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VIETNAM NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF TOURISM CONDUCTS TWO-CITY ROADSHOW

Vietnam National Administration of Tourism organised a two-city roadshow in Delhi and Mumbai, on December 12, 2017 and December 14, 2017, respectively. It was handled by Victoria Tour's Indian representative, Pruthi Ranjan. The objective of the event was to offer Indian travel partners an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the destination and meet the hoteliers, DMCs and activity companies.

Ngo Hoau Chung, Deputy Director General, Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT), said that everyone is keen to see the direct connectivity between India and Vietnam, which will provide huge impetus to travel between the two destinations.

While a major chunk of Indian traffic to Vietnam now is business travel, Nguyen Quy Phuong, Director-Travel Industry Management, VNAT, said that direct connectivity will support more leisure and MICE traffic from India to Vietnam. With direct flights, travellers need not have to spend long hours transiting at Bangkok or Singapore, Phuong added.



TOURS FOR YOU PORTUGAL PARTNERS WITH SERENE EXPERIENCES

Tours For You, an incoming Tour Operator and D.M.C. (Destination Management Company) in Portugal, has partnered with Serene Experiences to promote its sales, marketing and PR representation in the Indian market. Serene Experiences, based in New Delhi NCR, is a professionally managed Sales, Marketing & Public Relations Representation Company for international luxury hotels and DMCs.

Nuno Tavares, Owner & CEO, Tours For You, states, "India is a rapidly growing and an important market for us. We are therefore delighted to be partnering with Serene Experiences. Their experience and understanding of the complex Indian market will help us reach out to the various segments from honeymooners and couples, experiential luxury travellers, family vacationers to weddings and conferences. We believe that besides FIT travellers, our experience in organising the most memorable weddings and events would be of prime interest for the Indian market."

Naresh Chandnani, Founder & Director of Serene Experiences, adds, "We would be showcasing this truly unique and amazing destination to high networth individuals and the experienced traveller through various marketing activities, tying up with complementing luxury brands and through bespoke campaigns, individually crafted to acquaint the Indian luxury traveller, destination wedding planners and MICE organisers, with some of the most amazing experiences of Portugal."

ITDC HOSTS CHIEF VIGILANCE OFFICERS' CONFERENCE DELHI NCR- CHAPTER

India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) Ltd organised a Vigilance Study Circle (VSC) NCR meet at The Ashok, New Delhi. VSC NCR is a group of CVOs of various organisations or PSUs / autonomous bodies, situated in the NCR Region, who meet on a regular basis and hold monthly meetings to discuss various vigilance-related issues.

The meeting was chaired by Praveen Sinha, Additional Secretary, Central Vigilance Commission (CVC); M R Krishna, President, VSC; Vinayak Garg, Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO), ITDC, and attended by the Chief Vigilance Officers of various organisations.

Sinha delivered a lecture on vigilance-related issues in the meeting. The best practices followed by organisations present were also shared for further implementation.



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THE DEN DEBUTS IN BENGALURU

The Den, a state-of-the-art luxury hotel for millennials and globe trotter, debuted in Bengaluru. Located in the IT hub of Bengaluru, it provides the right blend of service, luxury and quiet efficiency for business travellers and fulfils the requirements of destination connoisseurs.

With 226 rooms, suites, impeccable facilities and a delectable array of dining options, The Den is positioned as an avant garde luxury hotel, referencing the theme of "Eat. Work. Sleep. Play".

Vinesh Gupta, General Manager, The Den, said, "The Den brand prides itself as being a cultural touchstone that provides state-of-the-art-facilities. The Den Bengaluru, will be the epitome of our vision, combining rich local traditions with renowned contemporary touches to deliver a fresh perspective on world-class service."

The hotel offers an extensive selection of cuisines. The Creek, is a round-the-clock dining restaurant; The Nest, is a trendy lounge bar; The Layla, the signature rooftop (yet to open) restaurant will offer Mediterranean Cuisine; The Cold Press provides a choice of healthy juices and The Deli is a full-service bakery

WORK highlights the banqueting space spread over 10,000sq. ft; SLEEP highlights the 226 meticulously designed rooms; PLAY translates to options like The Cave - a 15-seater cinema hall and The Play House offers entertainment activities. The hotel also features a state-of-the-art outdoor swimming pool, a fitness centre equipped with the latest equipment and Sactuary, a spa to rejuvenate mind and body.



BEST WESTERN HOTELS & RESORTS DEBUT IN CENTRAL DELHI

Best Western Hotels & Resorts continues its rapid expansion in India with the addition of two new hotels in New Delhi. They are the first international hotel brand to make inroads into the vibrant neighbourhood of Paharganj, which is known to be dominated by a high concentration of affordable hotels, lodges, and guest houses, ranging from 1-star to 3-star ratings.

As a part of their dynamic development programme in India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, which has seen the portfolio growing from 14 hotels to 35 hotels in the last 18 months, Best Western has signed multi-phase agreements with Blue Mango Hotels Pvt. Ltd. for opening the two new hotels in Delhi.

"As we continue our journey in taking the re-imagined Best Western brand into the future, we are dedicated more than ever to offer the best in hospitality to our guests," said Atul Jain, Chief Operating Officer, Best Western Hotels & Resorts – India, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka.

The pre-opening activities for the newly constructed upper midscale "Best Western Plus Central" have been initiated with a soft opening, slated in January 2018. The midscale "Best Western Pearl," which is a conversion hotel, is scheduled to open in September 2018, after renovation.

Both properties will be complemented by an array of modern amenities and facilities.

ATOUT FRANCE ORGANISES THIRD EDITION OF AMBASSADOR'S TRAVEL AWARDS

The third edition of the prestigious Ambassador's Travel Awards was organised under the high patronage of His Excellency, The Ambassador of France to India, M Alexandre Ziegler. Held at the Sofitel Mumbai BKC, on December 13, 2017, this year's awards continued the tradition of recognising and rewarding three travel agencies for an exemplary showcase of France through published itineraries and two Tour Operators for exceptional achievements in the visa domain.

The 2017 edition introduced a new award category: the Best Journalist Category, aimed at recognising and awarding the contribution of the media towards a showcase of France through published media articles.



The event was graced by the presence of His Highness, Shriji Arvind Singhji Mewar of Udaipur.

Travel agents were also invited to send in their best published itineraries, which were later shortlisted by a panel of eminent jurists, including His Excellency, The Ambassador of France to India, M Alexandre Ziegler, His Highness, Shriji Arvind Singhji Mewar of Udaipur, Jean-Michel Cassé, COO, India and South Asia AccorHotels, Olivier Boulland, Commercial Sales Director, Air France-KLM and Divia Thani, Editor, Conde Nast Traveller.

Sharing his thoughts, His Excellency, The Ambassador of France to India, M Alexandre Ziegler, said: "France is the preferred tourism and business destination globally, receiving around 83 million tourists in 2016. It is a favourite outbound destination in India – in 2016 alone, a record 6 lakh Indian travellers visited France. We look forward to welcoming them every year in yet greater numbers. I am delighted to give these awards recognising the contribution of the members of the Indian travel fraternity who are most dedicated to showcasing France's matchless destinations."



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12-Feb	Monday	Mumbai	11:00 - 16:00	Trident Hotel, Nariman Point
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15-Feb	Thursday	Bangalore	10:00 - 14:00	Taj Vivanta, MG Road
16-Feb	Friday	Delhi	14:00 - 17:00	Le Meridien
19-Feb	Monday	Ahmedabad	10:00 - 15:00	Hyatt Regency

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SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

KERALA TOURISM ORGANISES PARTNERSHIP MEET

Kerala unveiled its New Tourism Policy at the recently held Partnership Meet in Mumbai. With a focus on sustainable tourism, the policy underlines a major highlight of this year's domestic campaign. The revamped fare with an array of new tourism products was showcased at Mumbai. Shri Kadakampally Surendran, Minister for Co-Operation, Tourism and Devaswom, Government of Kerala, stated, "To ensure the accomplishment of an ambitious target of a 100% increase in arrival of foreign tourists and 50% in domestic tourists in five years, a tourism regulatory authority has been formed. This would help put a stop to any unhealthy practices and guarantee better intervention of the Tourism Department through scrutiny and a licensing system."



With the fifth edition of the Kerala Blog Express, a unique social media outreach that brings together international bloggers, Kerala is gearing up to welcome every kind of traveller. Kerala Blog Express starts on March 12.

"Most foreign tourists flock to Kerala to experience its cultural heritage, but what we are trying to showcase is the idea that our culture isn't limited to performances on stage. It is ingrained in our way of life and the department is taking small but significant steps towards helping a traveller experience the richness of Kerala, be it our temple festivals, cuisine, rural crafts, folk forms or traditional and popular art forms," said Rani George, IAS, Secretary, Tourism & Culture, Government of Kerala.

PARK HOTELS INTRODUCES 'ZONE BY THE PARK' IN JODHPUR

Park Hotels has now entered Jodhpur with the launch of its second hotel in Rajasthan, under 'Zone by The Park'. The first hotel of the price-conscious, design-conscious brand was launched in April 2015, in the Pink City, Jaipur. Zone by The Park is present in Coimbatore, Jaipur, Chennai, Raipur, Bengaluru, with upcoming hotels in Pondicherry, Igatpuri and Goa. The brand will have 17 properties by the year 2020; this will be about 1,500 keys in the next 4 years.

With 90 guest rooms, the new Zone by The Park, Jodhpur, is located at the city centre, in proximity to popular tourist destinations such as Umaid Bhawan Palace and scenic Kalyana Lake. Zone Jodhpur boasts a 7,600sq. ft. banquet hall with a spill over of 14,000sq. ft. of outdoor lawn for large weddings, exhibitions, social gatherings, celebrations and conferences. The hotel has 2 restaurants and a discotheque.

Speaking at the launch, Vijay Dewan, Managing Director, Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Ltd, said, "We are extremely delighted to launch our second property in Rajasthan, especially in Jodhpur, as it is a discerning tourist's destination with a reflection of history."

Zone by The Park, Jodhpur is home to an all-day dining restaurant, Bazaar, that serves world cuisine, inspired by multi-hued charismatic native bazaars. Urban Spice Box, the exclusive Indian grill and kebab restaurant and Z Bar, will prove to be the perfect place to unwind and relax.



WTTC- INDIA INITIATIVE APPOINTS NEW OFFICE BEARERS

World Travel & Tourism Council, India Initiative (WTTCL), has announced new appointments for 2018. Sunder G. Advani, Chairman & Managing Director, Advani Hotels & Resorts (India) Limited, has been appointed as the Chairman of WTTCL and Rajeev Talwar, Chief Executive Officer, DLF, has been designated as the Vice Chairman of WTTCL.

On his new appointment, Sunder G Advani shared, "We see from our experiences, the growth that tourism can help in generating economic opportunity, social cohesion and pride."

Rajeev Talwar informed, "WTTCL has been championing convergence between Government of India and the States to facilitate tourism in India. Our role will be to encourage the State Governments – the political leadership and bureaucracy – to take a more favourable stance towards the tourism sector."

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA LAUNCHES FIRST MUMBAI SHOPPING FESTIVAL 2018

Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), in association with the Ministry of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra, launches the first edition of its annual event, the Mumbai Shopping Festival (MSF), the first-of-its-kind citywide festival across Mumbai.

The festival will present visitors with world-class, immersive retail experiences clubbed with captivating live performances throughout the city.

Speaking at the occasion, Shri Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, said, "For the very first time the festival, held in Maharashtra, will bring the Mumbai Shopping Festival 2018 to you. I am honoured and pleased to announce that the festival will launch Mumbai as a world-class shopping destination. We are delighted to see zealous interest from our partners, including retailers, brands, restaurants, who have given innumerable hours to making the Mumbai Shopping Festival a reality."



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HANNELI SLABBER has been appointed Regional General Manager Asia, Australasia and Middle East, South African Tourism. Slabber has held the reins at South African Tourism's India office for the past seven years and will continue to guide and influence its operations going ahead. She has enabled, motivated and led the India office team, taking the

destination to the top of the holiday-maker's popularity charts, from establishing South Africa as a standalone destination, to building aspiration and universal appeal with celebrity, Bollywood and cricket personality associations and making classroom trainings identifiable and interesting. She has been instrumental in helping the South African travel industry understand India better.



SUNJAE SHARMA has been appointed as the Vice President of Operations for Hyatt India. Sharma will lead Hyatt's India operations and will be responsible for executing the company's operational and growth strategy in his new role. Prior to being appointed Vice President of operations for India, Sharma was the Area Vice President for South

& West India and General Manager of Grand Hyatt Mumbai, where he oversaw the strategic and financial performance of 16 hotels.



GAGANDEEP SINGH has been designated as the new General Manager of Courtyard by Marriott Hotel, Agra. Singh has over 15 years of experience in the core hospitality and customer-oriented operations, with hotel chains like Intercontinental Hotel Group, Sarovar Hotel & Resorts and Accor. He has been awarded The Ten Club Award 2017, Leader of the Quarter, Southwest Asia award, by IHG SWA.



PARTH SAXENA has been appointed as the new General Manager for Matrix Inn, Pune. An astute professional with 12 years' experience in the areas of Guest Relation and Hotel and Restaurant operations, Parth will now bring his organisational skills to the new position. Prior to Matrix Inn, Parth has worked in Sarovar Grand Hometel, Mumbai, Country Inns and Suites by Carlson, Navi Mumbai, Sterling Holidays Resort India Ltd., Mahindra Holidays Resorts, Coorg, and Shangri-La Eros, New Delhi.



MOHIT KANWAL has been appointed as Director of Sales and Marketing for Hyatt Regency, Delhi. In 2013, he joined Hyatt, in Pune, as Director, Sales and Marketing, followed by Hyatt Regency Mumbai, as Director of Sales and Marketing. Kanwal brings more than 18 years of experience in the industry, which gives him an in-depth and holistic understanding of the hospitality business. He started his career with The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi, as Hotel Operations Management trainee, after which he joined Trident, Nariman Point, Mumbai, as Sales Executive, in 2004.



ALPA JANI has been designated as Acting Hub – Head, MEISEA (Middle East Hub/ India/ South East Asia) - Tourism Execution for South African Tourism. The new position will expand the scope of Jani's responsibility to cover the Middle East and Southeast Asia, in addition to India. Jani has earlier served as Trade Relations Manager at South African Tourism's Mumbai office for seven years. She started her career at South African Airways in 2003 as Supervisor -Reservations and Ticketing. She then took on the role of Assistant Manager, E-business, at Thomas Cook. In 2008, Jani went on to handle HNI business at Thomas Cook's Indulgence. She joined South African Tourism in 2010.



VIVEK SINGH has been designated as the Regional Revenue Optimization Manager for StayWell Hospitality Group. He will be responsible for the overall revenue management of the group, with key focus on generating maximum revenues. In his illustrious career span, he has been associated with recognised global brands like Hyatt, IHG, Starwood, Accor, Marriott, to name a few. He has been a part of the pre-opening teams of Crowne, The Westin Gurgaon New Delhi, Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach, Dubai.

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CREATING A BETTER WORLD

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Annual Tourism Summit 2017 highlighted the need for Sustainable Tourism in all tourism activities

TT BUREAU



The Tourism Industry is one of the world's fastest growing industries and a major source of income for many countries. However, the ethic of responsibility needs to be addressed in all tourism activities.

Sustainable tourism has been recognised worldwide, notably in the realm of development in fostering better understanding among people everywhere, in being aware of the rich heritage of various civilizations and in appreciating the inherent values of different cultures and thereby creating a better world.

Highlighting the role of tourism as an efficient vehicle for promoting inclusive growth, Alphons Kannanthanam, Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, said, "India witnessed a combined 14.5 million tourist



arrivals in 2016 and this is not enough for a country as big as India and a country which has so much to offer. “

He was speaking at the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Annual Tourism Summit 2017 – Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, in New Delhi recently. While releasing a CII Report on Sustainable Tourism Practices in India the Minister said, “India is a safe place and everyone can feel comfortable here – only perceptions and the way it is projected needs to be changed. We should ensure safety around our heritage sites. We need to build an entire ecosystem of art, culture, coffee houses and live performances around heritage sites. They should be alive throughout the night.”

