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December  
2015

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# Q&A

with  
**MALAY MUKHERJEE**  
Chairman, IIDL



**What is your take on the current scenario in the hospitality industry in the country?**

The Indian hospitality industry has emerged as one of the key drivers of growth amongst the services sector in India. The third-largest sub-segment of the services sector comprising of trade, repair services, hotels and restaurants have contributed towards the growth and development of the country. Besides being a potentially large employment generator, the hospitality sector plays a vital role in the Indian economy. Rising incomes, increasing affordability, growing aspirations and increasing globalisation along with improvement in travel-related infrastructure have added to the growth of this industry.

**What kind of role does IIDL play in supporting the growth and development of the hospitality sector in the country?**

IIDL was formed in the year 2007 to venture into the real estate and infrastructure sector as an institutional player. Continuing the legacy of professionalism and integrity, inherited from its parent organisation IFCI, client satisfaction comes first and foremost at IIDL. Striving hard in the pursuit of the highest international quality standards, the mantra that moves IIDL is "Redefining Realty!"

IIDL has successfully completed its flagship state-of-the-art project Fraser Suites – a serviced apartment project located in Mayur Vihar, Phase-I, Delhi. The serviced apartments are being managed by an internationally renowned chain called Frasers Hospitality Pte Ltd. The project has 92 serviced apartments and a total constructed area of around 1,80,000sq.ft Fraser Suites provides star facilities like gymnasium; swimming pool; kids room; golf simulator; library lounge and a fully equipped business centre with meeting facilities. A nine-storey gold-standard property Fraser Suites offers an ideal living environment that will impress even the most tech-savvy guest making it one of the most sought-after luxury apartments in Noida.

**What are the challenges that you see in financing the hospitality projects?**

The cost of the land (which has spiralled) is the biggest

impediment for building a viable hospitality project. The challenges faced by the sponsor community in the country can be categorised under the heads – Funding, Human Capital, Clearances (Project related) and Operator Management Contracts. The lender wants an assured cash flow that can be collateralised-a traditional product by all means. There is no room for innovative products like acquisition financing which will enable a lot of Merger and Acquisition in the hospitality space. To add to it is the credit crisis that has now infiltrated and affected literally every industry that requires real estate financing, from residential to hospitality. High cost of debt and project delays owing to clearances affect the viability of hotel industry development adversely in a scenario where it is already being hurt by a poorly performing economy.

**What are your future plans for the hospitality sector?**

The Indian hospitality industry is one of the fastest growing sector of the Indian economy. I personally believe that hospitality plays an integral role in building a better working world, by connecting global regions across economic, investment and experiential platforms. Today, the impact of hospitality sector on our global economy is significant across the world - both in terms of jobs and GDP figure. With the growth of travel and tourism sector forecasted to expand by 3.9 per cent during 2015, the sector will be increasingly recognised as a key driver of economic growth at all the levels - local, regional and global.







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# *We promise...* **A WEDDING TO REMEMBER**



**Santanu Guha Roy,**  
General Manager,  
Radisson Blu Resort and  
Spa Alibaug speaks to  
Today's Traveller about  
the hotel being an alluring  
wedding destination

## **TT BUREAU**

### **What makes Radisson Blu Alibaug a complete wedding destination?**

At Radisson Blu Resort & Spa Alibaug we take special care of our guests and handcraft an event to provide a superlative experience. Add this to Alibaug's rustic charm, and you have a destination which is ideal for your wedding day.

We have an extravagant 5,000-sq ft. closed air conditioned banqueting area. The team at Radisson Blu customises the resort to present you with an exact replica of your imagination. Be it an intimate affair or an extravagant event that you have in mind, Radisson makes sure that your "I do" moment is magical.

Spread over an abundance of 16 acres of landscaped gardens, interspersed water bodies toned with Sri Lankan Architecture, with a touch of ethnic Thai and Balinese Interiors, Radisson Blu Alibaug provides an ideal setting for

one's dream wedding. The resort offers a choice of 156 well appointed Rooms, Villas and Suites, an array of Food and Beverage options and other services. Alibaug is well connected to the cities of Mumbai and Pune which makes it convenient venue for the guests and provides them with a much sought after getaway from the fast paced cities.

Food is the most intrinsic part of any wedding and Radisson Blu Resort & Spa Alibaug offers a scrumptious spread, ranging from various delectable cuisines from around the world to our very own coastal cuisine at its authentic best. Aparanta, one of the restaurants at the resort offers a wide and varied a-la-carte menu which predominantly features Mediterranean cuisine apart from International, Oriental and Indian Cuisine flavours. Kokum and Spice, our Konkani speciality restaurant is an absolute coastal delight for food Connoisseurs. With food from the coastal regions of Raigad, Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri, Goa, Karwar and Mangalore that is appetizingly prepared at Kokum and Spice, guests can explore their appetites most extensively. With such varied dining options available, the bride and groom can be assured that each guest's palate is catered to.

The modern age bride and groom also expect a wedding which has a vibrant and fun edge to it, and our discotheque, Razz Ma Tazz, comes in here to transform

the cool sun-kissed beach city of Alibaug, into a bustling party destination.

Also, spread across an area of 20,000sq.f, we have the exotic Spa, which is surrounded by water bodies and lush green gardens creating a tranquil ambience. Hence, it is a perfect place for the wedding entourage to sit back and relax at the Spa, either before or after the wedding.

### **Are there any special packages for the newlyweds?**

We believe every couple is unique and so are their requirements in terms of a package. We are happy to custom build a package based on the needs of the guest rather than have a "one size fits all" offer. Nevertheless most of the packages requested have common elements – besides the stay, there is the on arrival experience in the room with special amenities like a fruit and cheese platter, a romantic candle lit dinner for the couple, an exotic massage at the spa, special in room dining offers and more.

### **Is there anything else that you want to add?**

The team at Radisson Blu Resort & Spa Alibaug demonstrates our service philosophy of "Yes I Can!" to make the Weddings a memorable one and we ensure that the much talked about 'Dream Wedding' is not a dream anymore, but a reality.



Egrets meditate  
over still waters  
and a sleepy boatman  
glides past swaying palms.  
Meanwhile in a little boat  
rubbing shoulders with ducklings,  
you run into yourself.

Slow down  
in God's Own Country.



## KERALA TOURISM RECEIVES PATA AWARD FOR THEKKADY

Kerala Tourism was conferred with the inaugural Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) CEO Challenge 2015 award for the top emerging destination in the world. G Kamala Vardhana Rao, Kerala Tourism Secretary, received the award at a gala ceremony held at the World Travel Mart (WTM), London on November 2.

The award is in recognition of the pioneering Responsible Tourism undertaken in Thekkady by Kerala Tourism. Thekkady won the Top Emerging Destination award in the category for two-tier/three-tier cities while Albay in the Philippines received the award for regions/states/provinces.

"The award has given us the opportunity to showcase the new tourism products and packages developed in Thekkady under the Responsible Tourism project to a global audience," said Rao, who received the prize from PATA CEO Mario Hardy and TripAdvisor Vice President Martin Verdon-Roe.

"The Responsible Tourism Initiative of Kerala Tourism in Thekkady, implemented through Kerala Institute of Tourism and Travel Studies (KITTS), has developed new tourism products and packages in partnership with the local community and tourism industry," he added.



## TOURISM AUSTRALIA RE-LAUNCHES THE AUSSIE SPECIALIST PROGRAM IN INDIA

Tourism Australia has successfully launched the revamped version of its Aussie Specialist Program (ASP) in India. The programme aims to equip Indian travels agents with distinguished skill sets and knowledge to effectively promote and sell Australia as a preferred holiday destination among Indian travel enthusiasts.

Nishant Kashikar, Tourism Australia Country Manager, said, "Over the years, our Indian travel partners have been a driving force for the increasing arrivals to Australia. We understand that travel agents need continued flow of information and knowledge about the country's diverse tourism offerings for them to effectively create incredible itineraries for Indian travellers. The Aussie Specialist Program thereby aims to make the travel agents an authority on Australia's tourism attractions, thus facilitating them to effectively address the discerning demands of the evolving Indian traveller segments. With a record increase in tourist arrivals from India, Tourism Australia aims to further build on robust trade relationships and advanced training programmes for the trade fraternity. Currently, Tourism Australia has close to 2,100 Aussie Specialists in India and we expect the figure to cross 3,000 by June 2016."



## CELEBRITY CHEF VIKAS KHANNA SHOOTS IN OMAN

Michelin starred Chef Vikas Khanna on his maiden trip to Oman was bowled over by the beauty of the country. The chef was visiting Oman for the television shoot of the food and travel show anchored by him called Twist of Taste –The Persian Trails where he shot four episodes in the destination.

Chef Vikas Khanna said, "Oman has always been on my mind for this show. But from whatever I had seen of Oman before arriving here, I can say that no pictures can do justice to Oman. The destination is beautiful from all angles and the people of the country are wonderful. I had an absolutely wonderful time shooting in Oman."

Lubaina Sheerazi, India Representative, Ministry of Tourism - Oman, spoke about the association with the show, "This is our maiden television association with any Indian channel. The reason we chose to associate with FOX Life channel is because the audience of the channel matches our target group. Oman as a destination is niche and for the experiential traveller and through this association we hope to reach out to this segment of travellers."



## HONG KONG: YOUR WINTER WONDERLAND

As the festive season draws near, Hong Kong Winter Fest emits a magical and romantic ambience, with Christmas trees amidst glittering skyscrapers, citywide decorations, festive foods and a spectacular New Year countdown. Hong Kong is the perfect getaway for people who are travelling this winter with lots of love, songs and lights to cheer you and your dear ones.

As 2015 draw to a close, lovers will soak in the enchanting atmosphere at the Statue Square Christmas Tree and hung 'Love Locks' on the railings to seal their romance and create lasting memories. The Winter Fest 2015 is going to be spectacular and extravagant with Hong Kong Winter Fest been acclaimed as one of the Top 10 places in the world to celebrate Christmas by American CNN network.







## SIX-MONTH MULTIPLE-ENTRY VISA FOR THAILAND

Thailand's Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) has confirmed that it will be launching a new six-month multiple-entry tourist visa (METV) in November 2015. The visa, costing INR 10,000 (5,000 baht) will grant travellers multiple entries during a 6-month period, for up to 60 days per entry. All foreign nationals are eligible to apply for METV.

Soraya Homchuen, Director, TAT Mumbai office said, "I expect that frequent travellers from India as well as Indian travel agents, will be very happy with the news of the METV. Of late, Thailand has gained popularity for weekend getaways, especially on long weekends, in addition to already being India's favourite for family vacations and annual holidays. I am certain that the convenience of already having a visa in-hand will encourage more impromptu trips to Thailand."

Under the current rules, tourist visas are valid for just 60 days, after which visitors must leave the country or apply to a local immigration office for an extension. The new visa will allow visitors to enter and leave the country as often as they want over the six-month period; provide they leave the country every 60 days. Indian travellers must be able to show a proof of funds in excess of INR 400,000, 12-months' validity on their passports and must display an intention to travel to Thailand at least twice during the six-month period in order to be eligible for the METV.

One can only apply for an METV at a Royal Thai Consulate. It is not available on-arrival. Travellers should keep a buffer of two days, after submitting a completed visa form with all documents for the processing of an METV. "I am optimistic that this will go a long way in meeting our year-end target of 1,050,000 travellers by the end of 2015," says Homchuen.

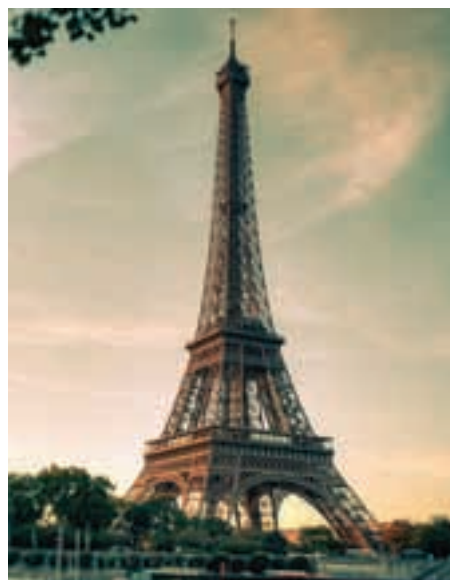
## FRANCE TO ISSUE BIOMETRIC VISAS FOR SCHENGEN TRAVEL

To facilitate travel throughout the Schengen Area and help issue long-term visas more easily, France, in line with all the countries of the Schengen Area, will issue biometric visas to Indian citizens with effect from November 2015. In this context, the French Embassy in India will offer a large number of 3 or 5 year circulation visas to frequent visitors of France.

Eight new VFS centres have been opened across India, bringing up their number to a total of 14 (Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Cochin, Delhi, Goa, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jalandhar, Kolkata, Mumbai, Puducherry, and Pune), to ensure the best possible proximity to the applicants.

All visa applicants will now be asked to come in person at any listed VFS centre of their choice to register their biometric data; children under the age of 12 years are exempted from this procedure. The recorded biometric data will be stored for a period of 59 months (almost 5 years), obviating the need for applicants to come in person again for renewing their visa. Furthermore, the biometric data recorded by France will be valid during this period for all Schengen Area countries (similarly, the data recorded by any Schengen Area country will be valid for France during a period of 59 months).

The transition to biometrics will not impact the visa issuance period, which, for India, is a maximum of 48 hours in keeping with the commitment of the French authorities (in cities where a consular office exists: Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Puducherry; 72 hours in other cases).



## INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS GROUP INTRODUCES CROWNE PLAZA IN JAIPUR

InterContinental Hotels Group unveiled its tenth Crowne Plaza hotel in India. The hotel is the newest addition to IHG's growing portfolio.

Shantha de Silva, Head of South West Asia, IHG commented, "Crowne Plaza is the fourth largest upscale, full-service, business hotel brand worldwide and with an increase in business travel in India, we see immense growth opportunity for the brand here."

It is with great pleasure that we announce the opening of our first Crowne Plaza Hotel in Jaipur, the capital city of Rajasthan. Jaipur is steadily emerging as an important business market in India and with opening of Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road, we look forward to providing superior services to our guests visiting the city for business or for leisure."



