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FEBRUARY 2017 | ₹50



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DELHI TOURISM PARTNERS WITH BOOKMYSHOW

In order to promote tourism in the Capital City, Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation Ltd (DTTDC) has entered into an agreement with BookMyShow for an online ticketing platform on a Pilot Project basis. In this maiden collaboration, DTTDC through BookMyShow, will offer online ticketing for major tourist attractions, which include Dilli Haats - INA, Janakpuri and Pitampura, The Garden of Five Senses, Guru Teg Bahadur Memorial and the Delhi Hop On Hop Off shuttles (HO-HO), and all other entry tickets/ events and paid shows, etc.

Kapil Mishra, Minister of Tourism, Government of Delhi, said that Delhi Tourism has taken the lead in giving the Tourism sector a digital push, through this partnership between DTTDC - BookMyShow on a Pilot Project basis. The objective behind this association is to help promote tourism in the state.

Kumar Razdan, Country Head, BookMyShow, said, "As we pave our way into online tourism ticketing in India, we are thrilled to partner with the Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation Ltd (DTTDC). Delhi is a city of monuments, historical sites, and is rich in heritage. With this initiative, we aim to make the DTTDC attractions more tourist friendly, and in turn, maximise footfalls." **tt**



MOT LAUNCHES INSTAGUIDE MOBILE APP

Union Tourism Minister, Dr Mahesh Sharma, launched InstaGuide, a mobile application that seeks to facilitate an easy access to Government-approved tourist guides. Lauding the efforts of the InstaGuide team, the Minister said the app is a step towards strengthening the Government's Digital India campaign.

Dr Sharma said, "It will be a handy tool for tour operators and travel agents for managing their tourist guide-related operations. He further added, "The app will help in improving the quality of service in the tourism sector, which will boost the number of foreign tourists arriving in India."

InstaGuide Founder, Divick Kishore, said, "Tourist guides play an important role in travel experience, especially for foreign tourists. Tourist guides not only help tourists navigate the language barrier, but also assist them in understanding our culture and heritage. Therefore, it becomes important that access to knowledgeable and reliable tourist guides is easy".

The mobile app, which has been developed by Innovative Tourism Technologies, lists only Government-approved tourist guides. It is mandatory for tourist guides to display their licenses and photographs, and ensure that their profiles are published on the app after due diligence. **tt**

RADISSON BLU KAUSHAMBI DELHI NCR: TRANSFORMING DREAMS

Radisson Blu Kaushambi Delhi NCR, in association with Make

A Wish Foundation, invited Mehak Saiid, a 12-year-old-girl who is suffering from cancer, and who has expressed a wish to "Spend a lovely time and relish lunch at a five-star hotel."



By granting a cherished wish to a child with a life threatening illness, Radisson Blu Kaushambi tried to give her back what the illness takes away - hope, strength, joy and happiness. Transforming these dreams into reality is the job of society and as a part of responsible business, the hotel is committed to this noble cause. Mehak also got a chance to see a live photo shoot, with top models, for one of Delhi's renowned fashion and lifestyle magazine, at Lust by The Pool - an open-to-sky poolside restaurant. **tt**



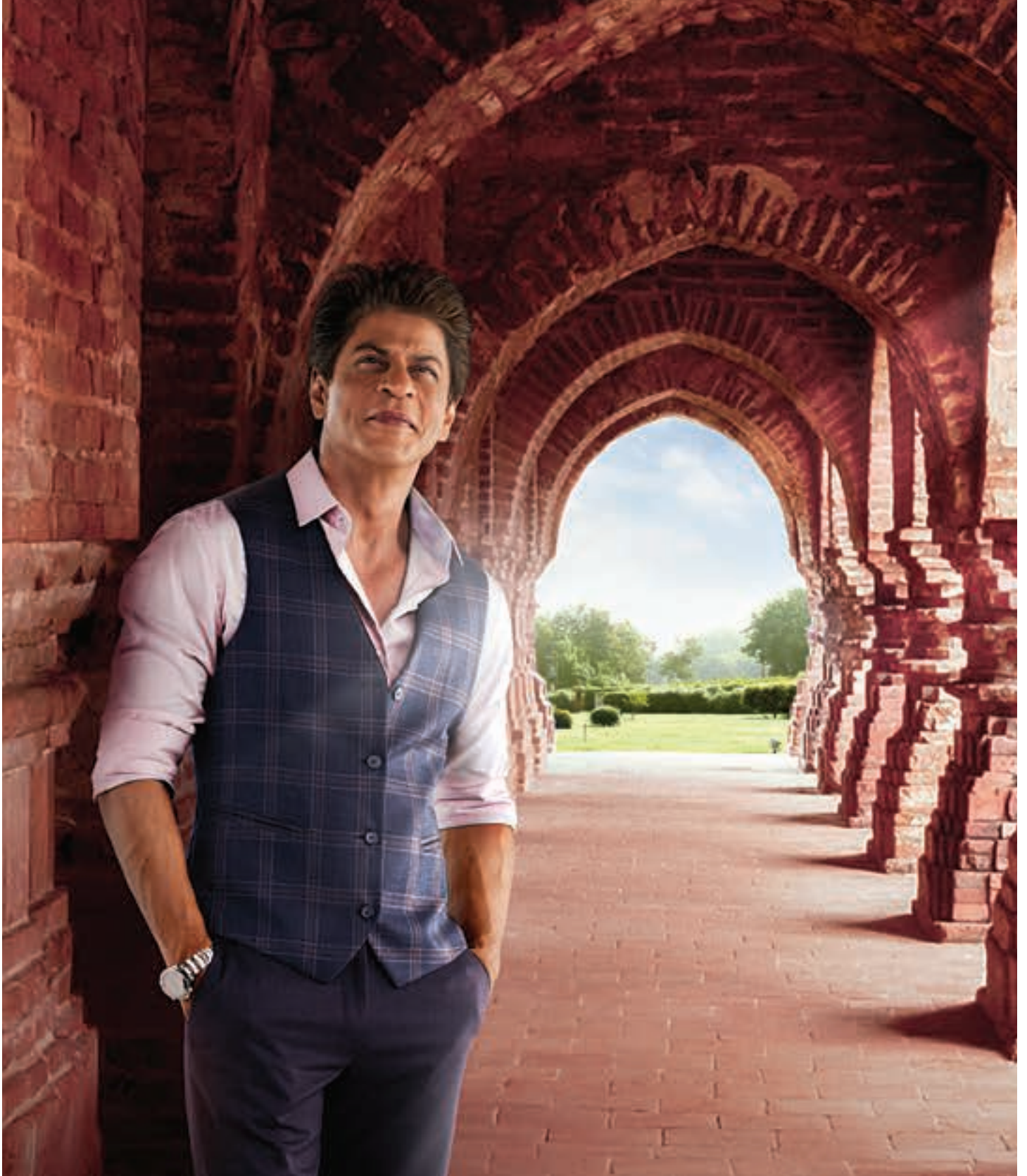
Ken Katayama, Deputy Director General, Bureau of Industrial and Labour Affairs, Rewati Chetri and Masahiko Sakamoto, Senior Director Tourism Division

TOKYO WONDERLAND

With the relaxation of short-term visa requirements, the number of Indian tourists to Japan is growing steadily, finally topping 100,000 in 2015. Looking ahead to the 2020 Olympics/Paralympics and beyond, Tokyo, the Gateway to Japan, is playing an increasingly important role in inbound tourism as Japan's capital, and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government is actively implementing measures to attract tourists.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government is also working on initiatives to establish a "Tokyo brand" that creates a strong impression of Tokyo as a tourist destination under the brand concept, "A place that promises all kinds of fun by constantly generating new styles while bringing tradition and innovation together." In this context, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government held its first ever promotional event for travel agents and the media in India (Delhi), to effectively promote the attractions of Tokyo to overseas markets and attract visitors to Tokyo. The venue was equipped with booths providing tourist information not only about Tokyo, but also about neighbouring prefectures such as Chiba, Saitama and Kanagawa.

The event called "TOKYO WONDERLAND" conveyed the different attractions Tokyo has to offer under five themes - "Unique Culture," "Excellent Dining," "Exciting Shopping," "Delightful Stay" and "Comfortable Nature." **tt**



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FASTEST 50 WINNERS ANNOUNCED

South African Tourism's 'Fastest 50' – a unique incentive campaign for trade partners in India – came to a promising close with names of the 'Fastest 50' being revealed recently

TT BUREAU

The premise was simple – the first 20 agents to book 50 customers for 9-night (or more) packages to South Africa, after the campaign's launch in 2016, would win an all-expenses-paid trip to the Rainbow Nation.

After an eventful and high-paced 2016, the much-awaited list of 'Fastest 50' winners is out. These top 20 trade partners have been shortlisted from across the country after having succeeded in delivering over 50 holiday packages to South Africa as part of the competition parameters.

From Thomas Cook, Mumbai, the winners were, Yameen Merchant; Deesha Musale; Pranali Kadam and Mekhla Chandra. Ami Thakkar and Mansi Gandani from Kulin Kumar, Mumbai. Radhika Gupta from Vayuseva Kolkata. Shalini Jain from Click 2 Travels Delhi. Hardik Mehta and Nayan Soni from Urvi Tours, Mumbai. Avinash Srivastav and Yogesh Sharma from GJ Holidays, Jaipur. Geetaben Gadhiya from Hallmarks, Surat. And, from SOTC there was, Ankit Narang SOTC Delhi;

Sanjivini Bhagat SOTC Bangalore; A Praveen Reddy, SOTC, Hyderabad; Amarnath Dey, SOTC, Kolkata; Taher Nakara, SOTC, Mumbai; Lijo John, SOTC, Baroda and Atchaya Sridharan from, SOTC, Chennai.

These 20 lucky winners will now be taken on an all-expenses-paid 10-day trip to South Africa, starting February 17, 2017. They will have the opportunity to indulge in unique South African experiences, ranging from shark-cage diving to exclusive wine tasting and exploring Cape Peninsula – it is slated to be one action-packed itinerary.

Country Manager – India, Hanneli Slabber, said, "India is an important market for South African Tourism and our trade partners have been vital in our success here. The 'Fastest 50' campaign was our effort to sustain these engagements so that we create destination loyalists. We extend our heartiest congratulations to all our winners and participants for their dedication and enthusiasm in this exciting chase. Their efforts are truly laudable and we hope that they continue to sell South Africa packages as ardently going forward."



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5. Load your deals on "New deal" and follow the simple upload directions

If you are not an SA Specialist, please register here: <http://saspecialist.southafrica.net/in/en>



SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM



WINE, FINE, DINE, AT SSAFFRON, SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, BENGALURU

Since its launch, Saffron, the Indian specialty restaurant at Shangri-La Hotel, Bengaluru, has been hailed as one of the city's most sought after gastronomical destination. The restaurant, which treats guests to royalty cuisine from regions of India with emphasis on Punjab, Hyderabad, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and home style, welcomed New Year with the launch of its new menu. Executive Chef, Anurudh Khanna, along with his indigenous culinary brigade, has added a creative touch to the menu to bring a refreshing change to Bengaluru's dining scene.

Elevating heritage Indian dishes, guests will enjoy mouth-watering delights like Silbatta ke Tikkey, Murgh Hazari, Meen Kozhambu, Haleem Tarkari, Karuveppilai Poondur Kozhambu and Zaraja Parantha. Traditional and contemporary sweet temptations like Chakar Ada Pradaman, Rangoli Kulfi and Khubani ka Meetha to culminate the meal will turn the dining experience into a lasting memory that guests will savour long after they have left.

"We are very passionate about continuously delighting Epicureans with our distinctive creations. Our chefs are experts at combining age-old recipes with advanced cooking techniques," said Andreas Streiber, General Manager. **tt**

SIDHARTH MALHOTRA SHARES MEMORIES OF NEW ZEALAND

Sidharth Malhotra, Tourism New Zealand Brand Ambassador and Steven Dixon, Regional Manager South and Southeast Asia, for Tourism New Zealand, unveiled a brand new video encapsulating Sidharth's latest experiences in New Zealand. In addition to the video the pair presented a sneak peek at the 100% Pure New Zealand campaign featuring Sidharth.

Dixon said, "India is a priority market for Tourism New Zealand and we are experiencing strong growth as more and more Indians discover the magic of a New Zealand holiday. We believe the market has great potential for future growth."

Sidharth commented, "New Zealand never ceases to amaze me. My recent trip there was truly rewarding, with so many unforgettable experiences." **tt**



GOVARDHAN ECO VILLAGE OBSERVES YEAR OF YOGA

Govardhan Eco Village (GEV), an ISKCON project, and a wellness destination for world citizens, which is a premium Maha Bhraman status certified by Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), who recently received the prestigious UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) Award for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism, announced the launch of Govardhan School of Yoga. Govardhan Eco Village highlights the importance of spiritual ecology, the need for us to live in harmony with ourselves and to discover and practise spiritual and eco-friendly principles.

Gauranga Das, Director, Govardhan Eco Village, said, "It's our honour and privilege to receive this award of India and we would like to express our gratitude to UNWTO for giving this opportunity to share this message of sustainability on a larger scale, especially this year, which is celebrated as the year of sustainable tourism."

Valsa Nair Singh IAS, Principal Secretary, Tourism & Culture, Government of Maharashtra, stated, "Govardhan Eco Village is doing commendable work by providing sustainable livelihoods and shaping global tourism through innovative initiatives."

Dr KH Govinda Raj, IAS, Managing Director of MTDC, stated, "We are delighted to be associated with Govardhan Eco Village as they are significantly contributing through innovative initiatives which are competitive and at the same time sustainable in character." **tt**



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AMAZON INDIA TO FUEL GROWTH OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN NAGALAND

In line with its vision to transform the way India sells, Amazon India announced its partnership with the Government of Nagaland and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), to empower and enable women entrepreneurs in the state by providing them with a global platform to sell their products at an initial zero cost.

Under the partnership, Amazon.in will conduct extensive training and skill development workshops to help women entrepreneurs in Nagaland understand nuances related to online selling and develop skills and capabilities necessary to nurture successful online enterprises. The programme also aims to encourage cottage industries in Nagaland by helping them grow through online commerce.

Temjin Toy IAS, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister of Nagaland, said, "Today, digital commerce has dissolved geographical boundaries and enabled millions of Indians to consume products and services from all corners of the country, leading to a massive economic transformation. We hope to drive this transformation in Nagaland by helping our women become e-entrepreneurs on Amazon."

Gopal Pillai, Director and GM, Seller Services, Amazon India, said, "Our entrepreneurial culture and initiatives have always been aligned with our vision of transforming the way India buys and sells. Through this partnership, we look forward to fostering entrepreneurship and empowerment among women."

"The SMB sector in Nagaland is largely women dominated. We believe that with adequate training, skill development and e-commerce exposure, this industry can grow exponentially and lift the economic landscape of the region and its people, especially women entrepreneurs," said Dr Sapna Poti, Head - Jammu, Kashmir and Northeast Region, NSDC. **tt**



INVESTOUR 2017

INVESTOUR, a unique platform for tourism businesses from Africa and Europe, to meet has convened more than 20 African Ministers of Tourism at FITUR, the Spanish Tourism Fair. The initiative, now in its 8th edition, has taken place as a joint initiative of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Casa Africa. INVESTOUR 2017 focussed on two main topics: 'Technology and design of new touristic products' and 'Capacity development for youth and women in tourism.'

