

# TODAY'S traveller

CORPORATE BUSINESS, AVIATION, MICE & LEISURE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

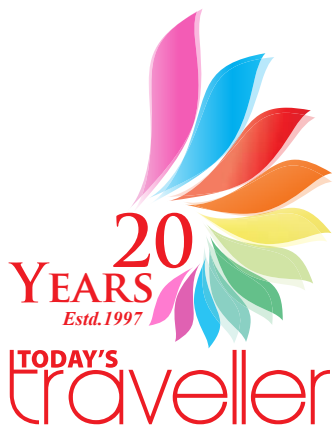
MAY 2017 | ₹50

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**MTM+LLTM MUMBAI 2017**



# 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

## 11<sup>TH</sup> TODAY'S TRAVELLER ANNUAL AWARDS &

Cover launch of Coffee Table Book  
'QUANTUM OF SUCCESS'

**31 JULY 2017**

Durbar Ballroom, Hotel Taj Palace,  
New Delhi



**Entries for Today's Traveller Awards 2017 are now open.**

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Send your nominations to [todaystravellerawards@gmail.com](mailto:todaystravellerawards@gmail.com)



## Discover Amazing Stories in Amazing Thailand Ban Chuen Beach, Trat (East Coast of Thailand)



**Tourism Authority of Thailand**

**New Delhi: Tel: 91 11 46741111 | Email: [tatdel@tat.or.th](mailto:tatdel@tat.or.th)**

**Mumbai: Tel: 91 22 22020264 | Email: [tatmumbai@tat.or.th](mailto:tatmumbai@tat.or.th)**

**Website: [www.tourismthailand.org](http://www.tourismthailand.org)**

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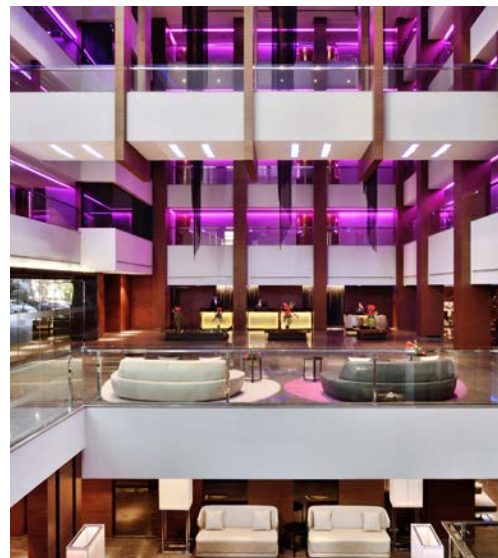
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## CIS MYSORE CELEBRATES EARTH HOUR

Patrons and staff of Country Inn & Suites By Carlson Mysore, together ushered in the celebrations of the 10th year of Earth Hour by lighting a 5-ft-long candle made by Mythri Charitable Trust, an NGO working for mentally challenged students. A sketch writing competition on Earth Hour and Quiz Contest were organised during Earth Hour, from 20.30 hrs – 21.30 hrs, for the in-house kids. The winners were handed over green saplings, encouraging kids to opt for the Go Green concept.

The hotel had 100 per cent occupancy, including the Banquet functions; 60 per cent of the guests came down to the Lobby, switching off ACs and lights in their rooms. The entire public areas, including Hotel Main Porch, Lobby, Coffee shop, PBNG, Specialty Restaurant, and Staff Corridors, etc, had switched off electricity. The public area was illuminated with thousands of diyas sponsored by the nearby temple.



## DUBAI REPORTS 11 PER CENT INCREASE IN INTERNATIONAL OVERNIGHT

Dubai's tourism sector sustained the momentum of its strong 2017 start, with the Emirate's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) reporting a stellar 11 per cent increase in overnight visitation in the first three months of the year compared to the same period in 2016. January to March 2017 saw 4.57 million travellers visit the city, reflecting more than double the growth achieved in the first quarter of last year.

Retaining their stronghold on the top three positions were India, KSA and UK, accounting collectively for 30 per cent of total Q1 visitation to Dubai, with India becoming the first ever market to record nearly 580,000 visitors in any one quarter, with a massive 23 per cent growth in arrivals between January and March.

His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Dubai Tourism, commented: "Q1 2017 has set us off on a very strong trajectory for the year and we are pleased to see our strategic investments and policy reforms yielding such definitive impact. As Dubai continues to evolve and expand the breadth and depth of its tourism proposition, we expect to amplify the appeal of our city as the top consideration for not only first-time but also repeat business and leisure travellers."

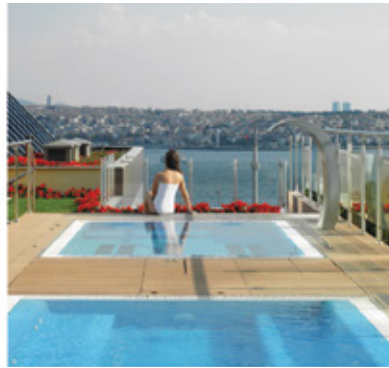


## KARNATAKA PARTICIPATES AT ATM DUBAI 2017

Department of Tourism, Karnataka, participated at the Arabian Travel Market 2017 in Dubai with Year of the Wild theme. It showcased wildlife and adventure activities in Karnataka.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr N Manjula, IAS, Director, Karnataka Tourism said, "In line with this year's theme, 'Year of The Wild', we have started promoting our adventure activities in Karnataka. This theme also helps us creating awareness and the importance of protecting wildlife. The Karnataka Government has also established the Karnataka Eco-Tourism Development Board to help the government in protecting wildlife, creating awareness about it, encouraging eco-tourism, forest safaris, etc. Along with the Eco-Tourism Board and JLR, Eco-Tourism Zones are being identified with a chain of nature camps and eco-trails. We are also in the process of finalising the Green Policy for the state," she concluded.





# *The Ritz-Carlton, Istanbul*

Located in the heart of the city overlooking the Bosphorus, The Ritz-Carlton, Istanbul features 243 guest rooms with its impeccable service and luxurious comfort.

More than 2,403 square meters of meeting and conference space including 11 meeting rooms and 1 Ballroom, highlighted by a magnificent Bosphorus view, are available for memorable events with superb catering, high-speed internet, state-of-the-art audio-visual services and technicians.

Guests at "Bleu Lounge" can enjoy full views of the Bosphorus while sampling creative cocktails and Mediterranean inspired dishes at our terrace restaurant.

The Ritz-Carlton Spa offers 8 treatment rooms, a unique 17-metre indoor pool and authentic Turkish Hammam, spread over an area of 1,500 sqm as well as 'Open Air Spa' terrace with jacuzzis, a sunbathing terrace, massage rooms and a pool.

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## FIRST HOLIDAY INN OPENS IN CHENNAI

**H**oliday Inn Chennai OMR IT Expressway opens in the city on the arterial Old Mahabalipuram Road (OMR), in the city's southern business district, viz., Taramani, Thiruvanniyur, also home to India's premier IT companies. The contemporary designed 202-room property is jointly promoted by Chennai-based SRP Tools and Bangalore-based Brigade Group and managed by InterContinental Hotels Group.

MR Jaishankar, CMD, Brigade Group, said, "We are excited to reveal a new luxury landmark in a strategic location in the IT corridor of Chennai. This is our first ever project in Chennai and we have spared no effort in ensuring that our hotel, with its contemporary design and services, will soon become a landmark in the city."

Badri Palaniappan, Director, SRP Tools, said, "We are most excited about signing up with IHG to manage the hotel under the Holiday Inn brand. I am sure team IHG under the able leadership of Shipra Sumbly Kaul, will not only meet all our expectations, but exceed them."

Shantha de Silva, Head of Southwest Asia, IHG, said "We are proud to add Holiday Inn Chennai OMR IT Expressway to our family and to strengthen our relationship with The Brigade Group and SRP Prosperita Hotel Ventures Limited. We are confident that our new venture together will be a successful one and that the hotel will become one of the flagships for the brand in India."



## SERENE EXPERIENCES TO REPRESENT TWO RESORTS IN INDIA

**T**herasia Resort Sea & Spa, a member of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World, is located on the island of Vulcano, Italy. Surrounded by unspoilt nature with the open horizon of the Tyrrhenean Sea. Set on a cliff with a view that encompasses the entire Aeolian archipelago, Therasia Resort is a sun-kissed sensation, far from the bustle of the mainland.

Garden & Villas Resort, Forio, Ischia: Set in its own extensive grounds, Garden & Villas Resort comprises 50 Rooms in 9 Villas, set in 3 hectares of Mediterranean greenery with native plants, floral footpaths, aromatic plants and palm trees. The resort is a short walk from the small picturesque town of Lacco Ameno and overlooks San Montano Bay.

Pierpaolo Tiretti, General Manager of Therasia Resort and Director of Sales & Marketing for Garden & Villas, says, "We are delighted to be partnering with Serene Experiences. We are sure our Indian guests will relish the experience of staying at two of the finest hotels in Italy and enjoy a host of activities during the spring, summer and the autumn seasons."

Naresh Chandnani, Founder & Director of Serene Experiences, adds, "We would be showcasing these two truly unique and amazing hotels to high net-worth Individuals and the experienced traveller through various marketing activities, tying up with complementing luxury brands and through bespoke campaigns individually crafted to acquaint the Indian luxury traveller with one of the most amazing experiences of Italy."



## COSTA CRUISES HOSTS INDIAN WEDDING IN BOLLYWOOD STYLE

**F**or the first time in the history of Costa Cruises, an entire ship was reserved exclusively for the celebration of an Indian-style wedding. Costa Fascinosa was sailing in the Mediterranean as venue for the wedding of Adel Sajan, son of UAE-based Indian business tycoon, Rizwan Sajan, Founder & Chairman of the Danube Group, the leading building materials company headquartered in Dubai. Four days of festivities were held in 'Bollywood' style and brought together over 1,000 guests.

"In our recent history, this is the first time a whole ship has been exclusively booked by a private individual for a family celebration. We are truly delighted and honoured that the a family has chosen Costa Cruises and this is further confirmation of the global appreciation of Italian style and quality. We did our utmost to make this a truly unforgettable wedding," – commented Neil Palomba, President, Costa Cruises.



# A CONNOISSEUR'S DELIGHT

Baselworld 2017 presents a century of placing passion, precision and perfection on a pedestal

## TT BUREAU

The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary show and premier event for the world's watch and jewellery industry reaffirmed its status as the global trendsetting show. The unrivalled premier platform celebrated the convention of the crème de la crème of the entire industry who united once again to take the pulse of the market, marvel at the new collections and witness the start of a new trendsetting cycle.



### ASTRONOMIA FLAWLESS

Jacob & Co. Founder, Jacob Arabo masterfully blends the intricate world of high jewelry with that of haute horlogerie to introduce the latest addition to the brand's signature Astronomia collection, the Astronomia Flawless.



### THE TREE OF LIFE

Exclusively feminine...The Tree of Life explores the fascinating world of haute joaillerie. "Making sense of beauty" is the KERBEDANZ motto, the masters in combining universal symbols with the outmost in the art of Swiss watch making.



### GEO-GRAHAM ORRERY TOURBILLON

Time and space fuse in the latest complication from Graham. Inspired by George Graham's invention of the first orrery in 1713, this precious limited edition of eight harmoniously marries horology and universe.



### REQUIEM

For this new edition of Baselworld, L'Épée 1839 unveils Requiem: a table clock with an 8-day movement designed in partnership with Kostas Metaxas. This limited edition takes its inspiration from the shape of a human skull and displays the time in the sockets of the eye.

Courtesy: Baselworld





## KOREA MICE NIGHT 2017

Korea Tourism Organization, in association with regional tourism boards of Seoul, Incheon and Gyeonggi organised its special MICE Roadshow at the Taj Palace Hotel, in New Delhi. The

event was divided into three parts, the Travel Mart, The Media interaction session and the Gala Night. More than 150 trade partners were attended by 17 Korean exhibitors, which included three regional tourism boards from Incheon, Seoul and Gyeonggi and other service providers, such as convention centres, hotel and cruise. Both MICE and Leisure assets of South Korea were discussed in detail with the Indian travel agents, wedding planners and corporates.

Byungsun Lee, Director, Korea Tourism Organization, said, "The Korea MICE Night, along with the MICE Mart, was a very successful event, where our exhibitors received encouraging response from big corporates, wedding planners and event companies. KTO will ensure its support to all the partners willing to promote Korea in India."

## HYATT PLACE RAMESWARAM CELEBRATES OFFICIAL OPENING

Hyatt announced the opening of Hyatt Place Rameswaram, the first Hyatt Place hotel in Tamil Nadu and the fifth Hyatt Place hotel to open in India. Developed by JKR Enterprise Limited, the hotel offers guests a convenient base for pilgrimages and leisure travel to the southernmost tip of India.

"The opening of Hyatt Place Rameswaram is a significant milestone for the Hyatt Place brand as it continues to expand in India and across the globe," said Kurt Straub, Hyatt's Vice President of Operations, India. "Rameswaram's first Hyatt Place Hotel will be a vibrant and dynamic hotel that combines comfort and style that fits right into the region's religious tourism."

"We are delighted to announce the opening of Hyatt Place Rameswaram in South India. The Hyatt Place brand offers an innovative service concept and a modern design, and we are confident this hotel will provide a wonderful new lodging option to those visiting the area," said Sharda Deepa, Managing Director, JKR Enterprise Limited.

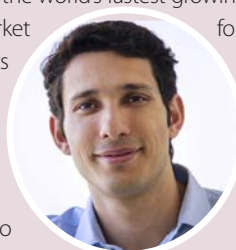


## ISRAEL REGISTERS 49% INCREASE IN INDIAN TOURIST ARRIVALS

Israel has witnessed a positive growth of 49 per cent in Indian arrivals from January to March 2017 vis-à-vis the same period in 2015. More than 8,300 Indians have already visited Israel in the first three months of 2017 as per statistics released by Israel Ministry of Tourism (IMOT).