## SUNIL KUMAR ELECTED PRESIDENT OF UFTAA

Sunil Kumar, who has recently been elected as the President of TAAI, was unanimously elected as President of UFTAA (The United Federation of Travel Agents' Associations) at the Annual General Assembly of UFTAA held at Brussels.

Yossi Fatael of IATA, and a very powerful IATA speaker, was elected as the Vice President and SG Kaka of KATA, was elected as the VP Finance. The Board of UFTAA which comprises of nine elected officers will soon meet and assign portfolios and committees.





# APPOINTMENTS



**NITIN LUTHRA** has been appointed as Executive Director, Cybiz BrightStar Restaurants Private Limited. He comes with an experience of nearly 23 years in the hospitality industry. In his role as Executive Director, Luthra will be focussing his energies and experience to manage and maintain the group's signature QSR brand from California, "Carl's r," which is famous world over for its char grilled burgers. At Cybiz, his main responsibilities include the growth plan to set up over 100 restaurants over the next 5-7 years, to establish systems, processes and procedures, to provide operational strategy, financial analysis and management.

**VARUN SAHNI** has been delegated as the General Manager at The Orchid, Mumbai. Sahani carries an experience of over two decades and is an IHM Graduate; he has worked with some of the leading hospitality brands and has also been associated with various hotels from the project stage and has experience in pre-opening and establishing operations. In his last position he was the General Manager at Jaypee Greens Golf and Spa Resort, Noida.



**ROSHAN RAJPAL** has joined Novotel Hyderabad Airport as EAM. Her last assignment with AccorHotels was with Novotel Bangalore Techpark where she was heading Sales & Marketing for all five multi-brand Accor hotels in Bangalore. Rajpal comes with 24 years of experience in Sales & Marketing across Accor, Carlson and IHG in South India. Apart from her Sales Experience, she is also certified in Revenue Management; a graduate of Academie Accor's International Hospitality Management Program (2015), she has most recently undergone Hotel Operations Training at the Sofitel BKC in Mumbai".

**ANKUR MEHROTRA** has been appointed as the Director Sales & Marketing Park Plaza Noida. With an enriching experience of 12 years, Mehrotra, aspires to direct all sales and marketing efforts towards achieving the operational goal of the hotel. In his last assignment he worked with Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group for three and a half years.



**SHIVANKAR KODESIA** has been designated as the Food & Beverage Manager Park Plaza Noida. He comes with over 14 years of experience and his assignment was with Hilton Worldwide. Kodesia, has completed a 3-year diploma in Hotel Management from the Institute of Hotel Management, Lucknow and MBA in Hospitality and Tourism from IMI Switzerland. In his current position he would be responsible for directing all Food and Beverage efforts towards achieving the operational goal of the hotel.



*Let's Celebrate New Year 2016  
in Amazing Thailand*



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## AIR CANADA UNVEILS: AB TORONTO CHALO NON STOP

Amidst much fanfare, Air Canada launched flights from Toronto to Delhi; the airline will be offering the only non-stop flight from Canada to India on their Boeing 787 Dreamliner. Fly in utmost comfort with Air Canada's award-winning, three-cabin service, including the next generation lie-flat seat in International Business Class, a Premium Economy cabin and enhanced seatback In-Flight Entertainment system available at every seat throughout the aircraft.



## LOI KRATHONG CELEBRATED IN DELHI

Delhi witnessed the vibrancy of Thai culture with the celebration of Loi Krathong (18<sup>th</sup> November, 2015), organised by Tourism Authority of Thailand, New Delhi. The beautiful Thai festival of lights, Loi Krathong was celebrated with great splendour here in New Delhi on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2015. The event was organised by Tourism Authority of Thailand, New Delhi and celebrated at the Radisson Blu Hotel, New Delhi. The event was attended by over 200 guests including HNI and well known personalities from travel, tourism and media industries. Dancers and musicians from Chiang Mai inaugurated the event with power packed cultural performances. It was followed by Muay Thai – a traditional Thai Boxing performance. The show was concluded with a decorated long drum procession. As a part of the procession, Miss Loi Krathong visited the pool side in a palanquin and invited guests to release the Krathongs – container shaped like lotus blossom made of banana leaves containing a candle, incense sticks, flower and coins. Speaking about the event Soonthorn Chaiyindeepum, Minister from Royal Thai Embassy, New Delhi said – "It gives us great joy to celebrate the Loi Krathong festival in this city and give the people to discover all things Thai, such as Thai culture performances, Thai food with all its simplicity and panache. We would also like to thank our partner Radisson Blu Hotel for their support in making this a successful event." He also congratulated Tourism Authority of Thailand, New Delhi for such a great endeavour.



## CONTINENTAL INDIA OPENS FIRST RETAIL STORE IN INDIA

Tyre giant, Continental Truck Tyres inaugurates their first retail concept store in Faridabad. The leading German automotive supplier and tyre manufacturer celebrated its inaugural ceremony of the flagship store with the launch of Sat Kartar tyres at Faridabad Transport Nagar. Spread across an area of approximately 108sq.m, the one of its kind store is situated at the prominent location just off the Mathura highway and will cater to all truck and bus tyre needs of the customers. Aimed at creating a new customer experience for Continental Truck and bus tyre, the Faridabad store is just the beginning for many more to come in the future. Mallika Rawal, National Marketing Manager, Truck Tyres Division, said, "Being one of the premium tyre manufacturers world-wide, Continental is focussed on giving excellent product quality and services to our customer so that they can recognise us as the most value-creating, highly reliable and respected partner. Opening of this store is a small step in that direction."





## PUNJAB HERITAGE WEEK

Punjab recently celebrated its nationally renowned Heritage Week (November 19-24), in various areas of the state, like Amritsar, Patiala and Chandigarh. The activity filled event was initiated by the Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board in association with DRONAH Foundation, UNESCO - New Delhi, INTACH -Punjab Chapter, ASI Chandigarh Circle, Department of Architecture – Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar and Chitkara University - Punjab Campus.

On November 19, the first phase of the Heritage Week was successfully launched amidst activities like heritage walk and painting competition for school and college students. A panel discussion on 'The state of Tourism and Heritage in Amritsar' was hosted by the Department of Architecture, Guru Nanak Dev University to raise some important issues related to heritage and tourism in Amritsar. The Honourable Mayor of Amritsar, Bakshi Ram Arora attended the event as its chief guest.



## SCANDINAVIAN SEMINAR CONCLUDES

Another Scandinavian Seminar, which took place in Chennai, Mumbai and New Delhi, has successfully concluded. Scandinavian Seminar has been an annual event since 2009, and it aims to engage the travel trade and provides a platform to meet Scandinavian partners from Denmark, Norway and Sweden interested in doing business with India. The seminar also aims to enhance destination knowledge of Indian travel professionals and also introduce new regions and travel products. A delegation of over 20 Scandinavian partners including National Tourism Boards, Regional Tourism Boards, Hotel Chains, Attractions, Museums, Airport, Cruise & Voyage companies and Destination Marketing Companies were in the above mentioned Indian cities and reach out to the Indian travel trade.

According to Mohit Batra, responsible for tourism promotion of the Scandinavian region, "We have witnessed a very robust growth and are optimistic that this year's showcase will help us in our endeavour of further augmenting Indian arrivals to Scandinavia in the coming months. Our aim is not only to raise awareness of the Scandinavian region at large – but also to raise awareness of what each individual countries – Denmark, Norway and Sweden have to offer. Denmark this year has witnessed an approximate increase of 30 percent on overnights from India, and Sweden. 15 percent on an already higher overnight base. Norway is not yet taking account of the Indian overnights but the growth seems to have been exponential."



## PARK PLAZA NOIDA TURNS 7

Park Plaza Noida celebrated its 7th anniversary this November with hosts of events lined up all through the month. Intriguingly, to mark the hotel's seventh anniversary all promotions have been designed around the theme seven, number seven being a universally significant one with seven days of the week, seven sages, seven seas, seven continents, seven wonders and so on.

There is galore of exciting offers at all the outlets, Spa, Banquets and rooms. To begin with, when you pay for a buffet meal at NTC or TGKF, the seventh guest dines for free. On ordering A la carte the seventh dish is for free. Similarly the seventh drink is complimentary. A billing of Rs. 700/- fetches seven vouchers worth 20 per cent discount at the Cakewalk. On paying for six Spa therapies, the seventh therapy is free at The Spa Salon. The validity period at Cakewalk and Spa Salon is for 70 days.





## CATCH THE SEASON WITH CARLSON REZIDOR

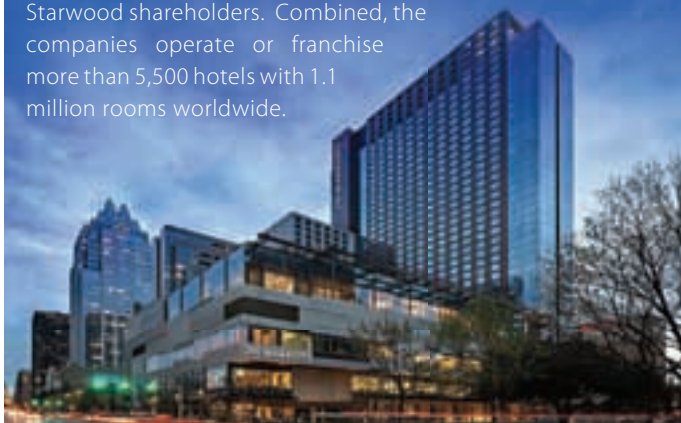
Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, is offering all travellers 25 per cent off best available rates with the 'Catch the Season' promotion, while also rewarding Club Carlson SM loyalty program members with Double Elite Qualifying Nights for stays between November 2, 2015, and the end of this year. The Catch the Season booking period is from November 2, 2015, to January 31, 2016 and the promotion is applicable for participating in Carlson Rezidor hotels across Asia Pacific. Stays have to be completed between November 2, 2015, and February 29, 2016.

"This is a great opportunity for business travellers to put themselves on the fast track to Club Carlson Elite status," said Sandy Russell, Vice President, Commercial Operations, Asia Pacific, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group. "With Catch the Season, we have made it more rewarding than ever to choose Carlson Rezidor hotels. It's our way of thanking our loyal guests for their continued support and making their hectic travel schedules work harder for them."



## MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL TO ACQUIRE STARWOOD HOTELS & RESORTS WORLDWIDE

Marriott International and Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide recently announced that the Boards of Directors of the two companies have unanimously approved a definitive merger agreement under which the companies will create one of the world's largest hotel companies. The transaction combines Starwood's leading lifestyle brands and international footprint with Marriott's strong presence in the luxury and select-service tiers, as well as the convention and resort segment, creating a more comprehensive portfolio. The merged company will offer broader choice for guests, greater opportunities for associates and should unlock additional value for Marriott and Starwood shareholders. Combined, the companies operate or franchise more than 5,500 hotels with 1.1 million rooms worldwide.



## PREFERRED HOTELS & RESORTS JOINS FORCES WITH LOVE146

Preferred Hotels & Resorts announced a partnership with Love146, an international human rights organisation whose mission is to end child trafficking and exploitation. Confronting the reality that, according to the International Labor Organization, there are more than 20 million enslaved victims, including millions of children, Preferred Hotels & Resorts has expanded its corporate social responsibility program, GIFTTS – Great Initiatives for Today's (Tomorrow's) Society – by committing to help Love146 abolish child trafficking through a combination of financial and educational resources.

"Our GIFTTS program is designed to promote socially responsible actions by member hotels and associates, and I could not think of a more important, powerful cause to join than the fight against child trafficking and exploitation. We are excited to partner with Love146 to help better educate the hospitality industry and travellers worldwide on this issue and to facilitate opportunities for our associates and hotel partners to collaborate on supporting prevention movements within their local communities," said Lindsey Ueberroth, President and CEO of Preferred Hotels & Resorts.



## MEININGER HOTELS TO DEBUT IN BARCELONA

Cox & Kings owned MEININGER Hotels signs an agreement for the MEININGER Hotel in Spain, which will be located on Gran Via in the south-west part of the city. The 186-room and 682-bed hotel is scheduled to open by the end of 2018. The proposed hotel is ideally located in an important area of Barcelona at a main avenue of the city and connected to the city centre as well as the airport by good access to public transportation.

Peter Kerkar, Director, Cox & Kings Ltd, says: "It's a great pleasure to sign the agreement for our MEININGER hotel in Spain. With this project we enter a strategically important market which is a significant step for our expansion in Europe."