"INVESTOUR has demonstrated not only the high relevance of such platforms to advance business, but also the immense potential of the tourism sector in Africa as reflected in the very positive results that the region had in terms of international tourism in 2016," said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

"For Casa Africa it is a privilege to be one of the joint partners of INVESTOUR as this event has become a major reference for African tourism investors," said Director General of Casa Africa, Luis Padrón. "Our goal is to promote exchanges and to create a platform in which tourism professionals from both shores can meet, discuss, understand each other, and to look for ways to cooperate and to grow," he said.

QUICK FACTS

In 2016, Africa welcomed 58 million international tourists, up 8 per cent from 2015. According to UNWTO's forecast, this figure will reach 134 million by 2030. The number of Spanish companies based in sub-Saharan Africa has multiplied by seven in the last five years.



COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT AGRA TURNS 2

Courtyard by Marriott Agra celebrated its second anniversary in the most magnificent way with the longest cake in the history of Agra, breaking its own record of last year. To celebrate the journey of two years, the hotel made the city's largest cake ever, which is 50ft long and weighs about 100kg. This exclusive cake is in the shape of the numerical '2,' to mark the hotel's 2nd anniversary in the heritage city.

This cake was prepared by the hotel's culinary team, led by Executive Chef, Vivek Kalia. Abhishek Sahai, General Manager, said, "Over the last two years, Courtyard by Marriott has become a preferred getaway destination offering Indian hospitality with a global flair. We are extremely excited about celebrating the hotel's second anniversary. We assure our guests that Courtyard Marriott Agra will continue to set new benchmarks in hospitality services and creative events in the city. The third year of the hotel's operations will be even more exciting. The best is yet to come!" **tt**

YATRA UNVEILS NEW BRAND IDENTITY

Yatra has revealed its new brand identity and logo. Sharat Dhall, COO (B2C), Yatra, said, "Today we are much more than a booking site for flights, hotels and packages. We are a travel marketplace. And, our new logo symbolises just that. The change in brand identity is coupled with the evolution of Yatra's product offering, covering an unmatched range across flights, hotels, holidays, bus, train, cab, homestays, activities and cruises."

Speaking on the new brand identity, Vikrant Mudaliar, Chief Marketing Officer, Yatra, said, "The new red logo showcases the richness of our experience and the expansive depth of our product portfolio. It also helps us to stand out in an increasingly cluttered media environment and at the same time lends a sense of confidence and reliability to our brand." **tt**



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March 22-23, 2017, FICCI, Federation House, New Delhi



SOME OF THE EMINENT SPEAKERS



Dr. Arun Kumar Manocha
Chairman &
Managing Director, IRCTC



Deep Kalra
Chairman &
Group CEO MakeMyTrip



Swaminathan Vedaramayan
CEO, Via.com



Sharat Dhall
President
Yatra Online Pvt. Ltd



Hari Nair
Founder & CEO
Holiday IQ



Geeta Jain
CEO
Carlson Wagonlit Travel



Raja Natesan
CEO
Uniglobe Travel South Asia



Vishal Suri
Managing Director
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Ajay Kumar
Vice President & General Manager -
India, American Express Global
Business Travel



Abhishek Rajan
Vice President & Head -
Travel Marketplace, Paytm



Nikhil Ganju
Country Manager
Trip Advisor India



Karan Anand
Head - Relationship
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Amit Taneja
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ETAA LAUNCHES EAST INDIA CHAPTER



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The Enterprising Travel Agents Association (ETAA) organised its first event in Eastern India, Kolkata, on 4 Feb, 2017, at The Park hotel. The event received an overwhelming response from its members and others from the travel trade. Agents from as far as Siliguri were part of this event, which was well represented by participation of members of other associations – Skal being one of them.

At the event, the ETAA East India Chapter was formed and Koushik Banerjee was announced as the interim Chairman. The event was graced by ETAA's Chairman Emeritus, Carl Dantas, President, Jagat Mehta, Chairman of Hospitality, Hotel & Tourism committee, Partha Chatterjee (Skal) and National Jt. Secretary, Dipti Thakoor. More than 40 travel agents from various associations attended the event from Kolkata and other surrounding cities.

There was a brief knowledge session by TrawellTag, which was conducted by renowned trainer, Aman Koushik, and Rajesh Dutta, Director Strategy & Client Relationship, TrawellTag.

Jagat Mehta explained how ETAA was formed and the various activities it conducts to educate its members. Dipti Thakoor updated the members in detail about ETAA and the benefits of being an ETAA member. Carl Dantas briefed the gathering about the idea of networking in ETAA and further thanked the members for sparing the time to attend the event and formal launch of ETAA's East India Chapter.

The event was well received by all and was a good start to ETAA's Regional Chapter for East India, completing a truly Pan-India presence of Regional Chapters in North, South and West India.

The ETAA National Board and its Regional Chapters are all geared up to welcome its members, special invitees and sponsors for its upcoming ETAA Convention at Leonia Resorts, Hyderabad, from 3 - 5 March, 2017.

ETAA's 2nd Domestic Convention March 3rd to 5th 2017



DEAR TRAVEL AGENT / TOUR OPERATOR

GREAT chance to grow your business by being an ETAA Member (registration form and other details on www.etaaindia.com) & by attending ETAA's Convention at Hotel Leonia Resort (5*) in Hyderabad from 3rd March 2017 till 5th March 2017.

WHAT IS ETAA?

- ETAA is a Non-profit organization representing the Retail tours operators / travel agents in India. Conceived in 1996 & registered in 1998 with the ROC as a section 25 Company.
- It is the largest association of Non-IATA travel agents in the country and probably worldwide. An IATA agent can be an affiliate member of ETAA with same benefits except voting rights.
- Our Members include travel agents, tour operator and companies whose products they sell such as tours, cruises, MICE, hotels, Adventure, Education tours, etc. We are the leading advocate for travel agents, the travel industry and the traveling public.

MEMBERSHIP STRENGTH.

- In 2011 our Members strength was 120 plus and as on today our Membership has grown to 700 plus on an all India Level, which is just a tip of the Iceberg.
- We currently have our Head office in Mumbai and 3 Regional Chapters in North, West and South India.
- We have Members on a Pan India basis extending from Srinagar to Cochin and Kolkata to Vadodara.
- We have Members from tier 2 cities like Nasik, Shimoga, Siliguri, Indore, Jaipur, etc.

PHILOSOPHY OF ETAA & BENEFITS OF ATTENDING ETAA'S CONVENTION AT HOTEL LEONIA RESORT (5*) IN HYDERABAD.

- To create a strong networking platform for its members to mutually benefit each other.
- We are also working closely with various State and International Tourism Boards to educate our members about the destinations and to equip them with the right selling tools to increase number of tourist to the respective destinations.
- Get a chance to meet Domestic & International Exhibitor & ETAA members from Pan India.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION WAS HELD IN 2013 AT THE CROWN PLAZA IN DUBAI.

- The Convention was hosted by Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing (DTCM), Government of Dubai.
- The Convention was attended by 400 Delegates from all over India.
- 1st time record setting attendance of 380 plus at the Convention Hall among all Indian Travel Associations.
- DTCM Presented a Half Day Workshop on Destination Dubai followed by the 'Dubai Expert Program' which was conducted in an Off Line format for the 1st time in the history of DTCM for any Association.
- Dubai Expert Certificate was presented by DTCM to the Members who cleared the written test.



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KARNATAKA TO PROMOTE BALL

Department of Tourism, Government of Karnataka, has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with JSW Bengaluru Football Club Private Limited (BFC), to carry out co-promotional activities for promoting Bengaluru as a football and tourist destination for people in India and across the world.

Minister for IT, BT & Tourism, Priyank Kharge, said "Bengaluru as a city with pleasant round-the-year climate, a growing sports culture and a truly cosmopolitan crowd, is probably the only city in India that can match European cities which pride themselves on their footballing culture and fans. Considering these factors, Department of Tourism intends to promote Bengaluru as a sports destination."

Mustafa Ghouse, COO, Bengaluru Football Club, said, "This association between Bengaluru FC and Karnataka Tourism is one that we are very excited about. We take great pride in the fact that we represent Karnataka and Bengaluru at the national and continental level." tt



CARLSON REZIDOR HOTEL GROUP DEBUTS IN SRI LANKA

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group marked its entry into Sri Lanka at a recent groundbreaking ceremony of Park Inn by Radisson Colombo. The event was inaugurated by John Amaratunga, Sri Lanka's Minister of Tourism Development & Christian Religious Affairs, Anil Amarasuriya and SR Gnanam, Chairman and Managing Director, respectively, at Sofia Hospitality (Pvt) Ltd, and Thorsten Kirschke, President, Asia Pacific, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group.

SR Gnanam, Managing Director of Sofia Hospitality, said, "We are happy to partner Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group as we share similar values and beliefs with the company."

Thorsten Kirschke, President, Asia Pacific, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group added, "This is a significant milestone as Park Inn by Radisson Colombo marks our first hotel in Sri Lanka and the debut of our Park Inn by Radisson brand in the country." tt

MAHARASHTRA – LARGEST SOURCE MARKET FOR TOURISM AUSTRALIA

Tourism Australia has yet again witnessed noteworthy growth statistics from Maharashtra, retaining the State's position as a key tourism source market in India. As of year ended (YE) September 2016, Maharashtra has recorded an increase of 25 per cent in tourist arrivals, and a remarkable increase of 18 per cent in spend. The State witnessed 53,800 visitors to Australia, contributing A\$ 232 mn (Rs. 1,160 crores) to the Australian economy, with an average spend of Rs 2.15 lakhs per person.

Nishant Kashikar, Country Manager, India & Gulf, Tourism Australia, said, "We are extremely delighted that all our focussed consumer and distribution initiatives in Maharashtra have paid off, resulting in a stupendous increase in arrivals and spend from the state. Going forward, we are positive that our extensive analysis of the market, in tandem with our key distribution partners and airlines, will provide us with the requisite insights to modify and transform our approach to cater to the requirements of travellers from Maharashtra." tt

Quick Facts

Total arrivals from India for the year ended November 2016 were recorded at 256,400, an increase of 11.5 per cent relative to the same period the previous year, making India the 9th largest inbound market for Australia.

The Tourism Forecasting Committee (TFC) has predicted 265,000 visitors from India for the Jul 2016 - Jun 17 period, a 9.6% increase over 2015-16. Arrivals from India are expected to perform well with an average annual financial year growth rate of 6.4 per cent through to the financial year 2021-22. tt

GLOBAL DESTINATIONS EXPANDS PORTFOLIO

Global Destinations adds three new partners to its diverse portfolio in 2017 – AlliedTPro, Infinity Escapades and Leisure Pass Group. The companies will be represented from the Mumbai office of Global Destinations, along with its 18 other partners. With the new additions, Global Destinations will be representing travel companies from continents across the globe.

Speaking about getting their new partners on board, Pranav Kapadia, Founder, Global Destinations, says, "We are very excited about our new partnership with three esteemed companies – AlliedTPro, Infinity Escapades and Leisure Pass Group. Each company is a leader in its segment and the alliances will enable us to provide our stakeholders a whole new variety of offerings. 2016 has been a good year for us with the addition of new products to our portfolio and being announced as the GSA for Air New Zealand in India. We look forward to more such opportunities and collaborations in 2017." tt



LUXURY HONEYMOON @ KENYA

Kenya is an ultimate honeymoon destination to celebrate your love and begin your life's journey together. Whether it's spotting the real-life cast of the Lion King, exploring a big city, or lazing around on some of the best unspoiled beaches in the world, Kenya's got every honeymooners wish list covered.

Its quintessential images of herds of elephants in front of snow-capped Mount Kilimanjaro, hot air balloons above the Maasai Mara and the proud Maasai warriors, has drawn honeymooners for years. It is the land which inspired Karen Blixen's 'Out of Africa,' a place of vast plains and abundant wildlife, coupled with endless white palm-lined beaches fronting the Indian Ocean. With every champagne toast at sunset, candle-lit beach dinner and every action-packed game drive, a honeymoon in Kenya is sure to provide lasting memories.

The idea of candlelight dinners in the bush, romantic walks, adventurous game drives, sundowners, hot air balloon rides, cruises, deep sea diving, snorkelling and much more, are all available in Kenya and this makes it an ideal honeymoon destination. With all these attractions and many more, honeymooners to Kenya have something to rejoice about. tt

MANISH ARORA DESIGNS FOR SWAROVSKI

Starting end March 2017, Swarovski Kristallwelten (Swarovski Crystal Worlds) will present exclusive displays by the famous Indian designer Manish Arora, in its three locations in Wattens, Innsbruck, and Vienna.

This is not the first time that Swarovski has successfully collaborated with the renowned Indian fashion designer. Carla Rumler, Cultural Director, Swarovski, said, "As part of one of our exclusive designer collections, back in 2004, we worked with Manish Arora to develop innovative heart-shaped crystal components for an opulent jewellery collection – even before his debut at the London Fashion Week in 2005. We are proud to have proved once again Swarovski's knack for finding emerging design talents. The exhibition, 'Life is Beautiful' for Swarovski Crystal Worlds is certainly the crowning glory of our long standing and successful cooperation."

The event was kicked off by the Austrian National Tourist Office on behalf of Swarovski Crystal Worlds. tt



Zakir Ahmed Director, Trust Travels Mumbai; Christine Mukharji, Director, Austrian National Tourist Office; Praveen Chugh, President, TAFI; Neelu Singh, Director and CEO, Ezeego1; Stefan Isser, Managing Director, Crystal World



Stefan Isser, Managing Director, Crystal Worlds; Carla Rumler, Creative Director, Swarovski; Manish Arora, Fashion Designer.

OYO LAUNCHES 'THE FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD HOTEL'

OYO announced the launch of OYO Townhouse, positioned as a friendly neighbourhood hotel. With this, OYO continues to break new ground as a true category innovator through an offering that combines experience and value at a scale that has never been attempted before in the hospitality landscape.

Ritesh Agarwal, Founder & CEO - OYO, said, "OYO Townhouse represents our ongoing commitment to continue innovating and creating world-class hotel experiences from India. Townhouse will operate as a hotel, community hotspot, cafe and merchandise store – to deliver an all-encompassing experience to guests.

We are excited to showcase and deliver this proposition today. We are confident that our guests will love the experience of these tastefully done properties, staffed with OYO Townhouse Managers, trained to deliver authentic and unique Townhouse service. This launch marks a milestone in our journey towards the next level of hospitality, consolidating our position as a category innovator and leader." **tt**



THE LEELA AMBIENCE CONVENTION HOTEL DELHI HOSTS NATIONAL TOURISM DAY

The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi hosted the National Tourism Day organised by The Indigenous Federation of Tourism India (TIFTI). Jaideep Anand, General Manager of The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel said, "It is an honour and a privilege to be associated with The Indigenous Federation of Tourism India and be a part of such a special day. We are glad to be able to help foster the spirit of celebration of the National Tourism Day amongst the various participants belonging to the numerous stakeholders of the tourism industry."

