

# TODAY'S traveller

CORPORATE BUSINESS, AVIATION, MICE & LEISURE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2016 | ₹50

**RAISING THE BAR**

**ALLURE  
OF NATURE**

**ON CLOUD LUXURY**

**FACE TO FACE  
WITH  
DR A K MANOCHA**

**24 HOURS  
IN AUCKLAND**

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Above timings are effective from 6<sup>th</sup> Nov 2016 and are subject to change

FLIGHT	FROM	TO	DEPART	ARRIVE	DAYS OF THE WEEK
AC 73	DELHI	VANCOUVER	6:55	8:20	MON, THU, SAT
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2016

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## REASSURING HOSPITALITY

Crowne Plaza, the upscale hotel by InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), made its entry in Jaipur with the launch of Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road. Ideally located in close proximity to the airport, in the business hub of Sitapura, the hotel provides 218 rooms and 20 suites in total. To provide guests with a comfortable stay, guests can enjoy their stay in the biggest rooms in Jaipur which are around 40sq.m in size. The inward facing rooms provide beautiful views of the pool side and the central courtyard. The Sleep Advantage® program includes premium bedding, aroma therapy, Quiet Zone floors and a Guaranteed Wake-up Call, which will help guests unwind and rest easier, ensuring a productive day ahead.

Spread across 19,500sq.ft, the hotel's expansive and pillarless banquet venues coupled with service excellence by Crowne Meetings experts, offer state-of-the-art technology, uninterrupted Internet connectivity and well-appointed break-out rooms. The hotel's comfortable space, customised themed menus and guaranteed two-hour response time cater to every business need.

Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road, a green building has incorporated several sustainable features. This Green Engage certified hotel gives the property the ability to track energy, carbon and water consumption as well as to assess how waste is managed. The Double glass unit ensures lower carbon footprints and allow maximum entry of natural light while minimizing heat transmission. It is the only hotel façade in India, to not have punch windows. The unique materials used in the building façade like aluminum composite panels, Double glass unit, Sand Stones and Terracotta fin will ensure the hotel remains cool throughout. Other sustainable solutions by the hotel are solar system for providing hot water, sewage treatment plant, energy saving times and sensors and hear recovery systems. **tt**



## DUBAI PARKS AND RESORTS TO DEBUT OCTOBER END

Dubai Parks and Resorts announced that the region's largest theme park destination will open its gates to the public on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2016. This unique destination will be comprised of three theme parks - Bollywood Parks™ Dubai, MOTIONGATE™ Dubai, and LEGOLAND® Dubai, together with LEGOLAND® Water Park. The destination will also include Riverland™ Dubai, a themed retail, dining, and entertainment experience, along with the Lapita™ Hotel, a Polynesian-themed family resort.

"This has been a long-time coming and I can't say enough about how excited we are to welcome our guests to the destination to Experience Amazing," said Raed Kajoor Al Nuaimi, CEO of Dubai Parks and Resorts. "As the largest entertainment destination in the region, Dubai Parks and Resorts will create jobs in Dubai, support the UAE's tourism vision and grow the family leisure industry in the region." Annual passes are currently on sale at [dubaiparksandresorts.com](http://dubaiparksandresorts.com), and daily passes will be announced soon. **tt**



## #KENYAKALLING

Kenyan ambassador to India HE Florence Imisa Weche, in absolute flare, danced to the tunes of the growing tourism in Kenya at the Launch Event of #KenyaKalling – A campaign by Kenya Tourism Board for the India Market to incentivise the Indian Travel Trade.

'Kenya Kalling' is a special incentive programme in conjunction with the Kenya Airways. Kenyan students in India performed a cultural folk dance in, wherein not only the audience but her Excellency also joined in and shook a leg. The talented students made the audience groove to their folk music. The event saw people from trade and travel industries pouring in at the event. Kenya Airways has launched a very attractive, all inclusive airfare of INR 25,538 for a return trip from Mumbai to Nairobi which can be booked on their website.

Hildah Ogada, Assistant Regional Marketing Manager, Kenya Tourism Board, said, "India is now the third largest tourist source market for Kenya. We have seen a growth of over 30 per cent during January to July, over the same time last year. India has grown as a source market and has tremendous potential to grow further, we are now targeting 100,000 visitors from India by 2018. Kenya Tourism Board has been undertaking several consumers as well as trade initiatives to further increase arrival from India." **tt**

# TAKE YOUR BODY WHERE YOUR MIND HAS BEEN LATELY. TAKE YOURSELF TO ODISHA.

Khandagiri-  
A journey back to India's rich  
architectural past.

If you're looking for an extraordinary holiday destination, look closely at Odisha. Dotted with some of the world's finest beaches and waterfronts at Puri, Chandipur, Gopalpur, Talasari and Astarang, Odisha is the sun, sand and surf paradise like none other. But it isn't only the beaches that will bring you to its shores. Odisha's resplendent past, evident at Khandagiri, Udayagiri, Ratnagiri and Konark; pristine wildlife beauty at Bhitarkanika, Similipal and Chilika; and unflinching devotion at Jagannath, Lingaraja, Ananta Vasudeva and Mukteswara temples will leave you spellbound for years. So make it to Odisha this year. It promises to be a one-in-a-million holiday.

# EXEMPLARY CHANGE MAKER

Making the passenger the prime beneficiary is A K Manocha, Chairman & Managing Director, IRCTC's main focus and with this in mind, he has brought in several initiatives necessary to translate vision to growth

## TT BUREAU

It is not without reason that the Indian Railways (IR), the largest government establishment in India, sports the tag line, 'Lifeline of the Nation.' A national asset, it runs around 11,000 trains, including 7,000 passenger trains every day, and controls a vast amount of goods and passenger services across the country. At the managerial level, IR is a well-managed organisation with a cadre of organised services. An asset arm of this mammoth conglomerate is the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd (IRCTC), a Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Railways.

IRCTC's mandate is to upgrade, professionalise and manage the catering and hospitality services at stations, on trains and other locations and to promote domestic and international tourism through development of budget hotels, special tour packages, information and commercial publicity and global reservation systems. The head of such an organisation would require to be innovative and intrepid, in order to make the sweeping changes necessary to translate vision to growth.

AK Manocha, Chairman & Managing Director, IRCTC, seems to be well armed with these requisites, considering the extensive changes he has effected for the benefit of passengers, including easing rail ticket booking, improving the catering in a few high-end trains and the introduction of a few other services, such as water vending machines at railway stations and executive lounges. In conversation with Today's Traveller, Manocha elaborates on his affinity and loyalties with IRCTC and how important the welfare of passengers is to him and the organisation.

Speaking about the new initiatives that have made a significant mark in its passenger services, especially water vending machines installed by IRCTC, which dispense safe, non-packaged drinking water for as little as Rs 1/- Manocha says, "IRCTC believes in providing services to the passenger of the country, and it has tremendous faith in that coin which is not very popular these days, that is, the one rupee coin. We are willing to offer 300 millilitres cold water as a refill for one rupee, and it is available across all stations of the country. With this objective in mind, we have already placed 600 machines. Other than that, 2000 water vending machines should be ready by the middle of next year, with another 10,000 more, ready to go into service over the next two years."

Manocha explains how the scheme will be promoted through self-help groups, so that women who are downtrodden and financially bereft, will get support. "These new machines are an extremely lucrative business," points out Manocha..."In



Vijayawada alone, I created a record of about Rs12,000 a day. So, a machine worth Rs 5 lakh would earn Rs 40 lakh a year...this proves that the self-help group has good business prospects," states Manocha.

Another scheme that is close to Manocha's heart is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Swach Bharat Abhiyan campaign, and in accordance with this, the 'Namma toilet,' which translates from the Kannada to mean 'ours,' has been installed at various stations in South India, and are ready for commissioning at Bandra, Andheri, Katra, Jammu, Amritsar, New Delhi, Mumbai, Lucknow, Banaras, Sarnath, Maruadih, Kashi, Pilibhit, and a few other stations. Modern and eco-friendly, each Namma toilet comprises a block of 8 units, with 2 male, 1 female, 1 handicap and four urinals. It can be converted into bio-toilets, with solar lighting as well.

IRCTC has evolved as a company whose structural plans and policies revolve around the concerns of the common man. The evidence of this statement is reflected in the insurance scheme policy which was launched in September. Under this policy, all passengers booking their tickets online through the IRCTC website will be eligible for travel insurance cover for a premium of just Rs1/-. Elaborating further, Manocha says, "We have also launched a Passenger Insurance Scheme, and it's extremely popular. Getting a million-rupee-worth of insurance for a rail journey, for one rupee is not a bad bargain, after all." In spite of the various challenges that remain, this scheme has proved to be a resounding success with the people.

Of course, challenges still abound – one of these is the need to drastically reduce the serpentine queues that one sees across ticket counters, people struggling endlessly to book their seats or berths in any train available. Ever the visionary, Manocha foresees seamless travel for Indian rail passengers, just as it is in China – "I am looking for a scenario where you don't even have to buy a ticket. One simply needs to go to the station, enter the train, go out of the train, and money is debited through your Smart Mobile through MPCI or payment gateways. In China, the passenger railway ticket comes to your home, or to your employer. Since technology is available there for this to be realised, this is possible. In India, this could well be achieved with the Aadhaar card...I am looking forward to realising a similar vision here in India," indicates Manocha.

The intuitive administrator seeks to differentiate between 'profiteering' and garnering profits for growth and elaborates upon this: "By dint of our efforts, our company has grown from 500 crore, which was its turnover, to 1500 crore today, all in six years time. We have grown by about 40 per cent within the last

two years, and have made it into the Fortune Next 500 list of Indian companies. We jumped another 200 ranks because of our tremendous performance in the last year or so. Last year's performance should bring us into the top 50 to 60, and I am sure this year's performance should bring it up into the Fortune 500 Indian companies list. And perhaps, in another one or two years, we could well be a part of the Fortune 500 global companies," Manocha informs.

Redefining luxury train travel since 2010, is the Heritage luxury train - the Maharaja Express which offers five great rail journeys across India with departures from Delhi and Mumbai. Manocha has brought the spotlight deftly on the high-end business prospects of the train and hopes to bring the product in the bucket-list of tourist visitors to India.

On the cards is the distinct possibility of taking over the Rail Transport museum, where a host of functions could be organised, such as fashion and film shows, cultural shows, food melas, etc. It will house an auditorium and a circular restaurant which will have automatic machines dispensing branded

foods, plus other sumptuous varieties of Indian cuisine. On the anvil are some non-branded ready-to-eat meals at incredibly low prices.

IRCTC also caters to the much-touted Gatimaan Express, with reputed branded teas at low prices; plus, 78 base kitchens, run by reputed concerns which are scheduled to be set up all over the country. "I aim to make train travel a 'wow' experience, with people preferring to travel by train because of the spectacular services offered by it, in terms of delectable food and entertainment," vows Manocha. While he concedes that air travel for business and certain conveniences overrides train travel, Manocha firmly believes that "nothing connects the country like the railways," that they are widely connected to many

towns and cities across the country, at one fourth the price of air fares. For instance, the Bharat Darshan trains and many other state-run trains ply at extremely low rates.

Manocha expands on what could be the gem in IRCTC's crown – train travel for pilgrims. IRCTC and Jharkhand Tourism Development Corporation (JTDC) have entered into an understanding for providing all expenses paid pilgrimages for BPL senior citizens. Under the understanding, the IRCTC will run two special trains to Puri (Odisha) and ferry a total of 1000 pilgrims every month. The pilgrims will be fed, lodged and taken out for sightseeing by IRCTC while the expenses will be borne by JTDC. "Like Shravan Kumar, our company takes care of all senior citizens to provide the best of facilities," rounds off Manocha proudly.

*IRCTC believes in providing services to the passenger of the country, and it has tremendous faith in that coin which is not very popular these days, that is, the one rupee coin.*

# MASTER STRATEGIST

With a skill-set in strategy, business development and implementation, Mario Habig, Managing Director, Le Passage to India Journeys, has created a brand that is committed to excellence

## TT BUREAU

Ask any successful leader about their area of focus and you are most likely to hear that strategy and implementation is high on their list of priorities. The next step is to ensure that successful execution of the strategy becomes the focus of every person in that organisation. It's called teamwork, what the French describe as 'esprit de corps.' It means a sense of unity, of enthusiasm for common interests and responsibilities, as developed among a group of persons closely associated in an enterprise.

Mario Habig, Managing Director, Le Passage to India, Journeys, brings with him a wealth of industry understanding, global experience and a proven skill set in strategy, business development and implementation. A man of vision, he has been able to articulate that vision to his team so vividly that it has become their vision. Habig began his professional career with TUI, in Group Controlling, in 2004. Prior to his role as Business Development Director of Destination Services, he headed the Executive Chairman's office and the Group Strategy & Business Development function at TUI AG.

In a one-on-one with Today's Traveller, Habig speaks about his rites of passage as he moved to Le Passage to India and his experiences as head of a Destination Management Company (DMC).