Speaking about the growth, Hassan Madah – Director, Israel Ministry of Tourism India, said, "India is one of the world's fastest growing outbound tourism markets and an important emerging market for us. Keeping this in mind, we have increased our investments heavily in India. We are certain that our continued efforts in targeting the Indian holiday planners through our specially designed advertising campaign for India, will yield even better results by the year end."

The statistics also revealed 93 per cent growth in Indian arrivals to Israel in the month of March, 2017, compared to the same period in 2015. Hassan Madah added, "We have seen a steady growth in tourist arrivals from India over the years and are confident that this trend will continue. Currently, El Al flies nonstop between India and Israel while Air India has also announced that they will begin operations on the New Delhi-Tel Aviv route in 2017. Increased air connectivity will surely act as an added impetus for more Indians to visit Israel for a holiday."



## INDULGE LAWN INAUGURATED AT CROWNE PLAZA JAIPUR TONK ROAD

Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road recently launched Indulge Lawn of 30,000sq.ft. Now, the hotel offers 44,500sq.ft. of event spaces, including 30,000sq. ft of lawn space and 14,500sq.ft of indoor venues with a capacity to accommodate up to 2,500 guests. The hotel offers state-of-the-art technology, uninterrupted Internet connectivity and well-appointed break-out rooms. The hotel presets flexible event spaces, customised themed menus and guaranteed two-hour response time by Crowne Meetings experts to cater to your every need.







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## THAILAND TO LAUNCH MICHELIN GUIDE BANGKOK TO PROMOTE TOURISM

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has entered into a partnership with Michelin Travel Partner to publish a Bangkok edition of the prestigious Michelin Guide. The aim is to allow food lovers to explore Thailand's culinary scene, raise the profile of Thai restaurants and boost the economy. The first guide is expected to be released by the end of 2017.

Yuthasak Supasorn, TAT Governor, said, "Everyone knows that the Michelin Guides are ideal books for international food lovers. We hope that this partnership between TAT and Michelin will boost high-quality tourism in Thailand, while helping visitors get more out of Thailand's rich culinary scene. The Guide will also inspire local restaurants to improve their quality and raise the bar in terms of gastronomic excellence."

Lionel Dantiacq, President and Managing Director (East Asia and Australia), of the Michelin Group, said, "Bangkok is one of the world's culinary capitals, offering amazing cuisine, from fine dining from renowned international chefs to small family-owned eateries. The kingdom's food also has a long, rich heritage which enhances the pleasure of tourists travelling."



Saksan Triukos, Managing Director of Michelin Siam; Lionel Dantiacq, President and Managing Director – East Asia and Australia, Michelin Group; HE Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul, Minister of Tourism and Sports, of Thailand; Kalin Sarasin, Chairman of the Board of the TAT; and Yuthasak Supasorn, TAT Governor, at the press conference to announce the launch of MICHELIN Guide Bangkok.



## ITDC CELEBRATES 8TH PUBLIC SECTOR DAY

India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) the Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the aegis of the Ministry of Tourism, recently celebrated 8th Public Sector Day. To celebrate the PSU day, ITDC being a Miniratna PSU, organised multiple events at all its verticals. To start with, AIHTM (Ashok Institute of Hospitality & Tourism Management), a hospitality institute under ITDC, had organised a 'Nukkad Natak' focussing on "Skill India," at the premises of Scope Complex. The performances were made by the students of AIHTM, ITDC. The event witnessed a gathering from other renowned PSUs.

Pradip Kumar Das, Director Finance, ITDC, and other senior officials were also present on this occasion. Every year, Public Sector Day is celebrated on 10<sup>th</sup> April and showcases the significant contributions made by Public Sector Enterprises to the national economy and sets out to create awareness among the public at large about the notable achievements, performance and role played by them.



## THE LEELA AMBIENCE CONVENTION HOTEL HOSTS FBB COLORS FEMINA MISS INDIA-DELHI

The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi hosted the North Zone crowning of the much celebrated fbb Colors Femina Miss India – Delhi.

Jaideep Anand, General Manager at The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi, said, "We are extremely happy to be hosting one of the most prestigious beauty pageants in the country. We, at The Leela, are grateful to everybody who came and made the event a huge success."

Devashree Mahajan, Head PR and Marketing Communications of The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi, said, "We, at the Leela, are extremely proud to be associated with the fbb Colors Femina Miss India and we hope to continue our association with them for future endeavours."



# YEARNING FOR SUMMER SNOW

Snow-covered mountains, merging with clear blue skies – a trip to Mount Titlis is your perfect summer getaway

## TT BUREAU

Imposing mountains, velvet forests, mirrored lakes, quiet chalets and snow-blanketed slopes – Switzerland is known for its inherently stunning scenery, most especially, the mountain peaks of Switzerland, which have always been a hot bed for summer activities. Ranging from hiking, mountain biking, the Trübsee boat hire to the Alpine Flower Trains, Titlis spells adventure for all. Boasting an altitude of over 2,000m above sea level and a unique glacier experience, this mountain destination provides the ultimate thrill.

Mount Titlis is Switzerland's tallest mountain and is nothing short of paradise. With summer in full blaze, a trip to this place will leave you with a lifetime of delightfully cold memories. A mountain in the Urner Alps of Switzerland, and located on the border between the cantons of Obwalden and Berne, Mount Titlis is the highest glacier excursion destination and biggest ski and snowboard paradise in Central Switzerland. The attractions at Mount Titlis include Rotair, glacier grotto, the ice flyer chairlift, the glacier crevasse, Titlis Glacier Park and Engelberg Monastery. Covered with snow throughout the year, Mt. Titlis offers ample scope for enjoying the novelty of playing with ice.

Ranveer Singh, who was named the Indian brand ambassador for Switzerland Tourism last year, is back holidaying in this picturesque country – and clearly has had the time of his life. Singh's Swiss adventure seems to be getting more exciting with each new social media post. The livewire of Bollywood has shared several images of Titlis in Engleberg, Switzerland. Singh also visited Trübsee Snow Park in Mt. Titlis and had a crazy time with his friends as he raced down the snowy mountain slopes on a rubber tube. With these back-to-back adventures, Singh's got all holidayers craving an adventurous and icy vacation.





## FROM THE STREETS OF DILLI 6 TO BROADWAY, RADISSON BLU, FARIDABAD

Radisson Blu, Faridabad invites its patrons to experience "Dilli 6", a culinary journey of the streets of Chandni Chowk at their multi-cuisine restaurant – Broadway. The food festival provides an authentic experience to the residents of Faridabad to indulge in traditional Old Delhi delicacies.

Starting from April 21, 2017 to May 29, 2017, the "Dilli 6" Food Festival boasts conventional dishes inspired by the rustic streets of Chandi Chowk, with dishes such as Sita Ram Bazar Ki Chat, Exotic Paranthas, Habshi Halwa, Kulfi, Masala Chai served in Chidi Chacka, and much more, presented in Broadway's signature style and class. A live beverage stall serving chilled beverages like Banta, Chuski (Barafka Gola) / Kaala Khatta, Ganne ka Ras and Lassi promise to give guests a real Chandni Chowk feel in the relaxed and cosy ambience of Broadway, as it offers an extensive buffet, with a wide range of delicacies, as well as à la carte selections, for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

**What:** Dilli 6 Food Festival  
**Where:** Radisson Blu, Faridabad  
**When:** April 21 – May 29, 2017



## GRAND HYATT MUMBAI CELEBRATES COMMUNITY SERVICE

April 2017 marks Hyatt's seventh Global Month of Community Service, and the associates at Grand Hyatt Mumbai are excited to actively participate in this global initiative to relive their commitment towards giving back to the communities they thrive in.

Grand Hyatt Mumbai in association with Concern India Foundation took the initiative to paint creative classrooms for kids with special needs. Their associates embarked on a colourful journey to the Stephen's School for Deaf & Asphasic and spent the day creating a visual dictionary to ease learning for these special kids.

In their zeal to do their best to impact the community, they also organised a book donation camp to assist Foundation for Population & Development of India to set up a Youth Library for underprivileged children.

## GODREJ PROPERTIES PARTNERS WITH TAJ FOR LUXURY HOTEL

Godrej Properties Limited announced that it has partnered with Taj Hotels Palaces Resorts Safaris to develop a world class Taj brand hotel at its flagship project, The Trees, in Vikhroli, Mumbai. The Taj at The Trees will offer approximately 150 guest rooms and suites along with world-class dining, entertainment and conferencing facilities.

Rakesh Sarna, MD and CEO, Taj Hotels Palaces Resorts Safaris, said, "We are very pleased to be associated with a group like Godrej, which is synonymous with trust, integrity and quality. We share their commitment of sustainable development and we look forward to bringing world-class hospitality to this great location."

Pirojsha Godrej, Executive Chairman, Godrej Properties, said, "We are thrilled to partner with Taj to create a luxury hotel at our flagship project. Our endeavour is to make The Trees India's most exciting mixed-use development and this partnership is an important milestone towards that goal. We look forward to working closely with the Taj team to create a landmark hotel."

## THE OBEROI BEACH RESORT, AL ZORAH, DEBUTS IN UAE

Situated just 25 minutes from Dubai International airport, Al Zorah is a unique destination in the UAE, masterplanned by Solidere International and a joint venture with the Government of Ajman.

PRS Oberoi, Executive Chairman of The Oberoi Group, said, "We are pleased to present The Oberoi Beach Resort, Al Zorah, which offers the highest standards of luxury and hospitality. I am confident that The Oberoi Beach Resort, Al Zorah, with its unique location, aesthetic design and a committed young team will offer the distinctive Oberoi service to travellers from around the world."

Imad Dana, Chief Executive Officer at Al Zorah, said, "We celebrate the launch of The Oberoi Beach Resort, Al Zorah, which unveils the destination and the diversity of experiences we offer. We are confident that visitors to Al Zorah will appreciate our flagship 5-star beach resort property, which will become a focal point for tourists and UAE residents to explore and enjoy."







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## MANOHAR AZGAONKAR TAKES OVER AS TOURISM MINISTER OF GOA



**MANOHAR AZGAONKAR** takes over as Tourism Minister, Government of Goa. Under the leadership of Azgaonkar, Goa Tourism is planning to introduce new initiatives and infrastructure projects.

The Minister's mission is to promote the diverse cultures of the state and focus on improving all its products and services. He has travelled extensively and is set to infuse new concepts and ideas into the tourism sector in Goa.



## VFS GLOBAL LAUNCHES NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF JAPAN VISA APPLICATION CENTRES

**V**FS Global, in partnership with the Embassy of Japan in India, is expanding the network of Japan Visa Application Centres across the country, bringing visa application facilities to applicants in 13 additional cities in India. As part of the country-wide rollout, VFS Global launched Visa Application Centres in the South Indian cities of Chennai, Bengaluru, Puducherry, Hyderabad, Cochin and Thiruvananthapuram.

Kenji Hiramatsu, Ambassador of Japan to India, said, "India is an important market for the tourism sector in Japan. In 2016, approximately 1,23,000 Indians visited Japan. I see enormous potential in the Indian market."

Vinay Malhotra, COO – Middle East and South Asia, VFS – Global, said, "We are confident that these centres will positively contribute to the strong ties of travel between the two countries, by maintaining best-in-class standards of service quality for applicants."



**MENINO D'SOUZA** takes charge as Director of Tourism, Government of Goa. On taking charge, D'Souza said, "It will be my endeavour to ensure that all policies and decisions pertaining to Goa tourism are executed in the right perspective and all functioning of tourism and trade activities streamlined and regulated. I am looking forward to my new assignment and will be committed to making Goa a top tourism destination."



**RAJIT SUKUMARAN** has been designated as Chief Development Officer in the Asia, Middle East and Africa (AMEA) region, at InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG®). Sukumaran brings more than 12 years' experience in Development, Acquisitions and Feasibility from his previous role as Senior Vice President, Acquisitions & Development, Asia Pacific, at Starwood Hotels & Resorts.



**DEBARATI BOSE** has been appointed as Director of Sales and Marketing at the JW Marriott Pune. In her current role, Bose will be spearheading responsibilities such as setting annual budgets, forecasting, analysing revenue reports and strategy building to increase the hotel's Revpar, and the banquet sales, amongst others.



**SACHIN DIDOLKAR** has been appointed as Director of Business Development for Conrad Pune. He comes with 12 years of experience in the hospitality industry, having worked with some of the most renowned hotels across the world, such as Marriott International, Taj Hotels & Resorts, Jumeirah Hotels, Emirates Palace and Starwood Hotels & Resorts.



**SOHAIB KIDWAI** has been appointed as Director of Sales and Marketing at Hyatt Regency Chennai. A result oriented professional with over 11 years of experience in the areas of sales, business development, strategic planning and team management, Kidwai brings with him a sound understanding and a wealth of expertise in the sales and marketing function.



## XENIOUS SOLITIARE RESORT TO START OPERATIONS IN MUSSOORIE

**A**fter successfully launching hotels in Okhla, New Delhi and Ajmer, Rajasthan, Xenious is slated to open its doors to guests in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand, with the launch of Xenious Solitiare Resort, on May 15, 2017.



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**CORPORATE**





# BENCHMARK FOR SUCCESS

With a presence in 60 cities across Tier 1, 2 and 3 markets and nearly 140 hotels, the Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group is one of the most experienced and successful international operators in India

## KAMAL GILL

It is *comme il faut* that success in any field rests on an infinite number of parts, with innovation, passion and soul inhabiting each part. A successful brand not only presents inspiring options that have set a high benchmark in the market place, but one that knows its business backwards and forwards. And, a logical requisite to this is a leader who can take the million daily battles head-on and smoothen the many challenges that a business is invariably inundated with; someone who can keep his team motivated, committed and crisis-ready.