National Tourism Day was celebrated for the first time in the history of Indian Tourism post-independence on 25th January 2017. The agenda of the event was one billion tourists; one billion opportunities. The event saw the presence of various respected dignitaries from the world of travel and tourism that participated in the event and presented their thoughts on various aspects of the tourism industry through a variety of sessions **tt**

ITB CHINA 2017 TO BE HOSTED IN EUROPE

Europe is the Official Partner Destination of ITB China 2017. A corresponding agreement was signed on January 31, 2017 by David Axiotis, General Manager, ITB China, and Eduardo Santander, Executive Director, European Travel Commission. The three-day Business to Business travel trade fair focuses exclusively on the Chinese travel industry and takes place from 10 to 12 May, 2017, in Shanghai. **tt**



ITDC ORGANISES SON ET LUMIÈRE

Selected for the National Bravery Award, the 25 children from different parts of the country were hosted to a mesmerising Sound and Light Show, run by India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) Ltd, at Purana Qila, New Delhi. The kids who received the National Bravery awards, for their outstanding acts of gallantry by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Republic Day, were invited to showcase the incredible 1000-year journey of the rise, fall and shaping of the Capital city through a spectacular Sound & Light Show, 'Ishq-e-Dilli,' operated by ITDC.

Anil Kumar Gupta, General Manager, Sound and Light Show Division, ITDC said, "It is heartening to see the courage and bravery these kids have portrayed, fighting their fears to protect other lives with some of them having lost their lives to save others. These kids are true role models who inspire others; it was an honour to host, meet and interact with these brave souls at the Son et lumière Show." **tt**

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CORPORATE

DEFINING STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

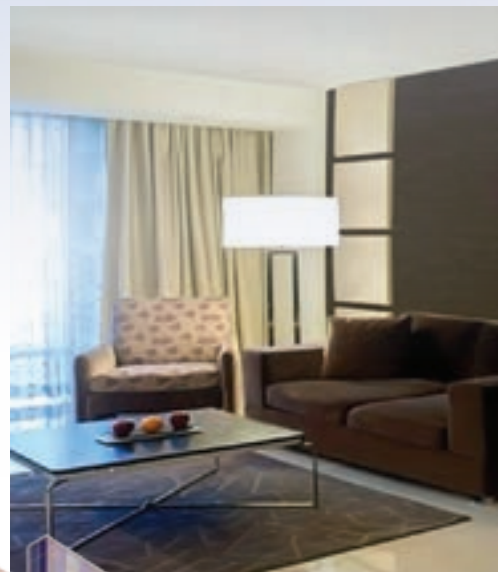


In conversation with
Sanjay Singh,
General Manager,
Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi

TT BUREAU

What are your strategic plans for development for the year 2017?

For 2017, our prime focus will be on product up-gradation, backed with an artistic and customised gourmet experience and a highly consistent and personalised service delivery with a 'Yes I Can' positive approach. Process improvement, productivity optimisation and building further on our best business practices will play a key role in achieving and exceeding set targets. Emphasis will also be on Associate growth through innovative L&D inputs and building strong, respectful and lasting relationships with all Stakeholders. Last, but not the least, responsible business practices involving taking care of our people, community and the environment will be at the core of all that we do.





What is the USP of your hotel?

The top USP of Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi is its strategic location, which provides easy and hassle-free access to EON SEZ, World Trade Centre, Magarpatta IT Park and Ranjangaon MIDC. The hotel has spacious and well-appointed rooms with world-class amenities. It offers highly personalised and customised services to its guests and is ranked amongst the top five hotels of Pune. The Great Kabab Factory, serving its signature recipes under the Northwest Indian Frontier banner and other multiple cuisine options like Continental, Italian, Mexican and Oriental with the choicest of beverages at the Skye Bar, present a complete gourmet experience to our resident and non-resident guests. An in-house spa and salon is like a cherry on the cake.

What is your hotel's corporate positioning?

We are an award-winning upper upscale business hotel, only 6kms from Pune's Lohegaon International Airport, primarily attracting business travellers. As mentioned above, Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi is positioned at Number 5 of 219 hotels in Pune on TripAdvisor and has won the much coveted TripAdvisor 'Hall Of Fame' award for winning the 'Certificate of Excellence' five years in a row, from 2011 to 2015. We have achieved this feat yet again in 2016 and have also won Times Food Awards, Hotels.com, HolidayIQ, Holiday Check, Booking.com and several other accolades for consistency and excellence in our products and services.

What are the facilities that your hotel offers for weddings and events?

The hotel features nearly 15,000sq.ft of flexible space through multiple venues, including banquet halls, al-fresco, rooftop and pool deck, which can host gatherings for up to 1000 guests. Intimate venues are available for interviews and important meetings in the form of three elegant and well-appointed board rooms suited for groups of 4 to 14. For weddings, the hotel offers a range of elegant options, including ceremony area, cocktail receptions, sit-down dinners and stand-up buffets, along with specially crafted delectable menu options. Thistle and Sienna, our two banquet halls, can accommodate meetings and conferences for 160 in a cluster formation and up to 325 in a theatre style. Customised menus with personalised and memorable service, flawless audio-visual aids, high-speed Wi-Fi Internet access and professional empanelled event organizers, add to the overall weddings and events experience.

CORPORATE JET-SETTER

MEGHNA GARG
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
FACILITIES & ADMINISTRATION
THOMSON REUTERS, NOIDA

Q: Most memorable trip to any destination?

Unlike sharing any international holiday experiences, I'd rather talk about the places which are a home away from home, and hence extremely special – within India. I also say this, because of my love for my country. A week-long trip to Goa via Hyderabad is amongst the most memorable trips that come to my mind, with its memories as fresh as yesterday.

Q: You dream of going to?

I have always wanted to go to Vegas or any getaway destination (within India) with my gang of close friends, for at least 15 days.

Q: Favourite airline and why?

For travel within India, I have found new interest in Vistara. It's comfortable and comparatively 'new,' for lack of a better description. For business travels – Indigo still stays at its reliable best. For international travels, Emirates is my pick, because of its inflight comfort.

Q: Best hotel experience and why?

Being a hotelier myself, I have experienced, worked and stayed in the best of super luxury hotels within India – from Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur, to Taj Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur, to Rambagh Palace, Jaipur, and The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi, Vivantaby Taj - Fort Aguada, Goa, Lalit Golf & Spa Resort Goa, Marriott, etc. I think every stay had its own share of sweet and adventurous experiences, but the majestic beauty of the 'White Lady in Lake' – "The Venice of India- the Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur," makes me think that I should go back there again and again. The heritage, culture, food, music, weather, landscapes and hospitality of Rajasthan absorb you. It's mesmerising.



Q: A place you plan to visit again?

I would love to visit Goa again, any day. You can never get enough of Goa. This is really true. Be it the food, beach-walks, sunshine, water sports, camaraderie, casinos, night life, music or overall safety – it's got everything under one roof. And, sunset? Well, Goa never sleeps. I have been there umpteen times till now, and I still choose to select this destination to answer this question.

Q: A family vacation that stands out?

I carry beautiful memories of a week-long family vacation to Shimla, and uphill to the Himalayas. It really bonded all of us well and will always be truly cherished by me.

Q: Your best holiday with friends?

Friends make every holiday special. Perhaps, the recent lap from Hyderabad to Goa for a week is amongst the best one. I share a few pictures of this trip to re-live the fun. It has everything from Goa's crazy Goat Festival fun to daytime parasailing, to evening beach walks, great food, to visiting the dramatic Ramoji Film City in Hyderabad, local cultural exploration and a lot of beautiful and enriching memories.

Q: Great food you enjoyed and where?

Though being from Punjab and then a hotelier, I can be such a critic when it comes to comparing good food. However, Rajasthan never disappoints with its varied spicy food, for each city has its royal heritage. My taste buds still can't forget the taste of Mewari cuisine-Dal Baati Churma, Ker Sangri, etc., from the streets of Udaipur. For non-veg lovers, Lal Maas is a must-have!

Q: What to watch out for while travelling?

When on vacation, please pack less to enjoy more! You won't have the stress of over baggage at airports with every new destination. Golden rule: Less baggage is more fun!

Q: As a travel buyer, what's your philosophy?

When in Rome, do as the Romans do! It's important to get absorbed in local culture to really enjoy the place. You have to let go and forget who you are. Just go with the flow. Indulge in local food, and tantalise your senses with shopping, more and more!



EVOLUTION OF CORPORATE SERVICES

GACS is the evolution of a forum to support various industries

TT BUREAU

Leadership, at its core, is much more than just shelling out orders and getting things done. Leadership is about setting examples and creating followers. Enduring to acquaintance sharing initiatives, GACS – “Global Association for Corporate Services” – was formally announced on January 08, 2017. Top management experts from different sectors, like Vibhu Narayan, Bhumesh Gaur, Sahibjit Garewal, Deepak Ohlyan, Captain Rajesh Sharma, Sameer Saxena, and many more experts, witnessed this event at Noida, NSEZ, at the launch of the forum, website and the mobile app, to keep their innovation caps on at all times and give strong suggestions and nifty solutions to problems.

At the launch, the founder team shared their view that the endeavour towards the making of this forum was to make robust processes with the use of technology and accrue distinctive benefits. The support will be more manageable than ever before with end to end elucidations. The mobile application is one step ahead for



providing seamless customer experience across the industry through Masterful and Indispensable Art, added by Rahul Lal.

GACS is a forum for working professionals from across the region, working in the Corporate Services domain, with their mammoth prospective, and partners with the business operations will ensure business processes can operate hassle-free operations.

Almost 25 sectors are covered by councils like Automobiles, Auto Components, Aviation, Bio Technology, Chemicals, Construction, Defence Manufacturing, to name a few.





CORPORATE JET-SETTER

BASANT K. PULI

AGM – ADMINISTRATION

TRANSASIA BIO MEDICALS LTD.

Q: Most memorable trip to any destination?

One of the most amazing adventures which I experienced in my life was at the Underwater World Aquarium at Dubai. Learning the most scientific way of diving, or riding a turtle tail and caressing a shark, it's all possible here.

Q: You dream of going to?

I dream of going to Switzerland, the city of dreams, with my family. It's a destination which I have been craving for, and look forward to visiting it in the years to come.

Q: Favourite airline and why?

My favourite airline is Emirates, an airline with understanding. I have travelled a lot on Emirates to Dubai, Kuwait and Oman, and their service by way of the human touch is indisputable.

Q: Best hotel experience and why?

Hotel Movenpick Jumeirah Lake Towers, Dubai, is a marvellous place to stay in. A hotel offering breathtaking beach views, excellent rooms and of course, a mouth-watering buffet spread, it's one of the best hotels I have come across.

Q: A place you plan to visit again?

Dubai, a city of surprises and firsts, the most



beautiful of which is its snow world, which mesmerises not only children, but people of all ages.

Q: A family vacation that stands out?

We had an exciting time in Dubai. We stayed at Le Meridien, visited the Aqua Park, Burj Khalifa, Monorail, and many picturesque beaches, especially Kite Beach, which is one of Dubai's most beautiful beaches. It's an ideal place to unwind and enjoy the long sandy beach with your family.

Q: Your best holiday with friends?

Definitely, it's Holiday Inn, Pattaya. We relaxed and rejuvenated with a mesmerising spa experience and lots of fun.

Q: Great food you enjoyed and where?

No matter where you go, you just can't beat the aroma of Indian food in Dubai, especially at Aangan Restaurant, Qusais.

Q: What to watch out for while travelling?

It's important to respect the locals and their beliefs in their country. Follow the law of the land and behave like a good tourist, and enjoy your travel. Carry the local guide and basic medicines to keep you healthy at all times.

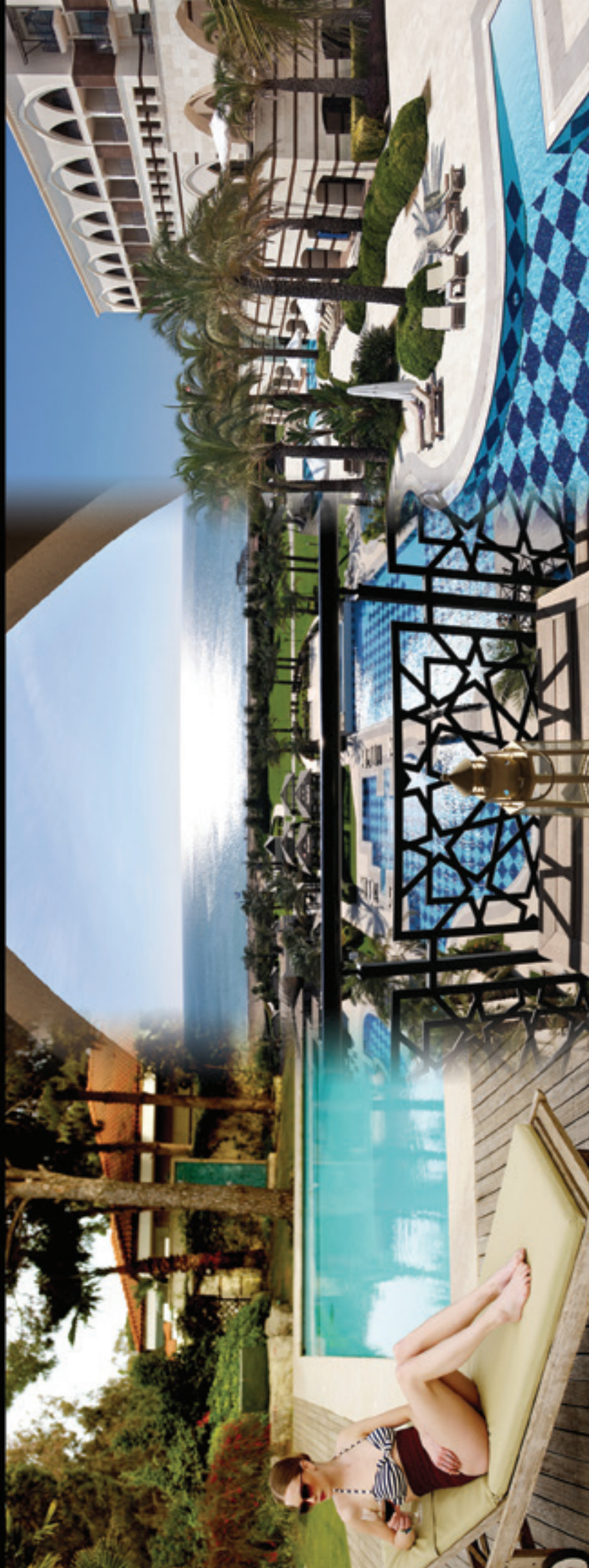
Q: As a travel buyer, what's your philosophy?