Habig's story begins in January 2015, when the Chairman of Le Passage to India invited him to take over as Managing Director of the company. A cultural shift had occurred with the takeover of the company by TUI, but Habig was ready for the challenge. "I think I was well prepared for the job since I had

a very good understanding of what I wanted to achieve in the company, and as such, within the industry," shares Habig.

The dynamic young executive set about managing the workforce, because he believed that was crucial. "I think it was very important to tackle the job from the HR angle because, I believe that if you keep your team happy, then they will keep your clients happy," states Habig. He points out how Le Passage to India was diverse, comprising many companies and brands, including Le Passage to India, India Routes, Go India Journeys, amongst others, and the first step was to bring them under one umbrella.

Habig succeeded in doing just that, proving that teamwork is the glue which keeps a team together, a bond which promotes strength, unity, reliability and support. "You can see now that we are well-synergised, we are sitting in one place, we have different teams interacting very strongly with one another, our ties are stronger and together we impact the market better," informs Habig. Though coming from a European background, Habig was cognizant of the importance of family ties in India and that a family approach to business that emphasised trust and values was the way to go.

Next on Habig's agenda was strategic positioning of the company and to create a mission statement that would provide the company with a framework and purpose. Armed with a repertoire of strategy skills from his years with the TUI Group, Habig knew that an effective mission statement must be a clear, concise declaration about one's business strategy. This is how he came up with the positioning statement that nailed

A man with short brown hair, wearing a dark navy blue suit jacket over a white collared shirt, stands with his hands in his pockets. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a scenic view of mountains at sunset, with a warm orange and yellow glow from the setting sun behind the peaks.

it for Le Passage to India: 'The journey of a lifetime, every time.' Shares Habig, "That has been our guiding principle. It was defined following the key issues in the market and from the fact that I have a very clear strategic framework because I've worked for many years in the strategic areas of business."

Habig stresses upon his experience as a business strategist, having started his career in TUI and making it to the top rung as head of the Executive Chairman's Office, where he was responsible for heading the group's strategy and group development function. He then developed a strategic framework for destination service for the entire DMC business globally. The astute professional points out that technology poses a major challenge in the marketplace, where suppliers now go directly to the end user.

Habig is an advocate of customer-experience management, which relates to customer interactions and to exceed customer expectations and garner customer loyalty. The master strategist puts his vision statement succinctly: "If I wish to create the journey of a lifetime, I would want to create experiences that last for a lifetime, something that is extraordinary and exclusive for my clients. If I aspire for that, I first need to understand the client, and be closest to that person. And that doesn't mean...the tour operator, or the travel agent abroad, I need to understand the end customer... the one who is travelling."

Hand in hand with customer engagement comes 'differentiated product propositions,' that is, offering exclusive products that nobody else can. Habig cites the example of Mexico's famous pyramid at Chichen Itza, where TUI offered its clients an exclusive entry before opening time. Habig has endeavoured to make this exclusivity consistent and calls it 'operational delivery,' and this is linked with the brand as represented by the company. The latest ISO 9001 2015 standard for product development ensures operational delivery and includes all standard operating procedures. This is how the company translates its vision to reality.

Multiple initiatives towards product enhancement, constant brainstorming, everyone working jointly as a team...these are some of the things that Habig lists as the hallmark of his company's resounding success. "Along with one key element to see it through, which is patience," concludes Habig with a smile.



## In conversation with Tom Garzilli, Chief Marketing Officer, Brand USA

### How important is the India market for Brand USA?

India is a significant market for us and ranks third as a target volume market for Brand USA globally. The USA offers unparalleled diversity of unique experiences for Indian visitors, and we will continue to build on our existing relationships and collaboration with the Indian travel industry through our various initiatives.

### What are the trends observed by you with regard to visitors from India?

The USA has witnessed a steady increase in Indian travellers. In 2015, India ranked 11<sup>th</sup> amongst the top 20 tourist generating countries for the US with 1,125,783 arrivals, an increase of 17.0 per cent over the previous year. Increasing numbers of Indian travellers are visiting our diverse destinations to, through and beyond our gateways. There is something for everyone - from our family-friendly destinations to our exciting urban experiences to our national and state parks.



### What are your plans for the India market?

Since 2013 Brand USA has been very active in India promoting the destination via continuous and ongoing engagement programmes with Indian travel agents and media. Our primary objective is to create top-of-mind recall of the diversity and range of tourism offerings in our country. We will also continue to engage our partners via targeted multi-city travel trade educational seminars across India, while supporting various trade and media FAMs. Our USA Discovery Program – the online training programme for travel agents is another successful initiative that is regularly refreshed with new and exciting content and training modules to further educate our trade partners on the range and diversity travel experiences across our country.

Lastly, we will continue to partner with airlines flying out of India to support their new flight lift to the United States. **tt**

## INDIA STANDS STRONG IN THE MASTERCARD GLOBAL DESTINATION CITIES INDEX

India stands strong in the sixth annual Mastercard Global Destinations Cities Index released recently, with five Indian cities making it to the Top 100 destination cities for 2016. Mumbai (ranked at 27), Chennai (ranked at 30), Delhi (ranked at 48), Kolkata (ranked at 62) along with Pune (ranked 91) are the five cities featured in the list.

Mumbai and Chennai stand out as the Fastest Growing Destination Cities globally with at least 1 million overnight visitors in 2016, ranked at numbers 14 and 19 respectively. Mumbai further consolidates its position as the only Indian city to enter Asia Pacific's Top 10 Destination Cities in terms of International Overnight Visitors in 2016. Ranked at number 10, right after Shanghai, the city boasts of 4.86 million visitors along with a visitor spend of \$3.6 billion for the year 2016. Bangkok has emerged as the leading destination city by international overnight visitor arrivals. According to the study, Bangkok is projected to receive 21.47 million international overnight visitors in 2016, just ahead of second-ranked London.

Asian cities make up half of the global top 10 cities – Bangkok, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo and Seoul – and seven of the top 10 fastest growing destination cities – Osaka, Chengdu, Colombo, Tokyo, Taipei, Xi'an and Xiamen. Parag Bhatnagar, Vice President, Marketing, South Asia, Mastercard said, "With an evolving business landscape and thriving tourist destinations, India has been witnessing a high influx of overseas travellers for both business and other purposes. It is interesting to see five Indian cities making it to the Top 100 destination cities globally for 2016." **tt**



## EXPLORE SCANDINAVIA – A PLACE LIKE NO OTHER

Witnessing rising interest of Indians in the region, Scandinavian Tourist Board has been organising an annual roadshow since the last eight years. According to Mohit Batra, responsible for tourism promotion of the Scandinavian region in India, "The Scandinavian Seminar is an annual event that intends to engage with the travel trade and inspire them by showcasing the destinations represented by Scandinavian partners from across the world. This year we have a delegation of 25 Scandinavian partners including National Tourist Boards, Regional Tourist Boards along with delegates from attractions, Cruise & Voyage companies and Destination Marketing Companies visiting New Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai. We intend to reach out to over 200 Business partners across the 3 cities. The business event aims to enhance destination knowledge of Indian travel professionals, introduce new regional travel products besides providing an opportunity to learn and experience each other's culture and business needs." **tt**



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## Kenya Kalling...

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## MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL'S EXPANDED PORTFOLIO INCLUDES 30 LEADING HOTEL BRANDS

Marriott International expands to include 30 of the most desirable and prestigious hotel brands with the addition of the Starwood Hotels & Resorts portfolio. At a time when travellers place even greater emphasis on enriching and personal experiences, they can now choose from the most diverse selection of hotel brands ever. With more than 5,700 hotels and 1.1 million rooms in over 110 countries across the globe, guests now have access to the best hotels and resorts wherever they travel.

Members of Marriott's leading loyalty programs, Marriott Rewards – which includes The Ritz-Carlton Rewards – and Starwood Preferred Guest (SPG), are also invited to link their accounts at members.marriott.com to enjoy the benefits, recognition and experiences each program has to offer. Members will have their status matched across programs and be able to transfer and redeem points across programs for travel to more destinations than ever before. Members who link their accounts will be able to transfer points at a three-to-one ratio. **tt**



Gaurav Singh, General Manager of Courtyard by Marriott and Fairfield by Marriott, Bengaluru, celebrating with associates Marriott International's successful completion of the acquisition of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc., creating the world's largest hotel company while providing unparalleled guest experience.

## QUALITY HOTEL DV MANOR, VIJAYAWADA WINS NATIONAL TOURISM AWARD

Quality Hotel DV Manor, Vijayawada, has been honoured with the National Tourism Award for the Best Four Star Hotel in the country. The all India award is instituted by Department of Tourism, Government of India and was presented by Speaker of Lok Sabha Sumitra Mahajan and Dr Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State of Tourism and Culture and was received by Dhaneekula Nagendra Prasad, Managing Director (owner) along with Rajesh Berry, VP & GM of the hotel.

"Quality Hotel DV Manor, an associate hotel of Choice Hotels International, USA, was adjudged as the best four star hotel amongst the 200 plus star hotels across the country, including many national and international hotels for the year 2014-15," said Nagendra Prasad. **tt**



## GLOBAL DESTINATIONS AND THREELAND TRAVEL HOSTS FAM TRIP

Threeland Travel, an inbound operator for Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar represented by Global Destinations in India organised an eight day familiarisation trip for key travel trade agents to Vietnam.

Pruthvi Khetani, General Manager – Mumbai, Global Destinations says, The Indian travel trade fraternity plays a great role in highlighting not just the usual offerings of the country but also educating potential travellers on various activities they can experience in Vietnam. The teams of Threeland Travel and Global Destinations worked tirelessly to make this visit a grand success."

Mahendra Vakharia, Managing Director, Pathfinder Holidays, says "My take of the destination has changed completely and we are more than confident of promoting this fabulous destination in a renewed manner. It is a good family destination that is safe, secure and clean with an amazing combination of nature, history, architecture, culture, delicious vegetarian food, night-life and shopping."

Chandrika Rastogi, Chief Executive Officer, Luxury Roots, says "I am glad I got the opportunity to experience Vietnam as a destination. The itinerary was very well planned and had a lot to take-away for us. We look forward to promoting this entire region." **tt**





**CORPORATE**

# GOA'S HOLLYWOOD CONNECT

IN CONVERSATION WITH

*Anand Chatterjee*

GENERAL MANAGER, PLANET HOLLYWOOD BEACH RESORT, GOA



## **What is your hotel's corporate positioning?**

Planet Hollywood Beach Resort, Goa is primarily a leisure hotel located on the white sands of Uttorda, South Goa, just 20 minutes from the Goa Airport. Goa is an equally important MICE and leisure destination. Planet Hollywood offers many facilities for an idyllic holiday and activity filled corporate programmes, off-sites. Our pillarless ball room is one of a kind due to its superior, fully central controlled audio-video system and high ceiling – a requirement that is often needed but is not always available. We also offer excellent outdoor locations for fun-filled activities or energy packed training sessions. Our F&B experience is wide and we specialise in customising the menus. Most importantly, we follow a 'single-window' system which enables a guest to book, plan and execute the function through one single team member.

## **What are the USPs of the hotel?**

Planet Hollywood Beach Resort, Goa is a tourist's paradise showcasing low-rise architecture depicting an elegant Goan





style, breathtaking landscapes, dramatic sculptures and art work. Each block of rooms features a different Hollywood theme through contemporary art-form memorabilia. This makes Planet Hollywood Beach Resort, Goa a delightful experience for every vacation, with guests being given the choice to stay in a different block on every visit.

The restaurants, bars, ball rooms and lobby sport a vibrant and energetic look with a myriad dramatic patterns, lighting and artwork.

The tropical garden and the coconut orchard in the hotel, spanning more than 10 acres, and the beach frontage make this a perfect holiday, conference or wedding destination.

#### **What are the facilities that your hotel offers to luxury and leisure travellers?**

The rooms are equipped with unique design elements,

featuring a mood lighting facility that sets the mood for the evening. All rooms feature king as well as twin beds with signature furnishing and a glass partition which separates the room and bathroom. You can choose from an option of rooms overlooking the Arabian Sea, Swimming Pool and natural greenery all around.

If you love adventure sports, our expert adventure sports team will create customised magic moments for you. Should you desire to explore Goa outside the resort, our experienced team will arrange everything, from visiting a quaint hamlet where you can interact with the locals, to a visit to the seafood market with our chef. For children between 3 to 12 years, the resort offers innovative indoor and outdoor activities for keeping your little ones occupied.

In terms of restaurants, the Planet Dailies is the all-day dining restaurant. Planet Dailies has a lavish and daintily presented buffet, comprising International, Far East Asian and Indian over breakfast, lunch and dinner. The restaurant has an interactive kitchen where guests can be involved in the food making process.

Fame, is the specialty restaurant by the pool. The hotspot resto-lounge featuring Western and Asian cuisine overlooks the swimming pool and portico. Its eclectic music and lounge area is a perfect place for an evening outing. It's open for lunch as a relaxed grills and stir-fry venue if you are in the mood for tempting starters. Enjoy the unique array of contemporary platters offering grilled seafood, the choicest meat cuts and fresh vegetables, along with Asian stir fries.