The Carlson Rezidor Group of Hotels most readily fits into this matrix. With over 75 years of experience in the hospitality business, the Group has grown to become one of the largest hotel companies in the industry with a powerful set of brands that deliver world-class hospitality

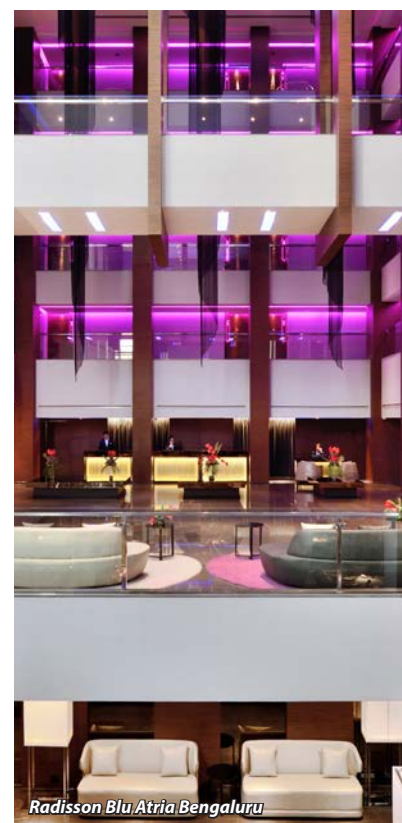
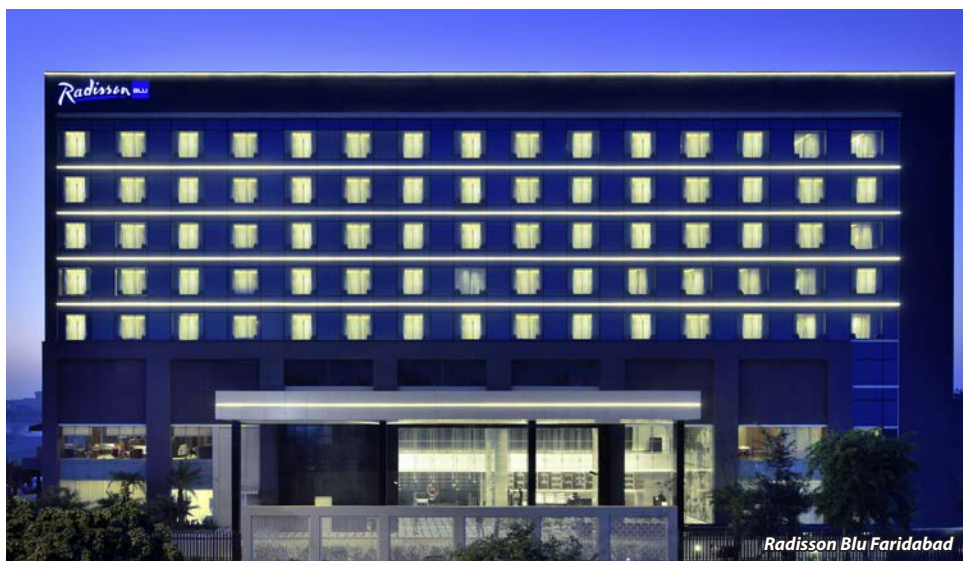
and exceptional service. It is one of the leading international operators in India and has presence in 60 cities across Tier 1, 2 and 3 markets. At its helm is Raj Rana, CEO, South Asia, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, who most conforms to the dynamics of a successful hotelier. Speaking with Today's Traveller, Rana defines Carlson's *raison d'être*, its successes and its philosophy.

"Our success in India is on the strength of our global brands and their recognition around the globe – after all, we have an expanding portfolio of more than 1,440 hotels in operation and under development and a global footprint covering 115 countries and territories," explains Rana. What is implicit, of course, is the fact that Carlson has well understood that the global brand, without losing its core DNA, has to be adapted to local conditions. "Therefore, localisation has helped us find a firm rooting in the Indian market. The Radisson Blu brand is particularly well recognised and has found the sweet spot, both with the guests as well as the investors," says Rana.

Another measure of Carlson's success,

**Raj Rana**  
CEO, South Asia,  
Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group





shares Rana, is "Our extremely high agreement extension rate with our existing owners. This indicates to us that we have been able to create strong relationships with our owners and have the ability to deliver sustained value for them."

One significant strategy that Carlson has successfully deployed is continued expansion across the country with new hotel signings in Tier 2 and 3 markets, in addition to its presence in key gateway cities. Though Tier 1 cities are still a priority, Rana says that many Tier 2 and 3 markets are experiencing considerable growth, leading to a demand-supply imbalance. "While metros still hold our interest, we believe that our future growth will be strongly influenced by expansion in prominent Tier 2 and 3 cities where we would be interested in benefitting from first-mover advantage by entering such markets at an early stage," states Rana.

When it comes to Carlson and the corporate connect, Rana makes it abundantly clear that as one of the fastest growing international chains in India, Carlson's dominant business is still corporate business, "whether the corporate business is coming through organised meetings and conventions or individual travellers, business is dominantly corporate. This segment is growing exponentially, at an annual rate of 15 to 20 per cent, and we intend to capture this market via a two-pronged approach, namely, RFP (Request For Proposal) and LNR (Local Negotiated Rate) contracting."

Rana elaborates further and explains how a strong global PCR programme

aids in driving business from key global accounts into the Carlson hotels. "Our core strength," says Rana, "is our GSO network, which contracts key accounts for our hotels annually. This process starts as early as May with the GSO team sharing a strategic road map against each account post reviewing





the Travel Click and Hotelligence report, thereby optimising rate and room night potential vis a vis competition.”

On the LNR front, Rana affirms that the Carlson Hotel teams work closely with local key decision makers in corporate houses to negotiate and sign up annual contracts, keeping in mind productivity, additional room night potential and a goal to achieve a higher ADR.

The intrepid CEO also shares that Carlson is fully cognizant of the needs of the female corporate traveller, a distinct segment with a significant share of the market. Whether it is to do with amenities in the bathroom or menu items or enhancing the security system, all these elements are taken into account as value add-ons.

The Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group’s standout feature is its Loyalty Programme and Rana conveys this articulately as he fleshes out details of the programme. Taking off from a popular axiom that says, “If you are competing to win, you need service on your side,” Rana believes that “Service is the foundation of loyalty. You can have guests walk into your door, but to have them walk into your door again and bring others with you – that is where true success is.”

Reflecting on how meaningful loyalty programmes can drive long-term value, Rana relates this to the The Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, explaining the yardstick it uses to measure loyalty. Says Rana, “It’s simply a measure of how many guests are truly willing to come back to you and recommend you.”

Rana points out that loyalty programmes have steadily grown in popularity, with many companies using them to gain market capitalisation. However, The Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group is committed to providing the best value through its own channels and websites. Though Online Travel Agencies may well have the advantage of numbers, The Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group has the edge over them in terms of recognising guests’ needs first hand and tailoring them to their specific situations.

Finally, working in the hospitality industry means you are working as a team, and becoming an effective team player is critical for the success of not only the team itself, but also



of the business as a whole, believes Rana. Other facets of the company’s teamwork include the Employee Value Proposition — ‘Make Your Mark,’ and initiatives such as W.E.A.R – Week of Employee Appreciation & Recognition, plus making a difference to the community by engaging in Responsible Business activities, such as cleanliness drives and organising meals for the underprivileged, among others.

“Our service philosophy of “Yes I Can!” stresses on significance of collaboration through the culture of empowerment and trust on each other’s ability to do a great job,” signs off Rana.







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# CORPORATE JET-SETTER

**LALITHA RAMANI**  
HEAD-KEY ACCOUNTS & COMMERCIAL  
TATA CAPITAL

## Most memorable trip to any destination?

My most memorable trip would have to be my recent trip to the Andamans with my husband. It is a trip I will cherish and remember for a very long time.

## You dream of going to?

I would like to visit Bhutan someday.

## Best hotel experience and why?

My best experience was at Silver Sand Beach Resort. Their food, courteous staff was up to the expected standard.

## A place you plan to visit again?

It would have to be the Andamans to relive the adventure all over again.

## A family vacation that stands out?

My trip to Leh Ladakh – this was an awesome experience, memorable, and is truly a must-visit destination.



## Your best holiday with friends?

An all-women trip to Amsterdam on KLM Royal Dutch Airlines. The tulip garden at Kukenhoff, walking tour and other exotic places were simply breathtaking.

## Great food you enjoyed and where?

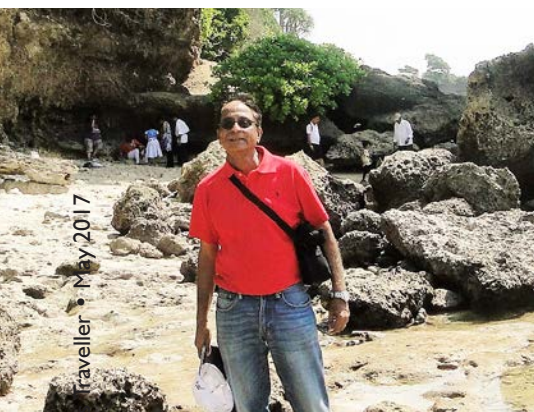
The Venetian Macao Resort Hotel in Macau had amazing food and a variety of cuisines for vegetarians like myself.

## What to watch out for while travelling ?

Travellers should watch out for travel advisory alerts, safety issues, travel light and keep their medical kit handy.

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

I strongly believe in exploring a place to its maximum and cherishing my every holiday.







# Tourism Investors Meet (TIM) 2017

July 5-6, 2017, FICCI, New Delhi

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(Investors)



B2G  
Meetings



Sellers  
(State Govts)

## Business To Business Meetings (B2B)

Buyers  
(Investors)



B2B  
Meetings  
(Partnership  
/JV/  
Investment)



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Companies)

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# THE LEELA MUMBAI — OUTSTANDING WEDDING VENUE

Make your wedding a remarkable experience at the Leela Mumbai, as you tie the knot amidst unparalleled luxury and style

## TT BUREAU

**W**hen it comes to that most special day in your life, you deserve to have a wedding venue that's perfect in every way. If Mumbai happens to be your destination of choice, then think The Leela Mumbai – the perfect setting for your grand celebration. Because, the Leela Mumbai's specialty resides in much more than luxury accommodation and special amenities. It's to do with the whole enchilada – right from the hotel's stunning landscape, convenient location, its elegance and grace, to the multifunctional banquet space, luxurious rooms, seamless service, and most of all, the traditional Leela hospitality to make your special day truly distinctive.

The Leela Mumbai's suitable location – just 2km from the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport and a convenient 15-minute drive from the domestic airport, ensures maximum comfort to you and your guests. An oasis in the heart of Mumbai's commercial district, The Leela Mumbai with its ultra modern amenities and banqueting space and inspired by India's rich history is the ideal wedding destination, whether it's a big fat celebration or a small-time intimate affair.

Consider the wide variety of options in terms of venues that The Leela Mumbai offers. The Grand Ballroom is the hotel's major highlight. The 12,000sq.ft Grand Ballroom can accommodate 1,000 guests and comes equipped with state-of-the-art amenities. The royal touch is provided by Murano glass

leaf chandeliers from Vienna, wooden panelling and rich wall-to-wall carpets.

Customisation is the key word here, as the column-free ballroom lends itself to be converted into separate sections for different wedding events like Mehendi and Sangeet, all under one roof. Be it traditional or modern, The Leela Mumbai is at hand. A dedicated entrance is available to suit your requirements.

When it comes to rites of passage, The Leela Mumbai is a master of ceremonies. A skilful and experienced staff and wedding planners take over completely, so that you are stress-free. Your dream wedding becomes a reality as expert hands effortlessly transform spaces into extraordinary settings, which translate to amazing floral arrangements, customised menus







and sophisticated décor. Gourmet chefs will pamper your palate with delectable cuisines and sumptuous confections. The no-holds-barred menu promises specialised regional food, Continental, Mediterranean and Pan Asian delights. From unforgettable gastronomical experiences to memorable themed parties and entertaining props, The Leela Mumbai ensures that you savour every moment.

The Leela experience does not end once the nuptials are over. The newly-weds need time to recover after the celebrations. The Leela Mumbai's deluxe accommodation, facilitated by premium amenities,

#### PERSONALISED EXPERIENCES

*We, at The Leela Mumbai, promise a once-in-a-lifetime wedding experience. We provide our guests personalised experiences, tailored to their preferences, coupled with warm, sincere and anticipatory service with a touch of authentic Indian hospitality.*



— Sameer Sud,  
General Manager, The Leela Mumbai



make for a perfect retreat for the newly-wed couple. The hotel offers a total of 391 suites and rooms, including the Presidential Suite and the ultra-lavish Maharaja Suite to unwind in supreme comfort and luxury.

At the Leela Mumbai, pampering the newly-weds is routine so, a specially designed spa and holistic retreat offers the best of indulgences, including the Signature Spa Treatment, which is a fine blend of Eastern, European and Ayurvedic therapies, potent enough to revitalise the body, mind and soul. These traditional therapeutic treatments, when teamed up with modern techniques of de-stressing and skincare make for premium holistic experiences. The spa's location in the tranquil green ambience of the hotel adds to the solace and rejuvenation of the senses.

The same uniqueness and exclusivity becomes the narrative of the hotel's culinary section as well. With flavours from the Indian royal kitchen to exotic Italian, Chinese and the contemporary 'soothing to all', dining here is an altogether sumptuous affair. Besides offering different cuisines, The Leela Mumbai offers newly-weds the luxury to dine in picturesque settings that comprise delectable meals in the captivating green outdoors (Citrus, Six Degrees) or an intimate wine and dine experience (Jamavar, Le Cirque Signature, The Great Wall) in utterly sophisticated indoors.

If you want your cherished moment to be beautiful, elegant and memorable, then The Leela Mumbai is the place that can make it happen.