As a tourist to other countries, you represent your country. So, keep up your integrity. Don't let your country down due to any kind of irresponsible behaviour. Also, to have a memorable journey, always contact genuine buyers and travel partners.





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ITDC: GLOBALLY INDIAN



With over 50 years of excellence in Tourism and Hospitality, ITDC continues to elevate Indian tourism and hospitality to greater heights

TT BUREAU

Incorporated in 1966, with a mandate to develop and expand tourism infrastructure, India Tourism Development Corporation Ltd (ITDC) is the only Public Sector Undertaking under the administrative control of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Ever since its inception, ITDC has played a key role in the development of tourism infrastructure in the country. Its expertise extends to offering complete hospitality, travel and tourism solutions in areas of accommodation, catering, conference and convention facilities, ticketing, transportation and travel, hospitality education and training, event management, tourism infrastructure and consultancy, etc.

ITDC completed a glorious meaningful and highly satisfying journey of 50 years of its existence on October 01, 2016 and celebrated its "Golden Jubilee" function in the month of October 2016, in a grand way.

ITDC has played a committed and pivotal social role in the development of tourism infrastructure in the backward areas, thereby trying to promote regional balance. It has also been a pioneer in organising Sound and Light shows in the country with its first ever show in Red Fort in 45 years, besides the first multimedia show at Old Fort in Delhi. In addition, shows at Ross Island, Andaman & Nicobar, Shilpgram in Deoghar Jharkhand, and Dhauli in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, are some other Sound and Light (SEL) shows mounted by ITDC for various state governments.



“Atithi Devo Bhava”: The Ashok Group of Hotels has stood tall with utmost modernity, unmatched regalia and traditional Indian hospitality. Excellence in specialty restaurants has triggered winning distinctions and accolades for the hotels.

ITDC’s hotel division that runs under the banner, ‘The Ashok Group of Hotels,’ can best be described as the epitome of Indian grandeurs, served along with a touch of classic Indian hospitality. As pioneers of Indian hospitality, it believes that it



is their responsibility to showcase the essence of India in its purest way and their hotels are a true reflection of that. At ITDC, hospitality is not considered as a job or an industry for which it works, but an appreciative art that sets them apart from everyone in the market.

ITDC operates eight owned hotels at Delhi, Jammu, Jaipur, Mysore, Patna and Bhubaneswar. In addition, it operates five JV Hotels at Guwahati, Ita Nagar, Ranchi, Puducherry and Bhopal, apart from managing a forest lodge at Bharatpur.

Even though geographical boundaries have become redundant in the present e-age, the ATT division of ITDC has a pan India presence at 11 destinations (New Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Aurangabad, Patna, Ranchi, Varanasi, Guwahati, Kolkata) to cater to the various needs of travellers through air ticketing, transport, customised packages, pre and post conference tours, off-season discount packages, tailor-made packages, city sightseeing tours, etc.

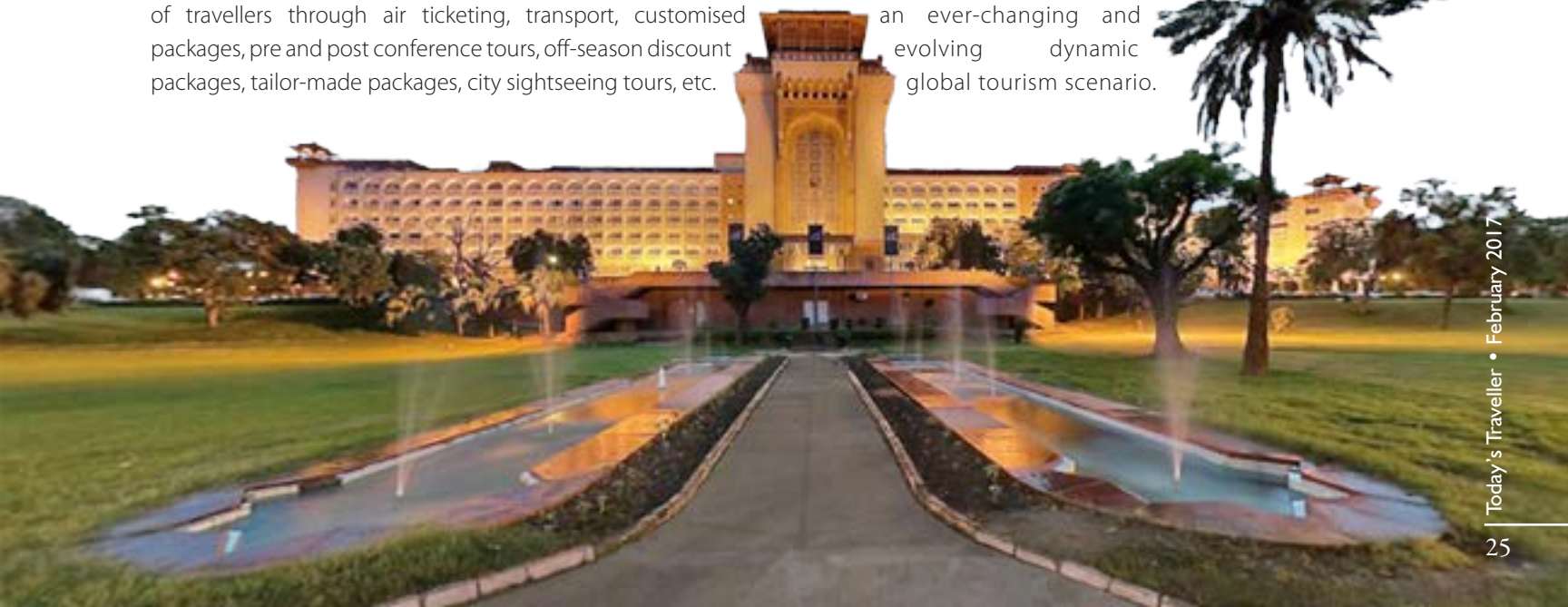
In the hospitality training sector, ITDC contributes through the Ashok Institute of Hospitality & Tourism Management and its own HRD division. The aim is to work towards making a difference to the academic culture for the students and its institutes offer a globally competitive curriculum and infrastructure. Last year, AIHTM formalised a collaboration with the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT), under Ministry of Tourism to offer a

three-year Bachelors of Science (B.Sc.) course in Hospitality and Hotel Administration. This initiative brings together AIHTM’s expertise as a leader in providing professional training in hospitality and tourism, NCHMCT’s significant excellence and on-the-ground experience in the hospitality and tourism sector. Under this programme, students learn from expert faculty and a wide pool of industry professionals, while getting hands-on experience in an international setting, and gain valuable insight about the cultural and business perspectives of the sector.

ITDC strongly believes in practising responsible tourism. The SEL division at ITDC has undertaken the task of conceptualising and mounting of Sound and Light shows

to emphasise the need for creating a lifetime experience and looking to the need of night time activities for tourists. The SEL division has been able to amalgamate the inputs from experts across industries to produce the show with state-of-the-art technology. The division also intends to undertake more activities of creative nature, like, Interactive Museums, state-of-the-art architectural dynamic lighting of monuments and important buildings, etc.

After 50 years of a successful global journey, ITDC will continue to strive for greater excellence in its strategic business units through professionalism, transparency and value for money based customer focussed services; to be ever ready in the future to create an ever-changing and evolving dynamic global tourism scenario.



EXPERIENCE UNMATCHED

Taj Santacruz reflects Mumbai's spirit and captures its essence through its exceptional dining experiences and varied culinary offerings



TT BUREAU

Strategically located just off the Western Express Highway, the Taj Santacruz, Mumbai, offers a vantage point of access, with proximity to the city's financial and entertainment centres. The newest addition in Taj's home city, and the fourth group hotel in the financial capital, Taj Santacruz is a tribute to this historic city and its pulsating cosmopolitan spirit.

Farhat Jamal, Senior Vice President – Operations (West-India) & Africa, Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces, said, "Taj Santacruz will set a benchmark for luxury in North Mumbai, with its unparalleled Taj service, elegantly appointed rooms and contemporary restaurants. It will be an oasis for business and leisure travellers alike. It is the new jewel in the Taj crown."

Mumbai is a smorgasbord of cuisines, languages, art, cinema and festivals. Taj Santacruz's architecture mirrors this unique sensory blend with colours and styles to reflect Mumbai within its walls. The soft references to Art Deco pay homage to the historical architecture of South Mumbai while maintaining the trademark Taj elegance. The chandeliers in the double height lobby give a modern edge to the city's European legacy. Jali-esque pattern, layering and colour – all integral to the Indian design ethic – give Indian overtones to the contemporary styling. Throughout the hotel, paintings and traditional sculptures by Indian artists provide local accents to reception spaces.

"We are delighted to extend the legendary Taj hospitality with the opening of Taj Santacruz in Mumbai. With its distinctive design, spacious rooms and warm service, Taj Santacruz is a luxurious new addition that is symbolic of the cultural melting pot that is quintessentially Mumbai. The hotel captures the spirit of the city and offers curated experiences to its guests, deep rooted in its culture," said Pankaj Sampat, General Manager, Taj Santacruz, Mumbai.

With the domestic and international airports in its vicinity and being minutes away from the city's new shopping, business and dining hubs, Taj Santacruz is the perfect spot for fly-in fly-out meetings, conferences and events, as well as travellers looking

for a central place to stay in Mumbai. With flexible business offerings, the hotel offers indoor and outdoor locations that are perfect for business conferences and private functions.

SOPHISTICATED ROOMS AND SUITES

The hotel comprises 279 rooms and suites which are among the largest in the city and blend contemporary elegance with touches of traditional Indian style. The modular design of rooms and luxuriously appointed amenities make them perfect for both business and leisure. The cushioned window seats in spacious rooms give the traveller the flexibility for in-room meetings.

The Taj Club Rooms, located on the dedicated Taj Club Floor, are designed to meet the specific needs of the international business traveller, with a 24-hour cyber butler, high-speed Wi-Fi and private Check-in service. The two lavishly appointed grand suites – the Presidential Suite and Grand Luxury Suite – have their own separate living spaces and kitchenette.



CULINARY OFFERINGS

Taj Santacruz reflects Mumbai's spirit and captures its essence through its exceptional dining experiences and varied culinary offerings. Local meets global at Tiqri – the expansive split-level atrium restaurant offering comfort food that foregrounds freshness, delicious street food from around the world and regional cuisine.

Rivea offers guests a refreshing take on the famed French and Italian Riviera palate in a modern coastal fusion of the best dishes from the south of France to Northwest Italy. The menu is designed to reflect the seasons, showcasing locally grown and internationally sourced ingredients which evoke the colours of the Riviera. Enoteca, Rivea's wine-tasting room, offers guests a taste of exquisite table wines paired with cheese, bread and antipasti.

WELLNESS

Designed to rejuvenate the senses, the hotel features a holistic Jiva Spa, Salon, Outdoor Swimming Pool and state-of-the-art Fitness centre.

iNFHRA FM EXCELLENCE AWARDS: HYDERABAD CHAPTER

The Fourth FM Excellence Conference & Awards was held at N Convention in Hyderabad, on January 18, 2017, with the support of leading industry bodies

TT BUREAU



Chief Guest Naresh Kumar



Winners



● NFHRA is an industry body and member based association representing more than 1200 members from the Facility Management & Administration, Workplace & Infrastructure, Corporate Travel & Hospitality, Corporate Real Estate, Safety & Security & Procurement professionals.

The Fourth FM Excellence Conference & Awards in the series, and Hyderabad's first ever FM Excellence Conference & Awards was organised at N Convention, on January 18, 2017, and was supported by leading industry bodies like the Society for Cyberabad Security Council.

The occasion was graced by the presence of Naresh Kumar, Deputy Labour Commissioner & Officer on Special Duty, AP Government, and Syed Shawket Hussain Madani, Joint Director Promotions, Information Technology, Electronics and

Communications Department, Government of Telangana.

The day was also graced by the presence of Gaurav Maheshwari, Chief Finance Officer, Signode India Limited, Sumesh Balakrishnan, Country Director Finance-India, Hitachi Consulting, Anil S, Chief Finance Officer, Q-City, and Mita Banerjee, Director Commercials, Indian School of Business, who shared the dais, and their experience in Hyderabad's first ever Panel Discussion on CXO's Expectation from the FM & Admin department.

The prominent jury comprised industry professionals from AMD Research & Development Center, Dr Reddy's Laboratories, Hitachi Consulting, Karvy, NTT DATA Global Delivery Services, Nisa Global, OpenText, Signode India Limited, Treebo Hotels, Virtusa Consulting Services, Via.com and some FM Professionals.

Another important highlight of the day was the Birthdays

of three of the Jury members, which was celebrated during the Award Ceremony, in the presence of more than 130 senior delegates from Hyderabad.

Below are the Winners & Runners-up across various categories:

Corporate Real Estate & Space Management, powered by TREEBO HOTELS



1st Runner-Up: S Madan Kumar, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Ltd

2nd Runner-Up: Sudheer Kumar N, TATA Consultancy Services Ltd



Innovation & Technology, powered by ZETA and supported by SAFETRAX

Winner: Dr Saji D'Souza, K.S.A.C Hospitals (I) Pvt Ltd

1st Runner-Up: Ashish Saxena, AMD Research & Development Center Pvt Ltd

2nd Runner-Up: Dinesh Reddy

Winner: VV Raghava Raju, Tech Mahindra Ltd

1st Runner-Up: EVK. Prasanta, Invesco Hyderabad Pvt Ltd

2nd Runner-Up: Sandhya Sood, Netcracker Technology Solutions (I) Pvt Ltd

Corporate Travel, Transport & Logistics, powered by VIA. COM & CARZONRENT INDIA and supported by GENERAL MOTORS, OLA CORPORATE, S RIDE

Winner: Nittan Bhalla, Wipro Ltd

1st Runner-Up: Amit Kaul, Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance

2nd Runner-Up: Allen Manohar, Karvy Data Management Services Ltd

Ecological Sustainability, powered by ARRAYSTORM

Winner: Dass Gunalan, Infosys Ltd

Madupu, Electronic Arts Games India Pvt Ltd

Safety & Security Award, powered by INTERNATIONAL HOUSEKEEPING AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES

Winner: Sharfoddin Mohammed, Cognizant Technology Solutions India Pvt Ltd

1st Runner-Up: G Sunil Kumar, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Ltd

2nd Runner-Up: Anil Kumar Munnangi, First American (India) Pvt Ltd

The Awards were also supported by Fuego Furniture, APLOMB Techsolutions, DMS Designs, Cafe Desire, Today's Traveller and Industrial Safety Review magazine. The next two Cities of the Tour are scheduled in Mumbai, on February 15, 2017, and Chennai, on March 8, 2017. For more information on the awards and to associate with the same, kindly email on support@infhra.com



Bags ON THE GO

Men's messenger bags have come back full circle, only to be more stylish and elegant

TT BUREAU



With a shoulder strap and some pretty stylish design options – the messenger bag is perfect for the man on the go. It is a medium-size bag and can be worn over the shoulder to keep the wearers hands free. Be it work or play, the man-bag has grown to become mans' best friend. .