Heart Bar is the main bar of the hotel. This eclectically designed high energy bar features a large selection of beverages. Featuring a comprehensive selection of vodkas and other spirits, this aesthetically designed bar will instantly shift you to the right mood for enjoying a splendid evening.

The Pink Room salon offers cuts, extensions, styles, colours, up-dos, perms and other hair services. Complete your glamorous look with professional and mineral makeup applications, bridal services, airbrush tanning and eyelash enhancements.





## A FLOURISHING BELGO-JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP

On 1<sup>st</sup> August 1866, Belgium and Japan signed their first Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation. This event marked the birth of a long history between the two nations. Since then, the two countries have maintained amicable, rich and solid diplomatic and commercial relations. The 20<sup>th</sup> Flower Carpet, set up in Brussels' Grand Place, was adorned in a Japanese design to celebrate Belgo-Japanese friendship. This ephemeral tapestry was made up of 1,800 m<sup>2</sup> of begonias, drawing inspiration from Japanese representations of flowers, birds, the wind and the moon to depict the beauty of nature. **tt**

## MTDC CELEBRATES 'WORLD TOURISM DAY 2016

Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) celebrated 'World Tourism Day 2016' on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2016 with UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) with this year's theme being "Tourism for All -Promoting Universal Accessibility". MTDC organised various initiatives to highlight tourism's social, cultural, political and economic value of the state. For the first time the World Tourism day celebrations of MTDC were recognized by UNWTO Madrid. An array of programmes had been planned by MTDC at Mumbai Head office and regional offices at Aurangabad, Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Ratnagiri, Nasik and Amravati.

On World Tourism Day, MTDC also hosted an 'Experiential Tourism Conclave' at JaiHind College which was inaugurated by Jaykumar Jitendrasinh Rawal, Minister of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra in the presence of Valsa Nair Singh IAS, Principal Secretary, Tourism & Cultural, Government of Maharashtra and Dr KH Govind Raj IAS, Managing Director of Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation.

Jaykumar Jitendrasinh Rawal, Minister of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra stated, "On the occasion of World Tourism Day, this year's theme being the theme being "Tourism for All -Promoting Universal Accessibility," our aim is to spread the importance and benefits of accessibility to constantly add value to our tourist experiences."

Madan Madhukarrao Yerawar, Hon'ble, State Tourism Minister, Government of Maharashtra stated, "It is an honour to be recognized by the by UNWTO Madrid on this special occasion of World Tourism Day."

Valsa Nair Singh IAS, Principal Secretary, Tourism & Cultural, Government of Maharashtra, stated, "Maharashtra is the land of prosperity, culture, spirituality which has gained growing global recognition as it has preserved its traditions in the wake of advanced industrialization."

Dr KH Govind Raj IAS, Managing Director of Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation, stated, "We organised an array of initiatives which will showcase the untapped beauty and unlimited tourism potential of the state." **tt**



## GOLD RUSH FOR KERALA TOURISM AT PATA AWARDS

Kerala Tourism received the prestigious Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Gold Awards for its marketing campaigns- 'Visit Kerala' television commercial campaign and for the Kerala Tourism e-newsletter at a glittering luncheon function today in Jakarta. The awards were presented to Kerala Tourism Director UV Jose by Mario Hardy (PATA CEO) and Maria Helena (Director, Macao Tourism Office) at the Indonesia Convention Centre on the last day of the annual PATA Travel Mart. The presentation ceremony hosted more than 800 global industry delegates.

"Kerala Tourism campaigns have always attracted international attention and admiration. The latest batch of PATA awards will once again turn the spotlight on the diverse attractions our state offers: from beaches, to heritage, wildlife and wellness," said Tourism Minister AC Moideen.

Kerala Tourism also participated at the exclusive travel mart, along with tour operator Spiceland Holidays, Kuruppath Heritage homestay and the Kumarakom Lake Resort. "The two PATA gold awards are further testimony to the effective and interest-evoking marketing strategies the state enjoys. They are also an endorsement both of our unique brand and products as well as the backroom engagement efforts that go into promoting them," said Principal Secretary (Tourism) Dr Venu V. **tt**

# PREFER(ABLY) INDIA

Preferred Hotels & Resorts invites travellers to partake in multi-sensory experiences as they showcase incredible destinations across India with the Preferred Plus offer

## TT BUREAU

**W**hen booking a minimum two-night stay with the Best Available Rate at participating hotels within the brand's Legend collection, guests will enjoy additional amenities, replete with warm impeccable service and exquisite accommodations.

### A WELLNESS RETREAT

Located in the heart of New Delhi, The Imperial New Delhi is an award-winning grand and historic hotel that seamlessly amalgamates the architecture of the Victorian, Colonial, and Art Deco styles. Its on-property Imperial Spa offers guests luxuriously rejuvenating services that employ the healing properties of Ayurvedic therapies. **On offer:** Enjoy 20 per cent off on Imperial Spa treatments with room rates from US\$149 per night.

### LIVE THROUGH HISTORY

Experience years of Indian History at The Leela Palace Bangalore. Known as India's Garden City with its cool climate and sprawling tree-lined streets, Bengaluru was once a haven for affluent retirees, and over the past decade has transformed into the "Silicon Valley" of India, a global business hub teeming with multi-national IT, automotive, and pharmaceutical companies.

### CULINARY SOJOURN AT THE LEELA GOA

Goa is renowned for its beaches, world heritage architecture and most of all, the kaleidoscopic blend of Indian and Portugese cultures. This is most evident in the extraordinary colonial baroque style architecture, stunning cathedrals, mournful Fado music and the unique regional cuisine rich with spices and flavours that reflect the melting pot of cultures.

The Leela Goa's Culinary Sojourn programme offers two full days of experiential dining that includes interactive sessions with the Hotel's chef and horticulturist to learn about the concept of organic farming, a visit to the local spice plantation, and a cocktail making session followed by sunset cocktails at the beach, in addition to luxurious accommodations. **On offer:** Enjoy the Culinary Sojourn program for two people from US\$728 per night, minimum two-night stay.

Other participating Legend hotels in India include The Roseate New Delhi, The Leela Palaces in Chennai, New Delhi and Udaipur. Travellers can enjoy additional benefits by enrolling in the iPrefer hotel rewards programme, which extends points redeemable for free nights and other expenditures, elite status, and special benefits such as complimentary Internet upon every eligible stay at more than 600 participating properties worldwide.



The Imperial New Delhi



The Leela Palace Bangalore



The Leela Goa



# CORPORATE JET-SETTERS



## VISHAL SUKHIJA ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT & REGIONAL ACCOUNT HEAD JLL INDIA

### Most memorable trip to any destination?

Undoubtedly, the most memorable trip was to Kashmir (Pahalgam, Gulmarg and Sonmarg). Every moment spent there was incredible.

### You dream of going to?

I would love to visit Santorini, Europe, someday.

### Favourite airline and why?

I would say Vistara (Domestic), Emirates (International). Their unmatched luxury combined with excellent services makes them my favourite airlines.

### Best hotel experience and why?

I had a memorable experience at The Taj Exotica Hotel & Resort South Goa, and Hotel Sindh Resort, Sonamarg Kashmir, for their best In Class services, beautiful location, lovely surroundings, delicious food and unmatched hospitality.

### A place you plan to visit again?

I would like to visit Singapore again.

### A family vacation that stands out?

We had some of the best moments at Phuket and Bangkok. From shopping to the nightlife, one always had so much to do there.

### Your best holiday with friends?

Me and my friends had a great time at the Suryavilas Luxury Spa & Resort, Solan, Himachal Pradesh, and Dune Eco Village & Spa at Pondicherry, Puducherry.

### Great food you enjoyed and where?

The Dinner Buffet held at Hotel Noormahal, Karnal, and Heritage Village Resort & Spa, Manesar, were outstanding. The food there was simply scrumptious.

### What to watch out for while travelling?

One learns a lot through travel, however, some things which deserve our utmost attention are: Hotel rating, location, room tip, nearby places along with visitor comments, local transport arrangements, healthcare and culture, followed at respective locations.

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

I am a frequent traveller and one of the primary philosophies that I live by is to achieve savings and benefits from our favourable conditions for flight and hotel bookings by finding comparable offers.



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AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA



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**125** Destinations  
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हवाई अड्डे  
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**International  
Airports**  
( 3 Civil Enclaves & 3 Joint Venture Airports)



चेन्नई



Chennai

कोलकाता

Kolkata



पुणे

Pune



इन्दौर

Indore



श्रीनगर

Srinagar

**08** कस्टम  
हवाई अड्डे  
(४ सिविल एन्क्लेव)

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**77** अन्तर्देशीय  
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एन्क्लेव

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terminals



## CORPORATE JET-SETTERS



### RAHUL LAL

**CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION HEAD  
INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES  
DALMIA BHARAT LIMITED**

#### **Most memorable trip to any destination?**

Undoubtedly, I would say Hong Kong. It has a magic about it, it's a place where you can be a child again.

#### **You dream of going to?**

New Zealand has always held a special charm for me, because it has everything under the sun.

#### **Favourite airline and why?**

I enjoy flying with Cathay Pacific. It's luxury and entertainment packaged as one.

#### **Best hotel experience and why?**

Welcome Marriott, Hong Kong, because they offer unparalleled comfort and delectable cuisine.

#### **A place you plan to visit again?**

Singapore, it has everything that you can ask for on a family vacation.

#### **A family vacation that stands out?**

Each vacation with my family is outstanding. But, if I were to pick one, it would be the place which I recently visited - Hong Kong.

#### **Your best holiday with friends?**

Dubai. The thrill of adventure is priceless.

#### **Great food you enjoyed and where?**

I enjoyed the organic food in China Market in Singapore. I came across such a vast variety of mouth-watering Tofu dishes.

#### **What to watch out for while travelling?**

The primary factors to watch out for while travelling are safety, weather at the time of visit and ease of transport. The rest depends on your choice.

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

Plan and invest in a trip that fulfils all aspects of a vacation - adventure, learning, relaxation and enjoyment.

## THAILAND MAGNETISES MICE MARKET WITH INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCES

Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has taken another step forward in strengthening Thailand's leadership position as a hub for unique business events in Asia by introducing Chiang Rai - the northernmost province of Thailand that is complete with potential and readiness in facilitating business events. To pave the way for endless innovative experiences for business events travellers to Thailand, the TCEB International Media Familiarisation Trip 2016 has been organised to showcase modern facilities and time-honoured heritage of Bangkok and Chiang Rai.

Underlining the success of Thailand's business events industry, TCEB revealed that in the first half of the 2016 fiscal year – from October 2015 to March 2016 – Thailand welcomed 493,384 business events travellers, earning the Thai economy more than 39,671 billion baht (approximately US\$1,116 million). Of these, a total of 135,240 (22 per cent) were here for meetings; 143,053 (23 per cent) for incentive events, 141,015 (22 per cent) for conventions, and 74,076 (12 per cent) for exhibitions. The top five markets during this period were China, India, Singapore, Malaysia, and the United States.

Weerasak Kowsurat, Chairman of the Board of TCEB disclosed that, "The ongoing success of the Thai business events industry demonstrates our strategy to encourage public, private, people, and communities to work hand in hand to harness the power of cultural capital and local wisdom, building sustainable economic growth and generating income for local communities."

Chattan Kunjara Na Ayudhya, Executive Director Advertising and Public Relations Department, Tourism Authority of Thailand said that "The TAT has long aimed at developing strategies to seek out new markets and develop niche ones as a way of attracting quality tourists to Thailand. This is why TAT supports the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau in promoting the amazing venues for MICE events as well as Thailand's wide range of activities and destinations."

Kanlayapha Panich, Thai Airways Manager of MICE Department said that "As Thailand's national flag carrier, THAI is committed to promoting the Kingdom as a venue for international meetings, conventions, incentives, and exhibitions. As a member of the International Congresses and Conventions Associations (ICCA) since 1975, THAI staff has acquired the know-how to organize international meetings and thus is able to understand the needs of organizers, thereby serving them best." **tt**



## WORLD MARROW DONOR DAY AT RADISSON

Radisson Blu Kaushambi Delhi NCR marked the World Marrow Donor Day by organising Stem cell donor awareness session and a drive in association with Jeevandayini Social Foundation and DATRI.

The session threw light on how stem cell donation plays a crucial role in saving lives of many suffering from life threatening blood disorders. Nearly 100 employees came forward to register and do their bit for the affected people.

Radisson Blu Kaushambi has always been on the forefront when it comes to socially responsible activities for the needy. Continuing its commitment towards responsible business practices, Radisson Blu Kaushambi has been appreciated for this warm gesture.