# CORPORATE CONNECT







## COMFORTABLE STAY

In conversation with **Hoshang Garivala**,  
General Manager, Oakwood Residence  
Kapil Hyderabad

### TT BUREAU

**(Q) What is your serviced apartment's corporate positioning?**

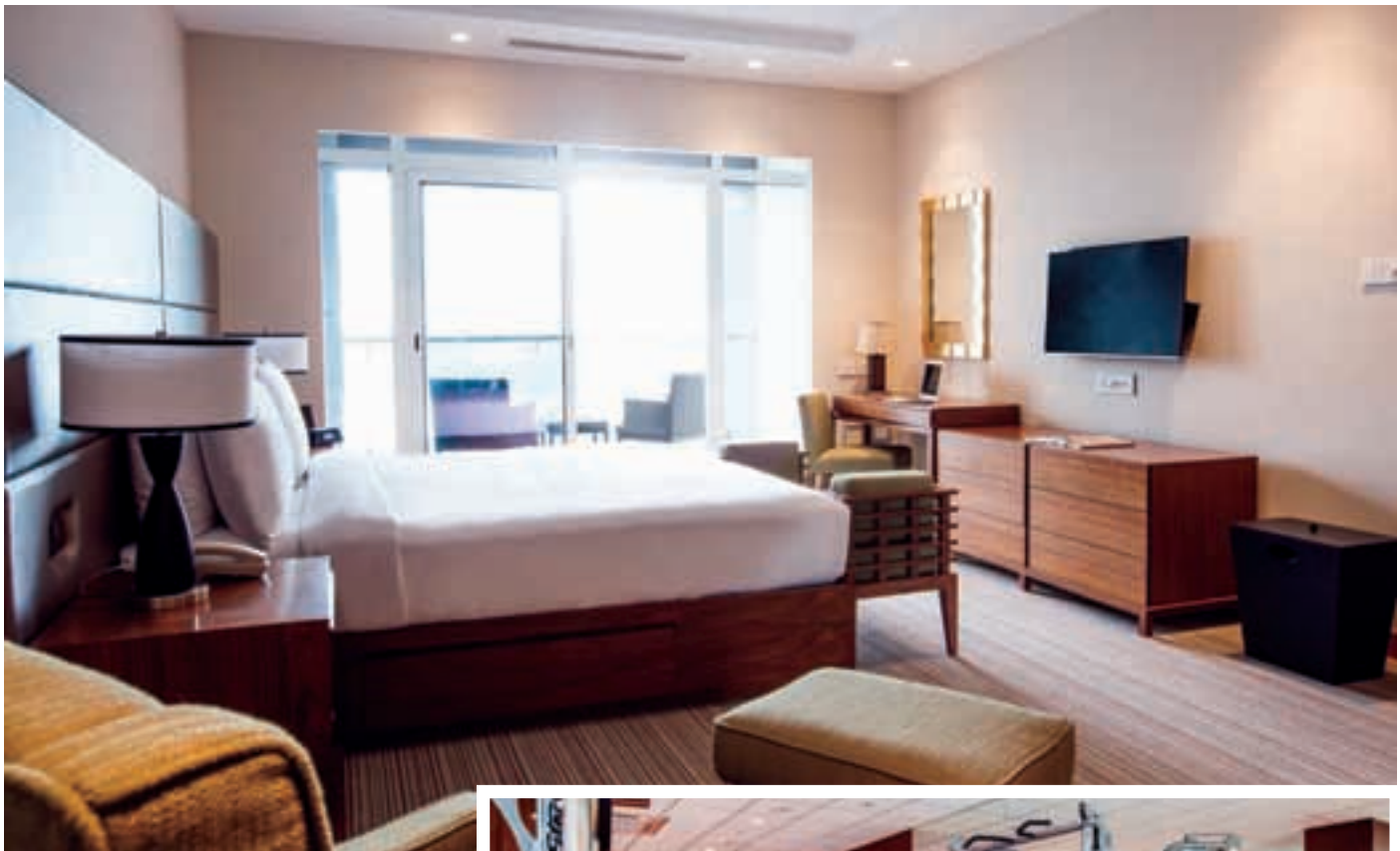
For families who are looking for larger accommodations, and business travellers seeking turnkey accommodation (for shorter duration stay) whilst relocating to a new city, Oakwood Residence Kapil Hyderabad (ORKH) has fully furnished serviced apartments in Hyderabad. The property provides 158 units, ranging from Studio, One Bedroom and Two Bedroom apartments. ORKH is dedicated to provide well-appointed rooms with modern amenities, at competitive prices in ideal locations.

**(Q) What additional benefits does a traveller get by selecting you over a regular 4-star or 5-star hotel?**

Hotels are great for short visits; however, most hotels at the same rate do not offer a sizeable living space and a full kitchen where it is easy to cook for an individual or family. With a home like set-up, our serviced apartments are designed to help you quickly settle in,







even if you are only in town for a week. By providing hotel services such as dry cleaning, housekeeping and laundry, we maintain your living space in tip-top condition.

In Oakwood Residence Kapil Hyderabad the facilities are designed to make both short-term and long-term stay possible. We cater for anything starting from one night up to years.

**(Q) What are the facilities that your property offers for social or business get-togethers/ meetings?**

The Oak, our pillar less banquet hall is spread across 3,354sq.ft and can be divided into four individual sections. With an exclusive pre-function area, it has the capacity to accommodate 250 guests in a range of set ups – anything from small meetings to large conferences, product launches to social functions. Elegantly designed with floor to ceiling glass windows, the banquet and meeting spaces brim with abundant natural light. They are also furnished with state-of-the-art audio-visual equipments, video conferencing solutions, high speed internet access, secretarial services and other modern amenities.



**(Q) What are the options for corporate visitors to entertain their guests?**

Oakwood Residence Kapil Hyderabad is located in the Gachibowli area of Hyderabad. It is designed in a manner so that guest can enjoy the city's natural beauty, which can be viewed from the patio area of the restaurant and private balconies of the apartments. The balconies are well-appointed with a seating for two, so you can enjoy the scenery in good company.

Oakwood's signature restaurant, Oakleaf, is an all-day dining restaurant and provides a naturally lit ambience, appropriate for casual dining, evening coffees and formal meetings. It presents an excellent selection of dishes made from fresh seasonal ingredients. The

menu includes international gourmet classics, Asian favourites, and a variety of healthy options. Another excellent area for a quick chat is the indoor swimming pool with pool-side seating, open during the day, where guests can order drinks or coffee with some light snacks.

**(Q) What is your corporate outreach programme?**

We have a dynamic sales team that does not only facilitate in getting new business but also takes the necessary steps to maintain our existing clients, while reaching out to new markets. They also double up as a relationship management team that manages our corporate relationships as well as our Oakwood network of National and International sales structure.



# Q&A

## LUXURY REDEFINED



**Davinder Juj**, Executive Assistant Manager, Eros Hotel Nehru Place in conversation with Today's Traveller **TT BUREAU**

### What is the USP of your property?

It is the location of the hotel that sets it apart, because, the finest of experiences need the finest locations. Located in the centre of South Delhi's business district, overlooking the ecstatic Bahai Temple, Eros Hotel, Nehru Place, stands as a true icon for both business and leisure traveller with international standards of hospitality. The USP we believe is the location combined with our service standards where we offer warmth of personalised India Hospitality Experience.

### What is the marketing strategy you have adopted to promote your property?

The hotel offers a multitude of finest Indian hospitality services to guests who are visiting us from all over the world. We place ourselves as a multi-functional and a contemporary ensemble. We believe in word-of-mouth remembrance and a genuine recall value for our service, hence we believe in service as our best marketing strategy.

We are a technically sound and updated property with a niche target clientele whom we can reach through all the available mediums. With digital and social media emerging as a very crucial broadcasting segment, we are well-versed with all the digital marketing tools available for the hotel industry worldwide.

### What distinguishes your property from others in the same bracket?

Strategically located in the heart of the business hub of South Delhi, Eros Hotel, Nehru Place is just 40 minutes drive from the Indira Gandhi International Airport. More than 25,000sq.ft of meeting space, some of the finest Food and Beverage Outlets

with an extravagant outdoor pool surrounded by lush green lawns make this hotel one of the most sought after property amongst our bracket. Still our skilled and warm staff is one of our biggest strength.

The old world charm of the property in the middle of such a busy sector offers a perfect break to relax and enjoy the stay at the hotel.

### Could you reflect on the new initiatives taken?

We aim to be a fully technology – enabled hotel and plan to introduce "Newer Cuisine" concepts to our restaurants to elaborate the Food and Beverage options. Also, we are working to enhance more "Green Initiatives" to be a responsible business. Moreover, we are working on a stronger marketing approach to strengthen on the online channels.

### What is your working mantra and your guiding philosophy?

I feel we are our own masters and if we don't give up, there is nothing that can stop us to achieve our goals.







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# CELEBRATING WINTER



This winter, soak in the festivities by celebrating Christmas and New Year at these luxury hotels

## TT BUREAU

It is that time of the year when people across the world are in festive mood, and hotels across the globe get ready to treat their guests with some of the best experiences that can possibly be offered. In India, luxury hotels bear an extraordinary face of celebration as they get ready to make the year-end a memorable experience for guests. We have brought to you some of the best options available for a year-end bash, celebrations that will leave no stone unturned.

## ITC MAURYA

Celebrate the season with a range of specially curated experiences from ITC Maurya's signature restaurants. Make merry on December 24 and 25, at The Pavilion and West View as you indulge in contemporary delicacies and free-flowing spirits. Nutmeg - The Gourmet Shop offers traditional delights like Pudding, Yule Logs, Mince Pies, Plum Cake and more.

Welcome this New Year in grand splendor with the hotel's The Pavilion, with a spread of cuisines from around the world or you can also indulge in a quintessential European experience at West View's magnificent rooftop. Also on offer are special menus from Tian and Dum Pukht, which include fine spirits and mesmerising live music.



## TAJ PALACE, NEW DELHI

Reminiscent of the Three Wise Men, The Taj Palace, New Delhi comes bearing gifts and surprises for its guests this festive season. Guests can enjoy a host of exclusive privileges from a champagne welcome to a special gift hamper and attractive dining discounts. The hotel's signature restaurants, Orient Express marks the festive season with an exotic five-course European table d'hôte menu; The Blue Bar will have an international cuisine of grills, wraps and rolls, while you can sip on cocktails from their unlimited premium select; at the Blue Ginger there is an aromatic blend of flavours drawn from







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Vietnam's past accompanied by an unlimited premium bar and a silken performance by traditional Vietnamese dancers; you could also try Masala Art, Tea Lounge and Kafe Fontana that have exclusive offers for both Christmas and New Year eve. Moreover, there is a special children's offer with magic show, cartoons, play and games and a children's menu. Taj Palace, New Delhi, also has their signature Sleepover packages which are a combination of restaurants and rooms.

### THE LEELA PALACE NEW DELHI

Year end celebrations at The Leela Palace New Delhi would be at full swing this festive season. As part of their yearly holiday tradition, the hotel's award-winning culinary team led by the French Executive Chef, Christophe Gillino has put together an irresistible month-long festive extravaganza. With sumptuous menus featuring classic old world delicacies and Christmas favourites, handcrafted cakes and desserts, themed afternoon high-tea, a unique selection of thoughtfully put together hampers filled with joys for your gifting pleasure, there is something for everyone. Taking the centre-stage in the lobby is the life-size gingerbread shop-house that is made of 2000 bricks of freshly baked gingerbread on the outside and over 400 gingerbread tiles on the inside. Giving guests an opportunity to take home the festive spirit, the gingerbread house offers a full range of Christmas delights like Mince Pies, Dundee Cakes, Plum Cakes, Xmas Cup Cakes, Chocolate Santas and more.

### RADISSON BLU RESORT & SPA ALIBAUG

Celebrations at the coastal town of Alibaug would be at full throttle, thanks to Radisson Blu Resort & Spa, Alibaug.

"Radisson Blu Resort & Spa Alibaug, is to make the Christmas and New Year's Eve celebration an unique experience for our guests. We aim to do something different and we have celebrations lined up on the Eve of Christmas with a live performance by a two piece band and Turkey dinner," says Sanket Sinkar, Food & Beverage Manager.

The hotel has lined up a New Year's Retro Theme that is aimed at paying tributes to the legends of the film industry. The idea is to engage guests and get them to "live and experience" the theme – rather than be just a part of the celebration. The lavish buffet spread will have cuisines from all over the world not forgetting the local taste. So, why not head to Alibaug for a memorable year-end?

### CROWNE PLAZA JAIPUR

The year-end celebrations in the Pink City will come alive this time at Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road. The hotel's services are well-designed this time of the year for a pleasant Christmas

and New Year for all. An array of home crafted Christmas delicacies would include, Plum Cake, Mince pies, Panatone, Christmas cookies, Yule log, Gugelhupf, Stollen created by Chef Deepak and his team of pâtissiers, at The Lounge from December 14 - 25, 2015. You could also go to Sirocco, all day dining restaurant for a delicious roasted Turkey by Chef Sandeep or head to House of Han, for a menu crafted by Chef Jinhong Luo. While the Christmas celebrations will include a Turkey dinner, Christmas tree, a special menu and activities related to children, the New Year will see a live performance, a DJ, Gala Dinner comprising of Global Cuisine, unlimited snacks and drinks for guests and a lavish Brunch on January 1, 2016.



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# CORPORATE JET-SETTERS

**PRASHANT DAS**  
HEAD-HR  
MOREPEN GROUP, NEW DELHI



## Q: Most memorable trip to any destination?

I really liked my Goa trip. It is by far one of the most fun places to be, and I definitely had loads of fun there. Given a chance I would definitely go back there.

## Q: You dream of going to?

The romantic Switzerland is right at helm of my list of places to visit. The alluring Alps with its snowy peaks cannot be missed in this lifetime. Add this to the delicious Swiss chocolates and the serene towns and you definitely have a winner. Nothing can beat this heaven on earth.

## Q: Favourite airline and why?

I prefer Jet Airways, simply because it is economical, comfortable and the staff is courteous.

## Q: Best hotel experience and why?

I have had great experiences at Hotel Clarks Inn. I have stayed at their hotels in Jim Corbett and Alwar and have found their services to be excellent in terms of hospitality and food. I would always prefer to stay at Clarks Inn properties for great experiences.

## Q: A place you plan to visit again?

Like I said, I would love to visit Goa, especially, during the monsoon season. Goa is the most beautiful during rains, and it is also less crowded. You can get accommodation for cheap during off season and get plenty of sea food variety. Above all, you can witness the romantic Goan rains.

## Q: A family vacation that stands out?

We had taken a trip to the famous Jim Corbett National Park, and it was indeed very special. The most fascinating thing about the place is that I have made four visits, and each time the jungle

looked different, I think this is the beauty of nature. The calm and serenity of this place is so engrossing.

## Q: Your best holiday with friends?

We made an adventurous trip to the famous Bhangarh Fort. The journey to the fort was as thrilling as being inside the "haunted" fort. And when you are with your friends, such places leave extraordinary memories for life, so I sure did have a great time.

## Q: Great food you enjoyed and where?

ITC's WelcomHeritage Hotel in Ranthambore was an awesome experience for the delicious food they served, especially, the "Laal Maas."

## Q: What to watch out for while travelling?

Out of my personal experience I would say a pair of slippers should not miss your packing, because it is an essential which we usually tend to forget.

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

Spend less on luxury hotels and more on experiencing the local food, culture, transportation, and sightseeing because these are the things which stay with you forever. A wholesome experience is very important.