Messenger bags have come a long way. The first modern messenger bag was actually worn by utility linemen in the 1950s. It was designed by the De Martini Global Canvas Company and its purpose was to accommodate all the tools that linemen needed when going up utility poles to fix them. The initial messenger bag was made of cotton canvas and lined with waterproof fabric, was not sold in stores, but issued to and by various messenger companies based in New York. Today, these bags are stylish, professional and practical; they have become synonymous with great style and design.

The messenger bag is the briefcase's younger, cooler brother. Every career professional or a fresh grad student needs

a reliable work bag for his documents, gizmos and gadgets, wallet, and an array of practical stuff that he may require throughout the proceedings of the day. Today, the range of messenger bags is much more diverse in colour, size and material, which means it goes well with all different types of outfits.



One should choose the right texture and should opt for a leather messenger bag or a heavy canvas messenger or backpack, if they want it to last a long time. Since one is going to potentially use the bag every day, this is an item worth investing in, so simply get out there and bag.



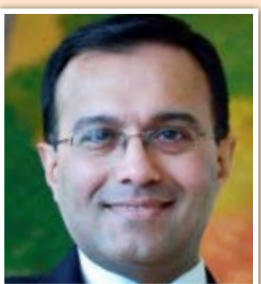


SVETLANA YAZOVSKIKH has been appointed as the Executive Director of Tourism at Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau. Yazovskikh has worked at the PHLCVB since 2008, most recently as the senior International Tourism Manager, where she oversaw sales and market activities for the PHLCVB's key overseas visitor markets. In her new role she will lead the tourism team in raising Philadelphia's profile as a global destination for overseas international leisure travel as well as domestic group travel, and will report directly to Coker Graham.



FAIZ ALAM ANSARI has been designated as Complex General Manager for Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel & Convention Centre and Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park. He has over 20 years of experience with leading hospitality brands and has been associated with Starwood

hotels & Resorts (now Marriott International Inc.) since October 2006. He has established his position in the industry as an innovative manager in the hospitality space. Prior to moving to Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park, Faiz was also the Hotel Manager of the flagship Westin Hotel in India, at the Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi.



DAVID MATHEWS has been designated as the General Manager of Trident, Bandra Kurla, Mumbai. A seasoned professional, Mathews holds over 25 years of leadership experience with the Oberoi Group and has worked with various prestigious brands. During his gratifying tenure in

Gurgaon, he has been awarded with the coveted title of 'General Manager of the Year' by Hotelier India Awards 2013. With over two decades of experience in the hospitality industry, Mathews has worked at premier hotels across India as well as in Muscat in the Middle East.



DHAVAL JANI has been appointed as Vice President of Sales and Marketing at V Resorts. Jani is a Sales & Growth-Hacking expert with nearly a decade's experience in the travel industry. Over the better part of two decades, Jani has headed the sales and growth initiatives of illustrious names like MakeMyTrip,

TATA Communications and Bharti Airtel. In his previous capacity as the Regional Head (Gujarat and Rajasthan) of MakeMyTrip, he and his team devised strategies that made MakeMyTrip the market leader in western India.



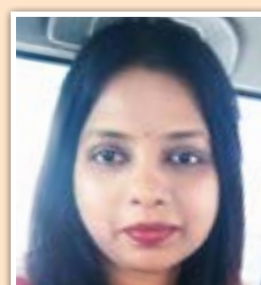
GAURAV MEHTA has been appointed as Director of Sales & Marketing at Radisson Blu Hotel, New Delhi Dwarka. Mehta is often described as a thorough strategic hospitality professional with over 16 years of experience in various assignments within the industry in the Sales & Marketing work stream. He has

earlier been associated with Grand Hyatt, Four Seasons, Hilton and The Imperial, New Delhi.



TULIKA KARKADA has been made Regional Head, Corporate – (West) at Sterling Holidays & Resorts. She comes with over 14 years of experience within the corporate world, having vast experience in sales and marketing. She has earlier been associated with leading brands

from the hospitality industry such as Jackson Hospitality, Mars Enterprises (Waterstones Hotel) and The Claridges Hotel New Delhi, to name a few.



SARIKA BULSARA DALVI has been designated as Regional Head Sales (West) at The Raintree, Anna Salai and St Mary's Road, Chennai. With several years of experience in the hospitality industry, she has been earlier associated with the Fidalgo Group of Hotels as their National Head Sales and Marketing and Fariyas Resorts and Hotels as their Director of Sales and Marketing.

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AVIATION



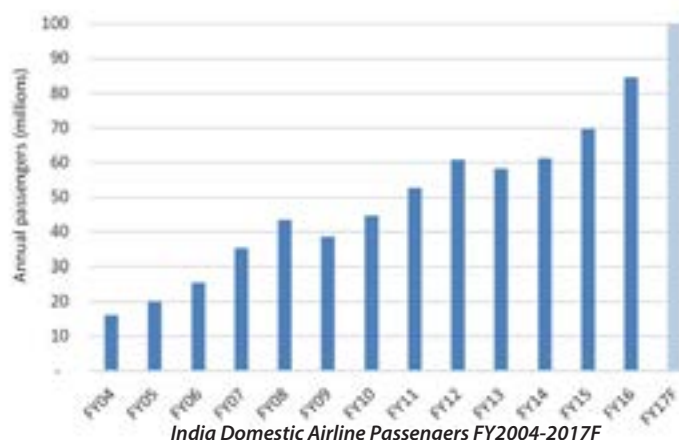
AVIATION SCORES GOLD

“India’s airlines posted a combined profit of USD122 million in FY2016, returning to the black at an industry level after 10 years” – reports CAPA India Aviation Outlook FY 2018

TT BUREAU

The year 2016 represented a turnaround in the fortunes of India’s aviation industry after several very difficult years. Lower fuel prices combined with modest capacity growth and strengthening economic fundamentals were largely responsible for surging traffic and an improvement in airline financials in FY2016. Domestic traffic was up 21.2 per cent while international grew by a more modest 7.7 per cent.

The study estimates that India’s airlines reported a combined profit of USD122 million in FY2016, the first time in a decade. This included record profits at IndiGo, Jet Airways, SpiceJet, GoAir and Air India Express. AirAsia India and Vistara, still in their initial years of operations, were however, loss-making, as was the national carrier, Air India, although, Air India reported its first



is expected to achieve 7.5 per cent GDP growth this year, with the IMF projecting that economic performance should improve still further over the next five years.

	Domestic	International
FY2016	21.2%	7.7%
FY2017E	22-23%	9-10%
FY2018F	20-25%	10-12%

Traffic Growth at Indian airports FY2016 to FY2018F
operating profit in a decade.

INDIA'S DOMESTIC MARKET TO SURPASS 100 MILLION PASSENGERS IN FY2017

After a strong FY2016, traffic growth has accelerated further in FY2017, with India likely to overtake Japan, this year, to become the world’s third largest domestic market behind the USA and China. In reaching this milestone, India will have achieved average domestic traffic growth of over 15 per cent per annum since the liberalisation of the sector commenced in FY2004. India

DOMESTIC TRAFFIC TO SOAR NORTHWARDS

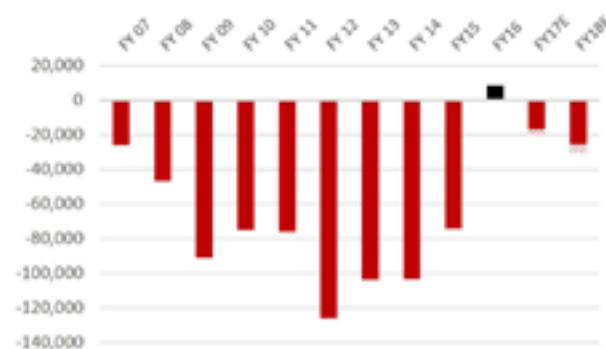
Domestic traffic could grow by close to 25 per cent in FY2018 and approach 130 million passengers. FY 2017 is expected to be the third consecutive year of domestic growth above 20 per cent. Growth could be as high as 25 per cent, but may be tempered 3-5 percentage points lower because of the impact of demonetisation. The introduction of GST may also reduce growth below projections, depending upon the tax rates applicable for air travel and inputs. Based on aircraft deliveries, competitive dynamics and the positive outlook for the economy, growth above 20 per cent could continue for up to a further two years.

FUTURE OF INDIAN CARRIERS

India's status as the fastest growing aviation market in the world creates tremendous opportunities. Indian carriers are scheduled to induct 60-65 narrow bodies and 10-12 regional aircraft in FY2018. The pace of aircraft inductions in FY2018 will be one of the key drivers of traffic growth. This is, however, subject to deliveries of A320neos proceeding as scheduled, and operators being able to deploy the equipment as planned, as some operational challenges have been experienced.

LCCS TO GROW BY 75-80 PER CENT IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS

With LCCs taking delivery of the clear majority of narrow body aircraft coming into the market (an estimated 50 out of 65 inductions), their share of the domestic market is expected to rise from around 65 per cent, today, to reach 75-80 per cent within the next two years.

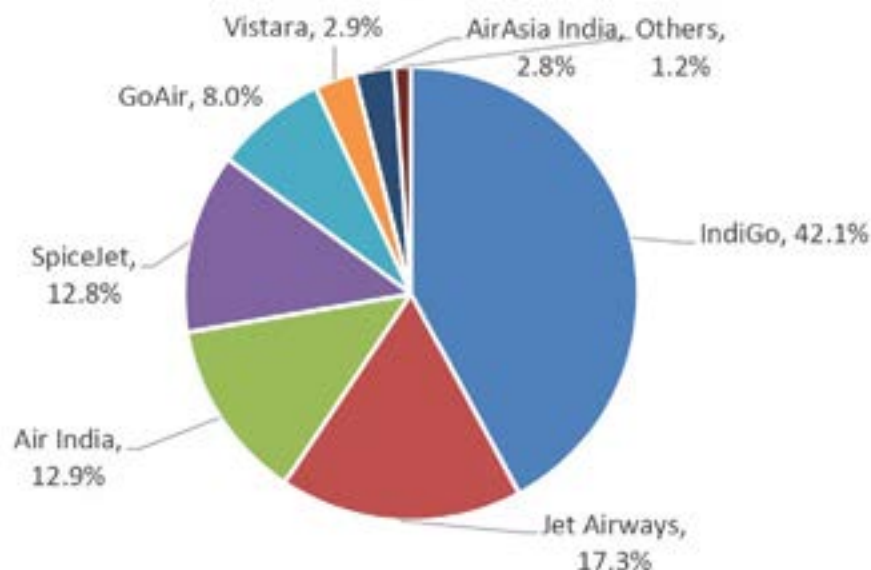


Actual and projected combined net profitability of India's airlines

LCCS TO EXPAND ON INTERNATIONAL ROUTES FROM SUMMER 2017

IndiGo and SpiceJet have pursued relatively modest expansion on international routes to date, preferring instead to focus on the domestic market. However, both carriers are expected to ramp up their international service from Summer 2017. This is also when GoAir plans to commence international services for the first time, connecting primarily unconnected destinations in Central Asia, the Gulf, China and Vietnam.

However, despite the overseas opportunities, the domestic market will remain the core focus for LCCs. At IndiGo, for example, international operations are expected to account for only 10-15 per cent of total capacity. IndiGo is increasingly controlling domestic capacity growth and moving the market; its domestic market share could approach 55-60 per cent within two years. This pace of growth will create a strategic compulsion for other Indian carriers to accelerate their expansion to remain relevant.



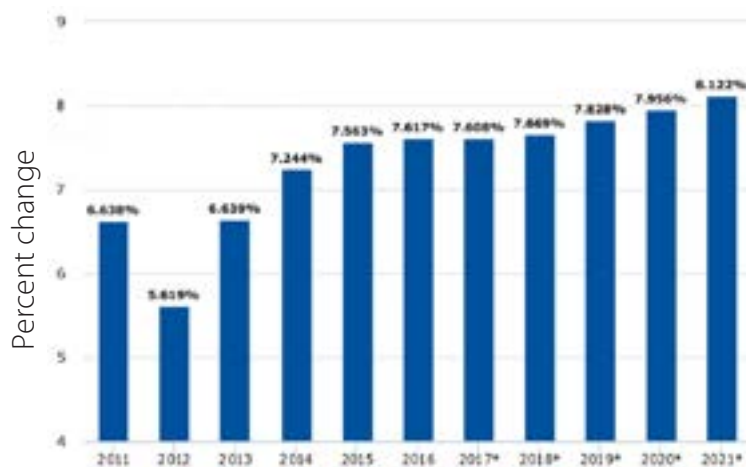
India Domestic Airline Market Share Nov-2016

AIR INDIA CONTINUES INTERNATIONAL GROWTH

Air India continues to expand its international footprint, primarily using 787 equipment, but viability challenges could start emerging on ultra-long haul routes starting from FY2018. Air India has been increasing its European and North American network, launching new non-stop services from Delhi to Vienna, San Francisco and Madrid over the last 12 months and a one-stop between Ahmedabad and Newark via London. New destinations under consideration for next year include Washington, Toronto, Nairobi, Tel Aviv, Copenhagen and Stockholm. But, the study believes that the viability of ultra-long haul routes could increasingly be challenged due to cost creep and a possible softening of yields.

DEMAND FOR AIRCRAFTS TO RISE

Indian carriers could place orders for 250-300 aircraft (including options) in the next 3-6 months. SpiceJet first, followed by Vistara, will be the primary drivers of new aircraft orders, both of whom are expected to stick with Boeing and Airbus respectively, for their narrow body fleet requirements. For its long haul operations, Vistara is likely to opt for the 777X.



India GDP Growth and Projections to 2021

Source: CAPA India Aviation Outlook FY 2018



Dr Guruprasad Mohapatra IAS, Chairman, AAI, lighting the lamp on the occasion of Winter Carnival "Rendezvous," in the august presence of Anjali Mohapatra, All India President, AAI Women Welfare Association – Kalyanmayee; Charu Raheja, Shalley Dutta, Vijaya Chaukiyal and Santhisree Murthy, at Airports Authority of India Officers' Institute, New Delhi.

KALYANMAYEE CELEBRATES WINTER CARNIVAL "RENDEZVOUS"

Airports Authority of India (AAI) Women Welfare Association – Kalyanmayee, celebrated Winter Carnival "Rendezvous." Dr Guruprasad Mohapatra IAS, Chairman, AAI, inaugurated the event in the august presence of Anjali Mohapatra, All India President, Kalyanmayee, Charu Raheja, Shalley Dutta, Vijaya Chaukiyal and Santhisree Murthy, at Airports Authority of India Officers' Institute, New Delhi.

Parents and students of Modern Montessori International enjoyed the carnival. The Modern Montessori International is a pre-school and education beyond school, a social initiative of AAI Women Welfare Association – Kalyanmayee. tt

AIR INDIA TO INCREASE FREQUENCY IN 2017

Having started twelve new flights domestically and four flights internationally in 2016, Air India has set in place ambitious expansion plans for 2017. With an aim to beef up regional connectivity in the country and start new international connections, Air India plans to add two new international destinations and increase frequencies on popular domestic routes like Nagpur, Ahmedabad, Chandigarh and Leh, etc, till July 2017.