General Manager of the Radisson Blu Kaushambi, Hemant Mehta, said, "It has been an enlightening session for all to understand the significance of stem cell donation and its role in dealing with the disorders." "The awareness can bring about an encouraging change in the lives of many," he added. **tt**



## GERMAN TOURISM & ACCORHOTELS CONDUCTS WORKSHOP

The German National Tourist Office, India and Accorhotels recently conducted Sales Workshops in the Cities of Kochi and Bengaluru. The Workshops which saw enthusiastic participation from the operators in both cities aimed at promoting Destination Germany and creating awareness on the diverse portfolio of Accorhotels across the country. With a presence of over 340 hotels across Germany ranging from the budget to the premium category, Accorhotels is one of the leading accommodation choices for travellers from India. **tt**



## JOHN ABRAHAM APPOINTED BRAND AMBASSADOR OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH TOURISM

The largest of the seven sisters that form the north eastern part of India, Arunachal Pradesh, or as the name means, Land of the Dawn lit mountains, is extremely rich in wildlife and natural beauty. Department of Tourism, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, with the help of Be Viacom18, has roped in popular action hero and Bollywood superstar John Abraham as the brand ambassador for the mystical land of Arunachal Pradesh.

Joram Beda, Tourism Secretary, Government of Arunachal Pradesh said, "Our focus this year lies in boosting the tourism sector and making Arunachal Pradesh a 'Must See, Must Experience' state."

Sudhanshu Vats, Group CEO, Viacom18, said, "Arunachal Pradesh is a traveller's paradise and a land of untold tales."

John Abraham said, "I am honoured to have been chosen to promote the tourism of Arunachal Pradesh. I have always been fascinated with North East India: each state has its unique beauty, history and culture." **tt**



## RHÄTISCHE BAHN ORGANISES FAM TRIP FOR INDIAN AGENTS

Rhätische Bahn (RHB) in partnership with Turkish Airlines recently hosted a familiarisation trip to Davos Klosters and Engadin St. Moritz in Switzerland for leading travel agents based in Delhi. The objective of the FAM was to increase visibility for luxury destinations like Davos Klosters and Engadin St. Moritz, along with the scenic Bernina Express train journey.

Make My Trip, Yatra, TUI, Flight Shop, Ottila International, Experiential Travel, Thomas Cook and Ambe World Travels participated in the FAM.

Sonal Salian, Market Manager, Rhätische Bahn India said, "The FAM trip was a great opportunity to showcase the Bernina Express, Davos Klosters and Engadin St. Moritz. Our trade partners were able to not only visit different attractions but also gain knowledge of the infrastructural offerings such as hotels, restaurants and local transport. To meet the demand of the discerning Indian luxury traveller, we highlighted experiential activities that Indians must include on their next Swiss holiday!" **tt**



APPOINTMENT



**S**anjay Sood has been elected as the new Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) President after the 65th Annual General Meeting held on August 31, 2016 at The Suryaa, New Delhi. Sood, CEO, The Devico's Restaurant, Shimla has been elected as President HRANI for 2016-18 tenure. He is the CEO of Ahuja Plastics Limited having numerous Restaurant and Hotel units in Shimla, Renuka etc. He is also into the business of Mining in Limestone. Sood has been an active Rotarian and was President (2014-15) of Rotary Club of Shimla. He has a vast experience in the field of hospitality industry and has been a member of the Managing Committee of HRANI for the last nine years. **tt**

## BLUE SQUARE CONSULTANTS TO REPRESENT ICELAND TRAVEL

Blue Square Consultants has been appointed as the sales and marketing representative for Iceland Travel, a leading DMC (Destination Management Company) in Iceland.

Jakobina Gudmundsdottir, Director of Sales & Marketing, Iceland Travel, says, "Recently, we have witnessed an increase in Indian enquiries to travel to Iceland. To foster this growth, we needed to have a strong representation in India. We felt that Blue Square Consultants is the apt partner to have in India because of their excellent track record; highly professional team and undisputed knowledge of Indian travel trade and travellers."

Lubaina Sheerazi, COO, Blue Square Consultants, says, "At Blue Square Consultants, our emphasis has always been to associate with reputed and quality clients and we have achieved this once again with our recent alliance with Iceland Travel." **tt**

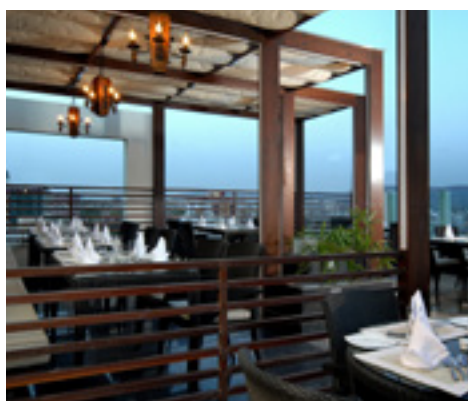


## PUNJAB TOURISM ENDORSES STAYZILLA FOR HOMESTAYS IN THE STATE

Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board (PHTPB) announced a strategic partnership with Stayzilla, one of India's largest homestay aggregators to boost adoption of homestays and unlock maximum number of rooms during the peak tourist season in Punjab. After signing MoUs with Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation, Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board and Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Limited, this tie-up firmly establishes Stayzilla as a leading player in the industry of homestays and alternate stays. The MoU was signed and exchanged in the presence of Navjot Pal Singh Randhawa PCS, CEO Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board along with Ankit Rastogi, VP Marketplace, Stayzilla and various other Punjab Tourism Department representatives.

"With sprawling farmlands and majestic rivers, Punjab has plenty to offer to tourists from all across the world. October onwards Punjab witnesses huge influx of tourists in Amritsar, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Patiala and Bhatinda. Our partnership with leading Homestay aggregator, Stayzilla will help in the growth of homestays across the state and address the under supply of quality rooms. Tourism in the state is always growing and we look to host as many tourists as we can. Stayzilla will be our strategic partner to help educate the locals and aid the growth of the homestay ecosystem," said Sardar Sohan Singh Thandal - Minister of Tourism and Cultural affairs and Archives and Museums.

"The concept of travel has evolved tremendously in India over the years. Unlike hotels, homestays provide a unique experience of the local life and culture. This is why experiential stays are on the rise. We are very excited to partner with Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board and spearhead homestays in the region," said Ankit Rastogi, VP Marketplace, Stayzilla. **tt**



## PARK INN JAIPUR INAUGURATES LA ITALIA

Park Inn Jaipur, a Carlson brand managed by Sarovar Hotels & Resorts, introduced a new Italian restaurant "La Italia". The rooftop restaurant offers authentic Italian food with a twist under the open sky along with an indoor dining experience with soothing Italian music. Adding the perfect accompaniment to a sumptuous meal is an exciting selection of international wines and beverages, especially from Italy. **tt**

## STB CONDUCTS SIX-CITY ROADSHOW ACROSS INDIA & SRI LANKA

In 2015, Singapore Tourism Board (STB) crossed a milestone of 1 million visitors from India. To sustain and grow tourist traffic from the Indian market, STB recently organized a 10-day, six-city road show across key markets in India and Colombo in Sri Lanka. Themed "Extending Hands in Partnership", the delegation was led by GB Srithar, Singapore Tourism Board's (STB) newly appointed Regional Director for South Asia, Middle East and Africa (SAMEA).

While addressing the trade during the road shows, GB Srithar emphasized on meaningful collaborations with the in-market travel trade, introducing new travel experiences for the Indian audiences and to jointly embark on creative marketing campaigns. Speaking along the sidelines of the events, he said, "As we move into the next exciting phase of promoting Singapore to wider audiences in tier 2 cities, we look to fostering closer strategic and tactical partnerships with the travel trade to entrench the positioning of Singapore as one of the must-see destinations for the Indian audiences."

The trade representatives from Singapore were all praise for the road shows and were unanimous in their optimism about the growth of Indian tourists into the Lion City. "Travelling to six different cities in 10 days may seem like a task but it is definitely possible. These road shows gave us an insight into the tier 2 and 3 cities in India, which are becoming important markets for Singapore. I thank STB for making this possible," said Amanda Aw, Senior Account Manager – Resort Sales, Travel and Leisure, who was representing Resorts World Sentosa.

"Lucknow has got an overwhelming response; in fact, this is one of the best roadshows I've attended in my entire career. Coming to the Tier 2 cities is a wonderful initiative taken by STB and I'm looking forward to many more events such as these in the future," added Diksha Batra, 2nd AVP, Star Cruise.

The six-city road shows certainly brought "Your Singapore" closer to the travel trade, allowed the Singapore trade to feel the pulse of the key Tier 2 cities and enabled strengthening of working partnerships with the in-market trade. **tt**



# DREAM WEDDINGS AT RADISSON ALIBAUG

IN CONVERSATION WITH

*Santanu Guha Roy*

GENERAL MANAGER, RADISSON BLU RESORT & SPA, ALIBAUG



**What makes Radisson Blu Alibaug a complete wedding destination? What are the facilities and incentives on offer for guests planning their wedding in your hotel?**

We are the only destination from Mumbai which is accessible by sea route and our proximity to the financial capital makes us a destination of choice for weddings. Besides this, the resort has an inventory of 156 rooms of different categories: Suites, Lake View Villas, Spa Villas, Deluxe rooms and Superior rooms to meet the requirements of large wedding functions. We have different banqueting space and open areas amidst scenic settings for various ceremonies during the course of the function, the courtyard for hosting the Welcome Lunch and rituals; an Olympic-size swimming pool for Pool Parties; the sprawling Lawns for evening get togethers, the Mango deck where all the weddings are solemnised. Food, of course, is the mainstay of any wedding and we are fully geared to cater to guests' culinary requirements, ranging from traditional to exotic fare. We understand that weddings happen once in a life time and pullout all stops to ensure that we make the function memorable and that the memories linger over a lifetime.

**Are there any new wedding packages on offer?**

Most of our guests have expressed their need to have a comprehensive package and keeping in mind

their requirements, we have designed our Shubha Mangalam Wedding Package, which takes care of every little need associated with a wedding. The package begins at Rs 45,00,000 for two nights and three days for 150 rooms including Breakfast, Lunch, Hi-tea and Dinner.

We have also taken care to ensure that the package includes guest hampers, Dhol for welcoming the guests, licenses for the function, and much more. In short, I can confidently state that this is one package which is designed to delight our guests, so that they can focus on enjoying the function and let us do our best to make the wedding function memorable.

**Is there anything you would like to add?**

Yes, given our success with hosting weddings, the hotel is also being increasingly sought for other social functions like celebrating Wedding Anniversaries, Birthday Functions, etc. We are constantly looking at avenues to delight our customers with unique experiences and we have plans to create something unique for our guests from the time they set sail from the Gateway of India. We plan to make the travel itself a unique experience which no other destination in the vicinity of Mumbai can offer. The attraction for this travel plan will be rolled out shortly and for now I can only say – watch this space for more!





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• iNFHRA is an industry body & member based association representing Facility Management & Administration, Workplace & Infrastructure, Corporate Travel & Hospitality, Corporate Real Estate, Safety & Security spread across a member base of more than 1200 members.

iNFHRA is associated with MEFMA (Middle East) and EURO FM (Europe) as their Global Partners.

iNFHRA is supported by more than 90 Senior Facility, Admin, Procurement, CRE & Security heads across India, who are associated with iNFHRA as Honorary Board Members and represent them in their respective geographies.

Post 32 successful conferences across India in the last 3 years, iNFHRA is glad to present for the first time in India, FM 'Xcellence

## Awards Tour 2016-17 across 6 cities, scheduled as below:

- Bengaluru: 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2016
- Gurgaon: 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2016
- Pune: 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2016
- Hyderabad: 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2017
- Chennai: 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2017
- Mumbai: 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2017

iNFHRA's FM 'Xcellence Awards will recognize & appreciate efforts by individuals or teams within the FM industry, from researchers through to facility operators, who have made a positive contribution to the knowledge, practical application and communication of strategies to improve the workplace environment and sustainable performance of their facilities.



These Awards are intended to award the “best of the best” within the FM world and to promote the strategic value and progress of facilities management industry.

**The award categories include:**

- Real Estate & Space Management
- Safety & Security
- Technology & Innovation
- Corporate Travel, Transport & Logistics
- Ecological Sustainability – Waste, Water & Energy Efficiency

For more details, please email: [support@infhra.com](mailto:support@infhra.com)





# THE LIQUID SUNSHINE

*"Whiskey, like a beautiful woman, demands appreciation. You gaze first, then it's time to drink."*

- Haruki Murakami

## TT BUREAU

Scotch drinkers belong into a league of their own. Coming from some of the best distilleries of the world where their secrets are as pure as the scotch they produce, they are known to be the best finishers of a long and tiresome day. The preparation of the beverage itself is a work of appreciation, various grains- Springbank barley, rye, malted barley, malted rye, wheat and all, in combination with the aging process which they undergo, results in a taste that wins it loyalties. Then again, when it comes to single malt scotch whiskey, it rarely matters how its consumed, its taste making that a matter of insignificance. Connoisseurs or amateurs, its pleasurable spell is cast upon all without any distinction.