In this, the Minister was in sync with the resolution adopted by the United Nations World Tourism Organization, which has designated 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, in recognition of the potential of the tourism industry, which accounts for some 10 per cent of the world’s economic activity.

Continuing, the Minister recounted that Sustainable or Eco-tourism is one of the most significant factors that tourists consider while deciding their travel destinations. Citing Indore, he said that the city has maintained its impeccably clean status through the initiatives of local bodies. “Sustainable models are also implemented in Kerala, especially remote Kerala, Meghalaya and Nagaland and can be replicated in other parts of the country only through individual and community level,” informed Kannanthanam, adding that “cultivating ownership for

“India is a safe place and everyone can feel comfortable here – only perceptions and the way it is projected needs to be changed.”

— Alphons Kannanthanam,
Minister of State (I/C), Tourism

promoting sustainable tourism and spreading awareness comes at the local bodies and municipal level.” Sanitation and hygiene also came under the aegis of civic bodies.

Gyan Bhushan, Economic Advisor, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, highlighted Government-led initiatives such as cycle and music tourism promoted at the Paryavartan

Parv to enhance tourism, saying, “We all have to think and act responsibly to achieve the goal of sustainability.”

Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General of Confederation of Indian Industry, elaborated on the goals of sustainable tourism, stating, “The tourism sector is, at present, experiencing a huge growth. It has become one of the major sectors under the Indian economy and is emerging as a key driver for generating employment and promoting economic diversification. We have to ensure that the tourism sector not only reaps benefits economically, but also responsibly, towards the country, people and culture. We should also see to it that it touches the lives of those who are not as privileged as we are and help in imparting skill sets and reducing poverty at all levels.”

Deep Kalra, Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Make my Trip, articulated, “Social media, today, has significant impact on why people travel. According to World Travel & Tourism Council,

“We need to build an entire ecosystem of art, culture, coffee houses and live performances around heritage sites. They should be alive throughout the night.”

— Alphons Kannanthanam,
Minister of State (I/C), Tourism

India ranks 7th in the world in terms of total contribution to GDP. We should look at developing cultural hubs where everyone can soak in India.”

Dipak Haksar, Chairman, CII National Committee on Tourism & Hospitality & Chief Executive, ITC Hotels & WelcomHotels opined, “One of three super sectors, Travel & Tourism is driving economic growth in the 21st century. The sector accounts for 9.3 % of total employment in India and has immense power to do well. India, one of the oldest civilizations in the world, has been attracting travellers from all over the world for long. The growing importance of India on the international stage has contributed to the growth of Travel & Tourism.”

Commented Waseem Raja, Deputy Director – Tourism, Jammu & Kashmir, on the revival of Jammu & Kashmir, “Inclusiveness is crucial and is very important for Sustainable Tourism. We need to involve and engage the locals to achieve sustainability. J&K is a model of unity and diversity, which presents a complete package for both Indian and global all tourists.

The central concept of Sustainable Tourism comprises the ‘triple bottom-line’ of economic responsibility, social responsibility and environmental responsibility. India is already keyed in, with its homestays and intrinsic hospitality. Shared consumption, technology and individual effort can realise the goals for Sustainable Tourism.

TOURISM'S SUCCESS STORY

The Ministry of Tourism hopes to up the ante for tourism growth in India by introducing a slew of initiatives to increase tourist footfall

TT BUREAU

From ancient times until the present, India has been the cynosure of interest, with foreign travellers being lured to the country because of its vast and rich tapestry of intrinsic beauty, architectural relics, heritage and culture sites. India's natural assets have also lent themselves to the immense potential in adventure and cruise tourism, which could possibly classify it as an incredible round-the-year tourist destination.

Cognizant of India's enormous potential as a tourist destination, the Ministry of Tourism has gone the extra mile to introduce a slew of measures to enhance tourist footfall in the country. And, spearheading the success story and determined to take it to greater heights, is the accomplished Rashmi Verma, (IAS) Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Articulating at length with Today's Traveller, Verma shares valuable insights into the challenges faced by the industry and the initiatives taken by the Ministry to expedite the pro-growth policies to promote tourism.

With a redoubtable background in tourism, Verma's mission is to bring world-class experience for travellers. Acknowledging that the Tourism Industry has emerged as one of the key drivers of growth in the country, Verma sums up the 2017 experience, stating, "This has been a remarkable year for tourism in terms of growth in foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs). India registered over 16 per cent growth till now which is higher in comparison to last year's. We are optimistic that this growth will continue in the year 2018 as well."

Aggressive marketing and honing in a product specific campaign are Verma's deliverables. The Ministry's "Incredible India 2.0 Campaign," will focus on a specific promotional plan, including thematic films on specific subjects. "We will be launching an aggressive marketing campaign in the overseas and domestic market. The whole campaign will be market and product specific," explains the forward-thinking Secretary.

Road shows will be a prominent part of the promotional campaign, informs Verma enthusiastically, adding, "We are planning some thematic road shows for Buddhist circuits in markets, which can be a good source for getting travellers interested in the same." With a burgeoning domestic market, road shows will also feature in Indian states, especially in the Northeast.

Recognising the significance of technology, a new Incredible India website, which is interactive and personalised, has been launched. Chat facilities and an app will ensure speedy facilitation of all travel queries and related issues. The astute leader foresees a huge influx of tourists and is ready with a game plan which will comprise both B2C and B2B marketing. "We will restructure our overseas





offices and create around 7-8 hubs which will help us initiate our marketing activities. These hubs will be serviced by ITMRs (India Tourism Marketing Representatives) and its objective will be to generate awareness about our tourism products and spread our reach in emerging markets," reveals Verma.

A more efficient physical and digital infrastructure will be effected by a selection of 10 iconic sites which will work towards world-class infrastructure. All resources will be collated with other ministries and state governments in order to provide top notch experiences to travellers. Moreover, MoUs have been signed with the National Highway Authority to establish five wayside amenities in Buddhists circuits, plus a possible partnership with the Ministry of Petroleum for selection of some petrol pumps that are setting up wayside amenities in key circuits.

Working in concurrence with other ministries and state governments is a policy favoured by Verma, therefore Special Tourism Zones are in the offing in 2018. A nod from the Ministry of Finance will enable the Tourism Ministry to offer the stipulated zones to 5 states on a challenge mode, thus greatly enhancing tourist facilities.

With regard to Heritage, Verma informs that the Ministry, in collaboration with ASI (Archaeological Survey of India), has launched a scheme, "Adopt a Heritage," which has been well received.

Verma aims to cater to several market types, such as Cruise Tourism, one of the fastest growing segments of leisure travel.

This segment could increase domestic tourists who currently fly to other countries to experience the same. Apart from working with the Mumbai Port Trust and other port trusts, Verma adds, "We are also collaborating with some of the international cruise liners to bring in more cruises to domestic ports which will result in berthing of international tourists."

A yen for Adventure Tourism among millennials has prompted the Tourism Ministry to declare 2018 as the year for Adventure Tourism. The Northeastern states have come up with new products to attract potential tourists and Verma asserts that safety is an important aspect and a different set of guidelines for Adventure Tourism will be issued. Guidelines for home-stays will be introduced to ensure the licensing, safety and availability of basic amenities.

The Ministry's visa policies and e-tourist visa facilities will be further streamlined, says Verma, while the Ministry is also working on providing quality guides who are proficient in various skills and who would be accredited after passing the online test.

Acknowledging tourism's enormous significance, Verma concludes, "The Ministry of Tourism has faced certain challenges and issues, and we are trying to build a successful platform in 2018 that will work towards bridging the gap in the demand and supply chain. We hope for a positive response to this campaign, which translates into a better footfall."





20 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport has set benchmarks with its consistent delivery of quality and service, a range of fine-dining options and striking banqueting spaces

TT BUREAU

When it comes to today's discerning travellers, the requisite is for increasingly personal, connected experiences and the best international luxury hotel brands have not only delivered on this, but have also achieved a consummate excellence of consistency that luxury travellers expect. Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport, the flagship property of Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group in India, has completed 20 years of delivering excellence and guest experiences that have been truly unique.

With key differentiators such as the 100% Guest Satisfaction Guarantee and the Yes I Can! spirit of service, and located close to the corporate hub of Gurgaon and the New Delhi Airport, Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport is a luxurious, vibrant, contemporary and captivating world-class hotel.

Consider the incredible dining options at Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport, where you can indulge in a culinary journey around the world. The popular award-winning Thai cuisine restaurant, Neung Roi, serves delectable Thai dishes; the iconic The Great Kabab Factory promises a unique dining experience, where you can relish up to 450 varieties of succulent kababs; experience

world cuisine at NYC, the all-day dining multi-cuisine restaurant; up your spirits at Savannah Bar, a colonial bar for relaxed evenings and avail R The Lounge for a quick bite between meetings.

Plan to host a corporate event or a grand wedding? Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport offers magical settings to host up to 1,000 guests, with lavish spreads and versatile space that can accommodate a range of events, not to mention an impeccable eye for detail that will ensure your event's success. Welcome guests at the striking banqueting spaces, Crystal and Ebony and be blown away by the exquisite décor, which includes mother-of-pearl and onyx embellishments, delightful Czech crystal chandeliers and state-of-the-art HD projection systems, single-touch iPad controls, clean fuel technology, et al.

And, after all the brouhaha of a hectic wedding celebration, recharge in the hotel's award-winning R The Spa, spread over an area of 20,000sq.ft, at three levels. One of India's finest urban spas, it offers a holistic wellness experience with a choice of massages and the right blend of Asian traditions and European therapies. It is also the first ever three-level spa experience where you can rejuvenate your mind, body and spirit.

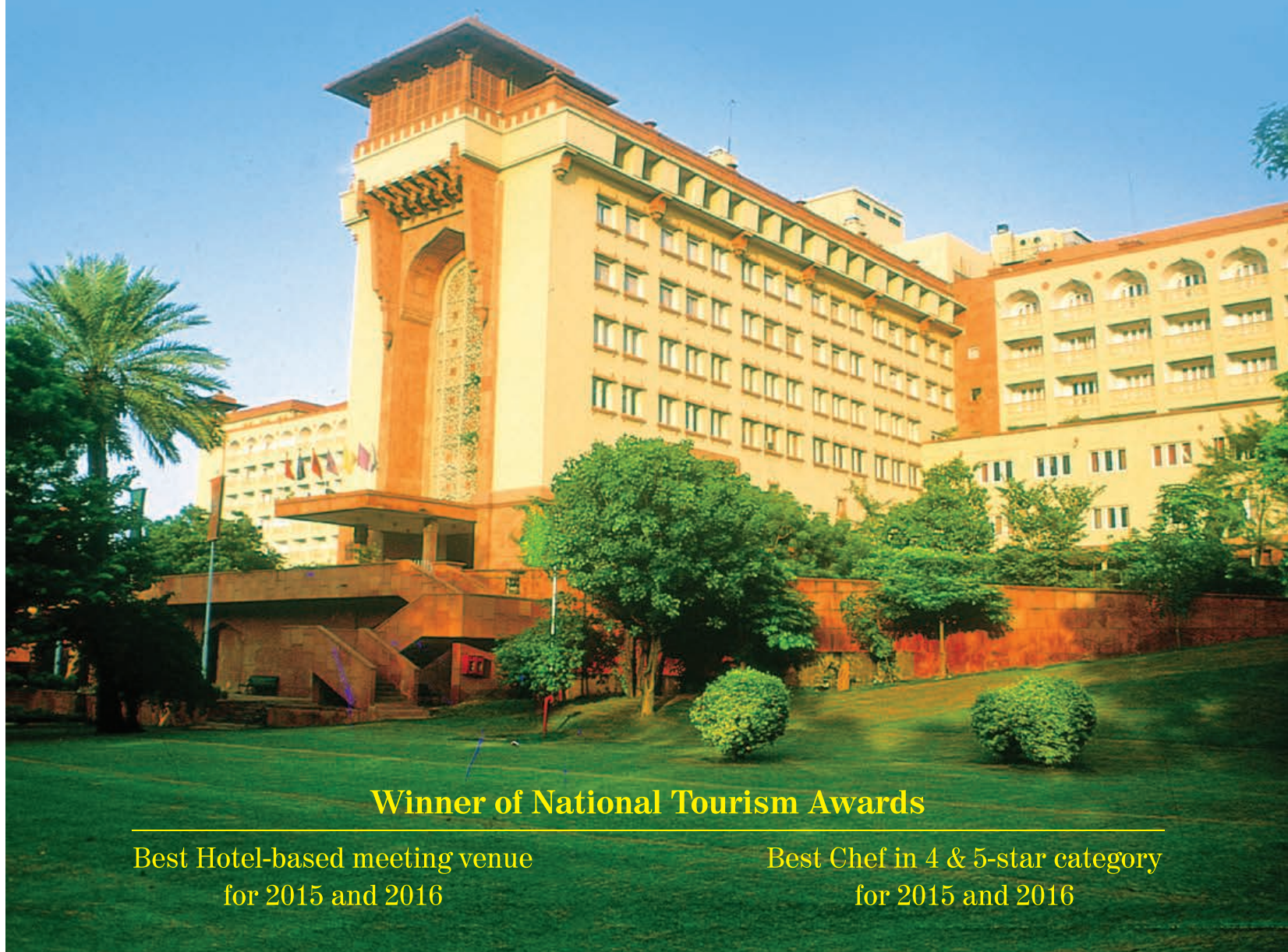


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ITDC: TOURISM'S FINE FACILITATOR



A key player in the Tourism Industry, ITDC has set benchmarks in tourism promotion, by providing a complete package of services in the realm of accommodation, transport, shopping, entertainment and publicity

TT BUREAU

The objective of India Tourism Development Corporation, or ITDC, as its nomenclature suggests, has always been to establish a robust base for the development of tourism infrastructure. It is perhaps the only enterprise of its kind that offers an almost complete package of tourist services, namely, accommodation, transport, shopping, entertainment and publicity.

And, within a short span of time, ITDC has risen as a key player in the Tourism Industry, setting trends in hotel design and décor, popularising cuisine, and concentrating its efforts towards providing guests with a truly Indian experience. Elaborating on this, as well as ITDC's expansive progress, its USPs and future plans, is the resourceful Piyush Tiwari – Director Commercial & Marketing, ITDC, to Today's Traveller.

Speaking about how ITDC has been a catalyst in India's tourism development, Tiwari states, "India Tourism Development Corporation has witnessed the evolution of the tourism and hospitality sectors over years. The business took unexpected turns, leading ITDC to the path of success. ITDC clocked turnover of 495.14 crore during the financial year 2016-17, as against 465.69 crore in the previous year. ITDC achieved the highest ever turnover from operations during the year."

Continuing, Tiwari reveals that The Ashok, New Delhi, ITDC's flagship property and a glorious blend of royal comfort and contemporary vibe, "has registered its highest ever turnover of Rs.152.91 crore during the FY 2016-17. The Ashok also received LEED GOLD Certification under Existing Building Operation and Maintenance category. CEO, U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)

handed over LEED GOLD Plaque & Certification to then C&MD, ITDC, during the felicitation ceremony on February 15, 2017."

Tiwari further informs how ITDC has put its best foot forward by expanding the Ashok International Trade Division (AITD), presently operating 12 Duty Free Shops at Goa, Haldia, Kolkata, Chennai, Mangalore, Visakhapatnam, Mumbai, Paradip, Kakinada, Krishnapatnam, Tuticorin and Cochin sea ports.

Among the multi-faceted activities of the Corporation, the Sound & Light division (SEL), has added a new show at the famous Sun Temple of Konark to its ever expanding list, while Diu Fort is also awaiting a formal launch. Additionally, monument lighting at five Buddhist monuments in Sarnath-Varanasi was another feather in the cap for the division.