Post the successful commencement of direct non-stop flights to San-Francisco, Madrid, Vienna and Ahemdabad – Newark via London, Air India will start direct flight operations on the Delhi-Washington-Delhi route in July 2017. This flight will be the fifth direct connection with the US and will be operated by Boeing 777 aircraft. Furthermore, in order to establish connectivity with the Scandinavian countries, the flag carrier will commence a direct non-stop flight to Copenhagen, capital of Denmark, in May 2017. This flight service will offer convenient onward connections to Scandinavian countries – Sweden, Norway and Kingdom of Denmark, Denmark.

In addition to this, in May 2017, Air India is looking to offer a real treat to Indian travellers by connecting Bangkok, one of the most favoured tourist destinations, by starting direct flight operations on the Chandigarh-Bangkok-Chandigarh and Kolkata-Bangkok-Kolkata sectors, besides starting a second frequency from Delhi.

On the domestic circuit, Air India will add new frequencies on various routes apart from starting new connections to bolster regional connectivity. A direct flight service to Port Blair will commence from Delhi in the month of May.

While responding to the constant public demand, Air India will also add second frequency on the Delhi-Nagpur-Delhi sector, fourth frequency on the Delhi-Ahmedabad-Delhi sector in March 2017 and second frequency on the Delhi-Leh-Delhi sector in the month of May. tt



TURKISH AIRLINES ENHANCES ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

Turkish Airlines continues to enhance its in-flight entertainment system. The system now features a completely redesigned and improved user interface that makes the offered entertainment content and information services even more enjoyable and easier to use. The redesign is based on an extensive study conducted by professional usability and user experience laboratories to maximise user-friendliness. With the latest technologies and developments incorporated into the design based on scientific studies, the end result is an impressive array of digital entertainment and information options for its passengers in an easily accessible form.

The newly designed in-flight services include a variety of new features, such as category filtering for movies or ratings of TV shows and movies from the



renowned database IMDb (Internet Movie Database). The system also offers a new search function that allows passengers to access content more easily and quickly by searching all across movies, TV shows, music and games. In

this context, Turkish Airlines' selection of "Accessible Movies" that are dubbed or subtitled with special descriptions for visually or hearing impaired passengers has also been extended now to a total number of 11 titles. tt

AIRSEWA: REDEFINING AIR TRAVEL

Union Minister of Civil Aviation, P. Ashok Gajapathi Raju, launched the AirSewa portal and mobile application in New Delhi, on November 25, 2016

TT BUREAU

AirSewa is an initiative of the Ministry of Civil Aviation to offer people hassle-free, convenient, delightful and digital travel experience. It is operated through an interactive web portal, as well as through a mobile application for both android and iOS platforms.

P. Ashok Gajapathi Raju, Union Minister of Civil Aviation, called upon all service providers to adopt the spirit of continuous improvement so that the collaborative platform of AirSewa can make air travel truly enjoyable for people. Jayant Sinha, Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation, expressed how flight delays, problem in refunds, long queues and lack of proper facilities at airports and complaints of lost baggage are the most common problems that air travellers are facing today. He stressed upon the need to respond to these problems in a systematic rather than an ad hoc manner.

FUNCTIONS GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL PORTAL

With the launch of AirSewa, passengers will be able to register their grievances through the mobile application or a web portal. The users will have the facility to upload voice or video along with an elaborate description of their issues. The users can track the status and response to these grievances through the mobile application, as well as the web application based on the reference number provided. Once the grievance is addressed, the user has an option to provide his feedback and rate the overall experience and satisfaction.

Nodal officers have been selected for all stakeholder agencies who will address the grievance in a time bound manner.

BACK OFFICE OPERATIONS FOR GRIEVANCE HANDLING

Each grievance shared will be directed to the responsible nodal agency for resolution based on the grievance category chosen by the complainant. Each grievance shall have a resolution time line defined



for initial response, as well as final resolution. Each communication made by the nodal officer will be sent through an alert through email and SMS.

LIVE FLIGHT STATUS / SCHEDULE INFORMATION

Air passengers will have an option to check the flight status and schedule between airports. Flights can be searched on the basis of flight number or for all flights to a particular airport. Users will have an option to check flight status, as well as flight schedule between any of the airports. The flight status and other information can be searched airport-wise also. Users will have an option to filter results based on the time slots of the flights, airlines and source/destination airports.

AIRPORT INFORMATION

Airport information will display basic weather information about an airport as well as connecting flight details from the airport. The information will also include basic details and contact information regarding airport services consisting of transport/ parking, rest and relax, Wi-Fi and wheelchair services, etc.

FAQs

FAQs are categorised and each category provides an array of questions and answers.





EMIRATES CELEBRATES 68TH INDIAN REPUBLIC DAY

More than a hundred Indian and Emirati employees at Emirates Group joined hands to commemorate India's 68th Republic Day. The employees, who represent different backgrounds and specialities, lined up in a '68' formation to mark the special occasion.

"We wanted to find a unique way to celebrate with the people of India on this significant day. The UAE is home to more than two million Indians who have become an integral part of this country's history and growth," said Ahmed Khoory, Emirates Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations (West Asia and Indian Ocean).

JUST IN



Emirates has enhanced comfort in the air with a host of exclusive, new products introduced to its First and Business Class cabins. Customers will travel in luxury with new additions, including First Class lounge wear, luxury blankets, skincare from VOYA and a new range of amenity kits from Bulgari. **tt**

ETIHAD AIRWAYS INTRODUCES THIRD DAILY TO BENGALURU

Etihad Airways is launching a third daily flight on the Abu Dhabi – Bengaluru route, effective March 26, 2017. The triple daily schedule will provide greater choice to local passengers travelling between the two cities, and improved connectivity to destinations across the GCC, North America and Europe via the airline's Abu Dhabi hub.

Peter Baumgartner, Etihad Airways Chief Executive Officer, said: "Our expanded services between Abu Dhabi and Bengaluru are in line with Etihad Airways' strategy to offer greater travel options when aircraft availability and market conditions permit. The extra flights to Bengaluru will cater to the strong demand between both cities, and bring closer our global network to and from Bengaluru over our Abu Dhabi hub."

Partner carrier Jet Airways will codeshare on Etihad Airways' enhanced Bengaluru services, and also offer connectivity from Bengaluru to destinations across India. **tt**

LUFTHANSA'S NEW DIGITAL TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

The A350-900 is the Lufthansa fleet's state-of-the-art newcomer. This aircraft is considered the most advanced and most environmentally-friendly long-haul aircraft in the world. The possibilities offered by the on-board entertainment system on the A350-900 are likewise leading edge. For the first time, passengers will have the option of making a selection from the on-board programme from home before setting off and adding their favourite items to a playlist.

To do this, all passengers need to do is load the "Lufthansa Companion App" onto their own tablet or mobile phone. The on-board programme is available up to six weeks in advance. Once on board, passengers then synchronise their personal favourite playlist with the screen in front of the seat, and there is also the option to use their own mobile device as a second screen. During the flight, passengers can then choose something to watch from their favourites list, and at the same time call up flight information, go on social media websites via FlyNet, do a little online shopping in the WorldShop, or find out a few things about the destination they are heading to. The app is available now and can be downloaded from Google Play Store – find it by entering "Lufthansa Companion App" in the search field. The app will also soon be available in the Apple iTunes Store.



Lufthansa's entertainment programme alone will be enough to stop passengers from getting bored. There is currently a choice of 100 movies, 200 TV programmes, an extensive audio programme with lots of CDs, playlists and audio books, games to play, and a children's section with lots of different films and music to choose from, plus information from the world of Lufthansa. Current news and sports reports from live TV channels can also be accessed via the seat screen or via the free FlyNet portal. **tt**

JENSON BUTTON TEST DRIVES NEW CAREER AS BA PILOT

Formula 1 star Jenson Button enjoyed racing through the skies after piloting a British Airways A380 flight simulator at London's Heathrow Airport. The former world champion – who recently announced his retirement from the track – spent 90 minutes perfecting take-off, cruise and landing of the world's largest commercial aircraft.



Button said: "It was so cool! I think I did pretty well for a first timer – though, if there had been passengers in the back we might have had a few complaints about my first landing. Let's just say it was a bit bumpy."

Captain Dave Thomas, Head of Technical and Training, was impressed by Jenson's handling of the aircraft. He added: "Jenson obviously has experience travelling at high speeds and he adapted well to taking control of the A380. Being a pilot is all about calmness under pressure, preparing properly and getting from A to B with safety being the foremost priority at all times, so I think coming from a Formula 1 background Jenson definitely has some of the attributes required of a pilot." **tt**

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EXPLORER

BUDDHIST CHRONICLES

The Buddhist Circuit in Odisha, comprising Dhauligiri, Ratnagiri and Lalitgiri, are a rich concentration of Buddhist heritage and culture

TT BUREAU

Buddhism, with its unique message of egalitarianism and constant emphasis of humanity, influenced numerous civilizations while giving birth to several newer ones. In Odisha, Buddhism is known to have existed since its inception, even though Lord Buddha never actually visited it during his lifetime. Buddhist chronicles refer to Buddha's Kesa Asthi (hair relic) brought to Odisha, then known as "Odra," by two rich traders – Tapassu and Bhallika. The Chinese monk, scholar and traveller, Hiuen Tsang, visited Odisha in the 7th century, and he

vividly described the flourishing state of Buddhism in Odra. The influence and impact of Buddhism in Odisha continued until the 15th century.

Indeed, the numerous stupas, images and viharas (monasteries) scattered across the land stand as a testimony to this glorious heritage. Buddhist tourism in Odisha has always been popular; however, with recent findings from several excavations, the entire sector has received a tremendous boost. The Buddhist Circuit, comprising Dhauligiri, Ratnagiri and Lalitgiri, showcases some of the most notable Buddhist sites, and boasts a rich concentration of Buddhism heritage.

The vagaries of time have not snatched their glories in any way, nor has the mysterious enchantment surrounding them faded away.

DHAULIGIRI

The rock outcropping on Dhauli Hill on the banks of the River Daya, is the site of a set of rock edicts left by the Indian Emperor Ashoka, around 260 BC. The Odishan edicts that are found here, including two special edicts, are essentially public injunctions to the empire's administrators in the area, enjoining them to rule with justice and gentleness. The elephant which

emerges from the rock above the inscriptions was probably meant to draw attention to the edict, besides serving as a symbol.

The serenity enveloping this place, combined with the legacy of Buddhism, motivated the Kalinga Nippon Buddha Sangha, under the guidance of Guruji Fujii, Founder President of Nipponzan Myohoji of Japan, to erect a Peace Pagoda, also called Shanti Stupa, besides the construction of a monastery called Saddharma Vihar, in the early part of the 19th century.

HOW TO REACH

Air: Bhubaneswar is the nearest airport, well connected to the major cities of India.

Rail: Bhubaneswar is a major station near Dhauli and well connected on the railway network of India.

Road: Dhauli can be reached by either by bus or rented taxi.



RATNAGIRI

Ratnagiri, located in the Birupa river valley, in Jaipur district, is another famous Buddhist centre. A small hill situated near the village bearing the same name consists of rich Buddhist antiquities.



A large excavation led to the discovery of two large monasteries, a big stupa, Buddhist shrines, various sculptures and a large number of votive stupas. The

HOW TO REACH

Air: Bhubaneswar is the nearest airport, connected to most major cities in India.

Rail: Cuttack is the best railway station within easy reach, at a distance of 70 km from Ratnagiri and well connected with major stations across India.

Road: There are good roads from Cuttack, and direct buses run between the two places.

excavation also revealed the establishment of a Buddhist centre dating back to the time of the Gupta king, Baladitya (first half of the 6th century AD).

The Mahayana form of Buddhism is said to have flourished here since ancient times, and in the 8th-9th century AD, it became a great centre of Tantric Buddhism or Vajrayana art and philosophy. Today, this university of Buddhist learning, lies in ruins, though it still reflects its former glory, and attracts a huge number of visitors the year around. Lovers of art and architecture will find much to marvel at here as Ratnagiri offers in its magnificent ruins – a large brick monastery with beautiful doorways, cella, sanctum with a colossal Buddha figure, and a large number of Buddhist sculptures.

LALITGIRI

Lalitgiri is the earliest Buddhist complex dating back to the 1st century AD. Recent excavations carried out here have unearthed several archaeological material that makes Lalitgiri a great centre of Buddhist attraction. The rural landscape is surrounded by the ruins of a huge brick monastery, the remains of the Chaitya hall, a number of votive stupas and a renovated stone stupa – the apex of a small rugged sandstone hill.

The museum displays a large number of Mahayana sculptures consisting of enormous Buddha figures, huge Bodhisattva statues, amongst others. The Standing Buddha figures, with knee-length draperies and over the shoulders remind one of the influence of the Mathura and Gandhara school of art. What enhances the sacredness of the stupa as well as the entire region of Lalitgiri is the discovery of caskets containing sacred relics that some attribute to Tathagata, from the stone stupa at the top of the hill. Famous Chinese pilgrim Huien Tsang, who visited Odisha in 639 CE, found more than hundred Buddhist monasteries which he elaborately mentioned in his travelogue Sie-yu-kie.

HOW TO REACH

Air: Bhubaneswar is the nearest airport. Well connected to Lalitgiri by bus.

Rail: Bhubaneswar is the nearest railhead, well connected to major cities through broad gauge network.

Road: Lalitgiri is well connected with Bhubaneswar, and other cities through a good road-network.



SCENIC AFFAIR WITH BANKURA

Bankura beckons with some incredibly picturesque destinations and a glorious heritage

TT BUREAU

Bankura, which forms a part of the eastern Chhota Nagpur plateau, looks like a place that has been touched by Nature herself, and this is pretty much evident in the ancient brown hills dotting the landscape and the abundance of gurgling rivers and streams. Moreover, the ancient temples and monuments that Bankura houses make it a repository of rich culture and tradition. It is for these reasons that Bankura has gained wide popularity as a tourist destination. A wide range of places to visit, from the cultural and architectural perspective, terracotta temples, dense virgin forests and some amazing scenery at Mukutmoipur, etc. attract visitors the year round. The panoramic landscape instils a sense of nostalgia, a yearning to drift back into a time long past.

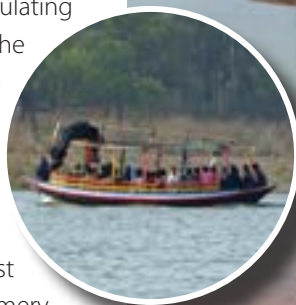
BISHNUPUR

The paradise for terracotta crafts and a flourishing temple town, Bishnupur remains a tourist favourite as well as a matter of pride for the locals. Besides being the origin of "Baluchari" masterpieces and the renowned music of Seni Gharana, Bishnupur was also the capital of the 7th century Mallabhum kingdom. The fame and glory of the kingdom rose to its peak under the rule of Bir Hambir, the 49th ruler of Mallabhum. Its rich, glorious past is reflected in its art and architecture, and music and handicrafts, such as pottery and weaving. Besides showcasing a unique form of architecture, Bishnupur prides itself on its brilliant and detailed terracotta work, which has not lost its charm over the course of time. A visit to the various temples in Bishnupur lets us into the exquisite craftsmanship of its artisans.