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City	Date	Time	Venue
Kolkata	18 January, Monday	10:00 - 14:00	The Oberoi
Delhi	19 January, Tuesday	10:00 - 16:00	Le Meridien
Hyderabad	21 January, Thursday	10:00 - 14:00	The Park Hyatt
Mumbai	22 January, Friday	10:00 - 16:00	The Palladium





# CORPORATE JET-SETTERS

## SAURABH GANDHI

Deputy General Manager - HR  
BSES Yamuna Power Limited

### Q: Most memorable trip to any destination?

It has to be my first international trip, Malaysia. It was also the first trip with my wife which is traditionally called a honeymoon. I fondly remember the exotic locales of Malaysia, had a great time sight-seeing and enjoying the local cuisine. It started with lot of preparation and even more anxieties but it all got submerged in the excitement of our trip.

### Q: Which is your favourite airline?

I must say that I was very impressed with Malaysian Airlines. It is a very cosy experience, great in-flight services and we reached Kuala Lumpur on time. So all in all it was great.

### Q: The best hotel experience you have had?

At the Novotel I certainly had a great experience. The hotel staffs were most courteous and we got our room on the 19<sup>th</sup> floor with a great city view. We had ordered for some tea and snacks which were delivered promptly and throughout our stay it was very pleasant.



### Q: What was the most fun experience you had as a tourist?

We had gone to Genting Highlands in Malaysia and it was a fun destination with awesome outdoor and indoor theme park. We spent one-full day enjoying rides in high up mountain slopes. Then later we had kept the evening free to try our luck in the casino and we played some simple games and as luck might have it we made a profit of 110 ringgits. So yes, these two experiences were definitely fun. But later we flew to Lankawi Islands which is a mesmerising and refreshing place. Lankawi is nestled in an ancient rain forest with hornbill, flying squirrels and when you couple it with the crystal clear Ocean, the experience is simply, wow!



# AVIATION





## SCHEDULED FLIGHT OPERATION AT MYSORE AIRPORT RESUMES

The much awaited air connectivity to Mysore Airport has resumed with Alliance Air, a subsidiary of Air India, starting operation of 72 seater flights from Mysore to Bengaluru, six days a week except Wednesday.



## APPOINTMENT



Yatendra Kumar has been appointed as the Chief Vigilance Officer, Airports Authority of India (AAI). A 1996 Tripura Cadre IAS Officer, Kumar, has worked in different capacities in both State and Central Governments. Before joining AAI, he worked as the Secretary to the Government of Tripura and held positions in Departments like Planning, Administrative Reforms and Home (Police).

## EMIRATES' SUPER JUMBO MESSAGE AGAINST THE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

Two massive Emirates A380 jets take to the skies this week, wearing special livery in support of United for Wildlife, a global collaboration that unites the efforts of the world's leading wildlife charities in the fight against the illegal wildlife trade.

The beautiful livery, featuring some of the planet's wildlife threatened by poaching and the illegal wildlife trade, aims to raise awareness of the illegal wildlife trade and communicate the need for urgent action.

The Lord Hague of Richmond, Chair of the United for Wildlife Transport Taskforce said, "We welcome the efforts and commitment made by Emirates airline to combat the illegal wildlife trade. This is

more than just an environmental issue. The illegal wildlife trade is now recognised as a serious and organised transnational crime. It drives corruption, is linked to money laundering and can damage economic development in many of the world's poorest countries and communities."

Sir Tim Clark, President Emirates Airline said: "Many animals, in particular African elephants, rhinos, tigers, and pangolins, are under extreme pressure because of an unprecedented spike in the illegal wildlife trade. The world is in a global poaching crisis, and everyone has to do their part to stop this, before it is too late."



## QATAR AIRWAYS WRAPS UP A SUCCESSFUL WEEK AT DUBAI AIRSHOW 2015

Qatar Airways concluded a successful week at the Dubai Airshow, showcasing three of its latest-generation aircraft, the Airbus A350, A380 and the airline's 25th Boeing Dreamliner, the B787.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, toured the airline's A380 during the Royal Tour on the first day. The tour was led by His Excellency Jassim Seif Ahmed Al Sulaiti, Minister of Transport for the State of Qatar, and Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Akbar Al Baker. Among the official delegation was also Abdullah bin Nasser Turki Al-Subaey, Chairman of the Qatar Civil Aviation Authority.

During the Dubai Airshow Al Baker also hosted meetings with notable dignitaries including Violeta Bulc, European Commissioner for Transport; Ghazi Zaiter, Lebanon's Minister of Public Works and Transportation and The Honourable Nathan Deal, Governor of the US State of Georgia. In addition, the US Ambassador to the State of Qatar, Her Excellency Dana Shell Smith, joined Al Baker and Boeing Commercial Airplanes President and CEO Ray Conner for a special ceremony on the second day of the airshow to celebrate the airline's 25<sup>th</sup> Dreamliner delivery.

Al Baker commented: "Qatar Airways was central to the aircraft on static display at this year's Dubai Airshow, with three of our finest aircraft present. This demonstrates the significant growth of our fleet in recent years, enabling Qatar Airways to showcase to the aviation industry the world's very latest aircraft and interior product types, including the A350, for which Qatar Airways was the global launch customer."





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## TURKISH AIRLINES AND VISITBRITAIN PARTNER TO MAKE UK THE DESTINATION FOR 2016

VisitBritain and Turkish Airlines announced a new global marketing partnership to attract more international visitors to Britain, with a focus across the airline's five regional gateways which include Manchester, Birmingham and Edinburgh, as well as London's Heathrow and Gatwick.

This new partnership will see VisitBritain and Turkish Airlines develop an international marketing campaign over the coming 12-months and will initially focus on Saudi Arabian, Indian and other Gulf markets. The campaign will inspire more visitors to see what makes Britain a GREAT destination, and explore all the nations and regions of Britain through the airline's current gateways.

VisitBritain Chief Executive Sally Balcombe said, "We are very pleased to be the first national tourist body to develop a global partnership marketing campaign with Turkish Airlines. There are significant growth opportunities in the markets served by Turkish Airlines, including the emerging market of Saudi Arabia, using the airline's global connectivity and rapidly expanding network. This partnership will also allow us to target our marketing to inspire more international visitors

to come and explore all the nations and regions of Britain, so we can continue to create jobs and deliver our ambitious plans for growth."

Ahmet Olmustur said, Chief Marketing Officer, Turkish Airlines, said, "This is an incredibly exciting opportunity for Turkish Airlines and we are delighted to be teaming up with such an acknowledged and reputable

brand as VisitBritain. The travel market in the UK continues to go from strength-to-strength and therefore we strongly believe this partnership will further enhance visitor numbers in the UK in the coming year. Turkish Airlines is always investing in the UK and along with partnerships such as this, we hope to see big inroads being made in terms of visitor numbers."

In India, VisitBritain's partnership with Turkish Airlines will see the launch of a tactical digital campaign in early 2016. India is one of Britain's most important emerging visitor markets, with almost 400,000 visits from India in

2014, a four per cent increase from the previous year. Turkish Airlines is also supporting VisitBritain's 'Bollywood is GREAT campaign', focusing on promoting Britain's culture and countryside.



## FLYDUBAI'S 50<sup>TH</sup> NEXT-GENERATION BOEING 737-800 ON DISPLAY

Dubai-based flydubai marks its fourth participation in the Dubai Airshow by showcasing its 50th aircraft, the newest and last aircraft to be delivered from the carrier's historic order placed at the Farnborough International Airshow.

Ghaith Al Ghaith, flydubai's CEO: "We knew that carrying Dubai's name set huge expectations. We had to deliver an airline that met the standards of aviation and innovation that the UAE is known for internationally. Like the city it represents, flydubai, strives on imagination and innovation."

"It has been a remarkable journey for what started off as Dubai's first low-cost airline and has continued to challenge the conventions of air travel in the region and to exceed expectations. We remain committed to supporting Dubai's aviation hub and creating free flows of trade and tourism. The fulfillment of the

first aircraft order on schedule has been a key factor in supporting flydubai's growth. The new aircraft order will also enable us to continue, with ambition, to open up more destinations and add more frequencies."



## JET AIRWAYS TO UPGRADE SERVICES BETWEEN DELHI AND SINGAPORE

Jet Airways, will upgrade its daily flights between Delhi and Singapore to an Airbus A330 aircraft, effective 25 November 2015. This will enable guests on this high demand sector to experience enhanced cabin comfort on board the wide-body aircraft, while offering convenient connections for those travelling from India to Australia and the ASEAN region over Singapore on codeshare and interline partner airlines. The upgraded service will offer 50 per cent more seat capacity than the Boeing 737 currently operating on this route.

Gaurang Shetty, Senior VP Commercial, Jet Airways said: "We are happy to deploy Jet Airways' spacious and modern wide-body aircraft to provide additional capacity on the highly popular Delhi - Singapore - Delhi route."

"This sector has seen a steady growth in traffic, particularly among business travellers. In addition, connecting traffic over Singapore to Australia and the ASEAN region booked through codeshare and interline partners is also growing rapidly.

The combination of comfort and luxury of wide-body services and attractive frequent flyer benefits makes Jet Airways the perfect option for travellers to Singapore and beyond."





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# TERMINAL BUILDING AT TIRUPATI AIRPORT UNVEILED

Airports Authority of India (AAI) boosts connectivity in the land of Balaji with the inauguration of new terminal building at Tirupati Airport

## TT BUREAU

The new integrated Terminal Building at Tirupati Airport was recently inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi in the august presence of Governor of Andhra Pradesh, ESL Narasimhan; Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Nara Chandrababu Naidu; Union Minister of Civil Aviation, P Ashok Gajapati Raju; Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, M Venkaiah Naidu; Union Minister of State (I/C) for Culture & Tourism and Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation, Dr Mahesh Sharma; Minister of Environment & Forest, Science & Technology Cooperation, Government of Andhra Pradesh, B Gopala Krishna Reddy and Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) Dr Vara Prasadarao Velagapalli.

The terminal building has been designed taking direct inspiration from the ancient bird deity, Garuda. The bird that closely resembles an eagle is often depicted as the carrier of Lord Vishnu (Lord Tirupati Balaji) and is popular all across India. The Terminal Building with the shape of Garuda-in-flight instantly connects with passengers visiting this temple city for their religious pilgrimage.

Built over a sprawling area of 16,500sq.m and 5500sq.m basement area, this airport terminal building uses energy efficient and eco-friendly material like fly ash bricks, low heat gain glass, LED lighting and energy efficient chillers and has obtained 'four-star' rating of GRIFIA. The terminal building is capable of handling up to 700 passengers, is a steel and glass structure and equipped with the latest modern state-of-the-art passenger friendly facilities.



## SALIENT FEATURES

- 18 check-in counters
- 10 immigration Counters
- 05 Custom Counters
- 03 Baggage Claim Carousels
- 02 VIP Lounge
- 01 CIP Lounge
- 01 Baggage Conveyors
- Car parking for up to 250 cars
- VIP parking for up to 25 cars





# EXPLORER







# BANGKOK ILLUMINATED

The upcoming Bangkok Illumination 2015 (December 1, 2015 – January 3, 2016) is an opportunity for tourists to experience the spirit of Thailand

## TT BUREAU

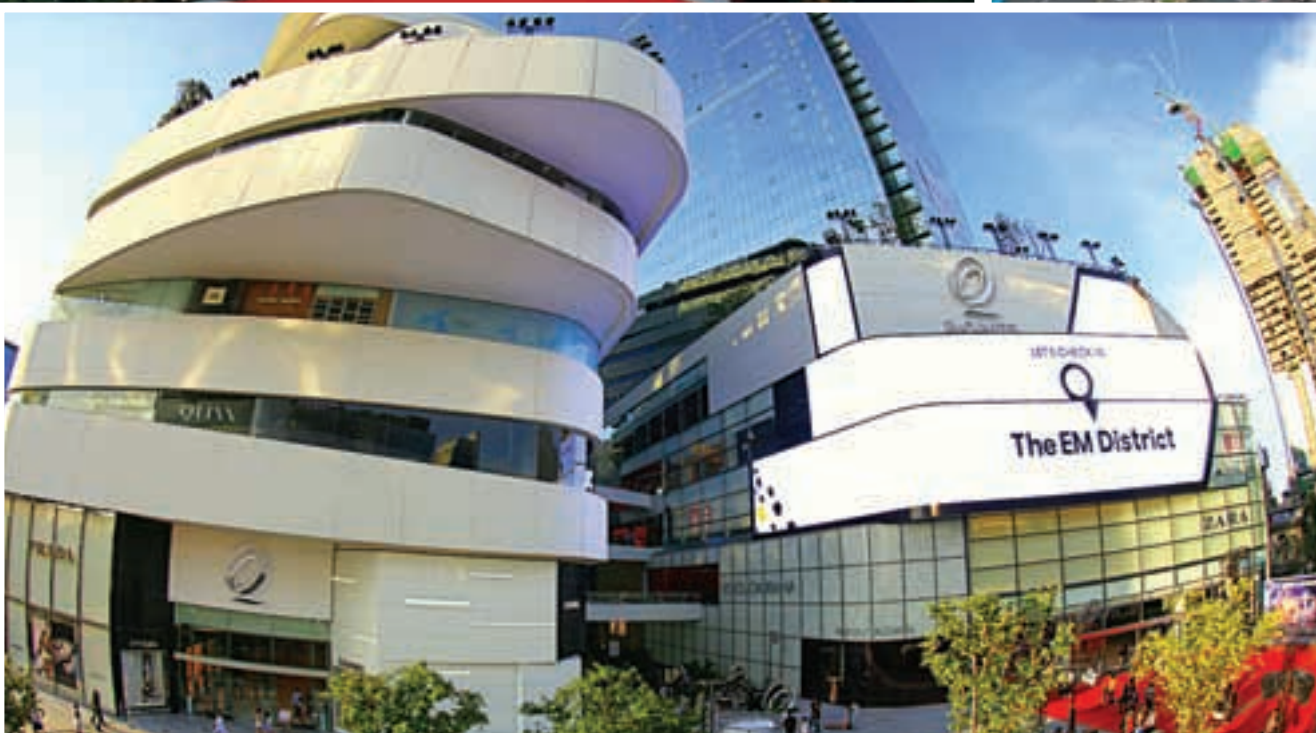
**T**he vibrant cosmopolitan of Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, is the cultural and commercial hub of the nation. The city presents myriad experiences for both young and old, and this festive season (Christmas and New Year), the city will be adorned with new hues of celebrations as guests would be greeted by an explosion of light, sound and visual arts at the Bangkok Illumination 2015.