# HOLISTIC HAVENS

Offering pioneering therapies and holistic rejuvenation, spas are trending favourites of discerning travellers

**RAHUL SINGHA**

Today, no travel itinerary is complete without a luxury spa indulgence. A few hours well spent at a destination spa not only leaves you feeling rejuvenated, replenished and relieved from stress, fatigue and tension, but also introduces you to a whole host of other cultures reflected through traditional therapy, use of local ingredients and unique settings for relaxation. Whether you have just landed in a new destination or on your way back, spa treatments are worth adding to the bucket list of a quintessential 'spa-holic'.



## SPA BOTANICO AT DORADO BEACH, A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE, PUERTO RICO

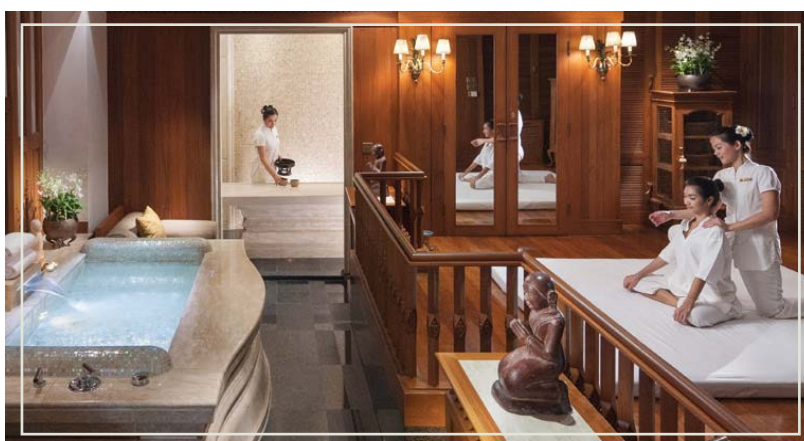
Achieve a blissful state of relaxation at Spa Botanico, the restorative spa in Puerto Rico, set within a fragrant pineapple garden and lush natural landscaping. Inspired by nature to impart a holistic sense of well-being, this sanctuary pairs local ingredients with indigenous soothing traditions performed in the most unique of spa settings for a full sensory experience. This integration with the natural world is reflected in these fresh new offerings, which take place entirely outdoors, within a lush, private garden setting. Treehouse treatment rooms, outdoor showers and plunge pools all serve to heighten the all-natural feel of this spa.

## THE ISHTAR SPA BY RESENSE AT KEMPINSKI HOTEL ISHTAR DEAD SEA, JORDAN

The Dead Sea is already a famous healing destination and The Ishtar Spa makes the most of its location, offering luxe treatments and personalised services. Known for being one of the largest spas in the region, the hotel offers 20 beautifully designed treatment rooms with private shower facilities, six outdoor individual treatment and relaxation areas, hydro-facilities complete with a steam room, sauna, and whirlpool, Tepidarium heated lounges, the Dead Sea pool and the largest hydro-pool in the Dead Sea.

## THE ORIENTAL SPA MANDARIN ORIENTAL BANGKOK

The quest for good health and beauty through meditation, massage and use of natural herbal remedies is an ancient tradition in Thailand. Experience this tradition, handed down through countless generations, in the restored, century-old teakwood house of The Oriental Spa: an oasis of peace and tranquillity. The Spa blends the ancient culture and rituals of the Orient and treatments are performed on the traditional-style floor mattress in their various treatment rooms.





# WHY? TO GET A STEP AHEAD OF DISEASE.

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Additional tests, if required, will be at additional cost. Conditions apply.



# QUINTESSENTIALLY EROS



## Eros Hotel at Nehru Place, New Delhi, is a one-stop destination for business and leisure, and a melange of style, grace and tranquillity

### TT BUREAU

Luxury's new-found residence, Eros Hotel, in the heart of New Delhi, is complete with experiences that could leave you spellbound and asking for more. The 5-star deluxe property flaunts a fine balance of grace and style and stands at par with the best of business-class hotels in the Capital.

simply a cocktail party, become routine indulgences at these ergonomic spaces.

Luxury gets a new high at Eros Hotel, so upscale wedding celebrations are a given. Outdoors or indoors, Eros offers a grand seating capacity for guests with a 26,500sq.ft-space, plus a bouquet of innovative decorative themes, avant-garde

technical capabilities and customised menus to make for that picture-perfect wedding celebration.

When it comes to fine dining, Eros indulges guests at its numerous dining varieties, pampering the palate with some of the finest culinary experiences. The fine dining options at Eros Hotel offer a host of fascinating cuisines and diverse culinary experiences. Whether you plan your girls' night out, the perfect romantic date, a sit-down dinner or a Sunday Brunch or a business meeting, the hotel provides you with the ultimate fine-dining experience at its in-house gourmet restaurants. The hotel's restaurants and lounges are reputed for creating an impressive wine-and-dine extravaganza.



Eros Hotel has its address in one of the busiest corners of South Delhi (Nehru Place), but, inspite of being surrounded by the hustle and bustle of mainstream urban life, the hotel boasts an ambience that speaks of harmony and elegance. Eros Hotel offers excellent accommodation, state-of-the-art facilities and services that add up to an extraordinary stay.

Facing the magnificent Lotus temple, the deluxe-luxury property defines indulgence at a whole new level. The hotel has a total of 218 rooms and suites, and provides experiences that go beyond the expectations of discerning travellers. Conveniently located, the hotel is just a 40-minute drive from the Indira Gandhi International Airport and is just half an hour's drive from the city's commercial hub, Connaught Place.

The hotel provides the best of services, state-of-the-art technical capabilities, an experienced team as well as customised menus and innovative decorative themes, for a seamless and memorable social event or business meeting. Sophisticated business events like press conferences, corporate get-togethers, seminars, training programmes, or



What makes this business hotel highly unique is also the fact that optimum specialisation is given to leisure and spa services. Eros Hotel offers a 24-hour personalised holistic health care treatment to guests looking to unwind in peaceful natural settings. From a refreshing early morning dip in an Outdoor Pool to a chilled drink by the poolside to a full-service Salon or a game in the Putting Green, Healthy Self has everything to enhance your wellness experience.



# CAPITAL CITY

*"Delhi is the symbol of old India and new, even the stones here whisper to our ears of the ages of long ago and the air we breathe is full of the dust and fragrances of the past, as also of the fresh and piercing winds of the present"*

**- Jawaharlal Nehru**

## TT BUREAU

A kaleidoscope of ancient heritage, colonial charm and metropolitan suburbs, Delhi, the national capital of India is a blend of many worlds. The city is an amazing paradox of tradition and modernity.

In its essence, Delhi cannot be stereotyped. It is at once cosmopolitan, bold and resilient. Everywhere, whether it is in the meandering alleys and nooks of Old Delhi or broad avenues of Lutyen's Delhi, there is a sense of the city's vibrant past. With a history that dates back many centuries, Delhi showcases an ancient culture that is evident in its many monuments, tombs and forts.

Relive Delhi's rich heritage as you check out these iconic marvels from the past.

### RED FORT

A fine example of Mughal architectural brilliance, Red Fort is a 17<sup>th</sup> century creation that has been the prime facia of the capital since historic times. The fort was built by the great Mughal ruler Shah Jahan and today it stands as a UNESCO approved World Heritage Site.

Located in Old Delhi, the red sandstone marvel is a hub for hundreds of tourists who flock in the capital every day. It is best to visit the fort in the evening when the specially arranged 'Light and Sound show' depicting the fort's historic events, takes place inside the complex.







### HUMAYUN'S TOMB

Completed in 1572, Humayun's tomb is reputed among the very first of the grand Mughal mausoleums in India. As the name suggests, the tomb was built in memory of the great Mughal emperor Humayun by his loving wife Bega Begum. The tomb reflects a beautiful amalgamation of Persian, Indian and Turkish style of architecture in its design, which when blended with the sprawling green lawns around it, creates a picture perfect impression.

Important buildings to be explored in the complex are Arab Sarai, Bu Halima and Nila Guba. All these, when clubbed with the other 150 tombs, earned the complex the title of the 'Dormitory of the Mughals'.

Humayun's tomb is located in the vibrant vicinity of the Nizamuddin Dargah and like several other Mughal structures in Delhi, is counted among UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites.



### INDIA GATE

India Gate is an iconic war memorial that was built in commemoration of 82,000 Indian soldiers who sacrificed their lives fighting for the British in the First World War. The National war memorial stands 42m high and resembles the famous Arc-de-Triomphe in Paris.

Designed by the renowned British architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, India Gate has its walls decorated with names of martyred British and Indian soldiers. The magnificent structure is located in the centre of Delhi, astride the prominent Rajpath road, making it an integral part of the National Republic Day parade in the capital.

Opened at all hours of the day, the war memorial gets completely floodlit with coloured lights at night, making the visit a delightful affair.



### JAMA MASJID

Jama Masjid, in the heart of Old Delhi, is another enchanting creation by the art connoisseur and Mughal ruler Shah Jahan. The mosque, which is also known to be the largest in India, towers over the whole of Old Delhi, yet stands apart from its buzzing surroundings.

The magnificent mosque stands on a massive rocky platform and has flights of stairs from three directions, leading to three entrance gates. Its sanctum sanctorium is in the centre, facing the west (in the direction of the holy Mecca). Built sometime in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, the mosque holds great significance for the Islamic world and is inundated by a large number of Muslims during auspicious occasions.

Considered one of the most impressive of Mughal monuments and the very last to have been built by Shah Jahan, Jama Masjid reflects the true architectural charm of the mighty Mughals.



### QUTAB MINAR

An epic example of the glorious Sultanate era in Delhi, Qutab Minar stands as the tallest brick minaret in the world. It has its history dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century when the Turk ruler Qutb ud-Din Aibak laid its foundation to celebrate the beginning of Muslim rule in the country. Elegantly built of red sandstone and marble, the Minar represents Indo-Islamic architecture at its finest.

Besides the tower, the complex houses other historically significant monuments as well. This includes the Iron Pillar of Delhi, Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, Tomb of Iltutmish and Tomb of Imam Zamina. Counted among the prominent tourist attractions of the country, this UNESCO World Heritage Site resides in the Mehrauli region of Delhi.





# CELEBRATING YOUR STAY

A preferred hotel destination in Ajmer, Country Inn & Suites By Carlson® Ajmer is a wholesome service hotel that will leave you coming back for more

## TT BUREAU

**R**edefine your stay at the city of Ajmer in Rajasthan as you check into the Country Inn & Suites By Carlson® (CIS) Ajmer. This midscale hotel features elegantly decorated rooms and suites that are complemented with exclusive round-the-clock services, state-of-the-art facilities and gourmet options that are sure to spoil you for choice. The hotel's dining options have become the city's hot spots, especially on weekends, with its mouth-watering kebabs and delightful delicacies of Indian, Chinese and Continental cuisines. The hotel is situated 5km away from the proposed airport, which has an expected opening in July 2017.

### AMENITIES

Located off the Ajmer-Kishangarh Highway, CIS Ajmer is easily accessible by road and air. It offers the traveller a perfect 'resort feel' destination with the luxury of leaving the hustle and bustle of city life behind. The property offers 71 exclusively appointed rooms, which include Superior, Deluxe and Largest Suites with 700sq.ft of area

with gratis high-speed Internet access. Food connoisseurs are in for a satisfying experience at their multi-cuisine restaurant, Mosaic, Big Shot Bar, for their sophisticated style and handcrafted cocktails, or dance late into the night at their London Pub Discotheque. The hotel provides guests a sense of serenity at their well equipped lush landscaping, state-of-the-art gymnasium, an outdoor swimming pool, Spa, activity area for kids and an elegantly designed open pool side area to provide an exclusive hangout space.

### BANQUETS AND FACILITIES

CIS Ajmer has positioned itself as a frontrunner in MICE hospitality. With a proposed airport to start functioning in the next couple of months, the hotel plans to become the most preferred and comfortable destination for MICE travellers in the cities of Ajmer and Pushkar. The hotel offers multiple banquet areas for hosting activities and events. On offer are a multi-purpose banquet space with one pool side lawn with a capacity of 600pax, a multi-purpose lawn ideal for weddings with a capacity of over 2000pax and



one premium hall for a gathering of 200pax. CIS Ajmer is being recognised as a popular Wedding destination as the hotel has lot to offer in weddings and proves to be a single window solution with its biggest inventory of rooms in the city and outlets/ space to organise different events at exclusive locales.

### GOING GREEN

Among other initiatives, the hotel also does its bit by adapting to environmental friendly methods with the use of Solar Boilers. The Solar Boilers are responsible for providing hot water to the rooms without the use of fossil fuels such as diesel and petrol or electricity during the day. The hotel also boasts the largest solar electricity generation plant in the city which produces approximately 1.5 lakh units of electricity a year, thus drastically reducing the consumption of natural electricity. The hotel operates on ground water completely



### ONE-STOP-DESTINATION

Country Inn & Suites By Carlson® (CIS), Ajmer, was the first international hotel chain in Ajmer a couple of years back. It caters very well to guests who visit the region for leisure and religious tourism. It has always been the preferred hotel for the Mayo College fraternity as well as the domestic and international buyers of marble/ granite from Kishangarh.



CIS Ajmer is also a popular destination for weddings, with its huge lawns and halls, which can accommodate up to 2,500 guests. Ajmer is one of the fastest developing cities of Rajasthan and now, with the airport coming up in 2-3 months, the hotel will have a more global presence. We look forward to providing a world-class destination to passengers as we are just a few minutes' drive from the airport.



— **Manish Gupta**  
General Manager, CIS Ajmer



and extensively practises waste water management, thus reducing its expenditure of natural water.