MUKUTMANIPUR

The Mukutmanipur–Jhilimili circuit has over the years, become a favourite with tourists visiting Bankura. The second biggest earthen dam in India, Mukutmanipur is just a two-hoursaway drive from Bankura and is located at the confluence of the Rivers Kangsabati and Kumari. This enormous tract of water is surrounded by lush green forests and hillocks. The undulating terrain along the southern edge of the Kangsabati Water Reservoir extends as a three-dimensional green, terracotta necklace. The azure waters of the reservoir, stall and placid, could fool you into believing that the sky is immersed within. By night, the vast blue plate transforms into a shimmering silver sheet.



SUSUNIA HILL

Susunia Hill, located just 20km from Bankura, is a popular trekking destination. However, this place is also frequented by visitors who especially come to see the Susunia Dhara, a natural spring, as well as the Chandavaran inscriptions. Excavations carried out in this area reveal these inscriptions dating back to the 4th century AD. Trees such as shal, segun, palash, amlaki etc, contribute to the floral treasure here. Autumn sees the entire hill appear as if it is on fire because of the red Palash blooms which cover it entirely.



NARA NARAYAN TEMPLE, JOYRAMBATI

Practical Vedanta was taught to the masses in a simplified manner by the patriot monk of India, Swami Vivekananda, who said that "Service to man is service to God." In pursuance of this concept, Swami Nityananda, Founder Secretary of the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Mission, Barrackpore, constructed a temple called Nara Narayan Temple, in the village of Joyrambati, in Bankura district. This temple witnesses a unique method of worship. Everyday, a male child, aged between four to five years, irrespective of his caste or religion, is worshipped as a diety in the temple. He is offered flowers, fruits, garments, etc. This kind of worship is said to be the practical fulfilment of the ideal of practical Vedanta, with the core message being that civilization will reach its zenith when we respect each other as we respect God.



MOVIES ■ THE NEW TRAVEL AGENTS?

Movies have gone beyond entertainment, transcending boundaries and revealing the encapsulating beauty a destination holds. Today's Traveller takes you to some choice reel to real destinations

RAHUL SINGHA

Today, movies do more than just tell a story. They introduce us to some never-seen-before destinations, making them come alive and urging us to put them in our itinerary as must-visit destinations. Films have, over the ages, entertained, intrigued and made us see what the world beyond holds for us.

Cult movies like, *Casablanca*, in 1942, opened up the mysteriously beautiful city of Morocco, which was immediately followed by a tourist inflow. The four-day maiden voyage on RMS Titanic gave us a glimpse of what a voyage on the Atlantic Ocean would feel like. While *Jungle Book* introduced us to the known, *Avatar*, in 2002 introduced us to the unknown.

Here, we capture some of the most picturesque destinations that have been showcased via movies which are nothing short of cinematic photography at its best.



Movie: **THE REVENANT**

Location: **ALBERTA, CANADA**

With three Academy Awards to its name and several nominations to boast, *The Revenant* is one of the most memorable movies of recent times. However, the breathtaking scenes in Calgary and Alberta in Canada didn't come easy due to extremely limited sunlight. Director Alejandro González Iñárritu had to spend nine months filming, which meant travelling endless hours each day to remote locations. Take a summer hike up the Calgary Mountains, when it's easily accessible and the weather's much more pleasant. The city also has much to offer to its tourists.

Film: **MAD MAX: FURY ROAD**

Location: **NAMIB, NAMIBIA**

Mad Max boasts some of the best and most intense action sequences, with the incredible landscape playing a vital part in the film. Directed by George Miller, the movie shows up the stark beauty of the world's oldest desert – the Namib. An earlier schedule for the film's shooting in Australia was shelved, Mad Max was finally shot in the south-western African country of Namibia, which is home to two deserts – the Kalahari and the Namib.



Film: **THE MARTIAN**

Location: **WADI RUM, JORDAN**

A regular with film shoots, Jordan has been a desirable location for several movie directors over the ages. Although major parts of the movie takes place almost 50 million miles from Earth, the sparse-looking rock pillars and sand dunes of this film can be found in Wadi Rum, also known as "The Valley of the Moon," in Southern Jordan. The Wadi Rum, which is the largest in Jordan, played the Red Planet on multiple other occasions, including Red Planet, Mission to Mars, and The Last Days on Mars. The UNESCO-protected area also played itself in the 1962 classic, Lawrence of Arabia.

Film: **FITOOR**

Location: **SRINAGAR, KASHMIR**

Directed by Abhishek Kapoor, Fitoor is a modern-day adaption of Charles Dickens' Great Expectations, where a poor but talented boy falls in love with a girl from an affluent family. The movie has been majorly filmed in Srinagar and in the famous Nishat Bagh, on the banks of the Dal Lake. The movie has been able to skillfully capture the perennial beauty that Srinagar has always been, as also the pristine charm of the winter snow.



Film: **MIRZIYA**

Location: **NUBRA VALLEY, LADAKH**

The Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra-directorial, Mirziya, is a film based on the folklore of Mirza Sahiban and moves between two time zones. While the movie has been filmed across various destinations, the barren desert of Nubra Valley features as a major player in the movie. Beautifully portrayed, the deep-cut Shayok and Nubra River Valleys offer tremendous scenery on a grand scale, with green oasis villages surrounded by thrillingly stark, level slopes, boulder fields and harsh, arid mountains.

Film: **PARCHED**

Location: **JAISALMER, RAJASTHAN**

Critically acclaimed, this Leena Yadav directorial is a story set in the arid landscape of Rajasthan, where four women navigate their way through personal and cultural difficulties. The movie strikes all the right chords and shows us why it is one of the most visited destinations for foreigners and domestic travellers alike.



Film: **MUSTANG**

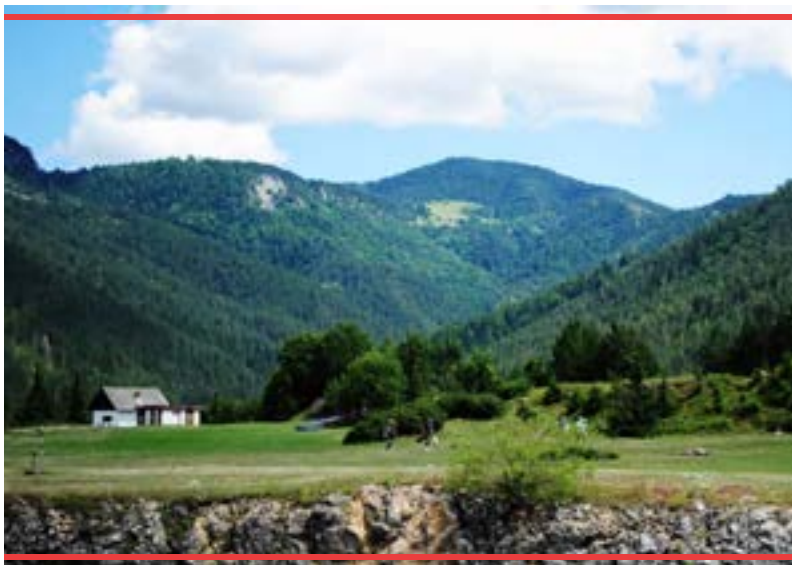
Location: **KASTAMONU, TURKEY**

Nominated for the Academy Awards, this acclaimed French drama, Mustang, tells the story of a group of orphaned sisters living in rural Turkey. While the movie sheds serious light on gender oppression, it successfully highlights the beauty of Turkey. Filmed in Kastamonu, this town is home to the Kastamonu Fortress, Ilica Waterfall and the Kure Mountains National Park.

Film: **EISENSTEIN IN GUANAJUATO**

Location: **GUANAJUATO, MEXICO**

Naturally, a story about a Russian filmmaker, who is rejected by Hollywood and travels to Mexico, is going to have a myriad of cultural references. However, the narrow streets of Guanajuato, Mexico, make it hard to focus on much else. Guanajuato's dichotomy of bright, colourful buildings and sparse countryside is highlighted in this drama.



Film: **THE FOREST**

Location: **TARA NATIONAL PARK, SERBIA**

Although the movie was supposed to have been filmed in Japan, where it is set, Director Jason Zada decided to recreate the eerie scenes in Serbia's Tara National Park. This paradise is home to the Balkans' Drina River and villages like Zaovine, where some of Serbia's best milk, cheese, and meat products are made.





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SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

‘Always it’s Spring and everyone’s in love and flowers pick themselves’ – EE Cummings



VISHWAJIT SHARMA

After a long, dreary winter, the sun is always very welcome. Nature herself awakens after a slumber, and how! Earth substitutes her white garment for a colourful one. Everywhere one looks, one is greeted with a motley assortment of colours. Flora and fauna of every conceivable kind partake in the celebrations; indeed, the charm of spring leaves nobody untouched. The spirit of festivity is also in full display during this time, and various festivals are celebrated to welcome the onset of spring. Sing with nature, dance with it and soak in the all-round festivity, after all, its springtime.

RHODODENDRONS BLOSSOM IN SIKKIM

Sikkim is beautiful throughout the year, but it’s during the months of March, April and May that it resembles an ethereal landscape. The colourful rhododendrons, in full blossom, can be seen across the towns and villages. Of course, to witness them in all their glory, visit the Rhododendron Sanctuary. To soak up the natural beauty and culture of the region, plan a homestay. Stay next to a forest in a cottage in Ravangla, go bird watching with the host during your stay in log cottages in Kewzing, or plan a homestay in a scenic village near the Varsey Rhododendron Sanctuary.





MANGO SEASON IN THEKKADY, KERALA

During the month of March, you can see mangoes in abundance in Thekkady, Kerala. Thekkady, famous for its vast lush fields and the Periyar National Park, is best visited during the spring season. Besides, this is also the time when many of the residents of the forests emerge from their caves and dwellings, and catching a glimpse of them is a real privilege. Lodgings here range from homestays in rustic huts, tree houses and properties near jungles. Besides, one has the option of indulging in a farm experience in a beautiful farmhouse, come closer to nature in a luxury tree house or enjoy a homestay in the buffer zone of Periyar National Park.



FIRST FLUSH OF TEA IN DARJEELING

In the months of February and March, tea is brewed from the first flush in Darjeeling. Several sprawling tea plantations are scattered all over the place, and spring manifests itself in a very unique manner here. Great throngs of tourists flock to Darjeeling the year round, all eager to capture its mesmerising beauty. However, if you happen to be a tea lover, you will find paradise in a fresh cup of tea brewed from the first flush. The exciting passenger ropeway offers a wonderful view of the tea plantations below. Plan your stay with the locals, at a farmhouse or the homestays in the tea garden of Makaibari, where one is exposed to the processing of tea.





UTTARAKHAND SPRING BIRD FESTIVAL

Being covered with the Himalayan mountain range on the northern side, Uttarakhand is the source of many of India's rivers. Its scenic beauty, coupled with the many pilgrim centres scattered across it, make it a fabulous tourist destination frequented by both devotees and nature lovers. During springtime, make your way to Uttarakhand to witness the rivers in full flood, roaring with all their might, leaving you strangely humbled. However, this is also the time when the state hosts the Uttarakhand Spring Bird Festival – a perfect chance for nature lovers, birdwatchers, students and members of conservation and tourism organisations to get acquainted with bird tourism.



WILDLIFE SPOTTING IN KANHA

The picturesque Kanha National Park was the inspiration behind Rudyard Kipling's all-time classic, Jungle Book. Even after all these years, the enchantment associated with this place still remains strong. The best time to visit the park in all its beauty is during spring. This is a good time to catch a glimpse of a variety of wildlife – from the blackbuck, swamp deer, sambhar and chital, beside others. Moreover, the open grassy meadows are a fascination in themselves. Kanha is synonymous with the barasingha, or swamp deer, that roam the large open tracts of grass amidst the forests of teak and bamboo.



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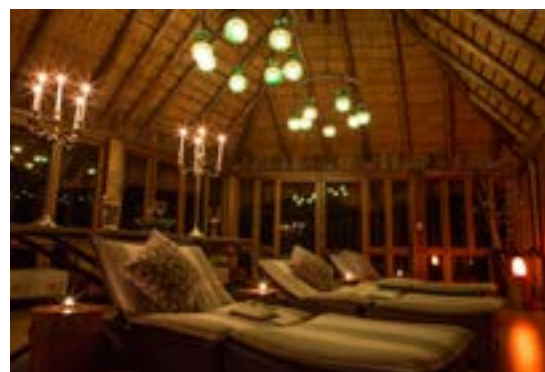
INDIRA LAUL

If you're reeling from a stormy year and looking for a holiday that offers complete escapism, then you've got it lucky. There are options a-plenty for today's travellers, who are more adventurous and worldly than of yore. 2017 could see more of what the industry terms 'experiential travel,' which translates to doing something while holidaying and not just indulging in a languid lay back on the beach. However, there are places that make virtue of the fact that there's nothing to do; there's wildlife travel, active travel and culinary travel, and much more. In fact, there are more extensive options available than ever before, but regrettably, not that many breaks that you can take in any given year. Today's Traveller helps you sketch out your own, unique luxury bespoke experience by narrowing down the field and rounding up the hottest travel trends in 2017.

WILDLIFE SAFARI AT KARLOOF SAFARI SPA, SOUTH AFRICA

A luxurious and spacious boutique lodge with 16 individually decorated Villas, an expansive world-class spa and 3,500 hectares of beautiful terrain abundant with wildlife, Karloof Safari Spa, is easily Africa's largest destination spa.

Escape from stress and submit yourself to nature's bespoke offerings at the spa amidst luxurious African surroundings. Get yourself a pedicure even as zebras make short shrift of the nearby grasses or break the shackles of time and tension as soothing hands massage in the warmth of the African sun. You'll soon



find out how every treatment here is an experience with professional therapists who have been carefully selected for their skills.

The spa nestles in extensive grounds and features 17 generous, airy treatment rooms, two of which are couples' rooms, all with wonderful views over native bush, a four-chair manicure/pedicure room, floatation tank, Kneipp pools, or cold water pools used to improve blood circulation, Jacuzzi, sauna and steam rooms.

Enjoy a diverse range of activities at Karkloof Safari Spa at your own time and pleasure. You could go game viewing, walking, hiking, mountain biking, birding or just enjoy the ambience. It's all about being in sync with nature, whether you want to settle into the deck overlooking the valley or lounge at the heated pool.

Walk on the wild side, as buffalo and black and white rhino roam these incredible wide spaces. Get your fill of various small carnivores, numerous antelope species, zebra, giraffe and wildebeest. With four waterfalls, various dams and three rivers located all within the precincts of Karkloof Safari Spa, not to mention the varied landscape and vegetation, mist belt forests and thickets, open plains and riverine valleys, this is one pure life experience in South Africa that you cannot miss out on.