The festival is the first international festival of light, sound and visual arts, in collaboration with government sectors, private sectors and certain national and international artists. The objectives of the festival are, to celebrate, His Majesty the King's 88<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary; to promote Thailand's tourism industry and traffic behind annual extraordinary lighting event; to generate hype and viral behind magnificent lighting and mapping show and to deliver excitement and happiness to the people of Thailand during the festive season. This year

the theme of the event is, The Extraordinary Enchantment, and would be held from December 1, 2015 to January, 3, 2016. The event will be held around the Em district area – The Em Station Link Bridge, The Emporium, The Emquartier -the most premium mall on Sukhumvit Road, and Benjasiri Park.

Key areas such as Sukhumvit Road, Benjasiri Park, EM Station, Emporium Parc, Quartier Parc, Quartier Waterfall, Quartier Water Garden, Quartier Avenue, Emporium and Emquartier Facades will be illuminated and highlighted. Keep Your Eyes On – a design crew based in Bangkok will initiate the illumination process. Specialised in motion graphics, visual graphics and mapping projection, the crew will undertake the lighting installation process. It will be a great treat to experience a special electronic music event organised by the group. Besides, there will be a vibrant Academic Showcase at Benjasiri Park which will feature magnificent creations of Frameless Collective – a creative





collaboration between Awattha, Thanaphanit, K.O.B.O.R.E.D, Go Ueda and Liammm, which focuses on Frameless context and site-specific lighting works. The group is known for their innovative approach and they draw their inspiration from mechanical and analogue processes.

The EM Station area of Bangkok will feature a lot of innovation and diversification in its illumination. The entire conceptualisation and execution will be undertaken by The Embassy of Design Territory – a creative group formed by four Thai designers. As the group's area of expertise includes architecture, interior design, installation and graphic design, every illuminated creation will be unique. Quartier Parc and Quartier Avenue deserve special mention as famous artist Matteo Messervy will come all the way from France to illuminate these areas. The master artist is known for various international projects which include large-scale installations, sculptures and creative illumination of high-end boutiques and hotels. He is a specialist when it comes to interactive

illumination designs and this year the Bangkok Illumination 2015 will showcase his distinctive aesthetic perspective.

Every illumination activity at the Quartier Waterfall area will be carried out by Duck Unit – a multidisciplinary art and design group. Duck unit will incorporate their core expertise in all the aspects of illumination which includes elements such as projection mapping and interactive lighting.

The massive Quartier Water Garden will be illuminated by a Bangkok based visual studio known as Kor.Bor.Vor. Founded in 2011 by a Bangkok based visual artist, K.O.B.O.R.E.D, the studio will take visual mapping to a new level. Specialised in motion and visual graphics, Kor.Bor.Vor will incorporate installation based performances which are not absolutely screen-based. The group will also collaborate with popular artists like Pomme Chan and Rukkit. Areas like Emporium and Emquartier Facades will showcase massive abstract projections which will make everyone spellbound. Have a good time and Happy New Year.



# WINTER UNLIMITED

Today's Traveller brings to you a comprehensive guide to international destinations for a charming winter break



## TT BUREAU

**T**he low hanging clouds overshadowing the mighty sun diminish human spirit during the winter months, while the cold wind chews on the bones. Winter is the time when we are on the search for the sun, looking for a bit of warmth amidst the cold and grey.

The good news is that our planet offers a range of exotic locales that offer cold and warm winter sun, we list you, international destinations, places where Europeans traditionally escape to during the winter months and others where travellers go to experience the cold.

## JORDAN

If you are planning to spend your winter vacation in the Middle East, then there can't be a better place than Jordan. The country boasts a temperate climate which makes it ideal for those who are seeking comfort and warmth during the bone biting winter. The winter in Jordan can be best enjoyed if you get into action. A hot air balloon ride will take you 6,000 feet above the ground from where you can enjoy the breathtaking views of the Wadi Rum valley and its ancient rock formations. Head towards the hot springs at Hammamat Zarqa and Ma'in Springs and enjoy a refreshing winter afternoon.







## NORWAY

A Norwegian winter is just what you might need during the winter months. In Norway visitors can experience the famous Norwegian Christmas traditions by visiting a Christmas market, but you will be able to take in a holiday concert, or even catch a glimpse of the northern lights. The period leading up to Christmas is a special time in Norway, as the shorter and darker days make for a very cosy time of year. The city oozes of Yuletide atmosphere with lights, decorations, trees, gift shopping, the smell of roasted almonds and the sound of Christmas carols in the street. The best place to soak up the atmosphere is at one of Copenhagen's Christmas markets.

Norway also has numerous thrills for travellers, they include, skiing in one of the 200 resorts, hotels and igloos made of ice or enjoying your own dog sled or ride a snowmobile across frozen rivers. Do not forget to visit the numerous Christmas markets at Copenhagen to get into the Yule tide spirit.

## NICE, FRANCE

A stunning winter experience that France has to offer, Nice was once essentially a winter resort to which Europeans would thrive, in order to escape the harsh winter months. It has been the centre of attraction as part of the Côte d'Azur or the French Riviera for a long time, so much so that, Nice had appealed to painters such as Henri Matisse and Marc Chagall. The suitable balmy Nice breeze is perfect for an evening walk and a cup of hot chocolate. Do not miss Place Massena, Place Garibaldi, Place Rossetti, the church of St. Martin and the stunning beach of Nice.

## CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

This alluring destination of South Africa is known for its winter charm. When cities across the world are suffering from a cold wave in the winter months, Cape Town remains calm with its mild Mediterranean-type climate, ranging from 18-20 degree Celsius. This is also the right season for tourists to indulge in outdoor activities such as hiking, trail running and mountain biking. The city also has some fantastic restaurants with fireplaces, setting a romantic and joyous mood. If being comfortable and cosy is what you seek this winter, then Cape Town is the place for you.







## AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

This is a place where you are certain to find the sun, and along with it a whole lot of exciting outdoor activities can go underway. December and January are the months when New Zealand experiences summer and is in full bloom, so it is one of the best places you could be during this time. Like any summer place, the best thing to do here in Auckland is to enjoy the beach. On the other hand you could also go for picnic or the famous Auckland bush walk! Kayaking is also another great way to welcome the beautiful season.

## MAURITIUS

Apart from pristine beaches, coral reefs and lagoons, the small volcanic island is also known for its warm tropical weather. The island can be best explored during the winter months when the weather is extremely pleasant. The bright sunny sky coupled with steady breeze will make you fall in love with the place instantly. You can indulge in various water based adventures like scuba diving and snorkelling while spending your winter at the island country. The winter in Mauritius is welcoming and its warmth will urge you to step out of your hotel room, and enjoy every bit of the beautiful island.

## BANGKOK, THAILAND

The winter in Bangkok is cool and pleasant making it really enjoyable. As, Bangkok boasts tropical monsoon climate, three different types of weather prevails. November to February is the best time to visit, if you want to enjoy every bit of the city's vibrant metropolitan life and culture. The night is cool, but the cool winter sun makes the day time appealing. If you are spending your winter in Bangkok, then you shouldn't miss Bangkok Illumination, the biggest and most vibrant winter festival of Bangkok. The festival is celebrated throughout Thailand, amidst art, food, sights, sound and colour.

## SWITZERLAND

The beautiful Swiss winter is famous amongst travellers from around the world. The reflecting sun on the white snow capped mountains creates an idyllic setting. To enjoy the Swiss winter intimately, you can stay at cosy ski huts. These huts will let you jump into action as numerous world class ski runs are organised in the vicinity of these huts. Various winter events are organised in the main city and in numerous boutique towns. Famous of all is Ice Karting, which features adrenaline filled activities coupled with the thrill of sliding on ice.







# WINTER WARMTH

Here are some of the best Indian destinations for those who are looking forward to an exciting winter

## TT BUREAU

India is a world in itself. The country has every season and a range of geographical splendours. On one hand, the infamous Indian summer takes a toll on people, while on the other hand, the Himalayan regions in the north and north-east and the Ghats in the south relieves people from the heat. In India, the winter months have a charm that is unprecedented and along its length and breadth, it presents with a new life in each place.

## GOA

The ultimate Indian destination for fun seekers, Goa is just what you need during the winter months. The winter season brings forth the best of Goa in the form of clear blue sky and sparkling water, add this to the Christmas celebrations and New Year's parties, and you are in for something really exciting. The Goan coastline is replete with beaches, from which you could take your pick. The temperature ranges from 15 to 25 degrees Celsius during the winter months. If you are looking for crowd and parties, head to north Goa, and for some peaceful experience go to south Goa. Either ways, Goa can be a pleasant experience during winters.

## SONAMARG, JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Sonamarg is an ideal place to enjoy the true spirit of Indian winter. Located at an altitude of 2,740m above sea level, Sonamarg is like a heaven on earth. The valley offers breathtaking views and the beauty of the place enhances even more during winter, laden with cool golden Sun rays. Sonamarg is surrounded by picturesque glaciers, meadows, serene lakes and snow capped peaks, which make for an ideal setting to forget all the hustle bustles of city life. To add an element of thrill to your winter





vacation, you can opt for trekking expeditions, organised from base camps at Sonamarg. You will get to know the terrain closely as the treks pass through beautiful mountain ranges and lakes such as Gangabal, Vishansar, Gadsar and Satsar.

### NAINITAL, UTTARAKHAND

Surrounded by seven hills and studded with vast lakes, Nainital is a paradise for winter lovers. Though the weather gets bitterly cold during winter, the bright morning sun makes the weather enjoyable. The major attraction of Nainital is the Naini Lake, which provides ample opportunities to spend an activity filled winter afternoon. You can embark on a day long boat ride and explore the scenic beauty. Take a walk through the narrow wooded lanes of Nainital's Oak and pine forests or just relax with a cup of hot coffee while enjoying the winter.

### BILASPUR, HIMACHAL PRADESH

Legend has it that the town was founded by an ancient sage called Vyas. The small mountain town is perfect for a short relaxing stay. Unlike other places of Himachal, Bilaspur boasts a moderate climate during winter, making it a comfortable winter destination. Apart from the historical Vyas Goofa, the place is famous for Gobind Sagar Lake. The lake offers various adventures and water sports opportunities like boating, water skiing and rowing. Other locations worth visiting in Bilaspur are Kandror Bridge and Markanda.

### KERALA

Popularly known as, "God's Own Country," Kerala is paradise on earth, and the winter season is the right time to explore its backwaters. Experience the beauty of the Munnar hill station, be enamoured with its backwaters by taking a boat ride, seek peace and tranquillity at the famous Eravikulam National Park, or visit the out-of-the-world beautiful, Kumarakom. To top it all, there are numerous beaches along the Kerala coastline, much of which was unexplored and calm. The Kerala experience in winter is unfinished without its famous Malabar cuisine, so do not forget to eat one of the most delicious cuisines of India.

### JAISALMER, RAJASTHAN

Popularly known as "The Golden City", Jaisalmer makes for a good winter travel destination. Though the nights are cold and windy, the bright sunny morning will intrigue you to step out and enjoy the city's rich heritage. The winter sun will accompany you while you explore narrow winding lanes of the massive Jaisalmer Fort. The lanes are lined with numerous handicraft shops and restaurants, which will keep you busy for the entire day. Besides, you can spend a laid back winter afternoon, while enjoying a camel ride on the deserts of Rajasthan.





# escape

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# SOUTH AFRICA – IN THE WILD

South Africa's highly developed tourism industry has made it one of the most sought after tourist destinations

## TT BUREAU

Situated on the southernmost tip of the African continent, South Africa is perhaps the only country which reflects true African essence. Apart from its natural treasures, the country is a melting pot of cultures, where antiquity merges with modernity. The only country with three capitals, South Africa's uniqueness has the power to create a long lasting impression. With an established tourism industry, South Africa offers immense opportunities to experience the country's vastness, in terms of wildlife, nature, adventure and exploration of local culture. As the country is a global leader in responsible tourism, every place you visit in South Africa will make you spellbound.

South Africa is best known for its wildlife adventures, as the land is home to some of the biggest national parks. You can opt for various well organised safaris which will give a chance to experience the country's diverse wildlife. The Big Five Safari is the most prominent of all which focuses on South Africa's five major wildlife species namely lion, leopard, rhino, elephant and buffalo. To be a part of the journey, you

should first head to the Kruger National Park. Covering over 1.9 million hectares, the massive park has 2,500km of well connected network of tar and dirt roads. The park is not just about the famous five. While on an adventurous ride, you will come close to 1,00,000 impalas, 10,000 blue wildebeests, 25,000 zebras, 1,000 leopards, 180 cheetahs, 1,500 lions and many more. To make your stay memorable, you can go for accommodation within the national park. Neighbouring private reserves such as Sabi Sand, Timbavati and Klaserie also offers accommodation facilities. As these places have the highest density of leopards, the cabin balcony will be as exciting as the safari itself. The park also has some of the best walking trails which hosts thrilling walking safaris. While on an organised walking safari, you will be accompanied by trained armed rangers as every moment will bring new surprises. Large comfortable tents and delicious food offered by Tanda Tula's New Field Camp and the Rhino Walking Safaris Plains Camps will finally conclude your rustic journey on a luxurious note.



# EMBARK ON A JOURNEY OF ENDLESS DISCOVERIES

DELHI-JAIPUR-JODHPUR CIRCUIT



## The journey... is the destination

The setting of winters gives travellers a wonderful opportunity to explore winter destinations in the north Indian plains. So, over a course of three days which begins in New Delhi, we take the road, covering the famous Delhi-Jaipur-Jodhpur circuit.