### AROUND AJMER

While in Ajmer, tourists are advised to visit the Ajmer Shariff Dargah, the shrine of Khwaja Gharib Nawaz (R.A), which is situated at the foot of the Taragarh hill, and consists of several white marble buildings arranged around two courtyards. Taragarh Fort, which is the fort guarding Ajmer, is believed to be the seat of the erstwhile Chauhan rulers and is reputed to be one of the oldest hill forts in India and the world. Anasagar Lake is a historic man-made lake built by Maharaja Anaji. Founded in 1875 by Lord Mayo, Viceroy of India, Mayo College is an Indo-Saracenic architectural marvel and is a must visit for all. Located about 11km from Ajmer, Pushkar is an important tourist destination and is known for the Pushkar Lake and the 14<sup>th</sup> century Brahma Temple, dedicated to Lord Brahma. According to the Padma Purāṇa, Pushkar is the only place where Brahmā may be worshipped.







# GEAR UP FOR GOLF

For golf fiends, accessories could be as much fun as the game itself

## TT BUREAU

Summer's here - time for long, languid days on an exciting and challenging golf course. Perhaps you have your resort booked, maybe even your tee times, but do you have your gear ready? Golf necessitates high-end arrangements, both for amateurs and professionals. Here are some golf accessories you don't want to leave home without.

### GOLF CLUBS

Limited to a maximum of 14 in a single game, a golf club defines your passion and class for the sport. If you like to go with some assistance, try the game improvement irons – Callaway Big Bertha OS, Cobra King Oversize and Pin GMax. Besides, the Hybrids which suit the purpose of both wood and iron also come in a variety of options, like Callaway Big Bertha Fusion, Cobra King F7/F7+ and Titleist 917 D2/D3.

If you like your putters blade styled, opt for Bettinardi Queen B, Odyssey O-Works or Ping Sigma G, whereas admirers of players like Dustin Johnson and Henrik Stenson can go for Mallet Putters like Ping Vault and Odyssey White Hot RX.

### GOLF BALLS

Like the clubs, golf balls also come in various types. This usually



depends on the player's style of play, his swing speed and the club with which the ball is hit. Modern-day technology vouches for the two-three, or four-layer design of the ball. For over a decade, Titleist Pro V1 golf ball with its hard penetrating trajectory and short game spin has been the best in the business. You could even try out the Nike RZN Black or TaylorMade Project (a) golf balls that provide a stable ball flight.

### GOLF BAG

Check out the handcrafted, customised Treccani Milano golf bag in light brown calfskin—it will definitely elevate your game in terms of style. Multiple external pockets and tee loops keep everything you need. The bag comes with a nylon waterproof travel case. And, if you are the more professional kind, try Sun Mountain's C130 that has 14 individual club dividers running through its length.

### GOLF CART

Walking all along the regular 7,000-yard golf course to get your next shot could be a drag bet yourself a handy golf cart. Check out the gas powered Yamaha Adventure Hauler that can touch a top speed of 40 kmph (a lot faster than a number of similar golf cart models) and has a seating capacity of two passengers. If you're more than two, we recommend Club Car's Precedent i2 Villager 4.





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AVIATION





## LUFTHANSA PRESENTS MUMBAI WITH AIRBUS A350-900

Mumbai becomes the third destination worldwide to receive Lufthansa's A350-900 and the second Indian destination after New Delhi. Lufthansa will operate its daily flight between Mumbai and Munich with the most modern long-haul aircraft of the world, the Airbus A350-900. In addition to increased capacity, the innovative new aircraft raises the benchmark on efficiency and travel comfort, reaffirming Lufthansa's commitment to Indian customers. Mumbai becomes the third destination worldwide to receive Lufthansa's A350-900 and the second Indian destination after New Delhi.

"Maharashtra is amongst our most important markets and our relationship with the city of Mumbai has grown consistently over the years. Therefore, it is only natural that Mumbai becomes the third destination worldwide to receive the most modern and environmental friendly aircraft, the Lufthansa Airbus A350-900," says Wolfgang Will, Senior Director, South Asia, Lufthansa Group Airlines. "Having made India home for over half a century, it's equally important for us to cultivate long lasting trustful relations reflective of our 'More Indian Than You Think' commitment. Building on this we will continue to invest in innovative products and services to ensure an enriching travel experience for our customers", added Wolfgang Will.

To mark first flights passengers on the new aircraft on board LH764 and LH765 from Munich and Mumbai were given a special commemorative certificate and an iPad cover, specially handcrafted by economically disadvantaged women of Purkal Stree Shakti Samiti. Additionally, an 'Insta Photo Booth' was created at the departure terminal that allowed passengers to capture moments of their journey with Lufthansa's A350-900. **tt**



## AIR INDIA TO CONNECT DELHI TO WASHINGTON, NONSTOP

Air India will operate a non-stop flight from Delhi to Washington, from July 7, 2017, to connect the capitals of India and the USA. This will be the only direct flight connecting Delhi with Washington with a B777-200LR aircraft. Washington will be Air India's fifth non-stop destination in USA after New York (JFK), Newark (EWR), Chicago (ORD) and San Francisco (SFO).

AI 103 will depart from Delhi at 0115 hrs (IST) to reach Washington at 0715 hrs (GMT), while AI 104 will depart from Washington at 1100 hrs (GMT) and will land at IGI Airport, Delhi, at 1030 +1 hrs (IST). Operating thrice a week on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, the flight will offer a 3-cabin configuration, with 8 seats in First Class, 35 seats in Business Class and 195 seats in Economy Class. **tt**



## AAI DRDO & JHARKHAND SIGN MOU

Airports Authority of India (AAI), Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Government of Jharkhand signed a tripartite MoU for development of Deoghar Airport in Deoghar district of Jharkhand. The existing Deoghar Airport will be developed for operations of A-320 and C-130 aircraft. Signing of the MoU took place in a ceremony held at the CM's residence.

Chief Minister of Jharkhand, Raghubar Das, Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation, Jayant Sinha, Minister of Transport, Government of Jharkhand, CP Singh, Member of Parliament, Ram Tahal Chaudhary and Member of Parliament, Nishikant Dubey, graced the occasion with their august presence.

Chairman AAI, Rajbala Verma, Chief Secretary, Government of Jharkhand, Amit Khare, Development Commissioner, Government of Jharkhand, Sudhir Raheja, Member Planning AAI, Sanjay Jain, RED (ER), AAI, HS Chaudhry, Additional Director of DRDO, Anil Vikram, Airport Director, Ranchi, senior officials of State Government of Jharkhand and AAI were also present on this occasion. **tt**



## MAHARASHTRA TOURISM SIGNS MOU WITH ETIHAD & JET AIRWAYS

**M**aharashtra Tourism signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Etihad and Jet Airways, aiming to boost tourism by attracting more visitors to the state and leveraging the airline's expanding international network.

Valsa Nair Singh, IAS, Principal Secretary, Tourism & Culture, Government of Maharashtra, Neerja Bhatia, Regional General Manager of Etihad Airways and Jayaraj Shanmugum, Chief Commercial Officer of Jet Airways, signed the MoU in the presence of Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister; Jaykumar Rawal, Minister of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra; Girish Mahajan, Minister of Medical Education and Water Resources; Sambhaji Patil Nilangekar, Minister of Labour, Earthquake Rehabilitation and Skill Development; Dr KH Govinda Raj, IAS, Managing Director of MTDC; Aashutosh Rathod, Director of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra and Joint Managing Director of MTDC and other officials from the Chief Minister's office; Tourism Minister's office and Etihad and Jet Airways.

Jaykumar Rawal, Minister of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra, stated, "We are honoured to welcome this opportunity to strengthen our cooperation with Etihad & Jet Aviation Group."

Valsa Nair Singh, IAS, Principal Secretary, Tourism & Culture, Government of Maharashtra, added, "This is a landmark agreement that will provide valuable support for Maharashtra Tourism's global campaigns and marketing activities, as well as some of the industry's most important trade and business events."

Dr KH Govinda Raj, IAS, Managing Director of MTDC, added, "This partnership will combine the dynamism of Maharashtra with the passionate hosts who open their doors by creating rewarding travel experiences for guests."

Aashutosh Rathod, Director of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra and Joint Managing Director of MTDC added, "When it comes to flying experience, there is not another airline operating to the state that offers travellers the level of luxury, comfort and service of Etihad and Jet Airways." **tt**



## TURKISH AIRLINES ADDS VORONEZH, RUSSIA AS ITS 298<sup>TH</sup> DESTINATION

**B**y launching flights to Voronezh, the global carrier reaffirms its ongoing expansion strategy to provide travellers with the greatest number of travel destination options. With existing services to Moscow, St. Petersburg, Sochi, Rostov, Kazan, Ekaterinburg, Ufa, and Stavropol, Turkish Airlines has now added Voronezh to its expanding Russian network.

Due to the carrier's capacity increase strategy on its Russia flights, roundtrip services between Istanbul and Voronezh will be operated at 3 times per week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Additionally, for the first six months of operation to the new destinations, there is a special offer for Miles&Smiles members, with a 25 per cent reduction in the miles needed to redeem either award tickets or upgrades. **tt**



## ETIHAD AIRWAYS EXPANDS CAPACITY TO KERALA

**E**tihad Airways is celebrating 10 years of flying to the southern Indian state of Kerala with the introduction of additional flights to the popular destination. Addressing media at a briefing in Thiruvananthapuram, Neerja Bhatia, Etihad Airways Vice President Indian Subcontinent, said: "With our multi-frequency scheduled flights to and from Kerala, Etihad Airways has demonstrated a commitment to this vibrant state by offering convenient global access and boosting the domestic tourism industry."

Dr Venu Vasudevan, Principal Secretary Kerala Tourism, said, "Kerala Tourism is delighted to learn of the extra flights launched by Etihad Airways, which adds more connectivity to Kerala. We congratulate Etihad Airways on a decade of flying to Kerala and look forward to conducting several joint initiatives to promote the many diverse destinations across our state." **tt**





**ROBIN KAMARK** has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer, Airline Equity Partners, at Etihad Aviation Group. Kamark will be responsible for leading and developing the Group's minority equity investment strategy, which includes stakes in airberlin, Alitalia, Jet Airways, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles, Etihad Regional and Virgin Australia. Kamark is a 17-year-veteran of the airline industry, rising through a range of strategy, commercial and general manager roles at SAS Group, to become Chief Commercial Officer. For the last five years, he has been Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer of Storebrand ASA, a leading Nordic financial services business. **tt**



## HILLS THE PREFERRED SUMMER DESTINATION REVEALS STUDY

**Y**atra.com, one of India's leading online travel portals, conducted their annual summer survey which showcases the trends of Indian travellers planning a vacation this summer. Commenting on the findings from the survey, Sharat Dhall, President, Yatra.com says, "It is very encouraging to see that the number of people taking a holiday during summer is increasing year-on-year. The surge in international travel highlights the fact that things are back to normal and also underlines that millennials are relatively intrepid and unlikely to be phased by economic problems or political unrest. Helped by relatively low air fares, there has been a shift in the passengers from rail to air."

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Credit card seems to be the preferred mode of payment with 90% people opting for it
- More than 100% increase in Indians looking to travel to USA since last year; 208% increase in Indians travelling to Europe since last year; Southeast Asia travel sees a sharp decline
- Post Brexit, an increase of 208% Indians looking at Europe as their preferred travel destination
- Despite demonetisation, Luxury travel has also witnessed a rise, with almost 48% per cent people willing to spend above INR 50,000 on travel in summer as against 18% cent last year
- 36.7% Indian travellers use their laptops while travelling by air
- Over 40% Indians are looking to book their travel via mobile this summer
- Goa takes a back seat, Hills the preferred destination this summer season
- Family trips see a phenomenal rise with almost 50% opting for family vacation in 2017 as compared to only 45% in 2016
- 67% opt for desktop as their mode of bookings; 79% would like to book through an online travel agent
- Indians seem to be caught in the daily grind of corporate life, don't switch off from work during holidays
- Indians continue to take frequent breaks, with over 59% taking more than 4 vacations in a year
- Around 50% of travellers are booking their tickets anytime between 1-3 months in advance compared to 43% in 2016, due to the ongoing trend of high last-minute fares.
- 90% per cent respondents are planning a summer vacation this year opposed to only 83% in 2016.
- 80% Indians are looking to stay in hotels this summer, only 4% prefer staying with friends/relatives.
- 50% Indian travellers read online reviews before planning their vacation, followed by 30% seeking recommendation from friends. **tt**

Source: yatra.com



## AAI CELEBRATES 22<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL DAY

**A**irports Authority of India (AAI), the mainstay of Civil Aviation in the country, celebrated its 22nd Annual Day on April 1, 2017, at Siri Fort Auditorium, New Delhi, with full grandeur. P Ashok Gajapathi Raju, Union Minister of Civil Aviation, was the Chief Guest and Jayant Sinha, Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation, was the Guest of Honour at the Annual Day Function.