Tiwari also apprises one about the laurels achieved by its flagship property, The Ashok, New Delhi. It is the proud recipient of the National Tourism Award in the category of 'Best Hotel Based Meeting Venue' and "Best Chef" in the 4-Star to 5-Star Deluxe, Heritage Classic & Grand Category, for the second time in a row. Chefs of The Ashok Group have been lauded with the Golden Hat Award, Kitchen Artist of the Year Award, etc, and have participated in Indian Food festivals across the globe, in 10 countries, including Myanmar, Spain, Lebanon, Netherlands, Congo, Italy, Cambodia, Ghana.

Tiwari is vocal about ITDC's future plans, outlining a five-pronged approach. "When it comes to future plans," states Tiwari, "ITDC has been a pioneer in the Hospitality and Tourism industry since the time of its inception. Our major focus is on the development of our flagship property, The Ashok, with the aim of making it a world-class Hotel in the Capital of India, in the times to come." Tiwari says that ITDC is working methodically to improve its overall performance by focussing on each vertical and various initiatives have been taken in this regard.

Firstly, reveals Tiwari, "ITDC is being repositioned as a one-stop solution for meeting the hospitality, travel and tourism related needs of prospective customers and other business verticals of ITDC are being strengthened and developed in view of the proposed disinvestment of some hotels."

Secondly, a big impetus is being given to connect ITDC with new customers, especially with the younger generation, through digital and social media. Steps are being taken to make ITDC website more attractive and user friendly.

ITDC has Introduced Special Packages/Promotions for hotels and ATT division; and a well-equipped digital agency has been appointed to ensure the brand's presence and engagement on all important platforms.

And, in order to augment its business, ITDC has initiated a dialogue with State Tourism Departments/ Corporation for strategic alliances.

For the coming year, Tiwari paints a robust picture, adding, "ITDC aims to build extensive marketing strategies and business plans to leverage on its strength of being a pioneer, well recognised and a trusted name in the Hospitality, Tour & Travel Industry. The Corporation would continue to aggressively promote and reposition ITDC as a "One-Stop Solution for all Hospitality, Travel & Tourism related needs," by being more visible in different kinds of media, including social media, to connect with the younger generation."

Presently, concludes Tiwari, "Our focus for the upcoming year lies in the renovation of our majestic hotels, The Ashok and Samrat, to bring them at par with the best in the industry. Upgradation and revamping of websites, forming strategic tie-ups with prospective partners to strengthen business verticals and pushing our limits to achieve excellence."

ITDC has been a pioneer in the Hospitality and Tourism industry since the time of its inception. Our major focus is on the development of our flagship property, The Ashok, with the aim of making it a world-class Hotel in the Capital of India, in the times to come.

**PIYUSH TIWARI –
Director Commercial
& Marketing, ITDC**





Venkatesan K
Additional General Manager & Head
Administration, VA Tech Wabag

TT BUREAU

Q: Most memorable trip to any destination?

Hong Kong & Thailand.

Q: You dream of going to?

As a family, we love nature and technology. Hong Kong and Thailand are a few destinations in the world, where you get a mix of both at an affordable cost, with high level of customer satisfaction.

Q: Favourite airline and why?

Sri Lankan Airlines. Best in on-board services. Very competitive fares for both Business as well as Economy Class and good connectivity to Far East countries.

Q: Best hotel experience and why?

Hotel The Park at Hong Kong and Hotel The Grand Sukumvit. Both are strategically located and competitively priced. Warm hospitality for guests, with sumptuous food varieties.



Q: A place you plan to visit again?

On the international front, I would like to visit Turkey, Brazil and Switzerland again. In India, I would like to visit Goa again and Kerala, where many areas have still to be explored.

Q: A family vacation that stands out?

Our recent visit to Hong Kong and Thailand, where my family enjoyed and appreciated nature, as well as the technological and architectural marvels.

Q: Your best holiday with friends?

Our visit to Istanbul and Dubai. These are must-visit places for every traveller who enjoys food, architecture, cultural excellence, fun sports and night life.

Q: Great food you enjoyed and where?

While it is a bit tough to choose from our outstanding culinary experiences, we enjoyed the food in Turkey and Thailand. Discerning foodies will never regret visiting these places.

Q: What to watch out for while travelling?

Go with very limited luggage, take sufficient money and don't be over cautious when spending during every stage of travel / shopping. Be considerate to your fellow travellers, irrespective of them being friends or family members.

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

Plan and travel in such a way that your entire family or friends enjoy the trip. One should always keep an open mind and adjust to circumstances. Try to understand and appreciate the local culture, lifestyle, food, and attempt to learn a few words of the language of the country you are visiting.

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Q: Most memorable trip to any destination?

A completely unplanned road trip in a SUV to the Uttarakhand mountains remains one of my most memorable trips. The scenic beauty is amazing, local food is awesome and homestays are even better. This entire trip was much better compared to any road trip abroad.

Q: You dream of going to?

A month-long trip to Europe.

Q: Favourite airline and why?

Singapore Airlines, for the best on-board services.

Q: Best hotel experience and why?

There have been many experiences in Dubai, Singapore, New York, Thailand, etc, but I find The Lalit Goa an excellent property – quiet, serene, yet playful. If looking for a relaxed time out, this is the best.

Q: A place you plan to visit again?

New York. One visit is not enough to explore the city, for sure.

Q: A family vacation that stands out?

Travel to any destination for leisure always gives lifetime memories, especially with family. In the recent past, an absolutely relaxed trip to Munnar has left us with fond memories of time spent in the tea estates, savouring local cuisine, strolling in the local markets, etc.

Q: Your best holiday with friends?

There are two – a road trip to Ladakh and a trek to Hemkund Sahib.

Q: Great food you enjoyed and where?

Recently, I have had some of the best food in Israel and that too, vegetarian.



Q: What to watch out for while travelling?

For Domestic travel – the right season and right time, so that one avoids the rush period.

For International travel – Don't go for any run-of-the-mill offer. Plan it well and in such a way that one enjoys the travel experience rather than be occupied in sorting out logistics.

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

As a travel buyer I always look at overall comfort, convenience, and of course, value for money.

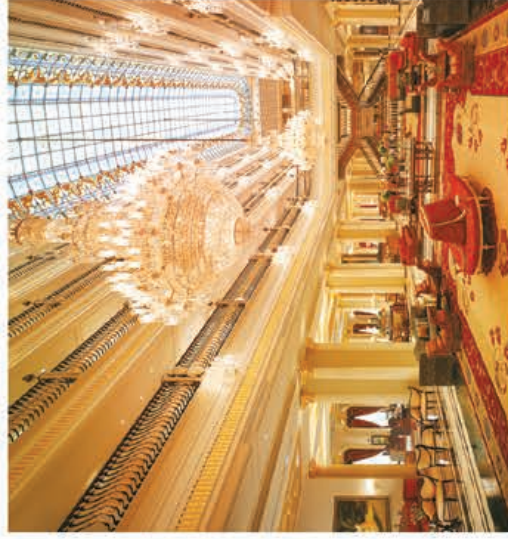




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CARVING A NICHE

Redefining extravagance and eminence, Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi brings the spirit of customisation to every aspect of the guest experience

TT BUREAU

The Hospitality Industry is fully aware of the shifting demographics of today's travellers for whom luxury means having unique, enriching life experiences, where uniqueness and customisation are the norm and not the exception. Luxury hotels have made it their business to make guests' dreams and wishes tangible.

Bringing the spirit of customisation to every aspect of the guest experience is Radisson Blu Pune Hinjewadi. At its helm is Pankaj Saxena, GM, Radisson Blu Pune Hinjewadi, whose constant quest for excellence leads him towards creating inspiring experiences for guests. In conversation with Today's

Traveller, Saxena shares valuable insights on the hotel's USPs, its brand positioning and the unique facilities that make it so distinctive.

What makes Radisson Blu Pune Hinjewadi so special? Reveals Saxena, "We unswervingly pursue finesse to create glorious memories for our guests - this I believe is our biggest USP." Its singular location in Rajiv Gandhi Infotech Park, Hinjewadi Phase-1, gives the hotel a vantage position, away from the tedium of urban traffic. Moreover, adds Saxena, "Our property is adorned with 7,338-sq.ft meeting and convention facilities, and this is why the hotel is emerging as the most preferred choice for MICE events, private parties and social events."

Other USPs include multiple on-site restaurants and lounges, which offer modern dining options for corporate and leisure guests alike. With a 'Yes I Can' attitude and a 100% Guest Satisfaction, our Team promotes a stress-free travel experience. "We are fortified to welcome 151 guests with modern rooms and luxurious suites that feature contemporary furnishings, comfortable workstations, mini bars and 40-inch LED SMART televisions," says Saxena proudly.

Saxena's astute managerial skills have focussed on a forward-looking approach that has positioned the hotel as an upscale lifestyle Business Hotel. "Our skilled team makes sure that a holistic full-service hotel experience is being delivered to our guests in a very compelling, exciting and modern way," informs Saxena.

The hotel's spacious rooms and suites provide a peaceful retreat, offering guests spectacular cityscape views from stylish floor-to-ceiling windows. There is high-speed wireless Internet throughout as part of the E@syConnect Service concept.

Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi provides delectable dining in three separate restaurants that pamper all palates. Specialties include Super Breakfast, an extensive buffet featuring a range of food items selected from the best of Continental, North European, and American cuisine for an Epicurean experience. The Over The Top, its poolside restaurant offers a mesmerizing view along with crazy concoctions and a gastronomical treat.

Providing customised experiences are the hotel's forte, and Saxena points out that he and his team go the extra mile to accommodate guests' needs. Thus, the usual Check-In and Check-Out timings have been dispensed with. Instead, guests





can Check-Out as late as 6 pm and Check-In as early as 6 am, subject to availability, at no extra cost.

If you're planning a dream wedding, Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi will assuredly make that a reality. "Our resourceful team is always on their toes to make sure every event is nothing less than spectacular," indicates Saxena. "Our wedding packages are inclusive of wedding decorators, photographers, pre-wedding photo shoots, exquisite F&B options and everything else that customises the experience of our guests. We hand-pick our planners, who are undoubtedly the best to be found in the town. We ensure that our team is there to craft and coordinate the finer details of your special day," says Saxena.

Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi sets the stage for guests' successful presentations, social events or evening galas. Customised menus and an experienced culinary team are committed to providing a 'wow' experience. Whether it's to do with personalising a menu specifically for a cocktail reception, a sit-down dinner or stand-up buffet, the hotel has you covered.

If you think meetings are about gathering people in the same room, think again. Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi

lets you discover a whole new way to meet. The hotel's set of Experience Meetings tools and services are designed to make meetings easier and delegates happier. The right ambience is created, using bright colours, walls to write on, high-tech idea sharing, versatile furniture and lighting, to spur delegates' creativity.

When it comes to innovation, Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi wins hands down. Brain Food, an innovative, responsible, Food and Beverage solution for meetings and

events, has been developed in collaboration with nutritional experts, chefs and food supply partners. Brain Food keeps the delegates' blood sugar levels constant, helping them feel fresh, focussed and energised.



Elimination of stress is a speciality at Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi, with the recently launched Nilaya Spa. Guests can rejuvenate with the most effective Eastern and Western spa therapies that soothe the senses, restore vitality and revive the spirit.

Whether you're business or leisure traveller, Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi makes sure that it provides an unfettered ease of comfort, convenience and accessibility to guests' experiences. As Saxena so aptly rounds it off – "At the end of every day, we aim to bring the broadest smile on the faces of our guests."

WILD & WONDERFUL ODISHA!

Odisha resonates with a visual delight, showcasing an incredible eco-system of sanctuaries, beaches, mangroves, pristine lakes and wildlife

TT BUREAU

This winter, treat your family and yourself to a 'green holiday,' one which invigorates mind, body and soul. Odisha, often referred to as the 'Soul of India,' is a visual feast and an ideal choice for a winter sojourn, with its stunning mix of spectacular coastal villages, wildlife habitats, beaches and some of the most popular pilgrim spots in India. Odisha's temples, food and people make this state an extremely alluring prospect for a family vacation.

Nestled between the shimmering waters of the Bay of Bengal and the lush, blue hills of the Eastern Ghats, Odisha's pristine beauty bedazzles all visitors. The Tourism Department of Odisha has spared no effort in promoting and spreading awareness about eco-tourism in the state. Whether it is the varied flora and fauna, trekking or camping at Eco-Resorts, Odisha promises a holistic journey through its majestic natural landscapes.

BHITARKANIKA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Located in the estuarial region of Brahmini, Baitarani and Patsal, Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary is known as the mini Amazon of Odisha, because of the abundance of mangroves, creeks, rivers, and estuaries found here.

Gahirmatha Marine Wildlife Sanctuary, the lone marine sanctuary of the state, is the nesting location for millions of Olive Ridley turtles that visit Sanctuary annually, from October to May. Gahirmatha is also the second largest Mangrove eco-system in the country after Sundarbans.

Visitors will find salt water crocodiles, wild boars, chital, mudskippers, Bibron's soft-shelled turtle, hawksbill and leatherback turtles, and can marvel at the more than 170 vibrant species of resident and migratory birds, including six species of kingfishers, darters and many others, that live here.



HABALIKHATI

Located within Bhitarkanika and boasting an incredible mix of beaches, unique mangrove forests and remarkable flora and fauna, Habalikhati lures researchers and visitors alike.

Sporadic nesting of sea turtles can be spotted on the beaches of Habalikhati, where several species of dolphins, finless porpoise reside, and monitor lizards, wild pig, spotted deer and king cobra have also made it their habitat.

SIMILIPAL NATIONAL PARK

Located in the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha, Similipal National Park includes a wildlife sanctuary and a tiger reserve. Similipal, a hill range, translates from 'Simil,' meaning Silky Cotton Tree.

Wildlife enthusiasts can visit Similipal Wildlife Sanctuary, which is home to leopard, elephant, tiger, sambar and chital, along with 304 species of birds. Nature lovers will find the region's lush green forests and its surrounding landscapes a veritable paradise.



CHILIKA NATURE CAMP

Sprawling over an area of about 1100sq.km, Chilika Lake is India's the largest coastal lagoon. Located in Puri, Khordha and Ganjam districts, it attracts tourists for being the largest winter base for migratory birds on the Indian sub-continent. It is also an important habitat for endangered species of flora and fauna.

With its distinctive and extraordinary family of marine, migratory and wildlife population, Chilika became the first Indian wetland to be declared "Wetland of International Importance" in 1981, under the IUCN-sponsored Ramsar Convention. Moreover, United Nation's World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) declared Chilika Lake as 'Destination Flyway,' because of its exceptional bio-diversity.

Tourists can also visit Debrigarh Sanctuary, situated 40km from Sambalpur. Bhetnoi, in Ganjam district, is home to blackbucks, which co-exist with human habitat as locals consider them to be harbingers of good luck.

Few destinations can take pride in offering a complete package for visitors. Odisha has it all – a rich bio-diversity that includes pristine nature, incredible flora and fauna, beaches, plus a rich culture and tradition mirrored in its many temples and pilgrim spots.

SWOSTI GROUP: EXEMPLARS OF HOSPITALITY

A pioneer in Odisha's Hospitality Industry, Swosti Group has set benchmarks with its exceptional customer service, facilities and product offerings

TT BUREAU

In the cut-throat competition of the Hospitality Industry, the success of a hotel usually rests on how it utilises key factors like customer service, cost control and product differentiation. Hotels achieve a critical success factor by various means – by making customer service an intrinsic part of the guest experience, offering guests unique experiences, providing impeccable service and facilities that will keep bringing back guests for more. Established in 1981, Odisha's Swosti Group is one success story that has emerged as a countrywide popular brand, renowned for its engaging hospitality and innovative product offerings.

The name 'Swosti' itself is synonymous with comfort and well-being and the Group's mission, ingrained in its essence, is that the Guest is God, and taking this to its logical outcome, is its USP – 'Once our Guests, forever our Friend.' The Group's constant endeavour is to provide the best of services. Speaking to Today's Traveller, J K Mohanty, Managing Director, Swosti Group, shares valuable insights on how the Group has developed the fine art of hospitality into becoming a winning brand.