### BOWMORE 1957

From one of the many distilleries of Scotland, Bawmore, comes another memorable malt. The elegant, salty smokiness marries with the peat on the nose to draw you in. On the palate, a ripe lemon zest accompanied by a touch of pecan and hazelnut is followed closely by rich cocoa and orange. A distinguished finish lingers, leaving a sherry-infused chocolate crème brûlée essence with a stream of peaty smoke. Single malts like this exemplify the subtle artistry of the distiller.



### JURA 30 YEARS OLD

Standing as an ode to the the Isle of Jura's largest standing stone, Camas an Staca, this spirit is first aged in American white oak casks, then spends the last three years in Gonzalez Byass Oloroso sherry butts, which add an immense concentration of flavors and aromas. A sensory collage of orange sherry and dark berry jam on the nose leads to a surprising display of vanilla topped by floral, citrus, chocolate and spice notes, this leads to the formation of a seductive bouquet.

### GLENMORANGIE THE ORIGINAL

A ten-year-old single malt, Glenmorangie Original is produced by merging the delicate spirit that emerges from Scotland's tallest stills, with first and second fill American white oak casks. It is here, maturing for ten long years in a range of ex-bourbon casks such as the famous slow-grown and air-dried "designer casks" from Missouri, that one's spirit finds a perfect balance between sweetness and complexity.

### SPRINGBANK 15 YEARS OLD

Springbank 15years old, an amazing Campbeltown single malt, produces an incredible array of flavours on the senses. The ingredients included in its formation, such as, rich dark chocolate, figs, marzipan, Brazil nuts and vanilla, work together in absolute harmony to create a top-class Scotch. An aroma of toffee hits the nose along with natural caramel, pepper, vanilla and malt, while the presence of campfire smoke and golden syrup simply embellishes the entire experience. The palate is full bodied and silky, with an initial sweetness, followed with pepper, dried fruits and nuts.

### THE GLENDRONACH ALLARDICE - 18 YEARS OLD

James Allardice was the eminent founder of this distillery, and has been named after him in his fond remembrance. This exceptional sherried single malt is non chill filtered and of natural colour. Matured in the finest Spanish Oloroso sherry casks and bottled at 46%, this sublime richly sherried malt is truly unforgettable.





**ARNAUD CHAMPENOIS** has been appointed as Senior Vice President, Marketing & Brand at Belmond. Champenois has over 20-years of experience in leading brands, marketing and communication in the luxury goods and services sector. He joins Belmond from

Starwood Hotels and Resorts where he has held the position of Vice President, Brand Director for Asia Pacific since 2011. Prior to that, Champenois was Regional ASEAN Brand Director for various brands such as Biotherm, Ralph Lauren, Giorgio Armani and Yves Saint Laurent at L'Oreal Luxury Products Division.



**GAURAV BHATURA** has been appointed as Chief Representative – India for Thai Smile Airways Co. Ltd. With over 16 years of rich experience in varied fields of Aviation Industry, Bhatura will be responsible for developing new gateways to/ from India to Thailand. In his new role he will head

and be responsible for overall Thai Smile Airways operations in India. His key responsibility will include overseeing all aspects of Airline Sales, Marketing through GSA, Revenue Optimisation, Events, Contracting, Airport, Customer Experience, Ground Handling, Catering and Commercial activities.



**SHUVENDU BANERJEE** has been appointed as General Manager, Crowne Plaza Kochi. He was previously Executive Assistant Manager of Crowne Plaza Gurgaon. Astute and results-driven professional equipped with experience in managing all aspects of a hotel. With over 15 years of experience

spanning the entire gamut of hospitality industry. In past he has performed diverse roles in Radisson, ITC, IHG group etc.



**RAJU SHRESHTA** has been appointed as the General Manager at Crowne Plaza Pune City Centre. He has been in Hospitality Industry for more than three decades and during his tenure he has worked across borders including Nepal, Thailand and India. He has persistently strong background in Operations,

Sales and Marketing. Prior to joining Crowne Plaza Pune City Centre, Shreshta was leading the team as the General Manager at Crowne

Plaza Today New Delhi Okhla. Shreshta is leading the team with his impeccable leadership skills and has taken on this new challenging role with a strong understanding of IHG's brand mission.



**VIKRAM SINGH** has been appointed as the Director of Sales, Fairfield by Marriott, Lucknow. A hospitality industry veteran of nearly 15 years, Singh brings an in-depth understanding of domestic and international hospitality sales and marketing.

In his new position he will be responsible for overseeing the sales efforts and productivity of the hotel, which encompasses corporate sales, wholesale, catering, conference services, marketing, revenue management and reservations. In addition, he will be involved in the direct oversight of the property level sales team and implement strategies to impact top line growth and concentrated efforts to maximize hotel's performance.



**ANIL K CHUNIYANA** has been appointed as Hotel Manager, Holiday Inn Chandigarh Panchkula. Anil will be responsible for the development in all areas of Hotel Operation and continue his contribution to the organisation. Anil started his Career as Guest Service Associate with Abu Dhabi

Resort and Towers and has been associated with assignments in India with Middle East and UK. He has been selected and successfully completed various special assignments, such as the London Olympics 2012 and has handled couple of Pre-opening Projects. He has also been awarded with IHG CEO special award.



**DEEP PREET BINDRA** has been appointed as the Director of Sales and Marketing at Bengaluru Marriott Hotel, Whitefield. With over twelve years of experience in the service industry, Bindra will lead efforts to create innovative opportunities for new business and marketing visibility of the hotel. Before

joining Bengaluru Marriott Hotel, Whitefield, he was working at JW Marriott at Aerocity in New Delhi as Director of Sales for the past two years, where he was responsible for generating revenue for the property as well as maintaining and accentuating the brand image.



**SMRITI SUBRAMANIAN** has been designated as General Counsel at OYO. A seasoned attorney with over 15 years of experience, Subramanian joins OYO from British Petroleum where she was the Legal Counsel for more than two years. She has worked with well-known

Indian and multinational corporates and boutique law firms and primarily focused on energy, natural resources, infrastructure and consumer goods industry.



**AVIATION**



## AAI TIRUPATI AIRPORT AWARDED BEST TOURIST FRIENDLY AIRPORT

**A**irports Authority of India's Tirupati Airport has been awarded the "Best Tourist Friendly Airport" under the category for "State Annual Excellence Awards (2015-16)" by Andhra Pradesh Tourism. The award was presented on the eve of World Tourism Day by Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Nara Chandra Babu Naidu at a grand event at Bhawani Islands, Vijayawada.

The State Annual Tourism Excellence Awards under various segments of Travel and Tourism Industry are awarded by Department of Tourism, Government of Andhra Pradesh for maintaining excellent Customer friendly relations with tourists/passengers, coinciding with World Tourism Day Celebrations. **tt**

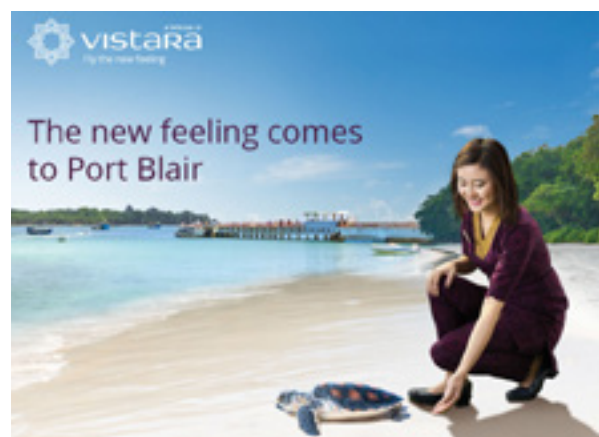
### ZUBIN KARKARIA HONOURED WITH TAAI'S 'AWARD OF DISTINCTION'



**Z**ubin Karkaria, CEO – VFS Global, and CEO – Kuoni Group, was conferred with the prestigious 'Award of Distinction' by the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), for his long-standing contribution to the Indian travel and tourism industry. The award was presented to Mr Karkaria at the 63rd TAAI Convention held in Abu Dhabi on 14 October 2016. The award recognizes Mr Karkaria's pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit and his role as a mentor in the industry. Presently, VFS Global serves 51 client governments and operates in 126 countries across 5 continents. The company, which pioneered the concept of visa process outsourcing, has facilitated travel across the world by enhancing efficiencies in the visa application process and making the overall visa application experience easier and more convenient for potential travellers.

Speaking at the event, Mr Karkaria said, "I am honoured to receive this recognition from TAAI, with whom I have been

closely associated since the beginning of my career. VFS Global has always supported and cooperated with the travel fraternity whilst ensuring the overall sanctity of the visa application process as per requirements of our client governments. **tt**



### VISTARA INAUGURATES SERVICES TO PORT BLAIR

**V**istara recently inaugurated operations to Port Blair, as its flight UK 747 took off from Delhi for Port Blair via Kolkata. With the addition of Port Blair to its rapidly expanding pan-India network, Vistara now serves 18 destinations across the length and breadth of the country.

Phoe Teik Yeoh, CEO, Vistara, said, "We are delighted to add Port Blair to our fast-growing network with a daily direct flight from Delhi via Kolkata. The Andamans are a beautiful part of India with rich history and breathtaking natural beauty."

Sanjiv Kapoor, Chief Strategy & Commercial Officer, Vistara, added, "Delivering on our brand promise to provide seamless, thoughtful and personalized services, we are pleased to introduce a variety of attractively priced packages in cooperation with top travel entities to offer our customers the most convenient travel in the Andamans." **tt**



## THE FIRST A350-900 IN LUFTHANSA COLOURS

The Lufthansa Airbus was in the so-called “paint shop” in the Airbus plant in Toulouse for eleven days, and then the moment arrived – the first A350-900 with white Lufthansa paint and blue lettering was ready to go. 30 people worked on the task, painting a total surface area of around 2,100sq.m. This is the first time that the official identification code D-AIXA has been seen. The use of an “X” follows in the style of the Airbus designation “A350 XWB” (extra wide body) – the cabin width of the A350-900 measures a generous 5.6m and gives passengers a great feeling of space.

The first ten Lufthansa Airbus A350-900 aircraft will be stationed in Munich for the coming winter. Delhi and Boston will be the first destinations to be served. The plane has space for 293 passengers – 48 in Business Class, 21 in Premium Economy and 224 in Economy Class. The

A350-900 is the most modern and the most environmentally friendly long-haul aircraft in service world-wide. In comparison with similar types of aircraft, it uses 25% less kerosene and produces 25% fewer emissions, and the noise “footprint” produced by the A350-900 is up to 50% smaller. **tt**

## AIR INDIA INTRODUCES AHMEDABAD TO NEWARK VIA LONDON

Air India commenced the first ever flight between Ahmedabad to Newark via London. The Flight AI 171 took off from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport at 05:00 hrs.

The flight will give a boost to tourism as well, as Air India offers convenient connections from Ahmedabad to Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai for onward travel to places of interest and tourism within the country. This flight has generated a lot of enthusiasm in the Indian diaspora in UK and US.

Ashwani Lohani, Chairman & Managing Director, said, “Air India is happy to start this new flight. It is a dream fulfilled for the people of Ahmedabad on India’s 70th Independence day. This is the third international flight introduced by Air India and we shall be launching flights to more international destinations soon.”

Bhupendrasinh Chudasama, Minister, Revenue, Education (Primary, Secondary and Adult), Higher and Technical Education, Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs, who was the Chief Guest for the inaugural flight said, “This flight was eagerly awaited by the people of Gujarat and has evoked an enthusiastic response. Besides, this flight would also be instrumental in attracting people from all over the world to travel to Gujarat and vice-versa.” **tt**



## ETIHAD AVIATION GROUP AND TUI GROUP IN TALKS ON AVIATION PARTNERSHIP

Etihad Aviation Group and TUI AG recently confirmed they are in discussions to create a strong European leisure airline group, focused on point-to-point flying to connect key tourist markets.

It is proposed to contribute the touristic operations of the airberlin group and the German TUIfly company, including the aircraft currently operated by TUIfly for airberlin under a wet-lease agreement, into a new airline group established by TUI AG and Etihad Aviation Group. This new airline group would serve a broad network of destinations from Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

The leisure airline group will be supported by the expertise of Etihad Aviation Group, the fastest-growing aviation group in the world, and utilise TUI’s state-of-the-art distribution capacity. TUI AG, Etihad Aviation Group and Air Berlin PLC intend to finalise an in-principle agreement in due course. **tt**

## HAHN AIR NAMES TOP PERFORMING AGENTS IN PUNJAB, INDIA

Hahn Air hosted an Awards Ceremony to celebrate its top performing travel agencies for the year 2015. With India having grown to one of Hahn Air’s top five markets worldwide, Hahn Air has established itself as the leading ticketing specialist across the sub-continent.

25 travel agents from Punjab were invited to attend the awards ceremony held at the Radisson Hotel Jalandhar. At the event, Hahn Air awarded a certificate of appreciation recognising its top ten agencies for their continued support. The top three agencies, Riya Travel & Tours, World Travels and Richi Travels Private Limited, took home trophies featuring Hahn Air’s mascot “Martin, the smart travel agent.”