The vibrant evening of music and celebration at the Siri Fort Auditorium was followed by the launch of the Corporate Plan of AAI by the Chief Guest, P Ashok Gajapathi Raju, in the presence of Guest of Honour, Jayant Sinha and Dr Guruprasad Mohapatra, Chairman, AAI, and other dignitaries. **tt**

## WORLD'S GREENEST TERMINAL LAUNCHES AT OSLO AIRPORT

**D**esigned by Oslo-based practice Nordic-Office of Architecture, the 115,000sq.m expansion to Oslo Airport sets new standards in sustainability. The competition-winning design,

which uses snow as a coolant, has achieved the world's first BREEAM 'Excellent' sustainability rating for an airport building. **tt**

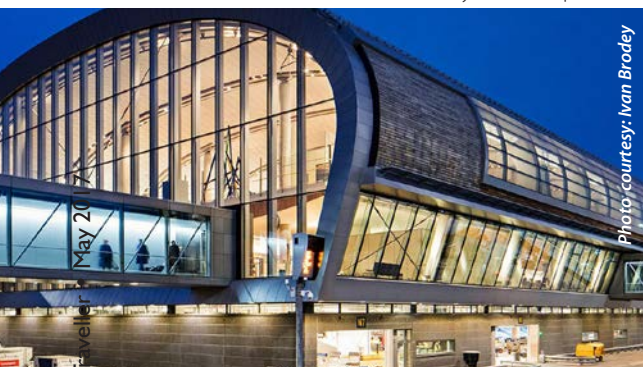


Photo courtesy: Ivan Brodey



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EXPLORER





# FAMILY-FRIENDLY THAILAND

One of the most welcoming destinations in Asia, Trat Province in Thailand bustles with attractions for a relaxing and adventurous family holiday

## TT BUREAU

Located in the eastern-most province of Thailand, Koh Chang, located in the Trat Province, serves as a hot spot for visitors looking for a wholesome family getaway. From jungle covered mountain peaks to far-reaching bays, grand waterfalls to thriving coral reefs, beach huts to luxury resorts, Koh Chang has plenty to offer everyone. In addition to natural beauty, Koh Chang and Trat Province are also home to a wide range of wildlife, including native birds, snakes, deer and even a number of elephants. As for activities, Trat and the nearby islands, including Koh Chang, Kho Kood, Kho Mak and Kho Kham are great for snorkelling, diving, camping and jungle hiking. Be it as a wedding destination or a island escapade, Koh Chang is so much more than just white sand, turquoise sea and unbroken blue skies.

### WATERFALLS

With its numerous rainforests and mountainous terrain, Koh Chang has an abundance of waterfalls. Klong Jao Leuam in Klong Son, Klong Nonsi in Dan Mai, Klong Neung and Klong Kheeri

Phet in Salak Phet are some of the famous waterfall attractions. Klong Prao waterfall and Klong Koi rapids/falls are best tracked with guides when out trekking. A round-the-year attraction, the ideal time to visit the waterfalls is during the monsoon season. However, a trip during the summer is just too tempting to miss as it involves diving into the many plunge pools created by the waterfalls.

### ISLAND HOPPING

Trat Province is surrounded by a number of other islands, all of which offer a relaxing tropical atmosphere, with beautiful white sandy beaches, great snorkelling and some stunning sunsets in the evenings. Island hopping across the small islands dotting the horizon is fun, relaxing and perfect for a family outing. The most popular islands which can be visited in a day include: Koh Chang Koh Wai, Koh Mak, Koh Kham, Koh Rayang and Koh Kood. The pier at Bang Bao offers the only regular connections with three boats a day running every day during the high season.

Another star attraction is the Lonely Beach in Trat Province



and don't let the name fool you – it is anything but lonely. Lonely Beach is a great beach and party place with all the night life that one desires. Earlier considered as a backpacker's haven, it is now an exclusive, high end paradise. Situated on the maritime border with Cambodia, the island of Koh Kood is known for its outstanding beauty. Its beaches, with their fine powder sand, clear waters and picturesque bays are all on the west coast, with Koh Kood's resorts scattered along its length. The wonderful sense of isolation is the unique selling property of the island.



ways to explore the beautiful coastline of the mainland of Trat Province and other nearby islands such as Koh Chang, Kho Kood, Kho Mak and Kho Kham. Most resorts here provide canoes and kayaks on hire for guests to enjoy the whole experience of being in water.

### HOLISTIC EXPERIENCE

Thailand, prides itself on its massage, spa, yoga and detox treatments, which are hugely popular among most visitors and an important and essential part of the whole holiday experience. Numerous top quality resorts operating at Koh Chang and Trat Province offer sensory treatments of the head, body and feet with the use of locally grown herbs and plants. Treatments include the use of tamarind (makham) with milk and honey as a moisturising and replenishing body rub, sea

### ELEPHANT TREKKING

Elephant trekking is one of the most sought after activities in Koh Chang. There are several elephant camps on Koh Chang that offer Elephant Back Tours through the jungles of Koh Chang. The island is also called Elephant Island, because the shape of the island resembles an elephant. The island houses a couple of elephant camps offering short and long elephant rides into the forest and fruit orchards. The entire trek lasts for a little less than an hour and includes bathing and washing the elephants as an activity.



salt as an exfoliator and the traditional white mud, (din saw pon), as a deep, cleansing facial.

### HAPPY SHOPPING (Thailand Shopping & Dining Paradise)

Shopping can never go off your books while on holiday and Thailand makes sure you get the best of everything to take back home. Moreover, starting this June, Thailand is celebrating its Thailand Shopping & Dining Paradise, wherein visitors can avail upto a ridiculous 80 percent discount on shopping items. Catering to different trends of Southeast Asia, the shopping and food carnival will be the biggest carnival of its kind in Thailand and will cover popular places like Bangkok, Phuket, Hua Hin, Pattaya and Chiang Mai.

### SCUBA DIVING AND SNORKELLING

Koh Chang and Trat Province have an abundance of marine underwater life for visitors to explore. Guests can be part of the environment and witness an array of aquatic animals swimming around the colourful corals. Notable sites include Koh Rang, Hin Luk Bat, Hin Sam Sao and Hin Raap.

### CANOEING & KAYAKING

Canoeing or kayaking is considered one of the most enjoyable

**What:** Thailand Shopping & Dining Paradise  
**When:** June 01 - July 31, 2017  
**Where:** Thailand



# SHOPPERS' DELIGHT



With mega shopping festivals happening around the world, we bring you a calendar of some of the best shopping destinations

**RAHUL SINGHA**

There are many ways to celebrate and most would agree that retail therapy is one of them. For some, shopping is the ultimate stress buster, while others may tend to pursue it as a mundane activity to be quickly dispersed with. Today's Traveller explores some extravagant shopping destinations that are unique in the way that they showcase some of the best attractions and provide a holistic shopping experience.

## THAILAND SHOPPING & DINING PARADISE

A shopper's paradise, Bangkok has for long been hailed as the most glitzy and fashionable destination for shoppers, looking to take the entire experience to an entirely different level.

With enormous discounts and brands on display, along with exquisite jewellery and brand-stocked shops, the visitor is naturally amazed at the spectacular sight that awaits his arrival. Siam Paragon, Siam Centre, Siam Discovery, and Gaysorn, all of these extravagant shopping malls are turned into sales destinations during the entire course of this event. And, with discounts assuming ridiculous proportions, this is one shopping and gourmet festival guaranteed to send people into a veritable frenzy.



**WHAT: THAILAND SHOPPING & DINING PARADISE**  
**WHEN: JUNE 01 - JULY 31, 2017**  
**WHERE: THAILAND**



**WHAT: HONG KONG SHOPPING FESTIVAL**  
**WHEN: JUNE 1 - AUGUST 31, 2017**  
**WHERE: HONG KONG**

## HONG KONG SHOPPING FESTIVAL

During the Hong Kong Shopping Festival in July and August each year, Hong Kong highlights special events and the stores put on sales for the festival. People like shopping in Hong Kong for better quality and prices than they can get in the Mainland and perhaps in their own country. The shopping festival not only provides discounts that are too good to let go, but malls are kept open for longer hours for tourists to make the most of it. For years, Hong Kong has had about the highest retail rental for stores which meant that shopping in Hong Kong is about the most popular in the world.

Travellers can generally find bargains on most products better than anywhere else and have a great time as well. You'll find the best of everything here – the widest variety of products, luxury stores with bargain offers and fine dining.





### ISTANBUL SHOPPING FEST

The 6<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Shopping Fest, which occurs in the historic city of Istanbul, draws a large number of visitors who are mesmerised by the amazing amalgamation of a shopping festival along with historic splendour. An annual extravagance, the Fest offers a fascinating glimpse into its distinctive culture, arts and cuisine, while offering many other attractions that promise to make your stay a joyful one.

An exclusive feature of this particular shopping festival is the distinctly designated days that host specific events assigned to them. Consequently, you have the Jeans Day, Technology Day, Gastro Gusto Day and Children and Entertainment Day. The numerous cultural events that accompany the shopping festival only serve to enhance the entire experience.



**WHAT: ISTANBUL SHOPPING FEST**

**WHEN: JUNE 1 - 16, 2017**

**WHERE: ISTANBUL**



### THE GREAT SINGAPORE SALE

This festival brings to you the very best that Singapore has to offer, living up to its reputation of being the most sought after shopping destination. Massive discounts, coupled with some incredibly attractive offers, greet you on your arrival at this shopping bonanza. Otherwise known as the GSS, it is the perfect place to indulge in a splurge of spending, as retailers offer colossal discounts on all their luxury products on display. Some of the most enticing shopping destinations that are completely worthy of your time and money include the Orchard Road belt, Little India, Kampong Glam and Chinatown. However, the best part about it all is that you enjoy the luxury of time, with most malls remaining open until midnight.

**WHAT: THE GREAT SINGAPORE SALE**

**WHEN: JUNE 9 – AUGUST 13, 2017**

**WHERE: SINGAPORE**

### 1MALAYSIA MEGA SALE SHOPPING CARNIVAL & 1MALAYSIA YEAR END SALE 2017

The 1Malaysia Mega Sale Carnival is one shopping experience that shopaholics just cannot afford to miss. Get ready to be treated with irresistible offers, big discounts from luxury brands to affordable items at malls and retail stores, making the carnival a must-visit. The 1Malaysia Year End Sale is the other big shopping event of Malaysia that brings the year to an exciting end.

Kuala Lumpur can be rightly called the one-stop shopping destination for visitors travelling to Malaysia. With its large number of luxury malls and top brands catering to every need, buyers do not have to settle down for anything less than only the best. Kuala Lumpur is home to world-class retail venues like the Suria KLCC shopping mall located at the base of the PETRONAS Twin Towers, the Sunway Pyramid and Mid Valley Megamall, both equipped with the latest designer stores.

**WHAT: 1MALAYSIA YEAR END SALE 2017**

**WHEN: NOVEMBER 1 - 31 DECEMBER 2017**

**WHERE: MALAYSIA**



**WHAT: 1MALAYSIA MEGA SALE SHOPPING CARNIVAL**

**WHEN: JUNE 15 - AUGUST 31, 2017**

**WHERE: MALAYSIA**





**WHAT: DUBAI SHOPPING FESTIVAL**

**WHEN: DECEMBER 26, 2017 - JANUARY 28, 2018**

**WHERE: DUBAI**

### KOREA GRAND SALE

Around 30,000 outlets with approximately 250 companies competing in an enthusiastic display of mind boggling sales, the Korea Grand Sale has justifiably been hailed as the state's tourism festival.

Along with the unprecedented discounts being offered on pricey products, this lively event also witnesses the hosting of several fascinating events, like the Magic Hat event and the Magic Box event. Stretching the concept of discounts to its very limit, it offers tickets to Ever land, at an unprecedented discount rate of 50 per cent, with an 80 per cent discount rate on various brands from "Lotte Duty Free." And, just when it couldn't get any better, this event also promises exciting free gifts on events held on particular dates. The date for the Korea Grand Sale is yet to be declared.

### DUBAI SHOPPING FESTIVAL

DSF, or, Dubai Shopping Festival, is a spectacular presentation of music, concerts, exorbitantly priced goods offered at incredibly accessible rates, and so much more. The hype surrounding it is only exceeded by the extravagant spectacle in full display at the commencement of the festival.

From raffle drawings to fashion flash mobs, DSF has it all. Witness the curious and fantastic transformation of Dubai Mall's famous ice skating rink into a runway at Fashion on Ice, or dig deep to hunt for your exclusive gift package. Treat yourself to the thunder and boom of fireworks that



DSF has become synonymous with, or challenge your luck with a round or two of raffles. You might just end up with loads of money or the car of your dreams.





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# MTM+LLTM: Forging Business

On April 7, 2017, a hugely successful MTM+LLTM Travel Exhibition at the Sapphire Ballroom, Hotel Sahara Star, Mumbai, concluded on a high note

TT BUREAU



**O**n April 7, 2017, a hugely successful MTM+LLTM Travel Exhibition at the Sapphire Ballroom, Hotel Sahara Star, Mumbai, concluded on a high note. The sold-out event highlighted the huge impact of the Meetings & Incentive, Luxury and Leisure industry on our economy, took note of emerging trends in Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) space and proceeded on a successful note, to promise newer business avenues for delegates.

The 14<sup>th</sup> edition of the MICE Travel Mart (MTM) and the eighth

Luxury & Leisure Travel Mart (LLTM) organised by OptiMICE Events Pvt Ltd, saw a footfall of over 450 invited buyers and created a hi-energy business platform for Buyers and Sellers of the MICE, Luxury and Leisure travel segments.

Kamal Gill, Director, OptiMICE Events Pvt Ltd, delivered the welcome address and highlighted new trends in the corporate and travel world.

The partners of the event were: Principal Country Partner – Dubai, Diamond Partner – Best Western Hotels and Resorts and Gold Partners – Jammu & Kashmir Tourism and Jharkhand Tourism. Other





industry majors who partnered this mart included OLA Corporate as Mobility Partner, Hilton as Lanyard Partner, Adlabs Imagica as Entertainment Partner and Hotel Sahara Star as Hospitality Partner.

The first Corporate Panel discussion, titled, "Raising the Bar with your Travel Partner – From Desire to Detail," moderated by the incisive Captain Rajesh Sharma, VP – Office Services (APAC), Re:sources, and the second Corporate Panel Discussion on "International MICE and Business Events – Focus Dubai," moderated by Carl Vaz, Director India, Dubai Business Events, featured well-known names from the corporate sector.





An OptiMICE Events Pvt Ltd initiative, the Reverse Marketplace session is an exclusive buyer-seller meet. It focusses on one-on-one meetings that give participants an incomparable access to any number of service providers. A truly enriching experience.



The event was thronged by a regular concourse of Corporate purchasers, Luxury and Leisure travel agents, Event and Wedding planners and other travel-service providers, who visited individual stalls and tables in a satisfying and productive single-day event.

Ashwini Kakkar, Executive Vice Chairman, Mercury Travels and Chairman Via.com delivered a hard-hitting key note address on, "Finding Prosperity in Challenging Times."