Articulating on the Group's corporate positioning, Mohanty reveals that Swosti Group has a strong corporate clientele. "We give our utmost attention to every personal comfort and satisfaction to every guest. Our professional team ensures that every possible comfort is extended during their stay with us. Since more than three decades, Swosti Group is at the forefront of quality hospitality services in Odisha and the secret to this success is each and every employee is driven by a passion to deliver. This passion makes Swosti Group stand apart and continues to add value to customer experiences," says Mohanty.

With regard to the facilities and services on offer for weddings and other upscale events, Mohanty points out how Swosti Group is an exemplar when it comes to defining the details that go into making a wedding celebration or a business event an exceptional experience. Right from extensive banquet halls to chic décor, great ambience, music and delectable cuisine, Swosti Group offers a complete package, comprising wedding management services

that include the venue, guest management, reception parties, as well as elegant suites / rooms for newlyweds.

As a leading hospitality platform, the Group owns three majestic properties, and Mohanty proudly informs that "Not many in Bhubaneswar or outside could boast of managing



wedding affairs the way Swosti Group do it at Swosti Premium, with the highest room inventory and the largest Convention Venue in Eastern India; Swosti Grand, the boutique hotel, and the Gopalpur Palm Resort.”

A recent addition, the luxury resort, Swosti Chilika Resort, is located on the banks of Chilika Lake, the largest Lagoon in the Northern Hemisphere. With 78 finely crafted cottages (Presidential suite, Pool Villas, Quad Villas, Hotel Block) and innumerable amenities, the resort has been planned to be amongst the best in the country. The Group’s mega project, the luxury resort has a slew of facilities, including houseboats, a spa, a houseboat spa, Yoga Centre, Herbal Gardens, lush landscaping according to international standards, an amphitheatre, water-sport boats, water scooters, facilities for water surfing, boating facilities for 26 Islands, badminton and tennis court, mini golf, bird watching tower, bicycle tours for foreign tourists, village tours, boat restaurants, facilities for conference, big lawn for marriage facilities – making it an ideal wedding destination in Odisha.

Clearly, Swosti Group’s national and international acclaim is the result of Mohanty’s vision and sheer determination. Rounding off, he says, “It is our responsibility to make the wedding and reception party of our valued guests an event that is filled with joyous memories that would be fondly remembered by our guests. In the past three decades we have had the highest number of wedding parties in the Swosti Group of hotels in comparison with other hotels in the same category, in the city.”



Swosti Chilika Resort, the only Luxury Resort on the banks of Chilika Lake



Swosti Premium, the Largest Convention Venue in Eastern India

GLORIOUS GARDEN ROUTE

South Africa's Garden Route showcases spectacular drives through stunning topography, picturesque towns, great safari experiences and opportunities for action –packed activities

TT BUREAU

There's reason enough why South Africa is on most travellers' bucket list. It is one destination that really has it all – the best food and wine, first rate wildlife, exceptional luxury hotels and a remarkable range of topography. It also has the most spectacular drives that are packed with incredible activities.

No sojourn to South Africa would be complete without a visit to the Garden Route, an incredible 200-km-stretch of road that takes you through mountains, sprawling wetlands, white-sand beaches, picturesque towns, with opportunities for hiking, whale watching, close encounters with elephant and cheetah, and more.

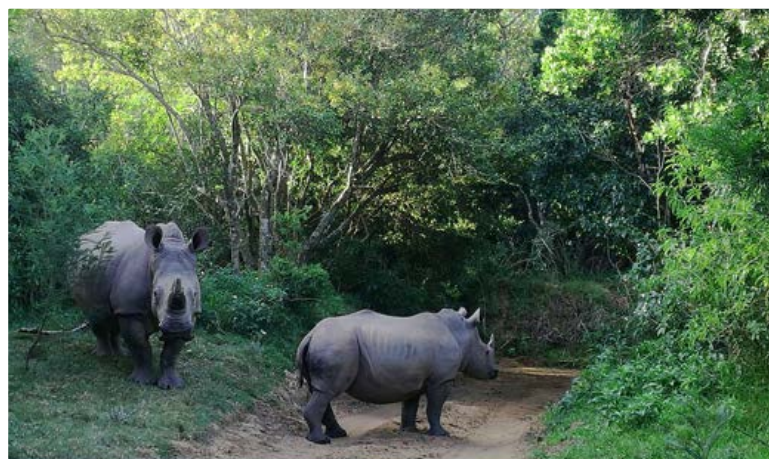
The Garden Route also comprises a scenic stretch lined with the beautiful towns of Knysna, George, Plettenberg Bay and Oudtshoorn in Western Cape, and in the nearby cities of Port Elizabeth and East London in the Eastern Cape. Here, travellers can pack in a lot of action into shorter time-spans and engage in 3 activities per day over short distances and charming surroundings.

WESTERN CAPE

If adventure's your thing, then Plettenberg Bay should be first on your itinerary. Check out Birds of Eden, outside of Plettenberg Bay, the largest single dome free-flight multi-species bird aviary in the world. Get an insight into the lives of primates at Monkeyland, just next to Birds of Eden.

At the heart of Garden Route is Knysna, where you can indulge your inner adventurer. Gravitates towards Knysna Lagoon, located between two sandstone cliffs known as the Heads. Let the kids splash around in the shallow waters as you lounge around in deck chairs and marvel at Knysna Heads. Try and catch the annual Oyster Festival, where around 200,000 oysters are quaffed over a 10-day period.

Make tracks to George, located halfway between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth on Garden Route, and its largest city. Dance the night away on the Insomniac Party Bus, a 40-seater Single Decker



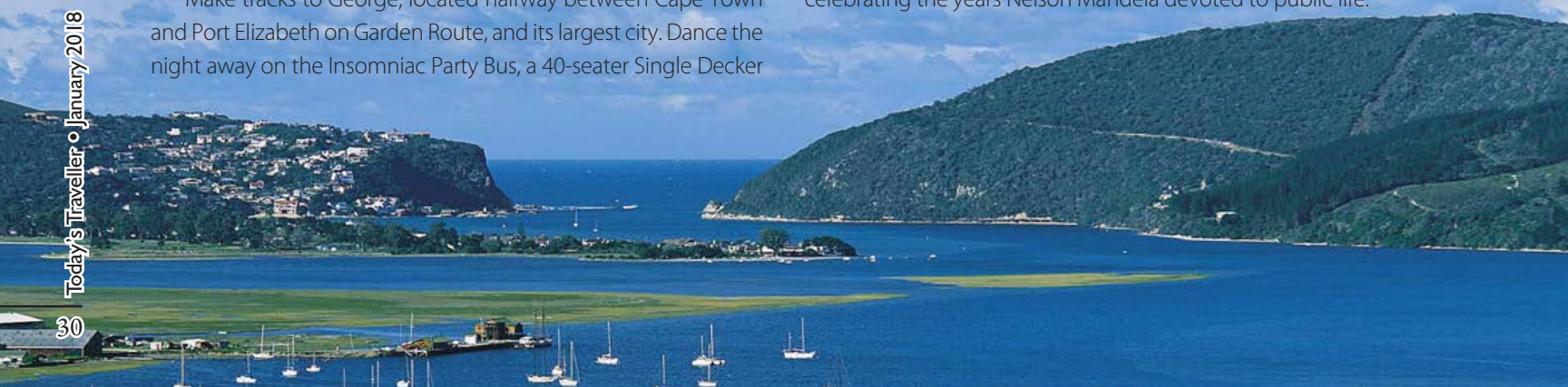
Party Bus, complete with bar, DJ booth and bathroom facilities for group tours. Pluck fresh strawberries at the RedBerry Strawberry Farm, watch your kids ride the enchanting little toy train or navigating the largest hedge maze in the Southern Hemisphere.

Visit Oudtshoorn, known as the ostrich capital of the world; be blown away by the stalactites and stalagmites in Congo Caves; brave the hair-raising crocodile-cage dive and enjoy a meerkat safari.

EASTERN CAPE

Move on to East London, which has a laidback charm and a pristine beauty all its own. It is also one of the few places where one can see the white lion at the Inkwenkezi National Park.

Not to be missed is Port Elizabeth, which houses South Africa's third largest national reserve, where travellers can have close encounters with hundreds of African elephants that roam around freely, making it a great safari experience. Addo National Park offers the unique combination of a marine safari searching for sharks and whales and the famous Big 5 safari. Include Nelson Mandela Bay and find Route 67 – a collection of 67 art pieces celebrating the years Nelson Mandela devoted to public life.





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ASHISH SONI IN CELEBRATORY MOOD

Designer Ashish Soni showcased unique insights into his world of design as he celebrated 25 years in the fashion industry

TT BUREAU

The celebrated designer, Ashish Soni, was honoured for completing 25 years in the fashion industry, at The Lodhi, New Delhi, on December 16, 2017. The evening theme, 'Welcome to my World', showcased unique insights into his world

of design, his personal fashion signature and a rare glimpse of how far the Indian fashion industry has travelled in this quarter of the century.

On display, were a compilation of the designer's popular runway shows, which helped in popularising the brand to



its name. There were also three exhibits focussed around Ashish's personal favourites from his creations over the years. Another interesting aspect was the documentary film about Ashish's journey in the industry and also a futuristic interactive audiovisual presentation powered by Artificial Intelligence.

On the celebratory night, Ashish Soni shared, "Welcome to My World" is an effort to take stock of the immense body of my work, including the past and present past achievements,

and as a special twist, merge my creative inner world with future technologies. This marriage of Fashion &

Technology is an attempt to create unique and interactive environments led by bespoke solutions. This has been an interesting journey and I am grateful to have completed 25 years in the industry and to be able to celebrate with my business associates, friends and family. Now, I am looking forward to taking the label to higher strengths over the next 25 years."

Ashish's friends and family from the industry were also present to mark this huge milestone. Some of the guests who attended the event were Renuka Chowdhury, JJ Valaya, Rohit Bal, Suneet Varma, Nikhil Mehra, Rajesh Pratap, Payal Pratap, Vikram Chandra, Yuvraj Singh, Robert Vadra, Bindu Vadera, to name a few.

Taking inspiration from the technologically driven world, Ashish has approached the presentation of his world in a futuristic manner, yet maintaining the strong, key sensibilities of the brand.



FITTING FINALE TO A GRAND EVENT



The closing ceremony of the 350th Prakash Parv Utsav was as grand as the opening ceremony, showcasing Bihar on a global platform

TT BUREAU

Spiritualism has always been an integral part of Bihar's culture. It is revered by Hindus, Budhists, Jains and Sikhs. Bihar holds a special place when it comes to Sikhism as it is the land where Guru Govind Singh started his spiritual journey and set on to create an invaluable legacy. He was born in Samvat, Patna, therefore the place is regarded as a highly pious place in Sikhism. Every year, Bihar witnesses a grand commemoration of Guru Govind Singh through the Prakash Utsav.

Guru Govind Singh's 350th birth anniversary was inaugurated with great fanfare in Patna, on December 30, 2016, and culminated with a grand finale, from December 23- 25, 2017. The three-day birthday celebration began two days prior the official festival date, during which a team of men and women from gurdwaras around

the world read the Sikh religious text, the Guru Granth Sahib, from beginning to end, also known as Akhand Path.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who graced the opening ceremony of the 350th Prakash Utsav, commented, "Commemoration of the historical events will connect future generations with our roots. Those who forget history can never create history...so, if we celebrate 300th, 350th or a centenary, all these events connect us with the great and historical traditions."

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar proclaimed, "Visitors should leave Bihar with good feelings," adding, "The railway station must be kept clean all the time and amenities like drinking water and rest areas must be available at all time for visitors."

On the final day of the festival, Sikhs celebrated the event with early morning hymns or Asa di Var, followed by readings from the Guru Granth Sahib, which took place at large public gatherings. Throughout the day, food was served and all present took part in prayers and singing to mark the final hours of the annual celebration, with evening prayers or Rehras taking centre stage as the sun set and the day drew to a close.

The closing ceremony of 350th Prakash Parv experienced the same number of devotees as during the opening ceremony. The government ensured that elaborate plans were chalked out and several noteworthy events were organised. Extensive arrangements were made to house 20,000 devotees in pandals, in Gandhi Maidan. An inseparable part of Bihar, Prakash Utsav represents the spirit of Guru Gobind Singh that would once again bring light to human existence.



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AVIATION





AAI PROMOTES NO-FRILLS AIRPORTS

In accordance with Government of India policy to make flying affordable for more people, AAI promotes low-cost airports to complement low-cost carriers

TT BUREAU

With the advent of Low Cost Carriers (LCC), the paradigm of air travel has changed significantly. The outcome is that a whole new business model has emerged, which questions price points, service criteria and more on the premise that plain simple is better than 'frills.'

Catering to passengers who wish to travel quickly and economically, LLCs are now reshaping the standards of what airports look like and how they function. The Government of India, committed to a no-frills business culture, is taking initiatives to promote no-frills airports to complement low-cost carriers. Airports Authority of India (AAI), in compliance with this policy, addresses the needs of the common man who desires to travel for work or pleasure without making a dent in his pocket.

Chief among these measures is the Government's Regional Connectivity Scheme – UdeDeshKaAamNaagrik (UDAN), for connecting un-served and under-served airports/cities. The User Development Fee and other airport charges and taxes account for a large percent of a ticket, so it is pragmatic to have these airports, which would limit or avoid costs of services and activities that are not necessarily crucial for airport operations.

AWAY WITH FRILLS

Costs pertaining to landing fees, parking fees, security and civic amenities at airports would be lower at no-frills airports. Terminals would be in minimalist design mode, dispensing with expensive glass and steel, fancy lounges, centralised air-conditioning, aerobridges, conveyor belts, escalators

and elevators for passengers, cutting down on capital and operational costs, with a sizeable reduction in interest. The result – a major boost for Tourism and for airlines with smaller aircraft. On no account would security and safety measures be compromised.

No-frills airports would be operational by day and in fair weather, doing away with expensive advanced landing systems at airports. Hilly regions would be equipped with Airfield Lighting, while the control towers could be mobile or a fixed, simple pre-engineered structure.

There would be three airport categories, scaling up according to passenger traffic, with modular, low-cost buildings which would require about a six-month construction period.

Besides the navigation system, AAI will provide training to the state's fire services and rescue teams. The airports would be equipped with ambulance and medical services, security and anti-hijacking measures, such as X-rays, explosives and ammunition detection systems; personnel scanners; two sets of walkie-talkies for communication and a Very High Frequency (VHF) system for the Control Tower.

Air-conditioning of security hold area and lounges will be standalone, allowing airport operators to shut off lighting and air-conditioning when not required. Only larger airports, handling 150 passengers per hour, would have conveyor belts' and infrastructure that is redundant could be shifted to another location. AAI is fully cognizant that no-frills airports are incumbent for a Government that is committed to providing more airports for more people.

INDIGO FOURTH MOST PUNCTUAL AIRLINE GLOBALLY

OAG, the air travel intelligence company has ranked IndiGo as the fourth most punctual airline globally in the mega airline category. In its annual review – Punctuality League 2018, OAG recognises the airlines that have consistently clocked the highest On-time performance (OTP) by including on-time performance for the world's Top 20 busiest domestic and international routes, and other categories. IndiGo has been ranked fourth amongst Top 20 mega airlines (The World's Top 20 operators globally in terms of scheduled flights in 2017) and ninth amongst Top 20 Low-cost carriers (LCCs) by OTP. IndiGo is the only Indian airline to have made it in the list of top 20 mega airlines.

Speaking on this recognition, Aditya Ghosh, President and Whole Time Director, IndiGo, said, "We are thrilled ... just can't hide the excitement of having been able to take India and IndiGo to amongst the very best in the world and one of the Top 5 Mega Airlines globally in terms of On-Time performance in the OAG Punctuality League 2018. Flying our planes on time is one of our core promises to our customers. This achievement reinforces IndiGo's commitment of providing our fliers with an on-time, hassle free experience at low fares, always."