Sanjay Shrivastava - Global Account Director Northern & Eastern India presented the awards and commented, “The support of our travel agency partners has been vital to helping drive Hahn Air’s substantial growth in India this year, and we hope these awards convey our appreciation for their efforts.” **tt**



# ON CLOUD LUXURY



The aviation industry today has redefined the concept of travelling, bringing in ever increasing levels of comfort and luxury, as these various airlines aptly demonstrate

## TT BUREAU

India is driven with the vision of becoming the third largest aviation market by the year 2020 and it is expected to be the largest aviation industry by the year 2030. With over 26 international airports and more to come, India is on the equilibrium of the advancement of the aviation industry. And, airline honchos are taking full advantage of this massive demand that is being created in the aviation sector by providing state-of-the-art in-flight comfort and

opulence fit for the royals in air. Today a flight trip in first class may cost you the better half of your years salary, however these flights are worth every penny.

### THE PERFECT WAY TO TRAVEL WITH LUFTHANSA

Lufthansa's First Class suites are simple and sophisticated. They come with lie-flat beds, complete with a mattress topper, pillow, and duvet, ergonomically-shaped seats, and in-flight entertainment options that come in up to eight different languages. On board Lufthansa First Class you can expect delicious cuisine, a high-quality lie-flat bed and excellent service – all in luxurious surroundings. So, you are ensured of reaching your destination fully rested and with enough zest to get on with your day.

With Lufthansa First Class, you can take off at any time, without having to change flights and without having to wait. Lufthansa Private Jet offers you the freedom to fly almost anywhere in the world and, at the same time, to enjoy services just the way you like them.

First Class passengers are also treated to wines selected by renowned sommelier Markus Del Monego and a caviar service that makes for a decadent meal.



## TURKISH HOSPITALITY WITH TURKISH AIRLINES

One of the leading airlines today, Turkish Airlines touches over 280 destinations worldwide. The Business Class seats in Turkish Airlines include an ottoman that creates a 188cm-long sleeping space when in the fully-reclined bed position and is equipped with a reading light located underneath the armrest services when it is deployed as a privacy screen. An onboard power receptacle supplies energy for laptops and other electrical devices. The armrest also serves as a privacy screen and is controlled by a touch button. A large table is located in the centre console and moves forward/backward as well as swivelling to allow more freedom of movement. The Main Control unit is located in the centre console, at the front end of the armrest and serves full control of the bed.

Turkish Airlines offer two types of lounges in the International Terminal, one for arriving and the other for departing travellers.

CIP lounges are open at least one hour earlier than the first scheduled domestic flight and at least two hours earlier than the first scheduled international flight, and stay open until the departure time of the last scheduled flight. Both the international and domestic lounges are replete with the latest technology, modern entertainment and state-of-the-art facilities that make travel a luxury affair.

### DON'T MISS

Turkish Airlines provides 'Flying Chefs' to create a unique atmosphere of "Turkish Hospitality" above the clouds by assisting the cabin crew in the preparation and presentation of their award-winning menus. Now Intercontinental flight passengers experience restaurant-quality service with carefully selected, high-quality menus that are regularly changed in order to provide new options for regular travellers.



## FLAT OUT WONDERFUL WITH AIR CANADA

Air Canada steps it up with their first class amenities. Special chairs called 'Pods' offer guests perfect comfort, as well as back and neck massages during the flight. Along with a large side table to rest your chosen wine glass, you also get your own personal touch screen TV as well as noise-cancelling headphones. Designed to provide guests with their own personal space that's ideal for a good night's sleep, each International Business Class seat reclines into a fully flat bed at the touch of a button. With all the latest in-flight amenities at your disposal, you will be sure to arrive at your destination feeling refreshed and active.

The airline's newest Executive Pod, set in the completely re-designed cabin, is available exclusively on board their latest Boeing 787 Dreamliner™ aircraft, as well as on selected Boeing 777 aircraft. These Pods are equipped with an adjustable pneumatic cushion allowing for individualised, customisable comfort; a pneumatic, adjustable headrest with head and neck massage; lumbar support and massage function; a state-of-the-art entertainment system with a 45.72 cm (18") touch-screen, a video touch handset and noise-cancelling headphones — the list is endless.

The International Business Class is equipped with state-of-the-art luxurious amenities and priority comprising services, fine wines and gourmet cuisine, a selection of premium newspapers, including route-specific titles, convenient duty-free shopping and a complimentary amenity kit filled with travel essentials and Canadian brand Escentis Aromatherapy skin care products, among other things.

The airlines also provides a concierge service that includes Maple Leaf Lounge access; extra baggage allowance; priority Check-in and Additional Altitude Qualifying Miles, among other benefits.





### BUSINESS OF LIVING WITH EMIRATES

Getting in and out of the airport has never been easier with the complimentary chauffeur provided to Business Class passengers flying with Emirates. The airline also provides First Class travellers a private cabin on the flight. Emirates' Business Class cabins come complete with a seat that converts into a fully flat bed and includes a mattress, privacy doors that allow for unwinding, a personal mini-bar, an array of complimentary wines, champagne and cocktails, and ambient lighting to allow for relaxation.

On longer flights, passengers can take advantage of the onboard shower spa equipped with Bvlgari toiletries and the onboard lounge that is available to First and Business class guests for having a drink and meeting fellow passengers.

Whether you're flying to your next meeting or enjoying your latest adventure, travelling in Business Class helps you arrive inspired.

### THE RESIDENCE WITH ETIHAD

Guests travelling with Etihad Airways are first greeted at the airport by a porter and concierge and taken to a dedicated Check-in reception. Afterwards, they can relax in the Etihad First Class Lounge or go for a massage at the Six Senses Spa.

The cabins come with Poltrona Frau leather seats that convert to a 6-foot 8-inch fully flat bed, ambient lighting, personal wardrobes, and a chilled drinks cabinet. Guests who are looking for the ultimate experience in luxury can stay in The Residence — an upper-deck cabin on Etihad A380s complete with a living room, a separate double bedroom, an ensuite shower room, a personal butler, and a chef to cook whatever passengers desire.

Etihad boasts the next big thing in flying: The Residence, a three-room suite with a permanent double bed in the bedroom, a living room and a private en-suite bathroom with shower. Travellers who book a suite have access to a chauffeur, spa, private Check-in, butler and an onboard chef.



### ROYAL ELEGANCE WITH THAI AIRWAYS

Thai Airways' Royal First Class begins with a graceful host greeting you with a flute of chilled champagne, while guests can lounge in their semi-private suite savouring caviar, silken service and lavish comfort in some of the sky's most spacious First Class cabins.

Thai invites guests to an experience of royal elegance. On Thai's Airbus A380s and newly remodelled Boeing 747s, Royal First passengers enjoy spacious semi-private suites, nearly 8ft long. Seats convert into 180-degree lie-flat beds; in-flight entertainment systems boast 23-inch flat screens with over 300 programmes, and passengers can relax with a full body massage at the Royal First Lounge of Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport before their flight.



# EXPLORER

A vintage-themed still life composition on a brown, textured surface. In the upper right, a silver and black Minolta camera is shown with its lens removed, and a black lens cap with 'HELIOS-22M2' and '28mm' markings lies next to it. In the upper left, there are two small, sepia-toned photographic prints; one clearly shows a bridge and has the text 'TO SOMEONE SPECIAL' and 'always smile! PONY BROWN'. In the center, an open notebook with blank, cream-colored pages is displayed, with a yellow pencil resting on the right page. At the bottom, a pair of black-rimmed glasses is laid out. The background is a detailed, aged map of the world, with labels like 'AMERICA', 'EUROPA', and 'INDIA' visible.



# EXPLORING THE CAVES

Behind the facades of Odisha's caves lie a hidden treasure of drawings, sculptures and rock-cut architecture, all waiting to be discovered

## TT BUREAU

Stumbling upon a cave for the first time, the early human would have been overcome by a plethora of emotions, with curiosity and excitement taking brief turns. It wasn't long before they found that the dark depths served perfectly as a hospitable dwelling. Over the years, caves have fascinated various sections of mankind for various reasons, and one of them were wandering ascetics who found their spiritual calling fully realised here.

In Odisha, there are several caves that have sheltered Jain monks since ancient times, and one can witness their imprints today in the form of various drawings and sculptures.

The Udayagiri and Khandagiri Caves are two such beautiful set of caves that stand as a testimony to the architectural level of excellence achieved during that period, and attract visitors the year round. Called "lena", these caves were essentially dwelling retreats or cells of Jain ascetics, and opened directly into the veranda or the space in front. Despite being austere plain otherwise, they depict auspicious objects venerated by the Jain monks, besides other scenes portraying the world around them.

## UDAYAGIRI

Approaching the Caves

From Bhubaneswar, Udayagiri is located on the hill to the right and one can gain access to its 18 caves through a flight of steps.

The largest amongst them, and also the most beautiful one, is the Rani Gumpha or the Queen's Cave. Being double storeyed, it was excavated on three sides of a quadrangle with some fine wall friezes, along with some restored pillars, apart from some fabulous sculptures contained within them. The right wing of the lower storey consists of a single cell with three entrances and a pillared veranda. Over the entrances to the cell, one can see arches, or toranas, which depict religious and royal scenes, a couple standing reverentially with folded hands, a female dancer with accompanying female musicians, etc.

Cave 2, known as Small Elephant Cave, or Chota Hathi Gumpha, is the object of much admiration for its masterly carvings that depict six enormous elephants that flank its entrance. All the other caves, namely Cave 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14 and 17 portray some notable incidents from the period they belong to, images of exploits or adventures, spirituality and legends.



## KHANDAGIRI

### Approaching the Caves

When one comes down the main road by a flight of steps in front of Cave 17 of Udayagiri, one will come across a track to the left which leads to the summit of Khandagiri hill. After following this track for a few metres, one will reach Cave 1 and Cave 2, also known as Tatoa Gumpha or Parrot Caves. It derives its name from the figures of parrots carved on the arches of the doorways. Cave 3, referred to as Ananta Gumpha or Snake Cave, depicts twin serpents on two door arches, and is one of the most important caves on Khandagiri hill, on account of its unique motifs in some relief figures of boys chasing animals, including lions and bulls, geese with outspread wings holding in stalks of lotus buds or blue lotus in their bills, a royal elephant flanked by a smaller one carrying lotus flower, etc.

Caves 7, 8, 9 and 15 feature amazing pieces of workmanship, some religious symbols carved intricately, while some showcase the various Tirthankars revered by the Jains. The 18th century Jain temple dedicated to Rishabhath, is perched on a hill, and enshrines some Tirthankars, besides offering one a spectacular view of the plains below.



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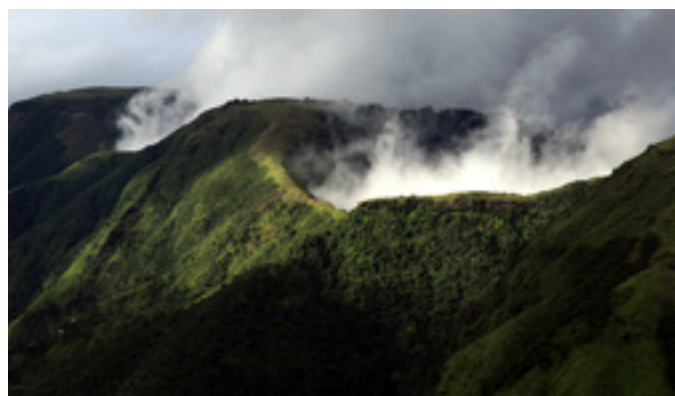
# ALLURE OF NATURE

Head out to these wonderful destinations where beauty resides in every corner and time seems to come to a standstill

VISHWAJIT SHARMA



Come autumn, and the leaves of red, yellow, pink and brown grace Nature's visage; a rustle of wind brings in its wake the magic of colours. It is a time for nostalgia, of scenic drives and warm apple cider. Its as if Nature is gearing up for one grand finale before the curtain sets on winter. In India, autumn is when people step out with enthusiasm, after combating the heat and the rains, go camping and participate in revelries all around. A trip to various Indian states during this time of year allows one to witness its famed beauty in all its glory, besides the numerous festivals which this season brings in its wake.



### MEGHALAYA, CHERAPUNJI

In Cherapunji, one can hear the clouds whispering to the mountains, the two always being seated in close proximity to each other. One of the wettest places on earth, this mesmerising place is famous for its roaring waterfalls, vast meadows and a friendly climate the year round. This place is also a photographer's delight with the presence of portrait like landscape enveloping you. Besides, Cherapunji is also home to some of the most gorgeous and exciting waterfalls in India, with some of the most eminent ones being Seven Sisters' falls, Dainthlen Waterfalls, Mawsmai Falls and the Nohkalikai Falls, which also happens to be the tallest plunge waterfall in India.