The 60 fixed corporate-led meetings at the Reverse Marketplace saw buyers from Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Pune, Ahmedabad and Mumbai in face-to-face meetings with exhibitors in a calm, unhurried and relaxed environment.

The event saw participation of senior managers from leading hotels, Destination Management Companies, National Tourism Boards, State Tourism Boards and Airlines.

Among the noteworthy delegates who attended the event were Gregory Taevs, Principal Commercial Officer, Consulate of the United States of America; Byungsun Lee, Director, Korea Tourism Organization (India office); Ashwini Kakkar, Executive Vice Chairman, Mercury Travels and Chairman Via.com; Rajiv Duggal, CEO, Lavasa Corporation Limited; Atul Jain - Chief Operating Officer, Best Western Hotels & Resorts India, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka; Praveen Chugh, President – TAFI and Iqbal Mulla, Chief Council, Global Tourism Council & Past President of TAAI. Leaders and members of supporting associations such as ADTOI, ETAA, IATO, TAAI and TAFI were also present to grace the occasion.







## BUYER FEEDBACK

*With MTM+LLTM, I got to connect with industry people and know about the new destinations for MICE activities all under one roof. It was more like a one point contact for hotels having PAN India existence. The business leads about the airlines, destinations, hotels and ground handlers were brilliant, especially the Western and Vythiri Village concept.*

– **Sylvia Fernandes**, Head-Travel (Welspun Group)

*It was a great space to meet Industry experts, peers and enthusiasts. It is always a pleasure to gain insights while interacting with people at such forums, where there are a lot of opportunities offered to Buyers. I came across some really interesting MICE destinations like Taiwan and the Baltic countries. So, certainly, I would be looking for some events there as well. Also, it was good to see so many Tourism boards / DMCs and hotels.*

– **Ajay Bhatt**, Associate VP – Admin & Facilities (Godrej Industries Ltd)

*It was a fantastic business platform. For a business associate like me, the best thing was the interaction and participation with various stay partners. Also, leads like the Hertz and Corporate Ola were well put, which gave me an eye-opener about the industry.*

– **Ajinkya Peshattiwar**, Head Facilities & Administration (Endurance International Group)

*MTM+LLM has always been a unique platform, whereby we have service providers and corporates under one umbrella. It gives an opportunity for us to have a one-on-one interaction with the respective agencies. Every year, we have seen a set of new vendors being added. What matters is conversion, and yes, out of the earlier marts which I attended, we have been able to utilise the services of the Exhibitors.*

– **Dr Abhijit Sarkar** VP & Country Head – Corp. Real Estate, Admin & Infrastructure (Sharekhan Ltd)

*MTM+LLTM is always a very good forum to network, generate and meet your contacts, especially in the Tourism board. Such an opportunity always helps in giving excellent services to our customers and this function provides leads in all areas.*

– **Vinith Vijayan**, DGM – Admin (Aditya Birla Management Corp. Ltd)

*MTM+LLTM gave all the stakeholders of the MICE & Luxury Travel segment, a platform for interaction. As corporate Buyers, we face a challenge where there are a lot of suppliers that want to interact with us year round and meeting each interested party one-to-one is not always possible due to logistic constraints. However, through such a platform, we are able to connect and communicate directly with multiple partners at one go.*

– **Shabnam Mehta**, Assistant Vice President and Head Admin Projects Corporate Administration (Aditya Birla Management Corp. Ltd)



## CORPORATE PANEL DISCUSSIONS BRING THOUGHT LEADERS TOGETHER

The first Corporate Panel discussion, titled, "Raising the Bar with your Travel Partner – From Desire to Detail," was moderated by the incisive Captain Rajesh Sharma, VP- Office Services (APAC), Re:sources, and featured well-known names from the corporate sector, like Dr Sanjay Pai, Director, Larsen & Toubro Ltd; Kashyap Biyani, Head- Global Meetings & Events, Cipla Ltd; Gary Grover, Vice President- Administration, HDFC Standard Life Insurance Company Ltd; Shabnam Mehta, Assistant Vice President and Head Admin Projects – Corporate Administration, Aditya Birla Management Corporation Pvt. Ltd and Maj. Pramila Mohite (Retd), Head of Operations (Travel & Hospitality), Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd.



*MTM+LLTM has been quite productive for us this year because it's a one-day event. So, it does not take much of our time, and since we are based in Delhi, coming to Mumbai for the event makes a lot of sense, because it allows us to meet a lot of buyers from Mumbai under one roof. Hence, we are quite satisfied and looking forward to participate in the future also.*

– **Sandeep Dutta**, Marketing Manager,  
Korea Tourism Organization



*MTM+LLTM is a wonderful platform and we participated as Best Western Hotels & Resorts for the second year in a row. I think our hotels have gained immense benefit out of the event and have secured business from corporates which they would have otherwise not been able to do so.*

– **Atul Jain**, Chief Operating Officer,  
Best Western Hotels & Resorts, India, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka





The second Corporate Panel Discussion on “**International MICE and Business Events – Focus Dubai,**” was moderated by Carl Vaz, Director India, Dubai Business Events, and featured well-known names from the corporate sector, like Ajay Bhatt, Associate VP – Admin & Facilities, Godrej Industries Ltd; Vibhu Narayan, VP & Head Corporate Services, Reliance Jio; Vikas Lashkari, Head Procurement India, Ernst & Young; Dr Abhijit Sarkar, VP & Country Head- Corporate Real Estate, Admin & Infrastructure and Sharekhan Ltd; Sriram Rajmohan, CEO and Managing Director, Club7 Holidays.

The highlight of the evening were the Corporate Star Awards 2017, which were presented by Kamal and Kewal Gill and Paul Riggazi, Director Worldwide Sales, Best Western Hotels & Resorts. The galaxy of proud awardees took their awards amid loud applause.

The occasion marked a rush of corporates. Some of the top companies who attended MTM+LLTM were Apollo Tyres, Deutsche Bank, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, Ernst & Young, Godrej Consumer Products, Landmark Group, Mastek Ltd., Parle Agro Pvt. Ltd., Signode India Ltd., Bajaj Electricals, Edelweiss Financial Services, HDFC Ergo General Insurance, IndusInd Bank, MasterCard, Reliance Communications, TATA Capital, TATA Consultancy Services, NTT Data Global Delivery, Fidelity International, and many more.



*It was our second time with MTM+LLTM, and definitely it was a great exposure for us. There were plenty of corporates. People are getting to know us, enquiring about us, and so for the next time also, we look forward to being a part of this programme. I am sure it will be good for all of us.*

– **Sushant Bhandari**, Dy. Sales Manager,  
Taiwan Tourism Bureau



*MTM+LLTM brought a lot of opportunities my way, with top customers in the corporate market as well as MICE. I think it was a great show and I wish the mart great success in the future and would love to return.*

– **Paul Rigazi**, Director Worldwide Sales, Best Western  
International, HQ Phoenix, North America





## CORPORATE STAR AWARDS RECOGNISE THE BEST

On April 7, 2017, a hugely successful MTM+LLTM Travel Exhibition at the Sapphire Ballroom, Hotel Sahara Star, Mumbai, concluded on a high note.

The highlight of the evening at MTM+LLTM Travel Exhibition were the Corporate Star Awards 2017, which were presented by Kamal and Kewal Gill and Paul Riggazi, Director Worldwide Sales, Best Western Hotels & Resorts. The galaxy of proud awardees took their awards amid loud applause.

The awardees were: Accelya Kale Solution Ltd, Aditya Birla Management Corporation Pvt. Ltd., Aircel, Ambuja Cements Ltd., Birla Sunlife AMC, Capital First Ltd., Cipla Ltd., DDB Mudra Group, Godrej and Boyce Mfg Co. Ltd., Godrej Industries Ltd., HDFC Standard Life Insurance Co. Ltd., IDBI Federal Life Insurance Co Ltd., Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd., Larsen & Toubro Infotech Ltd., Larsen & Toubro Ltd., Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd., Reliance Capital Ltd., Reliance Industries Ltd., Reliance Infrastructure Ltd., SBI Life Insurance Co. Ltd., Sharekhan Ltd., Ultratech Cement Ltd., Welspun Group.

The event came to a close with a party in the evening, which provided an informal networking opportunity for exhibitors and buyer delegates.



**iNFHRA**  
Token of Appreciation



**Accelya Kale Solution Ltd**  
Best Meeting/Exhibition Programme



**Aditya Birla Management Corporation Pvt. Ltd.**  
Most Well-Planned Business Travel



**Aircel**  
Best Incentive Programme for Employees/ Associates



**Ambuja Cements Ltd.**  
Best Meeting/Exhibition Programme



**Birla Sunlife AMC**  
Best Incentive Programme for Distributors/Dealers



**Capital First Ltd.**  
Best Meeting/Exhibition Programme



**Cipla Ltd.**  
Best Meeting/Exhibition Programme



**DDB Mudra Group**  
Most Well-Planned Business Travel

MTM+LLTM was worth participating in. It gave me an excellent opportunity to meet each corporate and understand his/her requirement. The corporate panel was of great help as it gave me an understanding of the opinion of industry experts. However, I would like to add, if a proper slot with time restrictions was given to each hotel, there could have been more interaction with the corporate.

– **Sarika Bulsara Dalvi**, Regional Sales Head - West,  
The Raintree Hotels

Excellent event! In my opinion, MTM+LLTM is the right vehicle to take India's MICE capabilities across the globe. The panellists were of high calibre and more so, it has an interesting concept which had a lot of corporates involved in it. The event also helped me get some great leads and now I am working on establishing a contact with them.

– **Carlton J Thomas**, Regional Head  
– Marine & Offshore (India, Middle East, Far East),  
General Manager India, ITL World





**Godrej and Boyce Mfg Co. Ltd.**  
**Best Incentive Programme for Distributors/ Dealers**



**Godrej Industries Ltd.**  
**Most Well-Planned Business Travel**



**IDBI Federal Life Insurance Co Ltd.**  
**Best Incentive Programme for Employees/ Associates**



**Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.**  
**Most Well-Planned Business Travel**



**Larsen & Toubro Ltd.**  
**Best Incentive Programme for Distributors/ Dealers**



**Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd.**  
**Most Well-Planned Business Travel**



**Reliance Capital Ltd.**  
**Best Incentive Programme for Distributors/Dealers**



**Reliance Industries Ltd.**  
**Most Well-Planned Business Travel**



**Reliance Infrastructure Ltd.**  
**Best Training Programme for Employees/Associates**



**SBI Life Insurance Co. Ltd.**  
**Best Training Programme for Employees/Associates**



**Sharekhan Ltd.**  
**Best Training Programme for Employees/Associates**



**Ultratech Cement Ltd.**  
**Best Incentive Programme for Employees/Associates**

MTM+LLTM is the only pure B2B corporate platform, which allows a direct interaction with the decision makers. I personally like this format of Reverse Marketplace as the one-on-one discussion, sitting across the table and exchanging notes is a good opportunity to meet everyone present in the event. Topics discussed during the corporate panel were of great help to get an insight into the current status of the industry, though a 2-way interaction would have been better.

– **Tajinder Singh**,  
Vice President - Sales & Marketing,  
Best Western® Hotels & Resorts,  
India, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka



**Welspun Group**  
**Most Well-Planned Business Travel**



The panellists, especially the speaker, Ashwini Kakkar were brilliant. His speech was informative and it gave us a lot of insights into what could happen in the travel and tourism industry. He talked about the opportunities, the market status and the kinds of threats the tourism industry is most likely to face in the coming future. Overall, it was an interactive event with the one-on-one sessions as its prime highlight.

– **Rajesh Bist**, Sr. Vice President  
– West & South India MICE, Club7  
Holidays Ltd & **Dinesh Barai**,  
Vice President – MICE Sales (West &  
South India), Club 7 Holidays



## 'FINDING PROSPERITY IN CHALLENGING TIMES' - KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY ASHWINI KAKKAR, Executive Vice Chairman, Mercury Travels and Chairman, via.com

Let me start by sharing with you the American military's viewpoint of the world that we live in, their thought procedure about the world of today. They go by the term VUCA, which stands for Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous world. And, why does the United States consider the world as such? Before coming to that, it must be realised that large corporates like Hindustan, Unilever, General Electric and General Motors are in sync with the VUCA world view.

They are putting their business plans into strategic thinking based on this new concept of the VUCA world. And, which industry gets affected the most by the VUCA? Clearly, it's our industry! Consider, if anybody in the world sneezes, the travel and tourism industry catches a cold. Today, the world is witness to many black swan events, like the discovery of new viruses – Ebola and Zika, rampant occurrence of wars and deaths on account of terrorism raring its ugly head, joblessness, Brexit, Syria, anti-globalisation and right-wing politics, all adding to the problem, which also begs the question – Are we headed for a Third World War?

In this whole scenario, we are called upon as travel managers or travel corporations, who can help people in distress or have the potential to manage these problems and plan forward both for our customers and employees.

Safety and security get willingly added to the equation, whether it's hotels, airlines or corporations, and I think the costs are coming to bite us back in the long run. The overarching scenario talks about a lot of positives that are happening, but we must also look at the prosperity side when we look at the challenges. Let us take a look at the next decade, in terms of international arrivals first. I think, it took us hundreds of years to get to 1 billion. In the next 10 years, we will go from 1 billion to 2 billion international arrivals. That's a huge number! This is surely going to bring prosperity for a lot of people in this business.

If we talk about domestic travel, the numbers are expected to rise to 2.3 billion trips per annum, from 1.1 billion trips of today. These are huge numbers and it will reap the benefits of a lot of these. Affluence, obviously, is increasing around the

world, but in India it is estimated that by 2025, the number of elite and affluent families, more or less, greater than \$40,000 per annum will increase from 24 million households to 49 million households, with an average capacity of 5.15 persons every household. Thus, people in the affluent category amount to almost 300 million.

