiences increase in demand due to surge in northern summer travel

With the full reopening of China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Japan, and Taiwan, there was a strong surge in passenger flow to North Asia during the northern summer travel season. The Singapore Airlines Group saw record operational and net profits for the first half of the year. In the first half of FY2023/24, SIA and Scoot transported 17.4 million passengers, a 52.3% increase

from the previous year. In the second quarter, SIA increased the number of aircraft in service by three. These consist of two Boeing 787-10s (delivered in August 2023 and September 2023) and one Airbus A350-900 (delivered in July 2023) aircraft. In the second quarter, Scoot started operating flights to Jinan, Nanchang, and Shenzhen, and SIA restored service to Busan.



Vietjet becomes largest airline operator between Australia and Vietnam

Vietjet announced the expansion of its flight to Australia. With 48 weekly flights, the airline will be the largest provider of service between the two nations. Vietjet starts operating daily flights between Sydney, Melbourne, and Ho Chi Minh City on December 1, 2023, giving passengers access to a total of 14 weekly trips. The airline will start flying to Ho Chi Minh City five days a

week on December 16, 2023, offering passengers ten flights weekly on this route. Vietjet is poised to become the leading airline connecting Vietnam and Australia with a total of 48 weekly flights to Australia. The enhanced flight frequencies to Australia come as Vietjet recognises the growing demand for travel during the year-end holiday season and the coming year.



BLR Airport enhances domestic passenger experience at Terminal 1

Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru (BLR Airport) announces the successful completion of a major terminal transformation project, which includes the repurposing of the former International area within Terminal 1 (T1) to create a dedicated and expansive space for Domestic operations. The airport's domestic facilities are being enhanced as part of its continuous effort to enhance passenger satisfaction and guarantee a seamless travel experience. To further streamline passenger movement into the Security Hold section (SHA) and on



to the new boarding gates, they have also activated a new Pre-Embarkation Security Check (PESC) section outfitted with Automated Tray Retrieval Systems (ATRS). In addition, three extra baggage claim belts have been added, bringing the total number of belts for domestic arrival planes to ten.

ON THE MOVE



RAJESH CHAKRABORTY

APPOINTED AT: Taj Hotel and Convention Centre Agra
PROMOTED TO: General Manager
 Rajesh Chakraborty brings 26 years of experience at IHCL. Noted for roles at Vivanta By Taj Aurangabad, he excels in operations, project management, and strategic planning. Known for transparent leadership, swift decision-making, and guest satisfaction, he aims to elevate the hotel's reputation.



AARON MCGRATH

APPOINTED AT: Six Senses Fort Barwara
PROMOTED TO: Regional General Manager
 Six Senses Fort Barwara appointed Aaron McGrath as Regional General Manager, a seasoned hospitality leader with over 30 years of experience. McGrath led Six Senses properties in Oman and Saudi Arabia. His commitment to customer-centric cultures aligns with the brand's focus on community, wellness, and extraordinary experiences.



BARUN GUPTA

APPOINTED AT: Expo Inn Suites and Convention
PROMOTED TO: General Manager
 Expo Inn Suites and Convention appointed Barun Gupta as the new General Manager. Renowned as "BG" in modern hospitality, he had been associated with Accor, Marriott, IHG, and Hyatt. He is recognised for transforming businesses through strategic marketing, operations, and public relations.



NISHAL SEEBALUCK

APPOINTED AT: The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore
PROMOTED TO: Hotel Manager
 The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore appoints Nishal Seebaluck as the new Hotel Manager. With over 18 years of experience, he has excelled in leadership roles in F&B in Mauritius and as Executive Assistant Manager at The Oberoi Marrakech, Morocco. Recognised for strategic leadership, he is dedicated to operational excellence, innovation, and achieving business growth objectives.



SAMIT KAZI

APPOINTED AT: West division of ITC Hotels India
PROMOTED TO : Area Head of Sales
 Samit Kazi appointed Area Head of Sales for ITC Hotels' West division. Based in Mumbai, with over two decades of experience, he aims to boost revenue across the region by collaborating with the sales teams and ITC Hotels Headquarters. Samit's extensive hospitality background positions him as a valuable addition to ITC Hotels.



ARY KUSUMANINGRUM

APPOINTED AT : JW Marriott Bengaluru Prestige Golfshire Resort
PROMOTED TO: Director of Spa and Recreation
 JW Marriott Bengaluru Prestige Golfshire Resort & Spa welcomed Ary Kusumaningrum as the Director of Spa and Recreation. With expertise in traditional treatments and diverse modalities, she has a proven track record in her role at Spa by L'Occitane at the Westin Surabaya.



ZUBIN SUTARIA

APPOINTED AT: Sheraton Grand Pune
PROMOTED TO : Director of Sales & Marketing
 Sheraton Grand Pune announces Zubin D. Sutaria as the new Director of Sales & Marketing. With over 12 years of experience, Sutaria was a part of Hilton Garden Inn, Pune. He honed his skills in renowned hospitality and real estate firms, coupled with a culinary diploma, positions him to drive business growth and enhance guest experiences.



SHIV BOSE

APPOINTED AT: Jaisalmer Marriott Resort & Spa
PROMOTED TO: General Manager
 Jaisalmer Marriott Resort & Spa announced Shiv Bose as the new General Manager, leveraging his extensive two-decade hospitality journey. With a commitment to excellence, he now oversees daily operations, ensuring unparalleled guest satisfaction and positioning the resort as a luxury destination with a focus on the wedding segment.



ISHITA NIGAM

APPOINTED AT: Pride Hotels Group
PROMOTED TO: Corporate Marketing Manager
 Ishita Nigam has been appointed as Corporate Marketing Manager of Pride Hotels. Formerly with Holiday Inn Mumbai and Marriott and Radisson, Ishita will spearhead marketing strategies at Pride Hotels. She has undertaken significant roles with renowned organisations like Marriott, Sterling Holidays, and Radisson Hotels Group.



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