After much research, we select the Fortune Hotels and WelcomHeritage properties because the options are many and booking is simple.

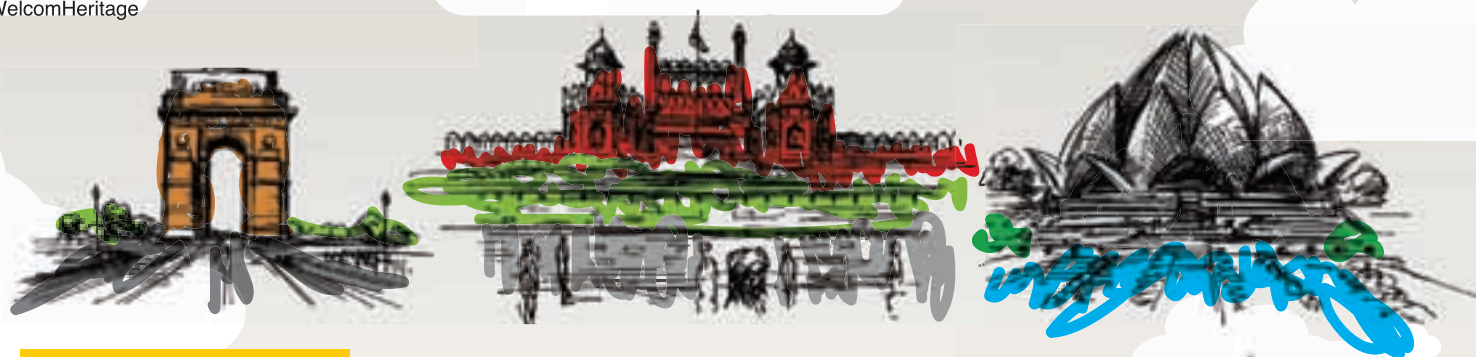
Our journey takes us to a range of amazing stays, each more beautiful than the other. It is a diverse circuit of not just good stays, but lasting experiences. We are lucky to get some of the best hotel experiences one can ask for – from traditional to modern luxury stays. Certainly, Fortune Hotels and WelcomHeritage Hotels do not leave any stone unturned to please their guests.

We begin on a Friday morning with the properties of Fortune Hotels here in New Delhi and Gurgaon, from where we travel further on to Jaipur for the second part of the circuit. On the third day we plan to make it to Jodhpur on our final lap. We work out an exciting itinerary to maximise the enjoyment quotient of the Delhi-Jaipur-Jodhpur circuit.



Fortune Select Metropolitan, Jaipur





### Delhi/NCR - Day 1

*A true manifestation of a diverse nation, Delhi is the relic of a bygone Mughal era, dotted with fascinating Mughal architecture all over. You could visit the famous Red Fort, Mughal emperor Humayun's Tomb, the Qutub Minar, the Bahai Temple (Lotus Temple), Jama Masjid or the old city of Delhi popularly known as Delhi-6.*



### Fortune Park Boulevard, New Delhi

**Journey begins** – This is a great starting point to explore Delhi and NCR region. Commanding a fantastic location in the heart of South Delhi on the Chhatarpur Mandir Road near Mehrauli, this 34 room hotel gets us mesmerised with its trees, water bodies, open spaces and sprawling lawns. **Distance from:** IGI Airport: 24 km | Qutab Minar: 9 km | Lotus Temple: 19 km | Connaught Place: 22 km. **Packages starting @ Rs 4,999/-\*** per night on double occupancy, inclusive of breakfast. Taxes extra.

### Fortune Park DJ Avenue, New Delhi

The hotel offers an excellent location being close to South Delhi as well as Gurgaon, providing convenient access to the city's finest attractions. The 21 smartly furnished rooms at the hotel come equipped with a range of modern amenities and features. Our breakfast here at the Orchid restaurant is sumptuous to say the least. **Distance from:** IGI Airport: 22 km | Qutab Minar: 7 km | Connaught Place: 20 km | Gurgaon City Centre: 12 km. **Packages starting @ Rs 4,999/-\*** per night on double occupancy, inclusive of breakfast. Taxes extra.



### Fortune Select Global, Gurgaon

This upscale hotel with 107 rooms is located in the heart of the commercial hub of Gurgaon on MG Road. The area boasts a bustling city life with top-end shopping malls, multiplexes, pubs, restaurants and golf courses along with neighboring tourist attractions. **Distance from:** IGI Airport: 16 km | HUDA Metro Station: 8 km | Cyber City: 4 km | Qutab Minar: 12 km | Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary: 8 km. **Packages starting @ Rs 6,499/-\*** per night on double occupancy, inclusive of breakfast. Taxes extra.

### Fortune Select Excalibur, Sohna Road, Gurgaon

The hotel offers 135 rooms along with a host of dining, meeting and recreation options to the guests. A prominent building on the Sohna Road's skyline in Gurgaon, Fortune Select Excalibur boasts easy access to the Delhi-Jaipur highway, the domestic and international airports and the metro line which now links Gurgaon with parts of Delhi. **Distance from:** IGI Airport: 23 km | HUDA Metro Station: 8 km | Cyber City: 13 km | City Centre: 8 km. **Packages starting @ Rs 6,499/-\*** per night on double occupancy, inclusive of breakfast. Taxes extra.





## Fortune Park Orange, Sidhrawali, Gurgaon

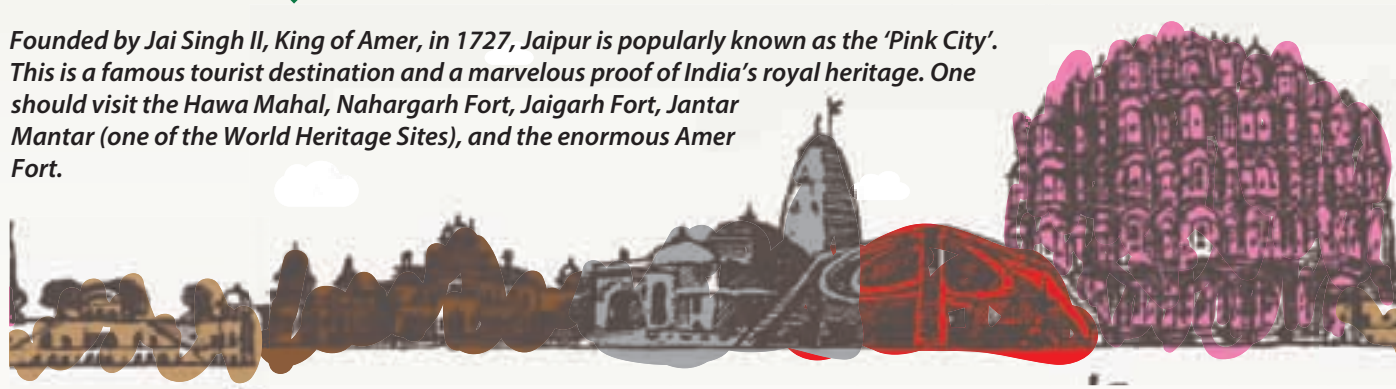
Surrounded by lush green sprawling lawns and open spaces, the hotel is designed for an enriching experience. Located off National Highway 8, the hotel provides easy access to Gurgaon and makes for an ideal pit stop for people traveling by road to and from Jaipur.

**Distance from:** IGI Airport: 46 km | Gurgaon City Centre: 25 km | Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary: 25 km | Neemrana Fort: 57 km. **Packages starting @ Rs 3,999/-\*** per night on double occupancy, inclusive of breakfast. Taxes extra.



### Jaipur - Day 2

*Founded by Jai Singh II, King of Amer, in 1727, Jaipur is popularly known as the 'Pink City'. This is a famous tourist destination and a marvelous proof of India's royal heritage. One should visit the Hawa Mahal, Nahargarh Fort, Jaigarh Fort, Jantar Mantar (one of the World Heritage Sites), and the enormous Amer Fort.*



## WelcomHeritage Sirsi Haveli, Jaipur

**Royal welcome** – Having reached Jaipur in the morning, we make our way to WelcomHeritage Sirsi Haveli by noon. It is a beautiful old Haveli situated on the outskirts of Jaipur in village Sirsi. The village is part of the Jaipur Royal Family estate dating back to more than 150 years. The hotel offers 23 rooms and suites, along with swimming pool, indoor games, ayurvedic massages, a multi-cuisine restaurant, "Jiman," and a conference hall for up to 50 guests. **City Attractions:** • Jal Mahal • Hawa Mahal • Johri Bazar • Amer Fort • City Palace • Jantar Mantar • Raj Mandir Cinema • Central Museum • Birla Laxmi arayan Temple. **Packages Starting @ Rs. 5,000\*** per night on double occupancy inclusive of Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner and all applicable Taxes.



## WelcomHeritage Traditional Haveli, Jaipur



**Finding wonderland** – A peaceful and aristocratic destination, WelcomHeritage Traditional Haveli, Jaipur, was constructed in late 1940's by Rai Sahib Laxmi Pati Singhania. The present owner, Dinesh Goyal, purchased this spectacular haveli in 2012 and made some laudable up-gradations to delight travellers. The property offers 24 rooms and suites with a swimming pool, Spa, a multi-cuisine restaurant, "Zaika," that serves Indian and continental cuisine and a roof-top restobar, "Over the Moon." The hotel also has a conference hall that can accommodate up to 150 guests. **City Attractions:** • Amer Fort • City Palace • Jantar Mantar • Nahargarh Fort • Jaigarh Fort • Jal Mahal • Hawa Mahal • Birla Mandir • Albert Hall Museum • Rambagh Palace **Packages Starting @ Rs. 4,500\*** per night on double occupancy inclusive of Breakfast and all applicable Taxes.







## Fortune Select Metropolitan, Jaipur

The 90 room hotel is located in the heart of the city, providing easy access to shopping, entertainment and tourist attractions. This 5-star hotel is the preferred choice for business and leisure travellers, providing a wide range of facilities and efficient service with traditional Indian hospitality. **Distance from:** Airport: 12 km | Railway Station: 3km | Old City, a.k.a. Walled City with its Bazaars (Bapu Bazar, Johari Bazar): 05 km | **Tourist attractions :** The City Palace 05 km; Amber Palace and Fort Complex 16 km; Jal Mahal 12 km; Jantar Mantar 05 km; Hawa Mahal - The Palace of Winds 05 km. **Packages starting @ Rs 3,999/-\*** per night on double occupancy, inclusive of breakfast. Taxes extra.

## Fortune Park Bella Casa, Jaipur

A contemporary, full-service hotel with 109 rooms located near the commercial hub of the city, in close proximity to the airport on Tonk Road. The hotel provides efficient service at great value along with a wide range of facilities and amenities to the guests. **Distance from:** Airport: 5 km | Railway Station: 10 km | Old City, a.k.a. Walled City with its Bazaars (Bapu Bazar, Johari Bazar): 10 km | **Tourist attractions:** The City Palace 11.5 km; Amber Palace and Fort Complex 25 km; Jal Mahal 19 km; Jantar Mantar 11.5 km; Hawa Mahal - The Palace of Winds 11 km. **Packages starting @ Rs 3,999/-\*** per night on double occupancy, inclusive of breakfast. Taxes extra.



### Jodhpur - Day 3

*Formerly the seat of a Princely State, Jodhpur is also referred to as the "Blue City." Founded by Rajput Chief, Rao Jodha, it is by far one of the most sought after tourist destinations in India. Jodhpur is also home to the magnificent Umaid Bhawan Palace and the Mehrangarh Fort. The city's alluring landscape has captured the imagination of the world to such an extent, that it has been featured in Hollywood films such as "The Dark Knight Rises," and "The Fall."*



## WelcomHeritage Bal Samand Lake Palace, Jodhpur



**Legacy revisited** – In Jodhpur, our only destination, the WelcomHeritage Bal Samand Lake Palace, Jodhpur, has the rich legacy of Rajput architecture. The magnificent structure is built in red sandstone while its environs have lush green gardens, situated on the banks of Balsamand Lake. It offers 36 rooms and suites that are replete with vintage décor items, richly done to illustrate the heritage of Jodhpur. The Palace is famous for its Kebab Corner that serves hot and fresh tandoori kebabs, barbeque dishes and traditional Jodhpuri kebabs in the open air. Also experience the royal ride in Maharaja's own buggy by his very own horsemen. **City Attractions:** • Mehrangarh Fort • Jaswant Thada • Mandore Garden • Rang Mahal • Nagaur Fort • Local Bazar • Sardar Samand Lake Palace. **Packages Starting @ Rs. 8,000\*** per night on double occupancy inclusive of Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner and all applicable Taxes.