Let's put this in the aviation category. Today, the aircraft that are flying in Indian skies amount to 430. But, in the coming 3 to 4 years, this figure is most likely to increase to almost 1,200 aircraft, with an addition of 200 to 250 in the pipeline segment. So we are slated to get about 430 to 1,500 aircraft flying in the skies within the next four years. Now, how does this pan out for customers or

for the corporates that are present here? It means lower oil prices that more or less sail between the 40 to 60 dollar rate. And, if that happens, increase in aircraft will result in lower domestic prices.

India has overtaken Japan as the largest domestic market in the world, leaving us behind only USA and China. We are at 131 million passengers per year and there has been an announcement of 33 smaller airports getting connected with regional airlines in the coming time, which will open a lot of destinations for us.

Things in the hotel industry are looking similar, as it has grown to 114,000 rooms from 15,000 rooms within a period of 20 years. And, in the next four years, 60,000 more rooms are going to be added. This is a very good development, but as the supply has gone up by 10 per cent, demand has upped by 16 percent. Thus, things are a bit worrisome as prices are most likely to get a minimal jump in the coming time. But, this won't be the case in the long run.

Although the Indian hotel industry is witnessing a progressive change, it still lags far behind the United States, which has around 4,000 hotels as compared to India's 887. A major disruptor of this balance is Airbnb, which is providing more stays than top hotel chains like IHG and Hilton put together. A similar scenario has shaped up in the car rental industry, the Indian context of which is greatly dominated by Uber. Therefore, change is the order of the day and we need to make our peace with it.



*By 2025, the number of affluent families, earning more than USD 40,000 per annum will increase from 24 million households to 49 million households with an average capacity of 5.15 persons every household.*

– Ashwini Kakkar





MTM+LLTM was very well organised, the organisers were very courteous and the atmosphere very vibrant. However, admission of general public to the event would help take our cause further.

– **Uday Kumar**,  
Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation

This was our first participation at MTM+LLTM and the experience was good. We met many Buyers and hoped to do good business. Further, it was a great networking opportunity for Ramada hotels as a group. We look forward to the next event. The electronic part, like the use of mounted adverts, could be introduced for the next edition.

– **Vipul Mohan**, General Manager,  
Ramada Plaza Chandigarh Zirakpur



The event was very successful and we met many corporates. We had an interactive session, which generated a lot of business for us. I suggest that the interaction between corporates and exhibitors be further increased so that it is a win-win situation for both in future editions.

– **Raghu Lanka**, General Manager - Sales & Marketing,  
Accord Hotels & Resorts



The mart has been really good and as far as the set up goes it is very professional. The first talk in the morning, the key note speaker was really good. He made a lot of high level points. A lot of marts that we go to, we meet smaller groups of people that we don't really deal with. But, here, we met a lot of VPs and CEOs.

– **K Jay Penno**, General Manager, Best Western Patong

Overall, we had a very nice experience at the MTM+LLTM. We got leads for 3-4 new companies recently included in our portfolio. Hopefully, they would be giving us extra room nights to help us achieve our target. The event was very nicely done and organised.

– **Anirudh Sanyal**, Assistant Sales Manager,  
Fortune Park Hotels Ltd



The event MTM+LLTM was very helpful for us in spreading awareness about the company and meeting all the top travel agents and corporates in Mumbai. We are looking forward to diversify our business and this event is certainly helpful for us to get new things started.

– **Vikram Halcchekar**, Assistant Manager - Sales,  
Jakson Hospitality Pvt Ltd







# HIGH ON HOLIDAY

Nothing beats the joy of vacationing in an enchanting mountain town with plenty of nature to explore

## TT BUREAU

Often termed as an obvious choice for the avid traveller in India, hill stations in the subcontinent are known to offer some of the best vacations ever. Mountain lovers love the diverse landscapes of mountainous regions, and the almost mystical ambiance that surrounds them.

India's topography primarily comprises the Himalayan mountain ranges in the north, the Satpura in the west and the Nilgiris in the south. So vivid is the country's hill segmentation that a traveller never runs out of options, be it an adventurous holiday in nature's toughest terrains, a leisure family vacation or just an escape from the city blues.

Here are five hill stations fit for holiday getaways of almost every kind.

### KEYLONG, HIMACHAL PRADESH

A 100km from Manali lies Keylong, the remote yet enchanting environ of the true Himalayas. The scenic hill station is reputed as one of the major offbeat tourist destinations in Himachal Pradesh. Situated at a height of around 3340m, Keylong documents itself as an unspoilt canvas that has mountains with white tops, rough pedestals covered in lush greenery and gurgling narrow streams.

The place is also dotted with numerous Buddhist monasteries (Khardang, Shashur and Tyaul





Gompa) that are renowned for their architectural excellence, and hence, one more reason to skip the rough Ladakh for Keylong.

Keylong is counted as being among Lahaul's prime centres for cultural exhibitions and its best visited in the months around July. It is during this time that the town goes into celebratory mode with different fairs and extravaganzas. The Pauri festival, Chaam Dance and burning of the devil are among the popular festivities at Keylong one can hope to be a part of in the summer months.

### **TAWANG, ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

A true epitome of the mesmerizing Himalayas, Tawang, in the extreme east of India, is a perfect sojourn for urban travellers who long for peace and tranquillity. The region is blessed with scenic marvels, known to cast a magical spell over its travellers. To begin with, it comprises the mighty Gudpi and Chong-Chugmi mountain ranges, the crystal blue Tawang Chu River and the glacial lakes, which allure migratory birds in large numbers during summer.

Nestled in the eastern corner of the country, Tawang shares its borders with Tibet in the north and Bhutan in the southwest and has Buddhism as its prime influence. The Hymns and chants from the monasteries are melodious and like a breath of fresh air.

Monasteries in Tawang are in abundance and can be seen at every nook and corner while strolling around the town. They

depict the religious history of Tawang, which primarily dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. A notable example is the spectacular 'Tawang Monastery,' which is the largest of its kind in India and the second largest in the world.

While most hill stations are best visited during summer, Tawang gets its major share of tourism in winter. As the cold season approaches, the region gets completely covered in a milky white blanket, making it a hub for snow lovers and adventure sports.

### **MATHERAN, MAHARASHTRA**

Away from the cacophony of Mumbai and Pune in Maharashtra, Matheran is a picturesque hill station that serves as a perfect weekend getaway for city dwellers. The hill station resides at an elevation of around 2,600 ft above sea level and is a declared eco-sensitive region. It is due to this fact that automobiles are completely banned in the vicinity of Matheran. And thus, commuting within Matheran is done only through the miniature train service.

Cruising uphill, the train ride offers panoramic views of deep gorges with roaring waterfalls. Once at the top, the view gets more enticing as lush greens of the Deccan Plains and Western Ghats contain the whole valley below. There are a total of around 38 tourist points, each having its trail backed by breathtaking surroundings. The most prominent of these are, One tree hill, Porcupine Point, Monkey Point and Louisa Point.







Getting to Matheran is no hassle at all as this tiny hill destination stays well connected through state highways. To experience the best of Matheran's natural beauty, tourists are advised to make their travel arrangements during the monsoon.

### KODAIKANAL, TAMIL NADU

Tamil Nadu's most suitable response to the Himalayas in the North as Kodaikanal in the Palani Hills – an absolute respite from the heat-soaked plains of the state. The topography of Kodaikanal, includes green meadows, dense forest cover and pristine lakes, all enveloped in a blanket of mist.

The hill station's history dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when British officers, in order to seek refuge from the tropical heat, made their habitat on the hills. This set off a popular precedent and the place was soon transformed into a popular tourist destination.

Today, Kodaikanal is an ideal sojourn, offering attractions like the Bear Shola Falls, Coakers Walk, Kodai Lake, Bryant Park and Dolphin's Nose to help urban travellers unwind far from

the madding crowd. Travellers can also indulge in activities like boating, horse riding, cycling and trekking to make the best of their Kodaikanal experience.

### GULMARG, JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Another refreshing discovery by the British, Gulmarg, in the Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, stands out as one of India's premier tourist destinations. Gulmarg, which translates to 'meadow of flowers,' offers the ultimate in 'nature mixed with adventure' for thousands of discerning travellers every year. The best part about Gulmarg is that it's an anytime destination and is not limited with the change of seasons.

Spring time cloaks the region with a lush green mantle, while winter brings its own milky white magic. The seasons bring a host of opportunities (summer and winter adventure) to explore the mystical terrains of Gulmarg.

The hill station is also renowned for its Gondola rides (cable car), which offer breathtaking views of the surrounding Himalayas and the pristine town of Gulmarg.







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# THINK TRAVEL THINK DUBAI

Dubai has emerged as the 'go to' destination to meet India's ever-increasing corporate, leisure and luxury requirements. At the recently held MTM Think Tank, at The Leela Mumbai, this fact was reiterated by corporate MICE players

## TT BUREAU

The recently concluded MTM Think Tank on 'Dubai as a preferred destination for Business Events,' on March 3, 2017, at The Leela Mumbai, was attended by a bevy of corporates from the travel and tourism world. There were various issues raised and addressed, which included MICE offerings in Dubai, safety and security of single female travellers and Visa procedures, among others.

The fact that Dubai's tourism sector has registered a strong start to 2017, with a stellar 11 per cent increase in overnight visitation in the first three months of the year compared to the same period in 2016, was appreciated by the audience. Similarly, the fact that from January to March 2017 saw 4.57 million travellers visiting the city, established the fact that Dubai as a land of rich cultural history and vast experiences is a preferred destination.

Corporates from several leading multinational companies were of the view that Dubai has, over time, emerged as a popular MICE destination.

Carl Vaz, Director-India, Dubai Business Events, made a presentation to the august gathering of how the Dubai Business Events programme continues to thrive and attract visitation



through a growing portfolio of leading events in the city.

The year 2016 saw Dubai win a growing number of global MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) events to be held over the coming years, including the World Congress of Cardiology 2018, Lions Clubs International ISAAME Forum 2018 and The International Federation of Health Information Management Associations International Congress 2019.

In recent months, Dubai has won recognition as the





Overseas Luxury MICE Destination of the Year 2016 at the China Travel & Meetings Industry Awards - Business Travel & MICE, and was named the Middle East's Leading Meetings & Conference Destination 2016 at the World Travel Awards Middle East, in addition to also winning the incentive People's Choice Award.

Most of the attending corporates reiterated that Dubai was the perfect destination for MICE activities, with its range of hotels, from affordable accommodations to luxury condos; delectable cuisine to satisfy all palates, personalised services to host big weddings or event spaces to hold many a company's annual general meeting.

The event was well attended by corporates from all over India. Representatives included Cipla Ltd; Ambuja Cement; Accelya; Ericsson; Transasia Bio-Medicals; Tech Mahindra; Reliance Infrastructure; Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd; Sharekhan Ltd; Aegon Life Insurance; Godrej Industries Ltd; Welspun Group; Godrej

Appliances; Tarz Distribution; TATA Capital Financial Services; MSD Pharma; ACG Worldwide; Aditya Birla Management Corporation; Essel Mining & Industries; Idea Cellular; Ultratech Cement; Reliance Jiocomm; Reliance Industries; Apollo Tyres; Loreal; Trent Ltd.; Glenmark Pharmaceuticals and Mahindra Auto & Farm.



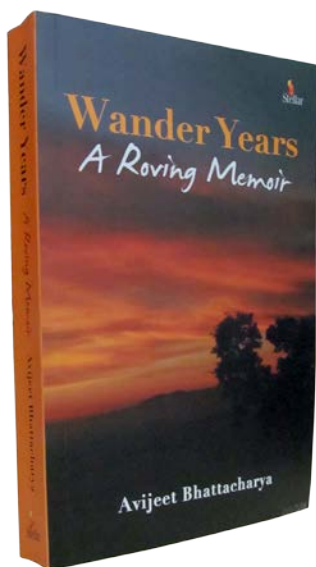


# PICK OF THE MONTH



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

## BOOK: WANDER YEARS – A ROVING MEMOIR



Published by Stellar Publishers, Avijeet Bhattacharya's 'Wonder Years – A Roving Memoir' is a travel tale with a difference. Using a popular genre, he decodes the cryptic puzzle that India is, and destinations abroad with a discerning eye and keen sense of detail. The book is replete with delightful narrations and memoirs, all punctuated with humour and charming anecdotes. The journey also highlights the special bond he shares with his wife and daughter. Bhattacharya truly captivates the essence of what it means to travel.

**Genre(s): Fiction**



## DVD: LOGAN

It's the year 2029 and mutants are close to being things of the past. Our veteran Wolverine has shed his cranky mood and lives the rest of his earlier termed immortal life taking care of the indisposed Professor X. The lone iron-clawed beast finally gets his calling and is now leading an untroubled life. But, troubles find him soon, when Laura, a mutant of the same breed as Logan, comes to his doorstep escaping the dark forces. The ageing Logan has to protect her, but unsure if he is still up for the action.

**Genre(s): Action/Drama**

## MUSIC: POISON THE PARISH

The 'Broken' hitmakers Seether are back with their 7<sup>th</sup> full-length studio album, "Poison the Parish," set to be released in the second week of May, worldwide. It is Seether's heaviest till date and is typical of the band's



crunching distortion, fuelled and brooding textured music, which, when paired with captivating lyrics, tightly holds down the listener. Overall, the 15-song album has a dirty style and a symphonic tempo that will hit you hard the moment Shaun Morgan gets his epic vocals running.

**Genre(s): Rock**



## GAME: PREY

A decade before, it was Tommy who was to save his abducted girlfriend and grandpa from the matter (living and non-living) consummating aliens known as Sphere. Now, Morgan Yu takes charge of an abandoned moon orbiting station, which in the aftermath of an accident and treachery gets infested by amorphous aliens. Try keeping up with the early pace, as the best 'fractured reality' and madness waits in the later hours.

**Genre(s): Action-adventure**



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