While in Meghalaya, one must visit the village of Mawlynnong located in the East Khasi Hills. Also referred to as "God's own garden," it holds the distinction of being the cleanest village in all of Asia. One can absorb the ethereal beauty surrounding the place, besides taking a short trek to the living root bridge at the neighbouring village of Riwai.

### BUDGAM, KASHMIR

In Budgam, the beauty of Kashmir is reflected in its pristine form, untouched and pure, in a way, showcasing the authentic spirit of Kashmir perfectly. Budgam district is famous for its mesmerizing natural landscapes and picturesque places, one of which is Yusmarg. Enveloped by fir trees and rolling meadows, Yusmarg is also famous for the shrine of Hazrat Shiekh Noor-ud-din Noorani, besides being an ideal place for sports like trekking, fishing, horse riding and skiing. Doodhpathar, which lies 42km

from Srinagar, is another bowl shaped valley with vast meadows, where the river echoes the rustle of the winds and soft winds negotiate their way through pine trees.

Nilang is another picturesque lake located 4km away from Yusmarg. Tourists are required to cross a rough trekking path through dense forest to reach the lake. The pristine waters of the lake are crystal blue. This is where the lake supposedly got its name from. It serves as an ideal picnic spot for tourists and locals alike.





### **KINNAUR, HIMACHAL PRADESH**

The Kinnaur district enjoys a great variation in its elevation, climate and topography, and showcases an interesting variety of flora and fauna. Sangla, a populous village standing on the right bank of the Baspa River, rests on a slope where one house after the next seem to outgrow each other.

The colossus Raldang peaks overlook the picturesque scenery lying ahead of it. The Baspa Valley endears itself to both visitors and tourists alike due to its flat terrain and green vegetation on the slopes. Moorang, situated above the left bank of the

Sutlej at some distance from the confluence of the Tirang, is a beautiful destination to head to. Reaching the place is in itself a wonderful experience, as one is required to do so through an apricot orchard.

Kinnaur consists of three wildlife sanctuaries, the primary objectives of which are to protect rare species. A curious variety of wildlife can be found in these sanctuaries. These sanctuaries are Lipa-Asrang Sanctuary, Rakchham-Chhitkul Sanctuary, and the Rupi-Bhaba Sanctuary.





### TAWANG, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Bordered by Tibet in the north, Bhutan in the south west, Tawang is both historically and naturally endowed. The solitude covering the Gudpi and Chong-Chugmi ranges, fast descending waters of the Tawangchu River and the stillness of the Tawang Valley are simply mesmerising. The people of the Monpa tribe are the major inhabitants of all the districts except for the Shyo village, which primarily houses people of Tibetan origin.

Tawang is also famous for its many beautiful glacial lakes with crystal blue waters, some of which are, the Sela lake, Sangetser lake, Banggachang lake, besides others. While most of the lakes remain frozen during winters, during the summers, one has the privilege of watching the migratory birds visiting these lakes.

Being the birthplace of the sixth Dalai Lama, Tawang is held in reverence by the Tibetan Buddhists, besides being a prominent centre for Gelug or Gelugpa, which is a pre-eminent Buddhist school of thought in Tibet. The 400 year old Tawang Monastery is one of the oldest and largest monasteries in India.



### GREAT RANN OF KUTCH, GUJARAT

The Great Rann of Kutch is a seasonal salt marsh located in the Thar Desert in the Kutch district of Gujarat, India and stretching to the Sindh province of Pakistan. Extending to about 7,505.22 sq.km in size, it's reputed for being the largest salt desert in the world. In India's summer monsoons, the flat desert of salty clay and mudflats, which average 15 meters above sea level, are filled with standing water. In very wet years, the wetlands extend from the Gulf of Kutch on the west through to the Gulf of Cambay on the east. A three month long festival called the Rann Utsav (festival of the Rann) is held by the Government of Gujarat, where tourists can witness the various sights of the Rann and get a taste of the local culture, cuisine and hospitality.

A cradle of craftsmanship, Kutch is known for its exquisite variety of weaving, patchwork, bandhani, tie-and-dye, rogan-art and other ethnic styles of embroidery, pottery, wood-carving, metal-crafts and shell-work. The variety emerges from the enchanting terrain that provides a perfect backdrop to an extra ordinary fair. Perhaps because the landscape is so white and ochre, even a hint of colour adds a fascinating element to the rustic life of Rann.





# RAISING THE BAR

Drink in hand, toes in sand: These classic beach bars do it better than anyone else

**RAHUL SINGHA**

Imagine yourself sitting by the beach with toes in the sand and sipping a chilled beer as the sun sets over the ocean. Picturesque isn't it? There is something magical about beach bars, which makes the heart skip a beat as you laze around listening to the crashing of waves. Here are bars that stand out head and shoulders above the rest. With a perfect ambience, ocean views and a lazy seaside vibe, these bars are the first amongst equals.

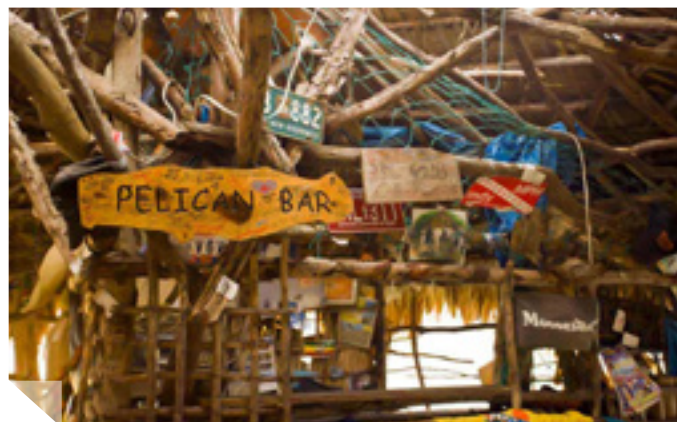
**NIKKI BEACH**

Located on Miami's famed South Beach, this large ocean front complex comprises a bar and restaurant facing the Atlantic Ocean. Visitors can lounge about in stylish cabanas, hammocks, day beds and lounge chairs scattered along the waterfront. Part of an international chain of beach clubs, it's become the club to be seen at largely due to its patronage by celebrities and jet-setters. A casual restaurant during the day, it turns into the city's most glamorous club after sundown.



#### OVERWATER BAR

Located inside the Maldivian resort of Gili Lankanfushi, this bar is built on stilts over the shallow lagoon surrounding the Lankanfushi Island in the North Male Atoll. A pier leads to the wooden bar which has lounge beds set around a small inner pool with panoramic views of the Indian Ocean all around. Lankanfushi is one of the 1190 islands of the Maldivian archipelago and its clear waters harbour colourful coral reefs and a host of marine life including spot reef sharks, needlefish and boxfish. The bar rustles up delicious fare made with fresh catch and other local produce. The resort also has over-water luxury villas, some of which can be only reached by boat.



#### FLOYD'S PELICAN BAR

It's pretty no-frill but the Pelican Bar has something else going for it—location. Smack dab in the middle of the ocean, a mile away from the Parottee Beach in Jamaica, this bar (the brainchild of a local fisherman) is named after the pelicans that circle around the underwater sandbar it's built on. After being razed by Hurricane Ivan in 2004, Pelican Bar was rebuilt entirely with driftwood and palm fronds and runs on electricity produced by a windmill. The tiny interiors are decorated with mementoes left by visitors from around the world. Patrons can enjoy their drink while wading in waist-deep water: regulars recommend the Pelican Perfection - the in-house special.





### BABA NEST

With dramatic 360-degree views of Phuket and surrounding islands on the Andaman coast of Thailand, this minimalist bar simply lets the gorgeous scenery take centre-stage. Patrons seat themselves on comfy beanbags scattered about on an elevated wooden deck which is encircled by an infinity pool. An extensive selection of wines, champagnes and cocktails compliments the experience. Baba Nest also has convenient sea-facing changing rooms below the deck for visitors who can't resist taking a dip in the ocean.



### BARASTI BAR

Located inside Dubai's Le Meridien Mina Seyahi Beach Resort, this award-winning beach bar overlooks the Jumeirah Beach. The wooden deck is ideal for lounging on a beach bed with the stunning views of the Arabian Sea. The bar's casual daytime vibe makes way for a full-blown party fervour at night with a regular DJ and live music getting into the act. There's also an indoor section with large screen televisions screening sports events. The menu is replete with American, Asian and Mediterranean dishes. Barasti is one of the emirate's city's most popular bars, and is choc-a-bloc on weekends.





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# 4<sup>TH</sup> MACAO INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL (INDUSTRY) EXPO CONCLUDES SUCCESSFULLY

ARJUN GILL

The 4<sup>th</sup> Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo (MITE) was recently held from 2-4 September, 2016 at The Venetian Macao. MITE is held every year in order to create a bridge for business communication and customer exchange in the domestic and international tourism industry, including attractions, airlines, cruises, hotels and the related industries. The program of the 4<sup>th</sup> MITE featured an array of highlights such as seminars, a studio showing tourism videos, sales for FIT travel products, as well as folk custom and specialty show.

While talking about the 4<sup>th</sup> Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo, Arzan Khambatta, Head of Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) India, shares, "I am glad that senior office bearers from major trade associations in India could attend the 4<sup>th</sup> Macao International Travel Industry Expo (MITE) along with leading trade media. MITE is the perfect platform to facilitate





business relations between the travel trade of India and Macao. We hope to popularize this platform further in India and hope to have much more participation from the Indian trade in the future.”

Adds Khambatta, “This year’s MITE was dedicated to fostering external co-operation and exchange for members of the travel trade fraternity with a wealth of business opportunities by creating a bridge for business communication and customer exchange in the domestic as well as international tourism industry connecting hotels, transportation and attractions. In addition to brand exposure; recourse development, trade exchanges and generation of sales were the focal points of this exhibition.”

Through close collaboration with the travel trade and other related sectors, MGTO has organized and co-organized a range of mega events and activities in recent years. It seeks to promote the destination through a variety of local, regional and international events. MGTO’s goal is to help Macao become a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure.



# VIBRANT INDIA



India's spirit is always high and the credit goes to the varied year-round festivals which add to the country's joie de vivre

## TT BUREAU

India is the only place on this planet where the air is festive year round. The credit goes to India's diverse cultural make-up which makes it possible for everyone to celebrate life in their own unique way. Festivals in India are not mere occasions, but a time machine ride to a rich social, religious and cultural history. Though the total number of Indian festivals is mind boggling, Today's Traveller will endeavour to acquaint you with some major Indian festivals even as the country is in full celebratory mode.

## AOLING FESTIVAL

Aoling is a chance to escape to the remote most eastern corner of Nagaland and experience an ancient ethnic celebration. Aoling is a major festival of the Konyak Tribe – a hunting tribe existing far away from mainland civilization and living peacefully to retain their age-old values. Aoling marks the start of the spring season and the festival is initiated by sowing seeds in the newly prepared Jhum field. It is a time of exhilaration and excitement for the Konyak people and they spend the entire festive period by making merry, drinking and dancing. As a part of the tribal ritual, rice beer is prepared and people weave new traditional clothes. The ancient hunting ritual is enacted during the celebration by firing guns and dancing in groups. The rest of the festive days are spent honouring relatives and remembering people who have passed away. Aoling is a one-of-a-kind festival because the original time-work flavour is still intact - a unique opportunity definitely not to be missed.



## DUSSEHRA

Dussehra is regarded as the most popular festival of India and is not confined to any particular region or state. Different states have given different names to this festival, like Vijayadashami in Bengal, Dussehra in northern India and Mysuru Dasara in Karnataka, but the underlying philosophy is uniform everywhere. The festival is rooted in antiquity as it represents the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana during the Treta Yuga. As per mythological accounts, Goddess Durga blessed Lord Rama with secret powers and on the day of Asvin Shukla Dashami Rama defeated Ravana and finally rescued Sita. Every year, this historical day is celebrated with a buzz all over India and tourists from all over the world flock to witness the event. Big events are organised where spectators witness public burning of large Ravana effigies stuffed with crackers. The festival also marks the celebration of self realisation and victory over the evils of greed, lust, anger, jealousy and over pride.



## BIHU

Bihu is a cultural festival of Assam and is celebrated not only in India but all over the world. The main feature of Bihu is the Bihu Dance, which is really a treat for the eyes. Bihu is not a singular affair and the entity encompasses three different festivals – the Bohag Bihu, Kongali Bihu and Bhogali Bihu. The Bohag Bihu is regarded as the most popular festival among all the Bihus. It marks the onset of the Asamese New Year and coming of spring. As a part of the celebration farmers prepare paddy fields for cultivation while women make a traditional cuisine called 'Pitha'. Bhogali Bihu glorifies the significance of cleanliness to attract goodness, hence, during this festival people wear new clothes and clean their homes to start the New Year with a fresh perspective. Kongali Bihu is celebrated to ward off pests and the evil eye and to ensure prosperity remains in place. Various sports are also held during the festival, making it an extremely exhilarating affair.