*\*Valid till 31<sup>st</sup> March'16. T&C apply.*



For Fortune Hotels details & reservations, call 24x7 Toll Free 1800 102 2333 or visit [www.fortunehotels.in](http://www.fortunehotels.in)

For WelcomHeritage Central Reservations, call 011-4603 5500 or visit [www.welcomheritagehotels.in](http://www.welcomheritagehotels.in)





# New **Services** make it quicker and more convenient to apply for a **UK Visa**

VFS Global in partnership with UK Visa & Immigration (UKVI) have introduced a number of new User Pay Services to help guide applicants through the visa application process. These new services include:



**Digital Assist:** Providing help to customers who do not have internet access, by assisting them with filling in their application forms at the Visa Application Centre



**Certification Service:** Enabling customers to keep hold of their original documents by submitting certified coloured photocopies instead of their originals. Customers need to bring original documentation to show the VFS Global staff and coloured photocopies will be taken, certified and submitted to the High Commission along with their application



**Walk-in Without an Appointment:** For customers short on time or who can no longer make it for their booked appointment



**Group Appointments:** Allowing groups to book visa appointments at the same time in the same Visa Application Centre, regardless of the size of the group; ideal for organisations, large families and tour operators



**Online Payment Assistance:** Allowing customers to pay their visa fees and buy any optional services in cash at the Visa Application Centre and the centre staff will use a VFS Global credit card to make the payments



**Get it Right:** Providing help to applicants by checking their visa form and documents for accuracy and completeness (strictly in accordance with UKVI guidelines at the centre. Customers also have the opportunity to submit any missing documents to the UK High Commission within a prescribed time frame

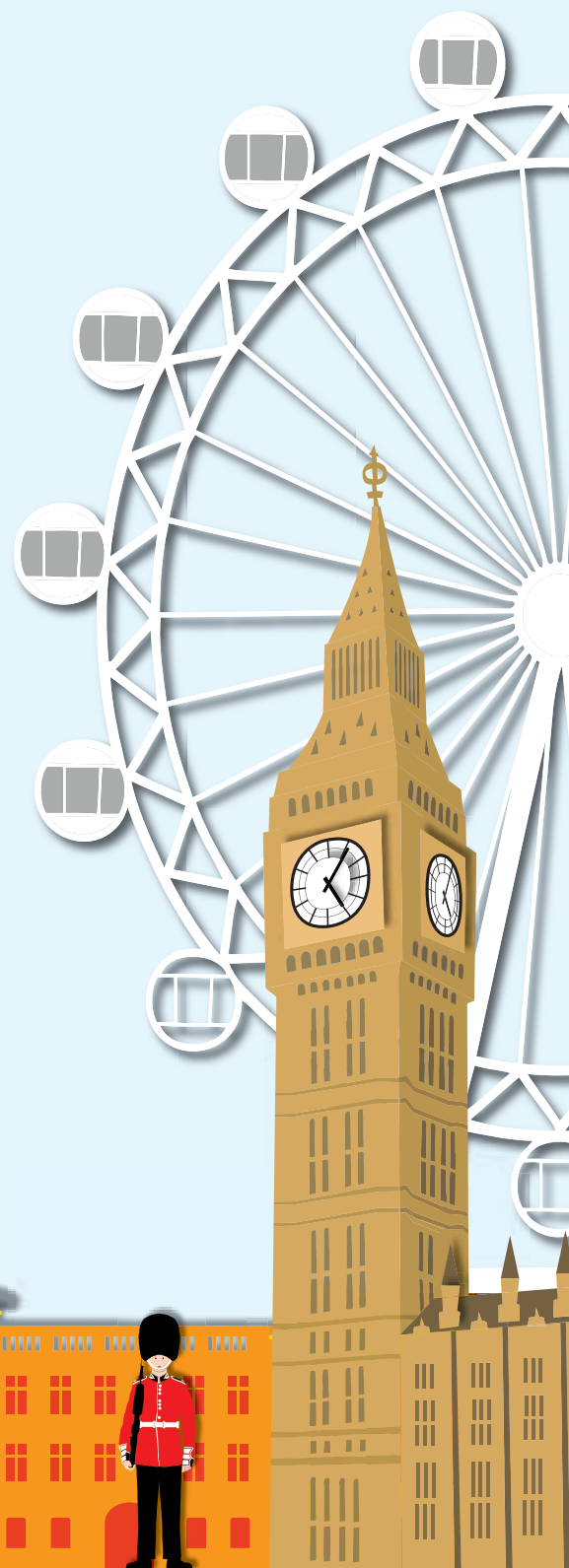
Simply approach any of the VFS Global staff at the centre or visit [www.vfsglobal.uk/india](http://www.vfsglobal.uk/india) to avail of the wide range of User Pay Services\* on offer.

## UK Visa Application Centres

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Kolkata | Mumbai | New Delhi | Pune

**Visit:** [www.vfsglobal.com/uk/india](http://www.vfsglobal.com/uk/india)

\*VFS Global also provides User Pay Services in the countries of Bangladesh, Nepal & Sri-Lanka.  
Please visit [www.vfsglobal.co.uk/global/](http://www.vfsglobal.co.uk/global/) to know more about the country specific services provided.







# TiEcon DELHI CONCLUDES ON A GOOD NOTE

With a lot more promises and interesting sessions for the next year, TiEcon Delhi 2015, India's premier event for entrepreneurs concluded on a successful note

## TT BUREAU

**T**iE, a global network of entrepreneurs and professionals, successfully concluded its annual event, TiEcon Delhi 2015, recently. The theme for this year's forum was 'Balancing the Act' which resonated in the informative and exciting sessions held during the two-day mega event at Taj Palace, New Delhi.

Vani Kola, chair, TiEcon Delhi 2015, said, "This year at TiEcon the focus was towards bringing out a conversation between Investors and start-ups and the mutual sharing of experiences. Each year TiEcon provides a platform to start-ups to network and communicate with other start-ups and Industry experts. This year a series of sessions and TiE's first ever 24 hour Hackathon was organised that saw a wide range of participation by start-ups and helped them in learning creativity and building stuff big enough to transform businesses and industries."

Deep Kalra, President TiE Delhi – NCR and Group CEO,







MMT said, "TiE is a one spot platform created for emerging start-ups and entrepreneurs to grow their network by engaging in conversations with their peers investors at the conference. TiEcon Delhi is known to come up with exciting acts of the start-ups each year. This year the TiEcon Delhi was themed on teaching 'Balancing Act' for the start-ups. We aim to make the environment friendly for start-ups and work towards encouraging entrepreneurship in the ecosystem"

This year, the two-day mega event was attended by Jayant Sinha – Union Minister of State for Finance, Government of India; Vanitha Narayanan, Managing Director, IBM India/South Asia; Kirthiga Reddy, Managing Director, Facebook India; Nikesh Arora, President & COO, SoftBank Corp – Chair; Amit

Burman, Vice Chairman, Dabur India Ltd; Amit Agarwal - VP & Country Manager, Amazon India and Arvind Singhal, Chairman, Technopak Advisors Pvt Ltd.

Riyaz Amlani, CEO, Impresario Entertainment & Hospitality Ltd; Ritu Dalmia, Diva Restaurants; Ashvin Chadha, Member, Indian Angel Network; Bala Srinivasa, Kalaari Capital; Padmaja Ruparel, President, Indian Angel Network; Dipak Agarwal, CEO, DLF Brands and Charu Sharma, Director, Mashaal Sports were among the well-known business leaders present at the event.

The opening keynote of the event was delivered by Nikesh Arora, President & COO, SoftBank Corp, who spoke about Entrepreneurship in India and the Evolving Ecosystem.





# JHARKHAND THROUGH THE WILD

Encounter nature in its purest form through Jharkhand's many wildlife reserves and national parks

## TT BUREAU

In the eastern part of India, south of Bihar, the state of Jharkhand exists in perfect symphony with nature and heritage. Jharkhand's history is very well exemplified through its architectural wonders and heritage destinations, making it one of the most exotic of Indian states. Its close relation with nature has also allowed it to remain a bastion of nature, and of all its various attractions, Jharkhand's wildlife is a major attraction for tourists. The enchantment of nature can be quite clearly witnessed in the state, and they are mostly highlighted through these historical wildlife sanctuaries and national parks.

### BETLA NATIONAL PARK

Located on the western part of the Chhota Nagpur Plateau, the Betla National Park is one of the widely known parks in the Northeastern part of India. This is in fact one of the nine tiger reserves that were first established in the country. The premises of the national park also has two historical forts, one

of which is located near the Betla, which was the erstwhile seat of the Chero Kings. Other attractions of the Betla National Park include waterfalls and hot springs. The right time to spot tigers here is during the month of May, when tourists can avail the privilege of Jeep safaris. It is however very important to hire a local guide during the tour.

### DALMA MOUNTAIN RANGE

A beautiful place to explore the wildlife of the state, Dalma Mountain Range is at an altitude of 3,000ft and is covered with greenery. The sanctuary was inaugurated in 1975 and has a total area of 193sq.km and is a haven for elephants, barking deer, sloth bear, porcupines, leopard, tigers and more. This is also a suitable place for trekkers to have a great time, as the slopes are quite steep. Throughout the sanctuary visitors can see several places where wild animals have made their hideouts. Staying at the sanctuary until night fall could be fruitful as the mountain-top here provides stunning views of the twinkling city below. Another positive side to the



Dalma Mountain Range is that it provides natural air condition to the steel city and is also a very important source of oxygen. It balances the ecology with its green forests and exotic fauna.

### HAZARIBAGH WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Another popular wildlife destination in the state, it is located at a height of 615m. Covering an area of 183.89sq.km, it is full of natural charm. An interesting addition to the charming sanctuary is the presence of Tribal communities who are living around this sanctuary. One of the prime attractions of the Hazaribagh Wildlife Sanctuary, are tigers, while other animals such as, sambhar, nilgai, chital, kakar, sloth bear and wild boar can also be spotted. With dense tropical forests and natural meadows, the Hazaribagh Wildlife Sanctuary is one of most sought after tourist attractions in the state of Jharkhand.

### SARANDA – THE SAL FOREST

A dense forest located in the West Singhbhum district is a paradise in its own right. The name Saranda, means seven hundred hills, and it is just the right place for a fantastic time away from the urban life. The landscape of Saranda is replete with greenery and meandering streams, and hills. The highest point in this beautiful dense forest is a hill range of 927m. This ridge is about 24km long and is a precious natural reserve for Iron ore. Additionally there are 13 other peaks that stand at a height of above 600m. One of the most important rivers here in Saranda is the Koena River, which originated in the Bhangaon village on the Bonai border.

### PALAMAU TIGER RESERVE

One of the first nine reserves that were brought under the Project Tiger programme in the year 1973, the Palamau Tiger Reserve is a magnificent spot

for wildlife enthusiasts. The Palamau Tiger Reserve is spread over an area of 1,026sq.km, with wildlife amidst staggering wilderness. The place is very well known for its exotic flora and fauna, and it should be easy to spot animals such as tigers, leopards, wolves, wild dogs and jungle cats. Here you will also find inhabitants from ethnic groups like, Munda, Kherwar, Chero, Birjia and more. The indigenous tribes are well acquainted with the nomadic lifestyle and are tolerant towards wildlife and nature in general.







# KERALA RE-DISCOVERED

Gavi is a mixed bag of tranquillity, natural wonders and adventure, tucked away in a quiet scenic village of Kerala

## TT BUREAU

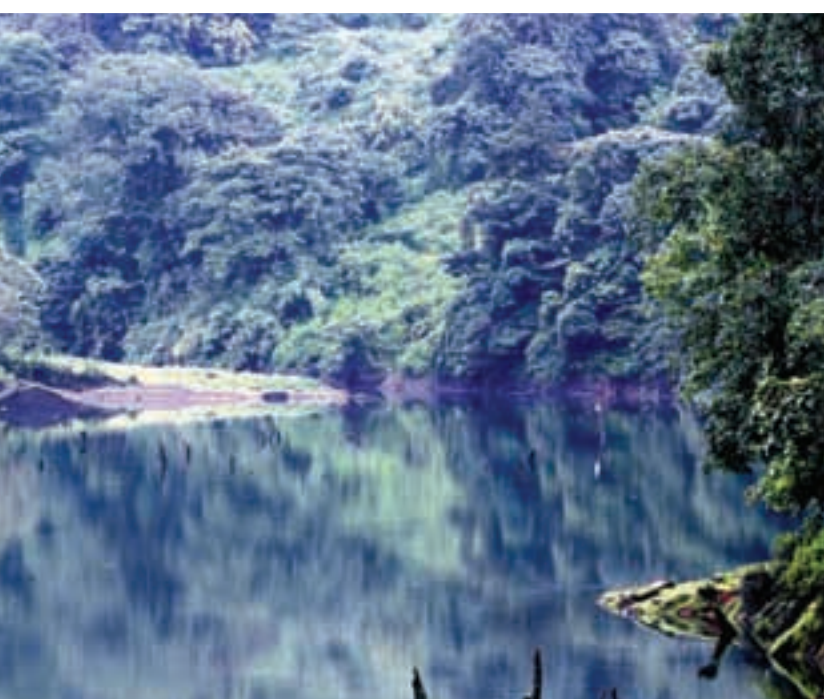
It's every traveller's dream to explore a destination which is less travelled – to explore a dreamland that is out-of-this-world. The good news is that, if you want to make this dream come true, then Gavi can be the answer to your wanderlust. Situated in a remote village of Pathanamthitta district, Kerala, the land is a canvas painted with nature's colours. Until recently, the place was a hidden gem, but since the world renowned tourism organisation "Alistair International" listed Gavi as a major Indian eco-tourism destination, it gained popularity among travel enthusiasts from around the world.

The comfortable climate of the region coupled with lush green valleys and pristine lakes make for an ideal location to escape the chaotic life of urban world. Gavi is surrounded by evergreen forests and can be enjoyed by nature lovers and jungle explorers. Eco-tourism is the main attraction of Gavi and there are plenty of facilities available for tourists. The valleys, forests and grasslands of Gavi are home to

endangered species like the Nilgiri Tahr and Lion-tailed Macaque. Besides, the place is a paradise for bird watchers, as various exotic birds migrate to Gavi from distant lands. It has been observed that the place is a safe haven for these birds to breed and prosper. There are around 260 known species of birds which can be found in Gavi.

The place offers various adventurous activities which can keep you busy for the entire day. To witness the diverse wilderness of Gavi, you can take part in a day trip organised by Kerala Forest Development Corporation. The trip starts at 8AM with a sumptuous breakfast and after that trained guides take you through a mesmerising journey. At around 12AM a full course south Indian lunch will refresh you after which you can start the next phase of the journey. After a short rowing experience on the vast pristine lakes at Gavi you will again hit the road to experience the thrill. Making your way through the forest roads, the safari will finally reach the scenic Sabarimala hills, which is famous for cardamom





plantation. At around 4PM the trip will conclude, followed by cups of tea. If you want to spend the entire day on water, then, there can't be anything better than a boat ride at Kochupamda. With an emerald hued natural backdrop, the lake is an ideal place to forget everything and just relax. Kochupamda Lake offers row boating facilities and you will be accompanied by trained guides.

If you want to make your nights at Gavi equally exciting, then, consider staying at the forest camp cottages. These cottages are maintained by Kerala Forest Development Corporation and offer a tranquil atmosphere. As the temperature at Gavi gets colder at night, a forest bonfire outside the camp will create an exciting ambience. Besides, you can also opt for accommodation at the Swiss Cottages.