As per the DGCA data, IndiGo, among all operating airlines, has successfully maintained the highest on-time performance on a month-on-month basis over a long period of time due to its unmatched operational efficiency and faster turnaround. **tt**



SKYSCANNER UNVEILS TOP TRAVEL TRENDS OF 2017

Skyscanner, the leading global travel app, rounds up travel in 2017 with interesting trends and insights using data from across India. Analysing millions of searches on the Skyscanner app to spot the travel patterns and habits of Indian travellers in 2017, Skyscanner reveals how Indians were planning their holidays in 2017 and brings forth new destinations for 2018.

Based on searches on Skyscanner, India's app over the past three years, some exciting global locations are emerging as the new 'go to' vacation destinations for Indian travellers. In 2017, Indian travellers drove a 31 per cent increase in usage of Skyscanner's multi-city search function compared to 2016. Skyscanner also noted a trend to plan ahead for travel among Indians. For international holidays, 58 per cent of travellers are likely to book tickets way before departure while only 12 per cent will leave it to the last minute.

Also, a whopping 89 per cent travellers opt for Full Service Carrier, comprising entertainment, checked baggage, meals, beverages and comforts such as blankets and pillows in the ticket price; while only 11 per cent prefer a Low Cost Carrier, which comes with no meals and no frills. **tt**



SWISS CARRIES MORE PASSENGERS IN 2017 WITH FEWER FLIGHTS

Swiss International Air Lines (SWISS) transported 16,896,233 passengers in 2017, a further 2.3 per cent improvement on last year's record result. The new record was also achieved with fewer flights: 140,074 systemwide, a 4.0 per cent decline. Of these, 121,885 (down 4.1 per cent) were within Europe and 18,189 (down 3.3 per cent) were on intercontinental routes.

Systemwide passenger capacity for the year was raised 3.1 per cent in available seat-kilometre (ASK) terms. Systemwide traffic volume, measured in revenue passenger-kilometres (RPK), was up 4.5 per cent. On its European network, SWISS reduced its ASK capacity by 2.1 per cent and saw RPK volume decline by 0.6 per cent; and on intercontinental services ASK capacity was increased 5.4 per cent while RPK traffic volume rose 6.5 per cent. Seat load factor for European services was improved 1.1 percentage points to 77.5 per cent. Seat load factor for intercontinental services was raised 0.9 percentage points to 84.3 per cent. Systemwide seat load factor for 2017 amounted to 82.4 per cent, a year-on-year improvement of 1.1 percentage points.

The airfreight business of Swiss World Cargo achieved a cargo load factor (by volume) of 80.1 per cent for 2017, a 4.9-percentage-point improvement on its prior-year level. Annual cargo sales were also raised 13.0% in revenue tonne-kilometre terms. In December 2017, SWISS1 carried 1,287,955 passengers, a 1.2 per cent increase on the prior-year period. A total of 10,785 flights were operated in the month, 3.7 per cent fewer than in December 2016. **tt**

UNITED AIRLINES MARKS 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF MUMBAI-NY SERVICE

United Airlines is marking 10 years of its daily non-stop service between Mumbai Airport and its New York/Newark hub, Newark Liberty International Airport. Since it was launched in October 2007, the service has carried over 1.6 million customers on over 7,000 flights.

"We are extremely proud to mark a decade of this successful route and thank our valued customers and the travel trade community across India for choosing United," said Harvinder Singh, United Country Manager India. "Our Mumbai service also offers a comprehensive network of onward connections from our New York/Newark hub to points all across the Americas," he added. **tt**



BOEING SETS AIRPLANE DELIVERY RECORD IN 2017

Boeing delivered more commercial airplanes than any manufacturer for the sixth consecutive year and set an industry record with 763 deliveries in 2017, driven by high output of the market-leading 737 and 787 jets. At the same time, the company grew its backlog with 912 net orders, reflecting healthy demand for its single-aisle and twin-aisle airplanes.

Boeing reached a new high on the 737 programme as it raised production to 47 airplanes a month during the year and began delivering the new 737 MAX, contributing to a record 529 deliveries, including 74 of the MAX variety. On the 787 Dreamliner programme, Boeing continued building at the highest production rate for a twin-aisle jet, leading to 136 deliveries for the year.

"The record-setting performance is a testament to our employees and supplier partners who continue to innovate new ways to design, build and deliver the most fuel-efficient airplanes to customers around the world," said Boeing Commercial Airplanes President & CEO Kevin McAllister. **tt**



SILKAIR FIRST TO FLY NEW BOEING 737 MAX 8 TO AUSTRALIA

SilkAir, the regional wing of Singapore Airlines, became the first airline to fly the Boeing 737 MAX 8 to Australia. SilkAir Flight MI-801 touched down in Darwin, Australia, on January 7, and was welcomed with a water-cannon salute. The airline celebrated the arrival of the MAX 8 into Cairns. The newest aircraft to join the SilkAir fleet, the MAX 8 offers customers an enhanced on-board experience and new cabin products, ensuring a comfortable and pleasant flight.

Commenting on the launch of the MAX 8 in both Darwin and Cairns, Foo Chai Woo, Chief Executive, SilkAir, said, "We are thrilled to be the first airline to introduce the new Boeing 737 MAX 8 to Australia. The new MAX 8 offers customers access to new and exciting destinations and paves the way for a new phase of growth. With the aircraft entering into service, we look forward to inviting customers on-board to enjoy the quality experience that the MAX 8 offers."

Currently, the MAX 8 aircraft is also deployed to other longer haul destinations in the network, including Kathmandu, Hyderabad and Bengaluru. **tt**



KOREAN AIR TO RELOCATE TO INCHEON AIRPORT NEW TERMINAL 2

Korean Air will relocate its operations from T1 to Incheon Airport Passenger Terminal 2 (T2) on January 18, 2018. The official inauguration of T2 will also take place on the same day. With new automated and innovative airport services, passengers will experience T2's cutting-edge technology, an eco-friendly architectural design and many other convenient passenger facilities, which will strengthen Incheon International Airport to become a hub in Northeast Asia. A total of four airlines will operate out of T2 - Korean Air, Delta Air Lines, Air France and KLM - all members of Skyteam.

Commencing January 18, all passengers using these airlines must go to T2 for Check-in and boarding their flight, instead of T1.

Korean Air will provide customers with extraordinary service, working in cooperation with other SkyTeam airlines to seek ways to attract transit passengers, such as the Joint Venture with Delta Air Lines.

The new terminal will enable passengers of the four airlines, including Korean Air, to experience a more convenient and transformed airport service. Korean Air has fully participated in the construction of T2, from design and planning, bringing their expertise in airport operation. **tt**

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EXPLORER

A QUAINT PARADISE



Perched amidst nature's lap, WelcomHeritage Glenview Resort offers the quintessential travel experience

TT BUREAU

A trend towards reconnecting with nature has prompted travellers to take a break from the city's cacophony and visit a destination that is not only rejuvenating, but also luxurious. With the tourism industry experiencing changes in trends every now and then, it has become inevitable for the hospitality sector to offer a holistic experience that incorporates rich cultural heritage and quality service.

With over 40 hotels across 15 states, WelcomHeritage Group has now introduced Glenview Resort in Kasauli, the quaint hill station which is situated at a height of 6000ft. The cantonment town, established during the British Era, is just an hour's drive from Chandigarh via the newly opened Himalayan Expressway.

An ideal getaway for all seasons, Kasauli boasts natural beauty, offering panoramic views of the Shivalik ranges, valleys and plains. Popular for being one of the most charming hill stations in Asia, Kasauli became, without-a-doubt, the residential setting for Glenview Resort. From Kimughat Kasauli, a short drive through the Pine forest takes you to Glenview Resort. Situated vertically below the Manki point, the resort stands opposite the famous Lawrence School, Sanawar. The Kasauli Mall and Kasauli Club are also in proximity to the resort.

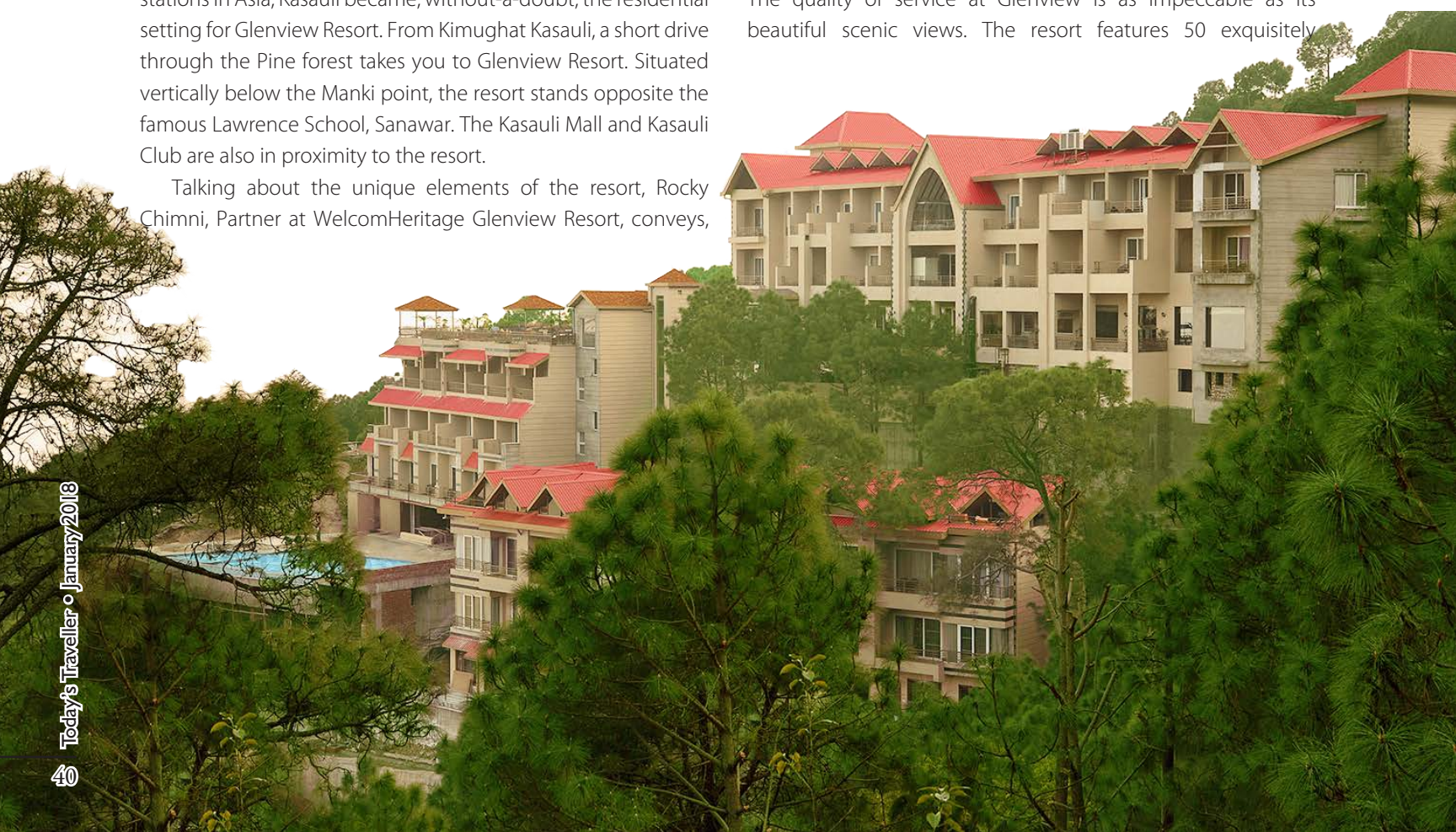
Talking about the unique elements of the resort, Rocky Chimni, Partner at WelcomHeritage Glenview Resort, conveys,

"Welcomheritage Glenview Resort, is presently the only branded property in Kasauli with a maximum number of rooms; the first and only resort to have an Infinity Pool along with a kids pool; a well-equipped spa run in collaboration with Akasa Wellness Solutions; winner of Aaj Tak Prime Time Global Business & Leadership Award; biggest banquet hall, ample basement parking, elevators, gift shop located at lobby level and providing the best in-room amenities and food in this region."

Elaborating on additional development, he added, "We shall be adding outdoor activities at the Resort, in collaboration with professional companies like Rappelling, Zip line, Burma Bridge, Paint Ball etc. The resort has gained great popularity as a destination weddings location. We have already hosted about 50 grand weddings."

ACCOMMODATION

The quality of service at Glenview is as impeccable as its beautiful scenic views. The resort features 50 exquisitely





designed rooms in Premium, Luxury and Suite categories. All the rooms and suites are equipped with mini-bar, 40" LED television, temperature control, satellite channels, in-room tea and coffee maker, Wi-Fi broadband connectivity, complimentary daily newspaper and turn down service. Deluxe bathroom amenities in all bathrooms, which also include rain shower cubicles. For in-room entertainment, Suites have iPod docks as well as Jacuzzi. In addition to a kids' zone, the resort has pool table, table tennis, library, etc, for recreational purposes.

The Resort's multi-cuisine restaurant, "Flavours", serves a Breakfast Buffet, along with an all-day dining A-la-carte menu, that includes a variety of Indian and Oriental cuisines. What sets this restaurant apart is its comfortable ambience, where guests can partake of sumptuous food as they take in the breathtaking views.

Chill-Out bar is another proud addition to the gourmet kitchen that offers an extensive selection of wines and spirits. If in the mood for freshly brewed coffee or tea, then visit The Hill's Lounge, which offers a panoramic view of the hills.

Guests can also spend time at the Infinity pool at Pool Bar & Grill, that overlooks a thick pine forest. Light refreshment snacks and drinks are also offered.

“Glenview Resort is presently the only branded property in Kasauli with a maximum number of rooms and the first and only resort to have an Infinity Pool.”

*Rocky Chimni,
Partner, WelcomHeritage, Glenview Resort*

MEETINGS & CONFERENCES

Glenview Resort has all the top-notch facilities that are essential for successfully hosting a formal meeting or social functions.

A choice of conference, meeting, banquet facilities include tastefully designed meeting rooms with a seating capacity ranging from 50-400 guests.

The Grande Hall is an ideal venue for hosting gala dinners, events, meetings or social functions for up to 250 guests. It can accommodate 400 guests when clubbed with the Resort's terrace, The Sky Deck.