### EID AL-FITR

Eid-Al-Fitr is a major religious festival of the Muslims and is celebrated widely in all parts of India. The festival or religious holiday marks the end of Ramadan – the Islamic holy month of fasting. As a part of the festive ritual, ‘Salat’ or prayer is offered in two units in an open field or a large hall. Practising Muslims indulge in charitable acts during Ramadan in accordance with Allah’s instructions laid down in the holy Quran. During Ramadan, they seek divine blessings by doing philanthropic work, offering prayers and abstaining from worldly pleasure. Eid-Al-Fitr is not just a festival but a way to introspect and cultivate the human qualities bestowed by Allah.

### KUMBH MELA

Kumbh Mela is regarded as the world’s largest religious festival. The extravagant affair is held every 12 years on the banks of the ‘Sangam’ – the meeting place of three holy rivers Ganga, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati. Every four years, the festival alternates between Haridwar, Ujjain, Nasik and Allahabad. Apart from its mythical history and antiquity, the festival holds a special spiritual significance. A huge congregation of pilgrims come from far off places as the festival marks the direction to wisdom.

Various clans of sages assemble at Kumbh and the attending devotees consider it a rare opportunity to seek blessings from them.

The uniqueness of this festival lies in the fact that it doesn’t cater to any particular religious group. Though it is largely celebrated by various Hindu communities, the basic philosophy of this festival is applicable to everyone. Kumbh Mela is a celebration of the eternal forces of nature which encompasses every life form and every atom in this universe.

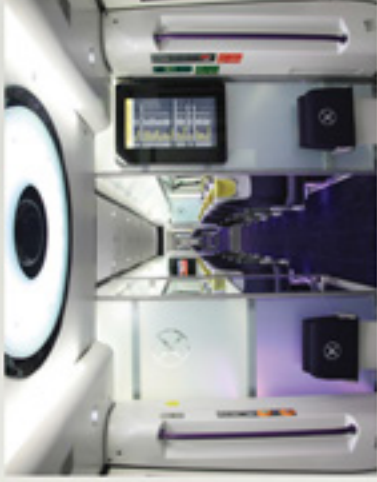
### ONAM

Onam is a major South Indian festival and celebrated in the Indian state of Kerala for 10 days during the Malayalam month of Chingam (August – September). The festival is celebrated to commemorate Lord Vishnu. The festival also represents the homecoming of the mythical king Mahabali whom the local people consider as their king. Onam is basically a harvest festival and it is celebrated to bring prosperity to the lives of the people of Kerala. The festival is all about vibrancy and richness and is celebrated amidst festive rituals, traditional cuisine, dance and music. The historical Thrikkakara temple in Kochi City is the main centre of the festival as the place is believed to be the ancient capital of King Mahabali. Major features of the festival include Ambrosial Onasadya, Snake Boat Race and the exotic Kaikottikali dance.



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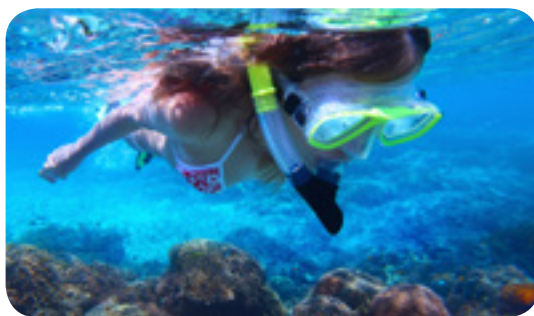


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# 24 HOURS IN AUCKLAND



Follow nature trails, indulge in delicacies, sample the classy wine – it's all here in Auckland

## TT BUREAU

### TRAILS

Ride your way along sea side boardwalks, or embark on a city cycling tour. Just hire a bike and pedal happily through Tamaki Drive promenade, brush past the beauty of the Woodhill forest, explore the Auckland City Waterfront, or follow the trails of Hunua Ranges that take you past lush forest and rolling farmland.

### TASTY TREATS

Visit one of the many bustling Auckland markets to lay your hands at some fresh local produce at local farmers' markets. On Sundays, the Matakana Village Farmers' Market displays artisan cheeses, Italian meats, organic chocolate, homemade chutneys and other inviting delicacies. If you find yourself in the city, rush to the City Farmers' Market in Britomart on Saturday mornings, or the lively La Cigale French Market in Parnell, on both Saturday and Sunday mornings.

### BRING THE BOTTLE

Auckland is enclosed by four wine regions-Matakana, Kumeu, Clevedon Hills and Waiheke Island - a paradise for wine lovers, really. Its blasphemy to be in Auckland and not taste their magnificent wine. The Bordeaux style wines – mouth-filling Cabernet Sauvignons and complex Chardonnays come from New Zealand's oldest established vineyards, and are a treat to the senses.





### ENCOUNTERS WITH WILDLIFE

Enjoy deep sea diving or snorkelling in the marine reserves, or see the huge gannet colony at Muriwai. From the iconic Kiwi and rare forest species to penguins and gannet colonies, bird watching is a spectacular experience here. Witness the playful dolphins glide in Auckland's magnificent Hauraki Gulf. A visit to Auckland Zoo, spread over 17 hectares, is both an exciting and educational experience.

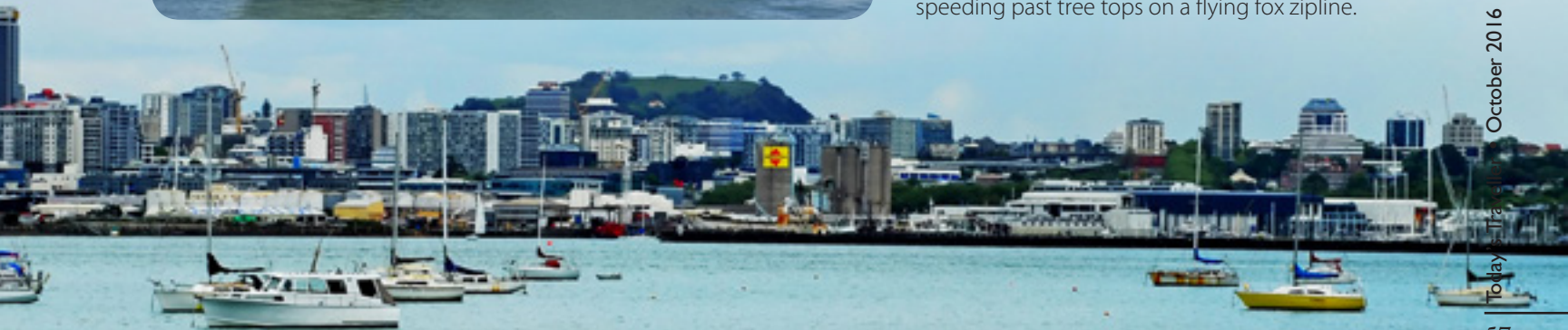
### SHOP YOUR HEART OUT

New Zealand is the premier destination for premier fashion boutiques for top international labels, high street stores and glitzy malls. Stroll leisurely at the cobblestone plaza at the Chancery between the high fashion boutiques and delicious eateries. At Nuffield and Teed Streets, one finds the likes of New Zealand's top fashion designers, some of which include Karen Walker, Zambesi and Kate Sylvester.



### THE PERFECT RETREAT

Waiheke Island enjoys a reputation as being the ultimate island retreat. A 35 minute ferry ride from downtown Auckland, Waiheke is known as the island of wine for its 30 vineries and vineyards. One can explore the island on a scooter and try their hand at archery, laser clay pigeon shooting, kayaking or speeding past tree tops on a flying fox zipline.



**What: Emirates Melbourne Cup**

**When: 1 Nov , 2016**

**Where: Melbourne, Australia**

On the first Tuesday of November every year, the best thoroughbreds from across the globe turn up at the Flemington Racecourse to try their luck at the prestigious title and a chance at the AU\$6.2 million which belongs to the winner. This event is commonly referred to as the race that stops a nation. Officially called the Emirates Melbourne Cup, the race is a celebration of the best that Melbourne has to offer.



**What: MTM+LLTM**

**When: 24 November, 2016**

**Where: The Ashok, New Delhi**

The country's premier MTM+LLTM is visited by travel decision makers from various corporate houses and travel agencies who are pre-identified for huge MICE movements and business travel, as well as luxury and leisure travel. The event creates a platform for you to showcase your products and prospects.



**What: Día De Los Muertos**

**When: 1 – 2 November**

**Where: Oaxaca, Mexico**

During the month of November, various families in Mexico celebrate a feast and invite the dead over for dinner. By its very orientation, one could mistake it for being another Halloween, however, this festival is meant to honour the dead and welcome their souls into their houses as a blessing. A curious mix of pre- Columbian customs and Christian theology, this festival dates back to over 3,000 years.

**What: Iceland Airwaves**  
**When: 2 – 9 November**  
**Where: Reykjavik, Iceland**

This is the ultimate festival for late night lovers, quirky clubs and even quirkier destinations. Icelandic legends like Bjork and Sigur Ros are names that music lovers the world over are well acquainted with, as they are the ones that shot Icelandic music to fame. The show promises a huge line-up of international rosters of alternative rock up and comers, as well as local music that electrifies.



**What: Guru Nanak Jayanti**  
**When: 14 November**  
**Where: Amritsar, India**

Preparations for the big day begin in full swing three weeks earlier, with regular morning processions, especially in Amritsar. The gurudwaras are decorated with flowers, flags and lights. Prior to the day of the festival, there is a procession called Nagarkirtan, with the five beloved ones (panchpyaras) leading the procession. The main day is accompanied by celebrations, chanting of hymns and poems, fireworks, etc.

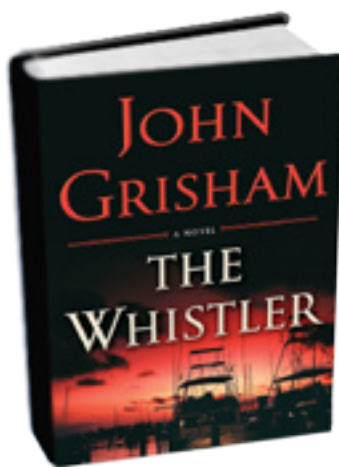


**What: Lewes Bonfire**  
**When: 5 November**  
**Where: Lewes, England**

On November 5<sup>th</sup> every year, Brits light bonfires and set off fireworks to cherish their good luck for stumbling upon Guy Fawkes, the guy who attempted to blow up the Parliament in the year 1605. The festival is backed by a long history of political oppression and religious turmoil behind it, and on this day, one can witness the Lewes Bonfire Societies parading around the city, dressed in unique costumes.

# PICK OF THE MONTH

Here are the latest collection of books, games, audio CDs and DVDs to keep you going throughout the month



## BOOK: THE WHISTLER

What happens when a custodian of the law turns against it? The latest release from America's bestselling author, John Grisham, promises to be one of the most electrifying novels of this year. Honesty and sagacity are qualities to be found in judges, however, what happens when the custodians of the law, manipulate it to serve their nefarious ends? Lacy Stoltz, a lawyer and an investigator for the Florida Board on Judicial Conduct, is faced with a corruption

case involving a Greg Myers, a disbarred lawyer, who comes across a Florida judge with a fortune of a lifetime. Who is behind these corrupt practices? Where will their search eventually lead them? The mystery deepens.

**Genre(s) : Crime, Thriller & Mystery**



## DVD: GHOSTBUSTERS

Ghostbusters combines the elements of spookiness and hilarity perfectly, with the results being nothing short of outstanding. Director Paul Feig magnifies the ridiculousness that is an essential component of this supernatural comedy. Undoubtedly the distinguishing minds in the comedy business today are Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, Kate McKinnon, Leslie Jones, and Chris Hemsworth. All of these fascinating personalities come together as a team to take on the unexpected invasion of Manhattan by ghosts, spirits and slime that have engulfed the city.

**Genre(s) : Science Fiction, Comedy**



## MUSIC: DAY BREAKS

Norah Jones is back, and how! The latest album released by her discovers her going back to her roots, jazz in particular. Through this album, she once again brings home the point that she is the representative of the typical American music dominating this era. Weaving various kinds and style of bedrock American music, she creates a style of music that is really different from any other.

The musical spirit defining Norah's Grammy winning debut, "Come Away With Me," is reflected in the various tracks of this album. However, the overall album reflects a considerable maturation as far as her technical skills are concerned.

**Genre(s) : Jazz, Pop Rock**

## GAME: MAFIA III – DELUXE EDITION (PC)

The game is set in the year 1968, and all the rules surrounding the "big scene" have changed. A few years spent in Vietnam has led to Lincoln Clay coming closer to the realisation, the truth as it is, "Family isn't who you are born with, it's who you die for." Lincoln, now back in his home at New Orleans, is focussed on getting his life back together. However, past connections and memories act as an obstacle in doing so.

Surviving in the new world will prove to be a tough challenge, and will take more than intense gun fights, visceral hand-to-hand combat, white knuckle driving and street smarts. It's time to climb back to the top, it's time to create a new family.

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





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