Gavi can be easily accessed by road, rail and air. It is just 199kms from the Madurai airport from where you can take a car and bypass through Vandiperiyar or Thekkady. Gavi can be accessed conveniently by rail. Kottayam Railway Station is the nearest station which is 128kms from Gavi. Besides, you can also reach Gavi from Ernakulam Railway Station or Madurai, Tamilnadu Railway Station. If you are travelling in the daytime then don't forget to visit the Periyar Tiger Reserve, which is en-route and can be reached by car from Vandiperiyar. Apart from tigers, the reserve is home to elephants, leopards, bears and mouse deer. Gavi is also the only place where the rare "gopher trees" can be found. In India there are only two such trees and both can be found only in the magical land of Gavi. So, head to Gavi and get mesmerised by nature's best.



# ENLIVENING ODISHA

Odisha offers a variety of exciting options when it comes to wildlife exploration and eco-tourism





### TT BUREAU

Located on the eastern coast of India, Odisha is a manifestation of beauty and serenity. The ninth largest state by area, Odisha is a rich mine of natural wonders and resources. The topography of Odisha is diverse in its characteristic, as the land is blessed with serene lakes, frolicking rivers and towering mountains.

There is something for everyone in Odisha, which makes it India's one of the most desired travel destinations. Wildlife is a major part of Odisha's natural treasures and a vast network of wildlife sanctuaries will give you a first-hand experience.

### USHAKOTHI

Situated just 45Kms from Sambalpur, Ushakothi is a well known wildlife sanctuary in Odisha. The place offers various opportunities to closely experience tigers, elephants, panthers and sambars in their natural habitat. To get an authentic jungle experience, you can opt for a night halt in a two-room forest rest house inside the sanctuary. You can get as close as possible to the wilderness through various guided safaris. Besides, there are strategic watchtowers within the forest, which will give you the best views. Spread over an area of about 305sq.km, the Ushakothi sanctuary is an avifaunal treasure house and a perfect place to quench your thirst for wildlife exploration.

### SUNABEDA

Located in the Nuapada district of Odisha, Sunabeda is known for its diverse wildlife habitats, canyons and 11 waterfalls. The vegetation of the place comprises of dry deciduous tropical forest and covers an area of 600sq.km. The major attractions of the sanctuary are its large variety of species such as tiger, leopard, hyena, barking deer, chital, gaur, sambar, sloth bear, varieties of birds such as hill myna, pea fowl, partridge and a number of reptilian species. Sunabeda has a large tiger gene pool which is considered the highest in the region and the sanctuary is an epicentre of tiger conservation project, supported by the Odisha government. The sanctuary is an ideal wildlife travel destination as it offers a chance to come face to face with the untouched beauty of nature.

### GAHIRMATHA

Gahirmatha is a unique sanctuary situated in the Kendrapara district of Odisha. The sanctuary is actually a stretch of beach which separates the Bhitarkanika mangroves from the Bay of Bengal. The uniqueness of the place lies in the fact that it is the largest turtle sanctuary of India. The stretch of beach is the breeding ground for giant Olive Ridley Turtles. A large number of tourists visit the place every year to witness the great migration of



these turtles that come all the way from the Pacific Ocean to lay their eggs. The vent is a rarity in India and this makes Gahirmatha Turtle sanctuary a hot destination for wildlife enthusiasts.

### CHANDAKA

Chandaka is a renowned wildlife sanctuary of India, best known for its thriving population of elephants. The sanctuary is characterised by thick bushes and a wide variety of natural vegetation like sal, bamboo, teak and eupatorium scrub. Situated on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Chandaka is spread over a total area of 193sq. km. Over the past few decades, various conservation techniques have revived the natural vegetation of the forest which resulted in a remarkable population growth of endangered elephants. If you want to observe the behaviour of wild elephants closely, then Chandaka will offer you all the opportunities. There are numerous watch towers erected at strategic locations within the forest, which will give you the best views. For nature lovers and eco-tourists, there can't be anything better than Chandaka. Apart from elephants, Chandaka is home to exotic wildlife such as leopard, chital, barking deer, mouse deer, langur, rhesus monkey, mongoose, sloth bear, wolf and hyena.



# 24 hours

in

# New York City

TT BUREAU



## EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

The Empire State Building is a major landmark of USA located in Midtown Manhattan, New York City. The towering 1,250ft building is a popular tourist attraction due to its historical importance and is regarded as an icon of American cultural. Built in 1931, the building is the fifth tallest skyscraper of USA and is regarded as one of the seven wonders of the modern world.

## TIMES SQUARE

Times Square is the most vibrant place in New York City. Located in Midtown Manhattan, the place is a commercial intersection and a melting pot of cultures. It is also famous for its Broadway Theatre District which is regarded as the centre of world entertainment. Walking is the best way to explore the vibrancy of Times Square where approximately 3,30,000 people pedestrians pass daily. It is also among the most visited places globally.



## STATUE OF LIBERTY

The Statue of Liberty is a neoclassical masterpiece and a prominent attraction of America. Located on Liberty Island in New York City, the statue was designed by Frédéric Auguste and was built by Gustave Eiffel. In 1886 the statue was gifted to USA by the people of France. Apart from being a major attraction, the statue has immense historical importance as the date of America's independence is inscribed on it which marks the journey of USA as a champion of freedom and liberty.







### MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

Madison Square garden is the world's largest multipurpose indoor arena situated in New York City between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues. The place is a hot bed of art, theatre, entertainment and sports . One should surely pay a visit to this larger than life sporting facility and spend their time watching boxing matches, concerts, ice hockey or basketball.



### THE CLOISTERS

The Cloisters is not just like any other museum. It is a time-machine ride to antiquity. The museum is a prominent tourist attraction and a treasure trove of European medieval history. The museum itself has medieval roots as it was built by assembling parts of five medieval European Abbeys, which were shipped to New York City between 1934 and 1939.



### ROOSEVELT ISLAND TRAMWAY

The Roosevelt Island Tramway is an aerial tramway spanning from East river connecting Roosevelt Islands to Upper East Side of Manhattan. It is a popular tourist attraction and is regarded as the best way to get a bird's eye view of New York City. Built in 1976, the service enables one to climb up to a height of 250ft making it a great place to get a breathtaking view of entire New York City.

### HOTEL CHELSEA

Hotel Chelsea is not only a major landmark of New York City, but also a living legend with a rich heritage. Built in 1884, Hotel Chelsea is located between seventh and eighth avenues of Chelsea neighbourhood. This 250 unit hotel is an icon of fame. Personalities like Bob Dylan, Virgil Thomson, Brigid Berlin, Brendan Behan, Sam Shepard, Charles Bukowski, Janis Joplin and Tom Waits frequented this hotel which extends its importance even more.



### ABC KITCHEN

A great travel should be complemented with a soul satisfying meal. In New York there are numerous such options, but ABC Kitchen has a special place. Known for authentic American cuisines, this restaurant is a masterpiece conceived by Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten. Amidst a typically elegant New York style ambience, the restaurant offers a wide range of dishes to die for. If you have already landed in New York, you should probably make your start memorable by trying the place's famous delicacies like Bow-tie pasta with kasha and veal meatballs, raw Maine shrimp, clam pizza, arctic char with Romanesco and ice cream cake.







**WHAT:** MEVLANA WHIRLING DERVISHES

**WHEN:** 10-17 DECEMBER

**WHERE:** KONYA, TURKEY

Mevlana Whirling Dervishes is a major traditional and spiritual festival of Turkey. The underlying philosophy of the eight day festival is based on the teachings of 13 century poet Rumi. The festival is celebrated to showcase the power of love and peace and their importance to realise the divine. As part of the tradition men spin in circles, wearing white robes and tall hats.



**WHAT:** BURNING THE CLOCKS

**WHEN:** 21 DECEMBER

**WHERE:** BRIGHTON, ENGLAND

Celebrated in the city of Brighton, England, Burning the Clocks is a vibrant festival of light and art. The festival marks the beginning of winter solstice and celebrated by people, irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Every year the festival is celebrated based on a pre decided theme. Participants are encouraged to create their own lanterns, using bamboo, willow canes and tissue papers. The organisers make responsible efforts through special lantern making workshops for homeless and disadvantaged locals.



**WHAT:** JUNKANOO PARADE

**WHEN:** 26 DECEMBER

**WHERE:** NASSUA, BAHAMAS

Junkanoo Parade is more than a festival. It is a Bahamian national pride which is celebrated after Christmas. The main attraction of the festival is its extravagant parade, which is a combination of colour, music and dance. Junkanoo parade has great historical significance as it is regarded as the oldest surviving street festival. Elaborately decorated costumes are major part of the festival, which are designed as per a pre-decided theme. Apart from costumes, participants also fabricate thematic floats during the parade.





**WHAT:** SUNBURN FESTIVAL  
**WHEN:** 27-30 DECEMBER  
**WHERE:** GOA, INDIA

Regarded as the biggest electronic dance music festival of Asia, Sunburn is all about raw fun. The festival is attended by more than 1,50,000 festival goers every year. Various renowned national and international DJs participate in the four-day extravaganza. Apart from raw fun and entertainment, the festival brings together other elements such as exotic delicacies and shopping. The iconic 'Big Arena' festival is organised by Percept, a reputed media and communications company in India.



**WHAT:** SNOWGLOBE MUSIC FESTIVAL  
**WHEN:** 29-31 DECEMBER  
**WHERE:** CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

Celebrated at South Lake Tahoe, California, SnowGlobe is a blend of dance music festival, snowboard adventure and New Year's celebrations. The three day festival features renowned DJs and underground rappers from around the world, specialised in genres ranging from electropop to hip-hop. The festival also provides a platform to snowboard enthusiasts who show off their tricks. Besides, various competitions are held which offer reduced-price lift tickets for fest goers to the scenic Heavenly Mountains.



**WHAT:** REVEILLON  
**WHEN:** 31 DECEMBER  
**WHERE:** RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

Reveillon is considered as one of the most elaborate New Year celebrations. Celebrated on Rio's Copacabana Beach, Reveillon features awe-inspiring fireworks, exotic cuisines, religion and tradition. Before midnight the festival continues with normal pace, but as soon as the clock strikes midnight, the calm family gathering starts to get wild, filled with raw festive fun. Numerous international bands perform during the celebration. A unique thing about Reveillon is that, it is an all-white dress code festival.



# PICK OF THE MONTH

Pick your favourite from this month's all-new collection of books, games, audio CDs and DVDs

## PANASONIC RELEASES NEW CAMERAS

Technology giant Panasonic has recently introduced the DMC-FZ1000 and DMC-FZ300 compact digital cameras in India, enabled with 4K photography and video recording. The 4K video imagery is capable of recording smooth, high-resolution videos, while images taken in the 4K photo mode boast stunning true-to-life detail.

As the newest editions to the state-of-the-art LUMIX range, the cameras have wide-angle LEICA lens systems with high-precision OLED live viewfinders. Both devices are equipped with High Sensitivity MOS sensors and Venus Engine image processors, which together capture crystal clear images with superior colour reproduction and minimum noise even in low light environments. Boosting both accuracy and speed, the DFD (Depth from Defocus) enabled models achieve an ultra high-speed autofocus time of 0.09 seconds and a quick start-up time of 0.66 seconds, ensuring that you never miss a shot.

Panasonic's flagship bridge camera, the DMC-FZ1000, boasts a massive 1-inch 20.1 megapixel MOS sensor, 4x larger than the conventional sensor size. With a 16x optical zoom, the model produces highly descriptive photographs rich in both detail and resolution. For cinematic level videos, the 5-axis HYBRID Optical Image Stabilizer and 5-step speed control together neutralise any handshake vibration and ensure smooth zoom control.



## BOOK: MY GITA

Written by acclaimed mythologist, Devdutt Pattanaik, My Gita is a simple guide to understanding Srimad Bhagavad Gita for the contemporary reader. The scholar has given a thematic approach to the book, rather than going verse by verse, and this has helped to make it far more accessible to the modern reader. Pattanaik has articulately highlighted how Krishna nudges Arjuna to understand his relations. The hidden message here is extremely relevant in the modern times when we are increasingly isolating the self by being submerged in things like, selfimprovement, selfactualisation, selfrealisation, or even selfies. My Gita, is an essential book to understand wisdom through Pattanaik's simple words.

**Genre (s):** Mythology



## DVD: THE MARTIAN

From acclaimed director Ridley Scott, comes Matt Damon starrer, The Martian, finally out on the DVD. The film is based on Andy Weir's 2011 novel The Martian. Adapted into a screenplay by Drew Goddard, the movie has Matt Damon play the role of an astronaut who is presumed dead and left behind on Mars. Damon then fights to survive in Mars. The film was premiered in the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival, where it received positive reviews from critics who believe Ridley Scott's touch of fine film-making sees a revival with this one. The film also stars, Jessica Chastain, Kristen Wiig, Jeff Daniels, Michael Peña and Kate Mara.

**Genre (s):** Science Fiction



## GAME: SID MEIER'S CIVILIZATION: BEYOND EARTH - RISING TIDE

A turn-based strategy 4X video game in the Civilization series developed by Firaxis Games is a well-developed sci-fi strategy game, which re-imagines certain systems altogether, and brings real characters into the formula. The game puts the player in the throne or the council chamber, depending upon the chosen leader. The game has a sense of otherworldliness here that earlier Civilizations don't contain. The game has gotten an upgrade in many ways, from new factions to new planet types, and these additions are a big thumbs-up for the game and its fans.

**Genre (s):** Strategy



## MUSIC: 25

This highly anticipated album from singing sensation, Adele is finally out and is making the rounds of music lovers already. With the single "Hello," already making a storm among Adele enthusiasts, the album is touted to be a big one. The British singer, who was planning on quitting the music industry after her smash-hit success of album, 21, came back from a hiatus and recovered from a writer's block to record this new album. The "Someone like You," hit maker has already created history by having her single "Hello," as the first single to sell one-million downloads in a release week. This one could be called the most anticipated album of the year.

**Genre (s):** Soul



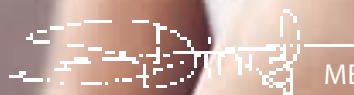


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