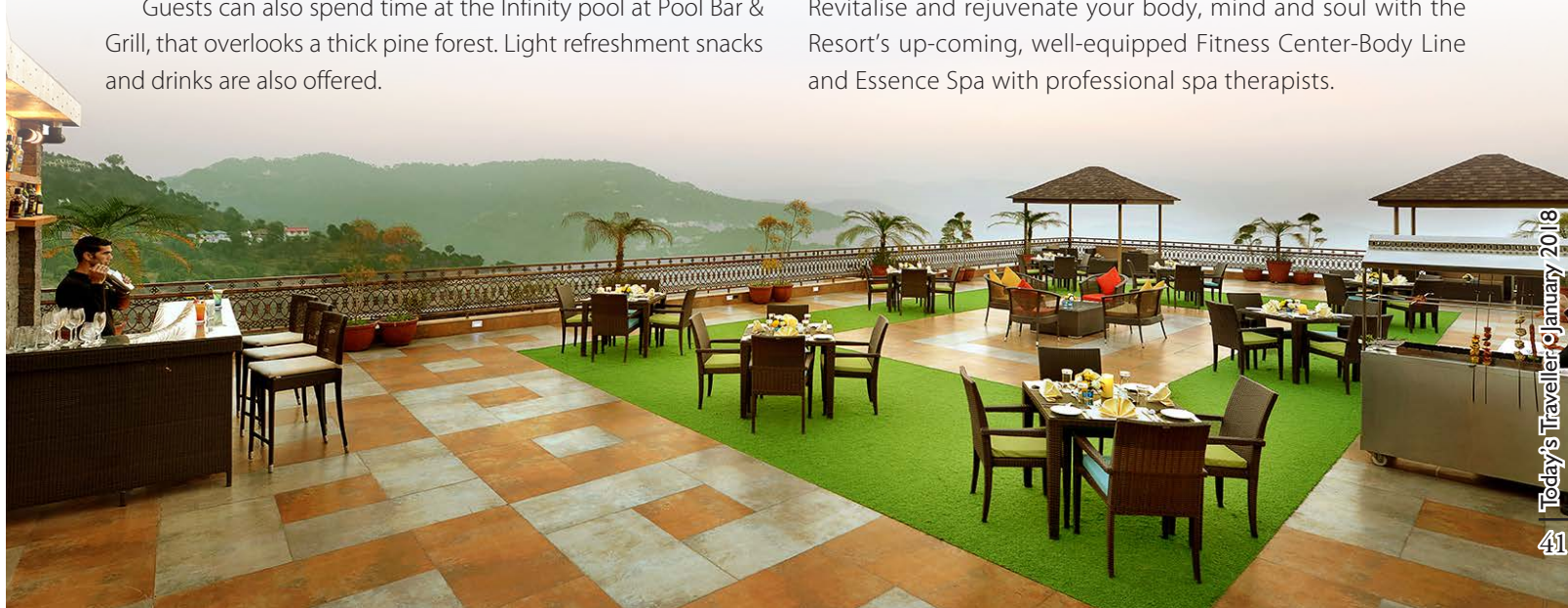
The Sky Deck alone is capable of hosting up to 150 guests.

Glenview Resort makes it a priority to execute a seamless event that can meet all the required specifications.

The resort also features Buzz – a perfect venue for organising small conferences or board meetings for up to 40 guests. A fully-equipped business centre is also available.

LEISURE & EXCURSIONS

Revitalise and rejuvenate your body, mind and soul with the Resort's up-coming, well-equipped Fitness Center-Body Line and Essence Spa with professional spa therapists.





A city tour can be arranged on a special request made at the travel desk to visit the city's nearby tourist spots like Manki Point, Kasauli Brewery, Mall Road, Kasauli Club, Church of England, Lawrence School Sanawar, Old British Cantonment: Dagshai, Central Research Institute, Baba Balak Nath Temple, Shirdi Sai Baba Temple, Sunrise/Sunset point, Gilbert Trail.

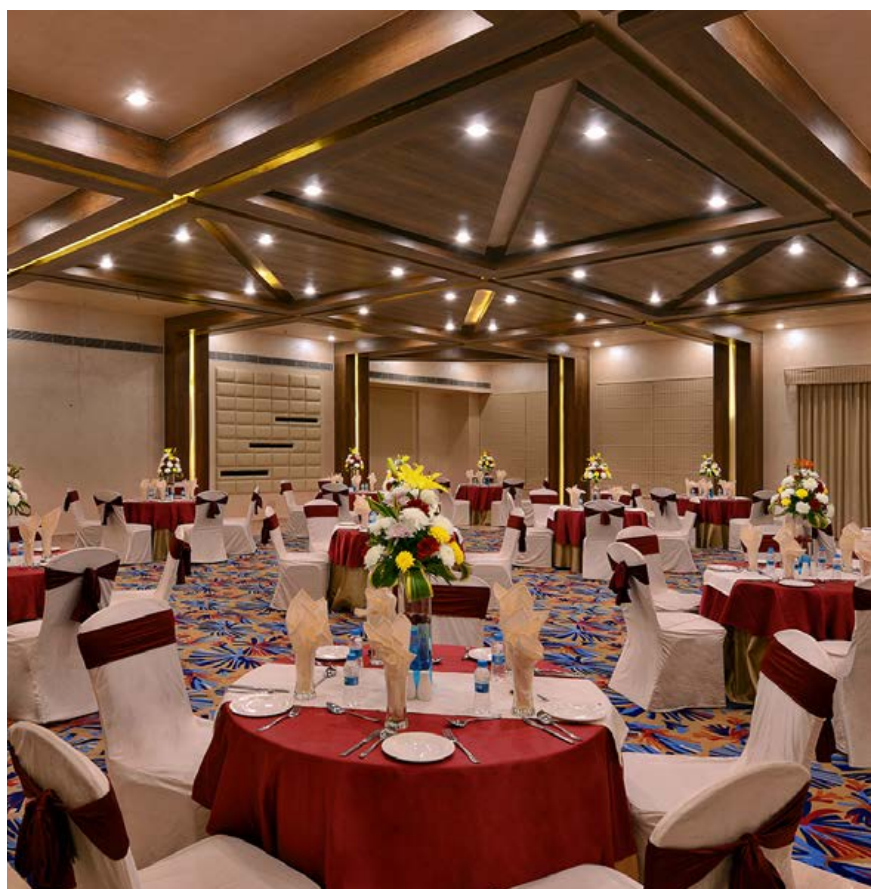
With a misty ambience, pine-scented air, snow-covered mountains and a comfortable ambience, Glenview Resort is ideal for discerning leisure and business travellers who yearn for a memorable stay amidst nature.

ACCESSIBILITY:

By Car: 1 hour drive from Chandigarh.

By Public Transportation: The resort is a 45-minutes drive from the Kalka Railway Station, which is easily accessible through all public transport systems.

Parking Facility: The first resort in Kasauli to have basement parking for 80 cars.



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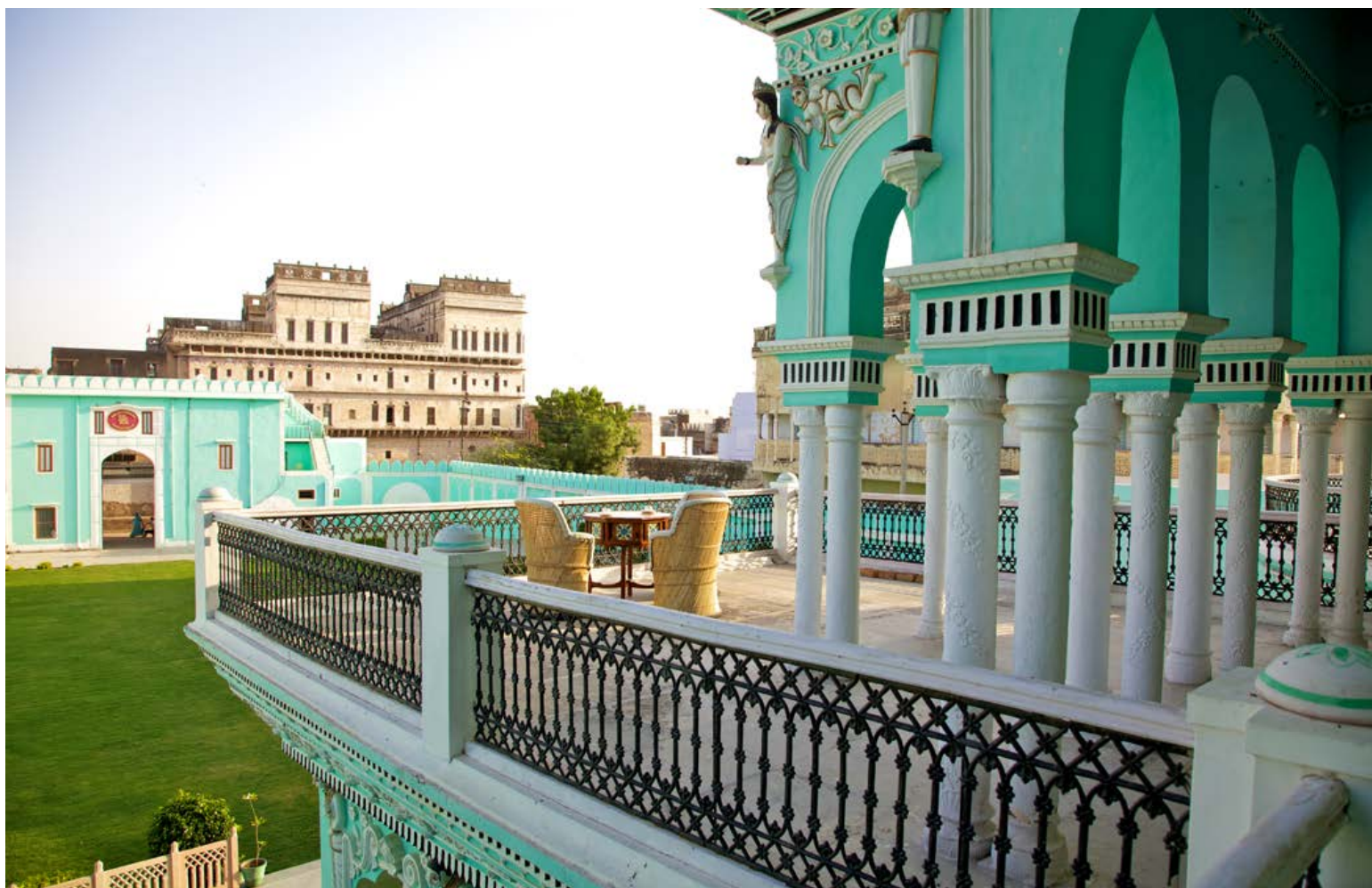


Strategic Media Partner



INDIA'S HIDDEN GEMS

Whether it's for a short trip or a corporate event, OpenSky Resorts offers seamless comfort and natural ambience in elegant properties in off-site destinations



TT BUREAU

With tourism activity on the increase, it has become a daunting task for people to select a destination which is far away from the hustle and bustle of urban chaos. Not everyone looks for popular holiday getaways – sometimes, exotic adventures require a vibe that doesn't march to the beat of visiting hordes.

OpenSky Resorts, a hotel aggregation and branding venture for leisure properties, has taken the initiative to find those hidden gems which are nestled in the lap of nature and also qualify the standards of quality and service. The company works exclusively with small, mid-market, pure leisure properties that are situated across North India, about 6-8 hours driving distance from Delhi/NCR.

OpenSky has personally vetted the properties across India to offer a memorable and one-of-a-kind experience at heritage havelis, Raj-era cottages, forest lodges, spa resorts and more.

MALJI KA KAMRA, CHURU, RAJASTHAN

The 100-year-old site is one of the popular heritage havelis by OpenSky Resorts. The Haveli lies in the mofussil town of Churu, in the Shekhawati region of Rajasthan, which is off the touristic beat. This painstakingly restored haveli showcases an architectural blend comprising a European pillared-structure, Art Deco influences and Mughul-styled doors and arches, adorned with Shekhawati frescoes.

Built over 17 years, the Haveli served as an 'entertainment house' for its owner, Malji Kothari, one of the richest 'Seths' of Churu, and his guests, including the Maharaja of Bikaner.

The 'Haveli district' adjoining Malji Ka Kamra, with narrow streets and 30-odd havelis that still stand, makes a great base for exploring the area. Churu has more havelis than its celebrated peer, Mandhawa. However, Malji Ka Kamra is the sole restored Haveli, converted into a hotel.



The once bustling merchant town of Churu was popular as a trade route, and its merchants prospered dealing in textiles, spices and opium. These opulent mansions stand testimony to their history of wealth and stories of travels across distant lands.

GETTING THERE:

Tourists can drive to Churu, which is about 270km away; along the journey on the state highways travellers can enjoy the scenic landscape of small towns and villages of Haryana and Rajasthan. Tourists can also fly till Jaipur and drive via NH 52 to Churu, a distance of about 180km.

Best time to visit: October – March

NATUROVILLE VEDIC RETREAT, RISHIKESH

A complete mind-body-soul wellness destination, Naturoville Vedic Retreat is situated amidst the lush greenery of the Doon Valley, near Rishikesh. With a mere 20-minute distance from Dehradun Airport, Naturoville offers authentic Ayurvedic treatments, Yoga and meditation under the guidance of trained professionals.

The Retreat makes a great base for exploring Rishikesh (15km), Haridwar (24km) and Dehradun (30km), three of

Uttarakhand's most popular tourist destinations. Comfortable day-return trips are possible to all three towns. Dehradun, known for its Raj-era institutions – Indian Military Academy, Forest Research Institute, Survey of India, and numerous boarding schools – is now a thriving city and the capital of Uttarakhand.

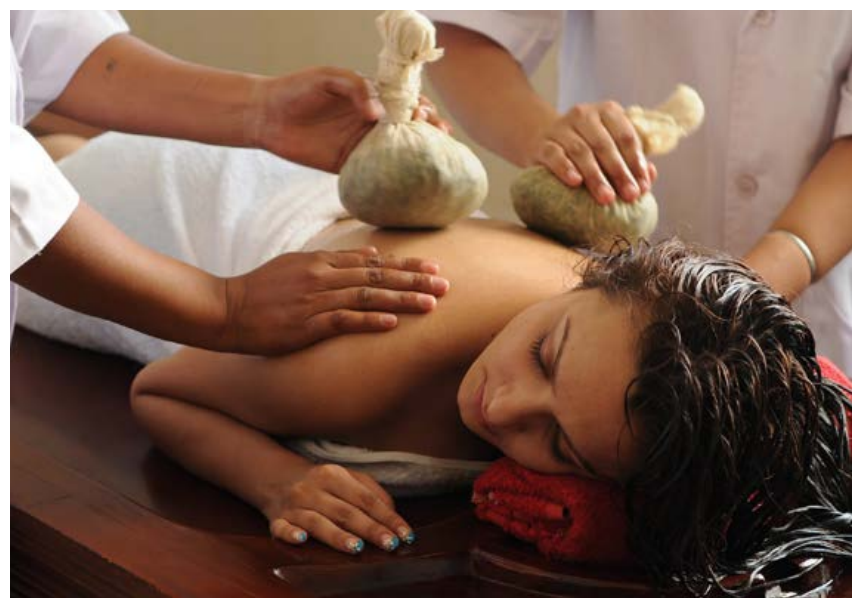
Millions of visitors, especially devotees, visit Rishikesh and Haridwar for a spiritual quest. It won't be surprising to find the region dotted with ashrams and Yoga centres.

Far away from bustling towns, Naturoville Vedic Retreat offers a holistic environment that is ideal for discovering inner peace.

GETTING THERE:

Located at a distance of 245km, you can choose to drive from Delhi NCR via NH 334. Alternatively, fly till Dehradun Airport and drive to the Retreat, which is just about 18km away.

Best time to visit: October – April





T RANSFORMING CORPORATE TRAVEL POLICIES

One of the most challenging problems in corporate travel today is to formulate a well-conceived corporate travel policy

KAMAL GILL

In today's fast-paced world where technology is driving change, companies are transforming their travel policies in order to keep pace. Keeping a corporate travel policy consistent across all touch points is of paramount importance. In order to build a good travel policy, companies need to broadly outline processes which are simple, have a clear policy, and provide flexibility for choice.

Employees need clarity and simplicity. They need access to an online travel booking tool, mobile apps, and a travel help desk to advise and guide. While this may sound simple in theory, the challenges in practise are many. Companies aim to achieve significant savings by driving compliance within mandates that try to balance company requirements and a consumer-centric experience.

However, balancing cost and compliance is difficult. At the end of the day, a company can only achieve cost savings in a travel management programme if all colleagues adhere to it and adopt it. And, that is the Catch 22 situation.

Very often, travel policies do not reflect purchase trends and patterns, nor do they identify new savings opportunities or proactively manage risk. The over-riding question, therefore, is what should the guiding principles be?

Should employees have a fixed budget cap for travel or be reimbursed on actuals? This heated debate was kicked off by 30 pan-India Corporate Travel influencers attending the MTM Think Tank at Le Meridien Hotel, Delhi.

Needless to say, controlling costs and expenses is critical to the success of any business and the house conducted a

robust debate on the pros and cons pertaining to per diem versus actual expenses.

Post the Think Tank, the discussions continued on LinkedIn and some of the views are reflected in the discussion.