COOKING CLASS AT RELAIS IL FALCONIERE & SPA, TUSCANY

For an out-of-the-box experience, take a cooking class at the Relais Il Falconiere in Tuscany, a spa hotel that also prides itself on its excellent Michelin-starred restaurant and cuisine. If you're looking for a relaxing break and a gastronomic insight into the Tuscan lifestyle, this is it. Silvia and Riccardo Baracchi's 17th century family residence, set amongst the vineyards and olive trees that surround the small Etruscan city of Cortona, is a true delight.

The cookery classes organised by Silvia are a unique gastronomic experience. In her cuisine, fresh products are drizzled with oil from the estate's olive trees, and the wine comes from vines grown in line with biodynamic principles. Other regional products, such as the Chianina beef, are chosen with care. Developing local synergies is natural here, as is the concept of a circular economy: food waste is strictly monitored.

In between the cooking classes get initiated into the art of falconry, which recently became a UNESCO world cultural heritage. The courses are organised on request for at least four people and teach the basics of falconry, tools and its history through the centuries. The services of the town's expert falconer would be available. And, if you wish to experience a true Tuscan lifestyle experience, you could go hunting partridge or wild boar with Riccardo, the Falconiere's owner.

Other wide ranging experiences and activities you could avail of are golfing, horse riding, fishing, water skiing, biking, sailing, mountain biking, jogging, archaeological excursions, hiking, Nordic walking, wine tastings, and helicopter tours.





BIKING TOUR IN PROVENCE, FRANCE

Get immersed in an active vacation as you burn calories hiking/ biking/walking/ or taking a multisport trip, because it's often just a better way to see the destination in more detail. The idea is to 'slow down to see the world', according to one well-known tour operator. Top-shelf luxury competitors like Backroads, Trek Travel, Gray & Co. and Italian newcomer Tourissimo, all arrange incredible bike trips, so if you want to burn those extra calories and be immersed in your destinations of choice, then go for it!

Take the Provence Luxury Biking and Culinary Tour and inhale the essence of this pristine countryside while pedalling along through sleepy hillside villages and along endless fields of lavender. Enjoy delicious local cuisine and the powerful, full-bodied red wines of the Chateauneuf-du-Pape region.

Discover the natural beauty of Provence, where every few miles the landscape changes into ever more breathtaking views and where locally grown wines and freshly grown foods grace every table.

Stay at the 5-star spa and winery luxury hotel, La Coquillade, owned by the BMC Pro cycling team owner. Located in the heart of the Luberon Valley, this beautiful resort offers incredible riding and spectacular views of the magical Provence countryside. Enjoy delicious gourmet meals and local wines.

La Coquillade offers a whole new concept of village luxury.

Indulge in a multifaceted experience that caters to spirit, gourmet dining, Spa, vineyards and cycling.

Perched on a hill, the hotel offers stunning views over the Luberon and Mont-Ventoux, in Gargas in the Vaucluse – a perfect spot for lovers of the great outdoors.

Cycling at La Coquillade is a blast for sports lovers and for anyone who loves exploring, because of the sheer number of services proffered by the resort. You can hire one of their famous BMC bikes at your convenience and set off to explore the splendid countryside. Some stunning routes include the charms of the Luberon and its wildlife. If you're more adventurous, hire a mountain bike and scale the legendary Mont Ventoux, and also try the passes in the Mountains of Vaucluse.

RIVER CRUISE ON THE RIVER NILE, EGYPT

River cruising has gained much popularity in recent years, and is a hot trend in 2017. River cursing promises many attractions – apart from the fact that there's no sea sickness to contend with, you will enjoy personal service and the ability to visit many desirable "ports" that are not on the ocean, from inland European cities to the natural wonders of the Amazon.

If you're looking for some mystery, history and grandeur, take a river cruise to Egypt, along the River Nile. Get steeped into the wonders of Egyptian culture, the gripping story of the history that shaped it, from Moses to the great emperor Julius Caesar and his lover Cleopatra, queen of Egypt. The Nile beckons visitors year after year with its mesmerising mysticism. Itineraries include stunning visits to Cairo, the capital of Egypt, with shore excursions to the Pyramids of Giza, Sphinx and the ancient city of Memphis. Here are some of the highlights that you will enjoy when you opt for an Egypt river cruise along the River Nile:





KARNAK TEMPLE, LUXOR

Be amazed as you enter the ancient world in Luxor's Karnak Temple. Enjoy the light show, and engage with an Egyptologist, who will explain many of the features of the temple complex. Check out the sound and light show in Lower Nubia, near the Temples of Abu Simbel. For some added fun, attend a traditional Galabeya party onboard the ship, filled with native music and high jinks.



EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHICS

Many Nile cruises offer the services of a skilled Egyptologist who can enlighten you on the language, society and history of Egypt – an enriching experience for all onboard. Take a trip to the famous Khan el-Khalili Bazaar and sample some authentic street food. Enjoy a stimulating cup of the best Arabian coffee in the world, and visit the Al-Azhar University.

GREAT SPHINX AND PYRAMIDS OF GIZA

Many itineraries start in Cairo, the capital of Egypt, where you can journey by camel to the Pyramids of Giza and the Great Sphinx. You can also learn more about ancient Egypt at the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities, which has a vast array of artefacts, including a gold mask of King Tut. Other attractions include the Citadel of Salah al-Din, the Mosque of Muhammad Ali and the Egyptian Museum.

Some itineraries also include Lake Nasser, a reservoir created by the Aswan High Dam, which is surrounded by some incredible sites, such as the Kalabsha Temple of Nubia and the Wadi El Seboua.

Egypt River Cruises offer many luxury yachts that offer the ultimate in luxury Nile cruises. An epitome of style and comfort, many are available for charter. You also have the advantage of tailoring your cruise to suit each day's sightseeing by offering an a la carte style touring itinerary.



24 HOURS IN ZURICH

Shop at Im Viadukt, relax by Lake Zurich, climb the Grossmunster tower and do much more – all in 24 hours in Zurich, Switzerland

TT BUREAU

IM VIADUKT: UNDERNEATH SHOPPING!

This shopping centre sets an example of practical innovation. Located in West Zurich, Im Viadukt transformed railway viaducts into thirty or more fashion boutiques, cafes, creative workspaces, bars, and a place to relax and unwind. Markthalle, an indoor market located at the front and centre of Im Viadukt, delivers the freshest local food and imported food in the vicinity. Spend some time visiting the many shops within the railway viaducts here.



KUNSTHAUS: A TREASURY OF ART

For connoisseurs of art as well as general admirers, Kunsthaus is a paradise. The Kunsthaus in Zurich is renowned for its permanent art collection and its temporary exhibitions. A visit to the gallery exposes one to the works of Alberto Giacometti, Picasso, Monet and Chagall, besides numerous contemporary Swiss artists. The collections of works by Georg Baselitz highlight the expressive innovation of the 1980s. Other attractions of the museum include paintings and rare sculptures by Cy Twombly.



CLIMB THE GROSSMUNSTER TOWER

The Grossmunster is considered to be one of Zurich's famous landmarks, and has quite a history behind it. In the first half of the 16th century, it served as the starting point of Reformation. Since then, its architecture has undergone various innovations and alterations. However, to get a panoramic view of the surroundings, climb the 187 stairs that lead from the nave upto the tower vantage point. From there, visitors get a bird's eye-view over Zurich rooftops, the lake and the Alpine summits on the horizon.



MAISON MANESSE: KNOW WHAT FINE DINING IS!

Maison Manesse is a restaurant that combines the pleasures of fine dining amidst a relaxed environment. The menu here undergoes a change almost weekly and never fails to surprise customers. The various tasting menus are named after songs by Joy Division (for non-vegetarians) and Brigitte Bardot (for vegetarians). The various dishes created by Chef Fabian Siquel attest to his culinary prowess.

FUN AND FROLIC AT LAKE ZURICH!

If you want a day of complete relaxation, interspersed with moments of fun, with some great food to keep you company, head to Lake Zurich. Take a boat trip to get the best experience of the lake, choose from public favourites like "Gipfeli-Schiff" (early mornings) to the "Sonnenuntergangs-Schiff" (sunset sailings). Check out the magnificent houses and villas of the bourgeoisie, then head to the famous golden coast on the northern side of the lake.



What: MTM+LLTM
When: April 7, 2017
Where: Hotel Sahara Star, Mumbai

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What: Frozen Dead Guy Days
When: March 10-12, 2017
Where: Colorado, USA

It's quirky and delightful, besides being quite a peculiar festival, but Frozen Dead Guy Days ensures limitless entertainment. Every March, thousands of revellers gather to celebrate the story of Grandpa Bredo Morstoel, a Norwegian who died in 1989. Some of the events include off-the-wall-contests – frozen salmon tosses, coffin races and polar plunges, all accompanied by generous helpings of cold beer in downtown Nederland. One of the most anticipated events is the Saturday night "Blue Ball" featuring live music, an Ice Queen pageant and a ghoulish Grandpa Bredo look-alike contest.



What: South by Southwest
When: March 10-19, 2017
Where: Texas, USA

South by Southwest was originally conceived of as a festival which would showcase independent music, and flourishing bands would woo prospective labels. However, in the last decade or so, the festival has also expanded to include film and technology. The film programme which is conducted has grown to become one of the nation's premier festivals and runs every day of the festival. This Austin, Texas festival, with its massive concerts, parties and conferences still draws thousands of attendees.

What: Dublin St Patrick's Festival
When: March 16-19, 2017
Where: Dublin, Ireland

St Patrick's Day was originally conceived as a religious feast in the ninth century, and took a thousand years to become an official holiday in the year 1901. However, it wasn't until 1995 that it became a government sponsored, four-day festival. Today, the event is as much about spectacle as it is about celebrations. The parade, which is held on March 17, is a particular favourite with the crowds, when the million strong revellers, clad in green, march defiantly through the streets, resembling an army. The streets witness traditional Irish dancing, while the city pubs, too, become scenes of amusement and merry making.



What: Mathura-Vrindavan Holi
When: March 13, 2017
Where: Vrindavan, India

The festival of Holi is celebrated during the last lunar cycle of winter, called Phalguna (usually in February or March). Throngs of celebrants fling all kinds of brightly coloured dye in the form of powder, liquid and water balloons at each other. On the eve of the festival (also known as Purnima Day), wooden sticks and old furniture are piled into town centres and set ablaze. From intimate celebrations at home to enormous street parties exploding with colour, Holi is celebrated with equal enthusiasm and gusto.

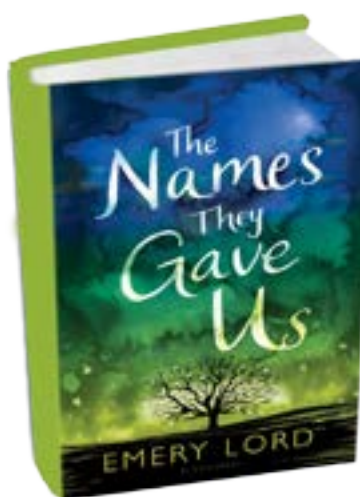
What: Ultra Music Festival
When: March 24-26, 2017
Where: Florida, USA

Ultra Music Festival is an electronic music festival that features hundreds of acts over two weekends, in downtown Miami, Florida. Ultra dominates the downtown Miami's Bayfront Park. Miami, Florida, has long been heralded as a warm weather playground for the rich, beautiful and energetic. Originally, the electronic music line-up boasted DJs and techno tastemakers from around the world, including the likes of Justice, Tiesto, Diplo, Deadmau5, Carl Cox, and others.



PICK OF THE MONTH

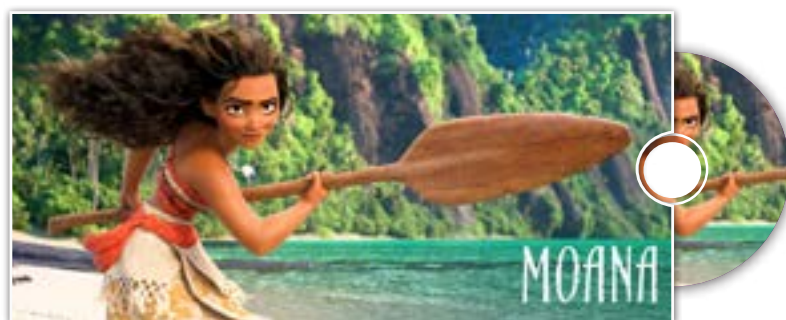
The latest collection of books, games, audio CDs and DVDs are here to keep you entertained for the month



BOOK: THE NAMES THEY GAVE US

A perfect summer was in store for Lucy Hansson and her boyfriend. However, the reappearance of her mom's cancer causes Lucy to falter in many aspects of life. Further, her boyfriend decides to stall their relationship for some time, while her summer job switches to a different camp. These abrupt changes pose a challenge for her. However, Lucy, coming to terms with the present, gradually accepts the changes as normal, and decides to move on. But, certain well-guarded family secrets finally begin to creep out from their closets. Can Lucy set aside her problems and discover what grace really means? Read to know.

Genre(s): Young adult, Romance

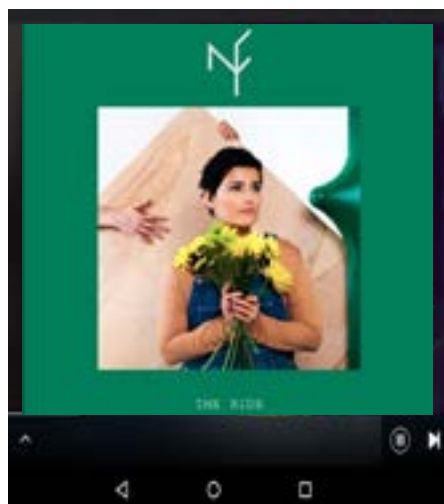


DVD: MOANA

Moana is a young, teenage girl from Ocenia. She possesses a keen sense for navigation, and a yearning for adventures. She sets out on a journey in search of a mystical island, hoping to save her people. However, she soon has company in the form of Maui, her hero, who also happens to be a demi-god. The two set out on an epic adventure filled with endless action, in the ultimate search of the unknown.

Genre(s): Adventure, Family

MUSIC: THE RIDE



After a gap of nearly five years, Nelly Furtado is finally ready to give her fans a brand new album. The versatile singer will return with her sixth studio collection, The Ride, on March 31, 2017. Her latest album will be released through her own imprint, "Nelstar Entertainment." It will feature Nelly's recent track, "Pipe Dreams," which was released earlier this year. "What

happens when you have a successful album and/or career, is you go, go, go, more is more, yes yes yes and no time for no," said Furtado.

Genre(s): Folk music, Dance pop



GAME: DYNASTY WARRIORS – GODSEEKERS

Dynasty Warriors – Godseekers is set in the Three Kingdoms period of Chinese History, the period when China comprised three states, Wei, Shu and Wu. Taking its cue from the Dynamite Tactics series, the game offers players a different way to experience the events of that saga. Godseekers throws newcomers Lixia and Lei into the mix. The story has as its background the final days of the Han Dynasty in 220, a time when China attempted to crush numerous uprisings and settle power struggles.

Genre(s): Adventure, Action



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