Capt. Rajesh Sharma, Managing Director - IFM & Asset Services at Cushman & Wakefield, opined, "With regard to the perennial debate on per diem versus actual expenses, it is a divided house with strong views on the merits and demerits of both."

He went on to say, "Personally, I weigh in on the per diem view, as I feel that in the long run it benefits both the individual and the company. With actuals, there is generally a tendency to spend more as it is from the "Sarkari Khatta," whereas with per diem it is a fixed spend for the company and the individual feels incentivised (especially at the junior level) to try and save some amount on the per diem for personal shopping/saving."

In sync with Sharma was Ajay Bhatt, Head - Administration & Facilities, Godrej Industries, who declared, "Per diem is the way to go, to avoid disparity during the process of claims. This will help to reap a long-term benefit and to have a defined structure."

Acquiescing with both dignitaries, Sriram Natrajan, Head, International Lease Administration, Verizon, stated, "I completely agree with you. Paying per diem will definitely eliminate other issues on compliance, including falsification of bills. This debate may not end immediately, but a larger consensus might come through if follow-up sessions are held."

Abhijit Sarkar, MRICS, Vice President & Country Head- Corporate Real Estate, Admin & Infrastructure-Sharekhan

Ltd, said, "Business travel is a major expense which every organisation would like to have control over. It's imperative to adopt policies which are employee friendly and also enable the organisation to achieve its objective of saving costs."

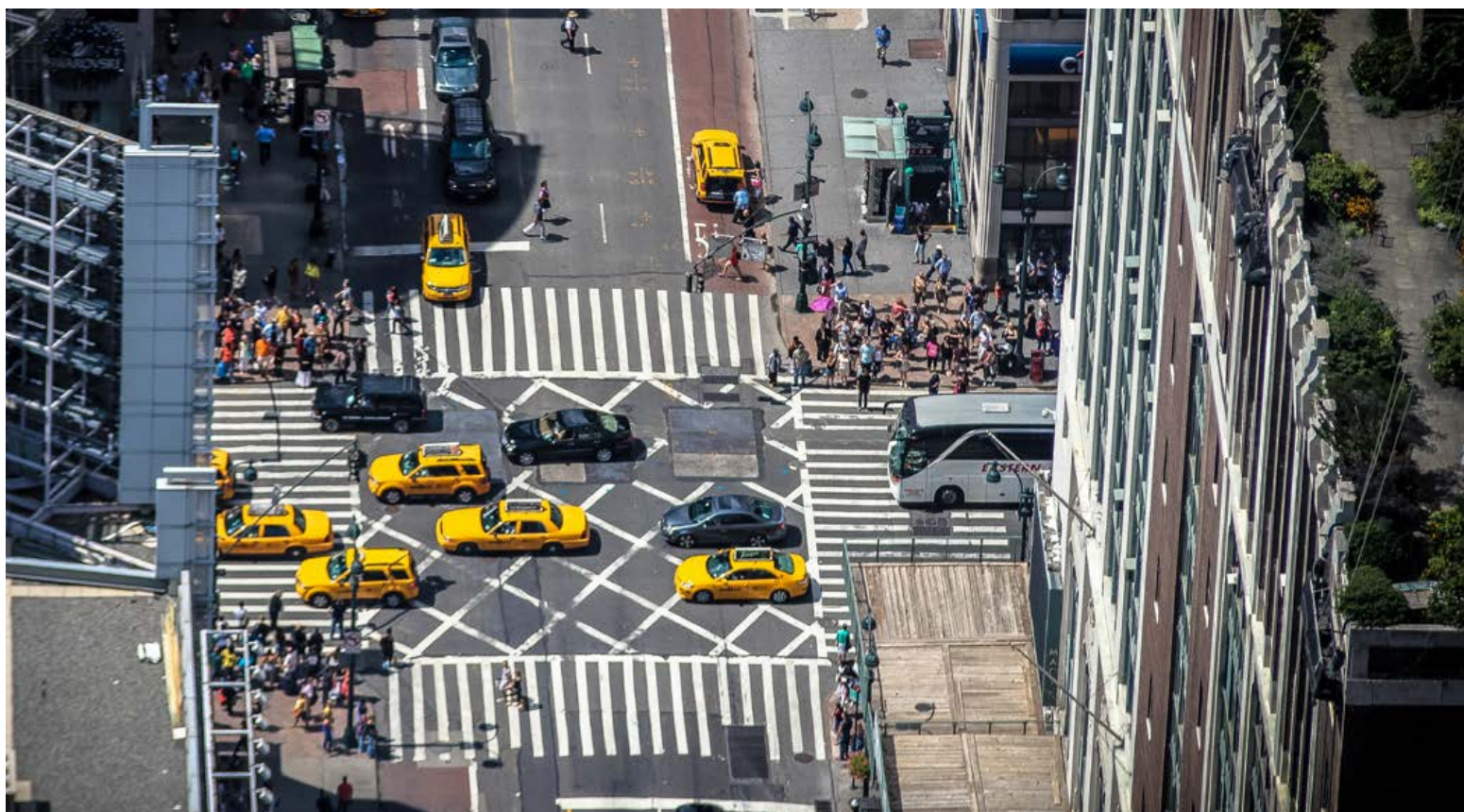
He elaborates, "Ideally, one should use both methods - per diem for food and actuals for lodging, depending on travel. Though per diem allows more certainty and predictability in travel budgeting, however, it doesn't eliminate the possibility of fraud, and its reduced documentation requirements may actually make it easier."

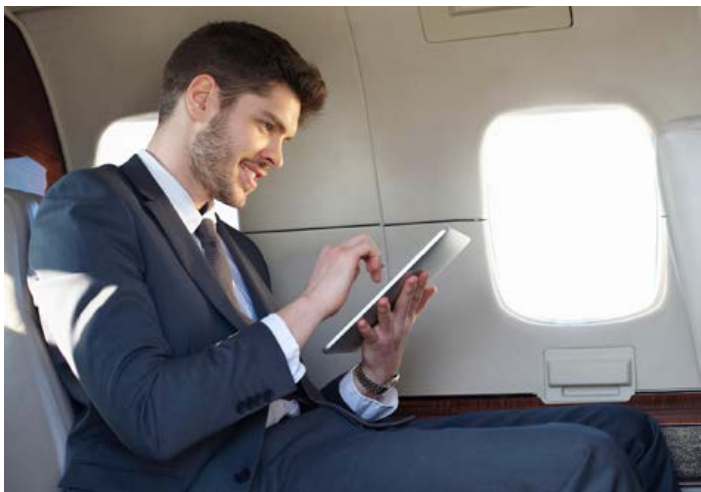
Sarkar feels, "Using actual expenses is more straightforward, because it demands supporting documentation. Although it is time-consuming and laborious in practice, it makes employees more organised. On the flip side, often it takes a longer period for the accounting staff to review travel costs and can lead to discrepancies that take time to investigate and resolve."

He recommended to have a per diem approach for regular travel, whereby it can cover food and lodging, especially when there is a clear understanding of the destination. When the travel is to a destination where employees often do not travel and the costs are higher, opting for actual cost may be the right approach."

Mixed reactions included those of Vijay Sheopuri, Manager Business Excellence & Administration at Tata Chemicals, who believed, "Cap is necessary on travel to avoid misuse and prevent money of the investor from being wasted."

Armaan Shaikh, Branch Head at Confidential, favoured a balanced approach, remarking, "In some categories, like car rental expenses, the budget per employee can be fixed. Today,





car rental contracts are signed with a lock-in period and prices are negotiated. These prices rarely get an increment during the contract term, unless there is high inflation. However, with reference to air travel, I guess the ticket, forex, visa fee, etc, and related costs of travel vary and fixing them would be an arduous task. In cases where rates go above the allowed limit, a person would have to keep on taking approvals, which would end up in confusion and frustration."

Geetha Rao, BDM, Sam Tourist, Bengaluru, added, "Firstly, paying reimbursement is also expensive and results in higher costing. Secondly, car rentals may vary from one provider to another, which also results in high costing. Thirdly, Corporate Ola or Uber differ in peak hours when rates vary. Sometimes, we may not get cabs which assure our safety." Another suggestion from Rao was that, "Tech parks can have a shuttle system where different companies can tie up according to their shifts, which might result in lower costs to the company."

Utpal Trivedi, Travel Manager at HDFC Bank, held the view that corporates were concerned with overspending and that the per diem option was the right one. "I think the per diem option is better as the same can be divided on the basics of grade and hence there will be no over spending, which is what corporate companies are looking for. Moreover, companies could also fix the budget at the start of the year."

However, Benjamin Banh, Vice President, Global Sales - Asia Pacific, Preferred Hotels & Resorts, differed, saying, "In my opinion, it's too easy to focus on a fixed amount while forgetting the BIG picture. The BIG picture is – can a company

afford the potential incremental revenue by sticking to a pre-planned budget?"

He went on to say, "Both options of budgeted amount and reimbursement, will work depending on the needs of the employee. There should be a SOP in managing incremental expenses to budgets and similarly a SOP in managing expenses that should not be spent just because it is in the budget."

Gautam Acharjee, Sr. Manager, Audit, Technocon Services, India, felt employees ought to be "Reimbursed on actuals, as a fixed budget cap for travel would hit actual ground operations."

The hospitality industry also had a voice in Benaifer Kapadia, Director of Sales and Marketing, The Chedi Mumbai, India, who commented, "As a hotelier, I feel per diems play a role of restriction vs. effective cost control. Per diem rates can't be paid to individuals who own 10 per cent or more of the business. Room rates are subject to the scale of economy (Demand vs. Supply). Per diems are fixed amounts throughout the fiscal or financial year, subject to grades within the organisation and city tiers of guest travel. A more evolved approach is to ask hotels to quote seasonal pricing which benefits the consumer and the hotel, too."

Gurmukh Singh Bawa, Senior Advisor at Aviation Industry; Former General Manager (PR), Airport Economist, at Airports Authority of India (AAI), made a significant point, expressing, "Foreign Travel has never been quite the subject in corporate



corridors and Board rooms, be it government or private. Foreign travel should be respected like any business travel; jet lag should be respected and reimbursements should be based upon actuals as per entitlement, plus-minus 10 per cent. Further, if the meeting is scheduled on the same day as landing, the Business Class travel lease of one extra day should be kept in the schedule. One must remember that it's not a pleasure trip, though employees get pleasure as they love their work."

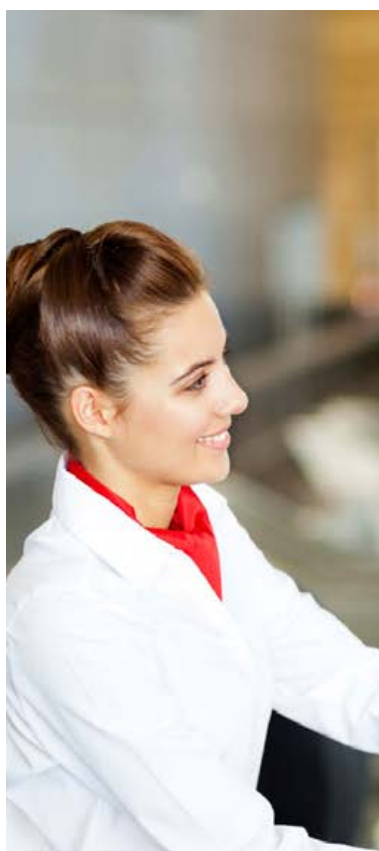
Vinod Kumar KM, Independent Business Consultant & Advisor-Processes, Services & Marketing, had a different approach, reflecting that company culture and philosophy must get reflected, even in the smallest of policies, including travel. "It really is a question of how you approach the issue and the philosophy behind the approach. If there is a fear, expressed or unexpressed, that employees can misuse actuals to either spend more, be extravagant or be outright dishonest by bogus bills, etc, perhaps per diem is a good way to go," enunciated Kumar.

Continuing, Kumar observed that nothing prevented employees from trying to save as much as possible on the per diem. They could stay and eat in places which demeaned the company brand or resort to fictitious per diems (by not travelling as many days as claimed). Some

companies, pointed out Kumar, offered a combination, i.e. fixed hotels, where the company paid directly and there was a fixed per diem for food and incidentals. "My approach is to have an open system of actuals, springing from respect to people, and then deal with the odd miscreant ruthlessly. Easier said than done, but I have seen it both working very well and also misused in many ways," added Kumar.

Thomas Tuttass, Senior IT Manager, Nokia, proffered another solution, "Just setting an upper limit makes employees stretch their cost up to the limit. For each employee, set a travel cap based on their last year's travel cost. If the New Year cost is lower, give them 20 per cent of the savings as bonus and set the new (lower) cost as a target next year. This will give a personal incentive to everybody to save money. Team goals do not seem to be as effective as the effect of their own choices."

Amita Parashara, Deputy General Manager, Projects- IFMG, Avon Facility Management, set the onus on the reporting Manager, saying, "Travel requirements vary according to job requirements. Capping has both positive and negative pros and cons, where expenses are budgeted, but employees could misuse it as well. Depending on the profile, a maximum limit should be set, but the prerogative and onus should be on the reporting Manager to justify the expense."





Some sections believed that it was important to create a Corporate Travel Policy that would not only help the company control costs, but also factor in employees' needs.

Thus, Sudhir Gupta, Assistant Vice President-Business at NCDEX e Markets Ltd, Hyderabad, opted for a fixed allowance, revealing that "employees who operate in smaller towns and cities are not able to manage their expenses easily or provide bills because of the lack of billable services in small cities, often making them forge claims to cover expenses."

His take was that, "Employees operating in small cities be given a fixed allowance. Senior Management level employees should be reimbursed for hotel and air travel and be given a fixed allowance for other expenses, considering their seniority and time constraints, which prevent them from making out bills for small expenses. This would ensure that the morale of employees is kept high."

This vigorous discussion has made it abundantly clear that travel is an intrinsic part of business and that it is imperative to establish a Corporate Travel Policy that is consistent, reasonable and accountable and strikes the right balance between the employer and employee.



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THINK INSPIRATION THINK DUBAI

The recently held MTM Think Tank brought together corporate professionals from various industries to discuss new trends in Dubai, essential in the planning of MICE events

TT BUREAU

With its dynamic metropolis, Dubai has established itself as a leading hub for hosting International events. Host to the largest number of all trade exhibitions in the Middle East, Dubai constantly works towards excellence and perfection, which has resulted in numerous international associations in the city. With ever-changing travel policies, it becomes imperative to adapt to changes without disrupting the flow.

Keeping Dubai at the core, this year's MTM Corporate Think Tank discussion was centred on 'Moving MICE Beyond Boundaries – Focus Dubai, New Parameters of Choice,' which resulted in a brainstorming among corporate decision makers of the industry. Held on December 13, 2017, at Hotel Radisson Gurugram, Udyog Vihar, the event was partnered by Dubai Business Events.

Kiran Bhandari, Country Director-Dubai Business Events, addressed the gathering with the destination offerings. He also brought into play the aspect of Dubai as an inspirational city for incentives. The event further shaped into a roundtable discussion, which was well attended by Delhi NCR's leading corporate travel purchasers.

Bhandari addressed queries of buyers over the 90-minute session, which was moderated by Kamal Gill, Director-OptiMICE Events Pvt Ltd. Other speakers for the event included Amit Kaul,



Head – Administration, Canara HSBC OBC Insurance CO., Sqn. Ldr. Neeraj Rathee, VP – Premises Infrastructure & Procurement, Fullerton India, Capt. Rajesh, Sharma Managing Director, IFM & Asset Services, Cushman & Wakefield and Deepak Ohlyan, Director – Facilities, Dell International. As the Hospitality partner for the event, Radisson Gurugram, General Manager Kanchan Rizvi delivered the presentation on the newly branded hotel and its new offerings.

Dubai aims to become a global association hub with focus on sustainability, mobility and opportunity. However, as the pre-planning process gets smarter it becomes imperative to know how Dubai plans to improve the experience of its attendees at MICE and business events. Likewise, different contexts were brought forward during the panel discussion. With over 100,000 hotel rooms in over 600 establishments, some being the best in the world, the pertinent question was – is it preferable to organise events at a venue with first-hand experience or change the location to let clientele enjoy the different parts of Dubai.

Every event commences with establishing a base and one of it involves planning an itinerary to enable trouble-free travelling and follow-up activities for clients; this part, in general, is not icing on the cake. MTM Think Tank envisaged on how enterprises can strategise to avoid any disorder. Insights were also shared on whether to hire a local event planner or DMCs who can provide

destination selection expertise that can translate to innovative and higher-quality events. Apart from this, corporate travel professionals presented their views on the process and ease of granting business visas in Dubai.

Dubai being the melting pot of different cultures and lifestyles, it becomes essential to exchange views on how companies arrange Indian cuisines for delegates and attendees in the city. While planning a MICE event in Dubai, enterprises need to ascertain how successful they will be in realising their aim and objectives. Speakers at MTM Think Tank emphasised on the factors that can drive organisations close to their fulfilment quotient.

Connected to more than 250+ destinations across six continents and with the offering of world-class infrastructure, Dubai, without a doubt, becomes the inevitable city to host a corporate event. The MTM Corporate Think Tank provided an interactive platform for the who's who of Corporate MICE & Travel decision makers to discover solutions to the challenges faced while planning and hosting an international business event.





TYING UP FOR SUCCESS

TiEcon Delhi's vibrant event brought professionals, entrepreneurs, investors and stalwarts of the business industry under one roof

TT BUREAU

Resourceful business professionals and entrepreneurs are constantly on the lookout for a partnership programme that can understand the challenges faced by them and can help achieve their dreams by way of ideas, help them eliminate impediments to success and translate their ideas into enterprise.

Over the past few years, the Indian start-up ecosystem has taken off due to evolving technology, availability of funding and consolidation activities by various firms. Foreign investors are making big bets on the Indian market, which has become a robust place for young entrepreneurs.

TiE Delhi NCR, a non-profit association dedicated to fostering entrepreneurship, is one such platform, which welcomes entrepreneurs worldwide, and believes in the power of ideas to change the face of entrepreneurship and growing business, through its five pillars – mentoring, networking, education, incubating and funding. Founded in 1992 by a

group of successful entrepreneurs, TiE is currently the world's largest entrepreneurial organisation.

Providing a global platform for start-ups, entrepreneurs and investors, TiEcon Delhi organised a vibrant event, themed 'Reimagining Success,' on 15-16 December, 2017, at Taj Palace, New Delhi. With stalwarts and leaders of Indian economy present under one roof, TiEcon Delhi attracted more than 150 speakers, 50 different sessions and about 1500 participants.

The two-day conference began with the welcome address by Pramod Bhasin, President/Chairman, TiE Delhi-NCR/ Clix Capital, and Bobby Bedi, Managing Director, Kaliedoscope Entertainment Pvt Ltd, who defined the strong entrepreneurial landscape in India, stressing on revolutionising and accelerating the start-up revolution, which will bring dynamism, new thinking and create jobs to foster the Indian economy.

It was followed by an inaugural address by Jayant Sinha, Hon. Minister of State for Civil Aviation, Government of India,

and Saurabh Srivastava, Chairman Emeritus, TiE Delhi-NCR. The Minister proposed a 'Digital-Sky' for drones, which would be pivotal for start-ups in India.

The session focussed on empowering Women, Agritech, Social Entrepreneurship and Fintech, with a speaker's list that included distinguished leaders, like Rajan Anandan, VP, Southeast Asia and India, Google; Sonam Wangchuk, Founding Director, SECMOL; Sunil Bharti Mittal, Founder & Chairman, Bharti Enterprises; Rahul Sharma, Co-founder, Micromax; Geeta Goel, VP Mission Investing, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and Srikanth Rajagopalan, Financial Services BD, Amazon Internet Services.

Other speakers included Talvin Singh, Percussionist, Composer and Producer, Utopia Sound Studio; Supriya Shrinete, Executive Editor – News, ET Now, Jaspreet Bindra, Mahindra and Mahindra and Suchita Salwan, Founder & CEO, Little Black Book, among many others.

TiE Talk between Talvin Singh and Bobby Bedi, Managing Director, Kaleidoscope Entertainment Pvt Ltd, was a memorable event, where Talvin Singh played music that blew the audience away.



Fireside Chat, another noteworthy feature, showcased eminent personalities, Sunil Bharti Mittal and Pramod Bhasin.

TiEcon Delhi-NCR also hosted front-runner awards, the Auto-Tech and Mobility Award, that enabled the winners to meet auto manufacturers and bring their solutions to the market. Social entrepreneurship, how to build a mentor network, scaling the venture, the right time to exit, survival stories of entrepreneurs, were some of the other subjects comprising the panel discussion. Thus, through its dedicated programmes and pitches, TiEcon Delhi aims to become an ideal platform for investors and potential entrepreneurs.





24 HOURS IN *BUDAPEST*



Hungary's vibrant capital charms tourists and locals alike with its grand historical architecture, splendid night life, and sumptuous cafe society

TT BUREAU



GREAT SYNAGOGUE

Budapest is popular for its buzzing night life, but the essence of the city is in its history. Visit the Great Synagogue, the largest Jewish house of worship in Europe, which showcases both Romantic and Moorish architectural elements. Get blown away by the architectural marvels of the synagogue's central rose window and pipe organ.

Inside, discover the Hungarian Jewish Museum & Archives, and find the 3rd century Jewish headstone and a handwritten book of the local Burial Society. On a sombre note, on the north side, view the Holocaust Tree of Life Memorial and its leaves, on which are inscribed the names of thousands of Jews who were brutally murdered by the Nazis.

ST. STEPHEN'S BASILICA

Jog your inner spirituality and aesthete as you gaze up at the 96-metre-high St Stephen's Basilica, named after the Holy King St. Stephen, also the founder of the Hungarian state. This exquisite church took more than 50 years to complete and its dome corresponds to the height of the Budapest Parliament Building.

Forget the gloom in the basilica's interior and traipse up to the top of the dome for some incredible views. Don't miss the mummified right hand of St Stephen, the patron saint of the church, which is housed in a glass case in the chapel and the object of much veneration. If neo-classical architecture's your thing, take a guided tour of the Basilica, scheduled from Monday to Friday, between 10am - 3pm.



CASTLE HILL

About 5.5km from Great Synagogue, Castle Hill houses some of the city's best medieval monuments and museums. About a kilometre long, the monument is a limestone plateau towering 170m above the Danube. The UNESCO World Heritage Site consists of two distinct parts, the Old Town and the Royal Palace. While the locals resided in the Old Town, the Royal Palace was for nobles.



HUNGARIAN STATE OPERA HOUSE

Go to Central Budapest and check out one of the most prestigious musical institutions, the neo-Renaissance Hungarian State Opera House. Take a selfie in front of the statue of Ferenc Erkel, composer of the Hungarian national anthem, which stands in front of the Opera House. Marvel at its façade, which is adorned with statues of muses and opera greats. The interior boasts chandeliers, gilded vaulted ceilings and marble columns. Tour the Opera House by day, and by night, soak in world-class performances.

CORVIN CLUB & ROOF TERRACE

After all the hectic touring, relax and unwind at Corvin Club & Roof Terrace, located just 2km from the Hungarian State Opera House. Enjoy remarkable views of the city from the club's open-air dance floor. Enjoy the after-party on Sunday mornings and if you are into reel-life, then choose Mondays or Tuesday nights to experience rooftop cinema.



DIVINO BORBAR

Uplift your spirits at DiVino Borbar, located 2.4km from Corvin Club, and a mere 2-minute walking distance from St. Stephen's Basilica. DiVino is Budapest's most popular wine bar, that is thronged by locals and tourists alike, every night. Choose from more than 140 wines produced by Hungarian winemakers. Don't look for the Menu booklet, as the entire selection of wine and food is written on the wall; if you get stuck in your selection, you can always ask the staff to recommend you the best. Complement your wine with a selection of delectable tapas, a must-try to complete the experience. complete the experience.

WHAT WHEN WHERE



What: M1 Singapore Fringe Festival

When: January 17 – 28, 2018

Where: Various

Innovated and created by Singaporeans and international artists, the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival is an annual event, focussing on theatre, music, dance, mixed media and visual arts. Aiming to introduce the best contemporary and socially engaged projects to the local audience, the festival showcases a different theme each year and serves as an innovative platform for meaningful art. This year's festival centres on eminent Singaporean artist Amanda Heng's work, 'Let's Walk'. A Sole - dance theatre performance by award-winning theatre maker, Edith Podesta, will be one of the festival highlights.

What: Sundance Film Festival

When: January 18 – 28, 2018

Where: Park City, Utah, USA

Sundance Film Festival is the biggest event for new and upcoming filmmakers and artists from around the world. Sundance Institute features bold, independent storytelling and showcases emerging talent to support independent film and theatre artists. Starting from January 18 - 28, 2018, Sundance Film Festival, a non-profit organisation, is known for its dedicated work in identifying the emerging international stories and introducing them to US audiences.



What: Toronto International Boat Show

When: January 12 – 21, 2018

Where: Enercare Centre, Exhibition Place, Toronto

With over 250 workshops and seminars, the world's largest indoor lake event for boaters returns to Enercare Centre. The Boat Show will take place at the city's Enercare Centre and will showcase all the innovative eye-catching boats with high-tech features. New boating accessories will be features at exhibitor booths. The highlight for this year's event will be celebrity guest Brenda Lowe from the reality show, "Survivor: Nicaragua". Additionally, the event will feature Yamaha Fish Off and Twiggy the Water-Skiing Squirrel for kids, which has a squirrel skiing on the waves. Boaters can avail free boat rides, canoes, kayaks, pedal boats, plus many more interesting activities.



What: IBTM Arabia 2018**When: February 5 - 7, 2018****Where: Etihad Towers, Jumeirah, Abu Dhabi**

Abu Dhabi's rising level of development and investment, as well as its enhanced connectivity and infrastructure, have driven the city's popularity among meetings and events professionals globally. Testament to this is the number of high calibre suppliers already registered to attend IBTM Arabia 2018, the most established event of its kind in the Middle East MICE industry, taking place at Jumeirah at Etihad Towers in Abu Dhabi, from 5-7 February 2018.

Leading international suppliers confirmed to attend the event include the Azerbaijan Convention Bureau, Czech Tourism Authority, Interprefy, Norwegian Cruise Line, Singapore Tourism Board and the United Nations Conference Centre.

**Jaipur Literature Festival****When: January 24 - 29, 2018.****Where: Diggi Palace, Jaipur, Rajasthan.**

Jaipur Literature Festival is one of the most renowned literature events in Asia, which honours both celebrated authors and upcoming writers. The event will commence on January 24 and conclude on January 29 and all detailed information about this year's speakers can be found on its official website. The world's largest free event will witness national and international authors who will enlighten the audience with their upcoming work. In addition to authors, humanitarians, inspiring business leaders, historians and politicians will also be attending the event as speakers.

Chinese New Year**When: February 16, 2018 – March 2, 2018****Where: Mainland China**

Unlike the Gregorian calendar, New Year in China is celebrated on a different date. Chinese New Year generally happens between January 21, and February 20. This year, it will start from February 16, 2018 and end with the Spring Lantern Festival on March 2, 2018. Being a 15-day long celebration, this event marks the longest public holiday in China. The best part in China during this time is the traditional gorgeous decoration. The whole city is wrapped in red as it symbolises wealth, happiness and prosperity. With parades, lanterns, red lanterns and beautiful fireworks, Chinese New Year is an event worth witnessing.



PICK OF THE MONTH

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



MUSIC: EMINEM'S REVIVAL

After a temporary absence from the music scene, the rap god, Eminem, has released his new album, 'Revival'. The record was released through Web/ Shady/Aftermath/Interscope Records and is on course for a No. 1 debut on the Billboard 200 chart, which is currently led by 'Shape of You' phenomena, Ed Sheeran. If the new album topples Sheeran, Eminem will mark his eighth consecutive on the Billboard 200 chart. Eminem had earlier topped the chart with Recovery (2010), Relapse (2009), Curtain Call: The Hits (2005), Encore

(2004), The Eminem Show (2002) and The Marshall Mathers LP (2000).

'Revival' was led by the single, "Walk on Water," featuring Beyoncé, which has so far peaked at No. v14 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart (marking Eminem's 37th top 40-charting hit). Revival is Eminem's first new studio album since 2013's The Marshall Mathers LP 2.

Genre (s): Hip-Hop/Rap



DVD: STRONGER

Directed by David Gordon Green with Jake Gyllenhaal in a titular role, Stronger follows the true and inspiring story of Jeff Bauman, who lost both his legs during the infamous 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. The title of the movie was inspired by the book of the same name, which was written by Jeff Bauman and Bret Witter.

The onus of playing a real-life character comes with great expectation, especially if the actor is Jake Gyllenhaal. The story takes us to the life of an ordinary working-class man, Jeff, a 27-year-old from Boston, who visits Marathon to win back his ex-girlfriend Erin (Tatiana Maslany).

The blast occurs and he loses both his legs in the attack. What follows next is his heroic journey and inner courage to overcome the devastating incident which tests the family's bond and defines a community's pride.

Genre (s): Drama



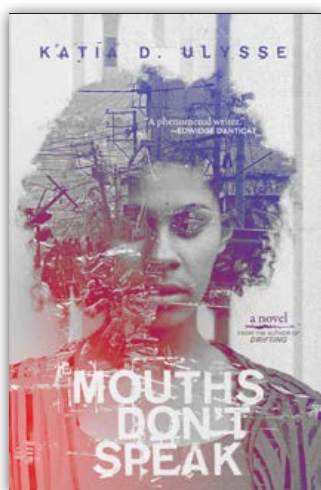
BOOK: MOUTHS DON'T SPEAK BY KATIA D. ULYSSE

The highly anticipated literary release in early 2018 is Mouths Don't Speak, by Katia D. Ulysse. Known for her intense writing, Ulysse follows the story of a woman who returns to Haiti after the 2010 earthquake kills her parents. The massive earthquake that shook Haiti took over a quarter-million lives and left millions of others homeless.

Three thousand miles away, Jacqueline Florestant mourns the death of her parents and decides to visit Haiti. Her husband, a former US Marine, cares for their three-year-old daughter as he fights his own battles with acute PTSD. After leaving Haiti as a child, about 25 years ago, Jacqueline returns only to find that what she is looking for has crumbled to dust.

Ulysse delves into the implications of trauma and emotional isolation and deals with complexities of family separation. Mouths Don't Speak is a story of annihilation and redemption and brings back tales of colonial imprints and what it means to call a place home.

Genre (s): Literary Fiction



GAMES: XENOBLADE CHRONICLES 2

One of the most awaited games of the season is Xenoblade Chronicles 2, the sequel to Wii and Wii U. The game leads us to the story of Rex, a driver who is capable of summoning living weapons called Blades. With the help of a Blade named Pyra, he journeys across Alrest in search of the World Tree, where the fabled paradise Elysium rests.

A fascinating storyline set up in a gorgeous open-world with deep combat systems, Xenoblade 2 is unique in its character customisation, which includes switching out your blades and summoning powerful beings for help.

Players are drawn to the skills and abilities that each blade possesses and among those are the Field Skills that can be used to get out of the battle to explore the sprawling world of the Alrest. What sets XC 2 apart from its previous edition is the inclusion of far better graphics that makes you enjoy the expansive storyline. This adventure series raises the ante with its arcane combat set up that involves teaming with an artificial life form to get extra weapons and move sets.

Genre (s): Action Role-Playing





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The Seminar will be addressed by Film Directors, Producers and Actors, who will present the topic of Film Tourism and the important criteria involved in destination marketing. The speakers will also discuss the approach that destinations should take to seize the opportunities provided by Film Tourism and thus reap the benefits by way of increased revenue and visitor arrival. It will be part of the broader event – MTM+LLTM.

Time duration: One hour





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Film
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