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CORPORATE BUSINESS, AVIATION, MICE & LEISURE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 2018 | ₹50

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HO CHI MINH CITY ORGANISES ROAD SHOW IN NEW DELHI

Ho Chi Minh City, for the first time, officially promoted the destination in New Delhi, from January 31-February 3, 2018. The road show was headed by Bui Ta Hoang Vu, Director of Ho Chi Minh City Tourism Department. Ho Chi Minh City is the political, economic and cultural centre as well as the important travel gateway of Vietnam and the region. The number of international visitors coming to Ho Chi Minh City has steadily increased in recent years, accounting for 58 per cent of total international visitors to Vietnam, plus achieving 28 per cent of Vietnam's tourism revenue.

Along with its more modern elements, the city also boasts traditional appeal from its cross-cultural architecture and historical value. Established more than 300 years ago, Ho Chi Minh City is rapidly modernising to fit the needs of incoming travellers. A city of culture, Ho Chi Minh City is well-known for its outstanding attractions, such as The Reunification Palace, Opera House, Central Post Office, Ben Thanh Market, Cu Chi Tunnels, Notre Dame Cathedral, Jade Emperor Pagoda and a series of historical and cultural museums. These represent the local beauty and national significance of Vietnam.

Praised as 'Food Paradise' by many prestigious media, like CNNGo and Lonely Planet, Ho Chi Minh City showcases a variety of delectable. For authentic Indian street food, tourists can easily find Indian restaurants near Ben Thanh Market or on Bui Vien Walking Street, namely Kampung Panda Restaurant, Baba's Kitchen, Mumtaz Saigon, and many more. For fine dining with excellent food, Ashoka, Tandoor Saigon, Little India Saigon and Ganesh restaurant are highly recommended.



VFS VISA CENTRE FOR UKRAINE OPENS IN INDIA

Residents of India wishing to travel to Ukraine can now apply for both short and long term visas at the VFS Global Visa Application Centre in New Delhi. Ukraine was recently signed on as VFS Global's 57th client government worldwide, when the Ukraine Ministry of Foreign Affairs and VFS Global signed a contract to provide visa services on behalf of the Eastern European nation across eight countries – Angola, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, and Tunisia in the Africa region, Lebanon in the Middle East region, India in the South Asia region, and China, in September 2017. The contract entails the launch of 10 visa application centres across these eight countries by January 15, 2018, with the one in New Delhi being the first step toward that goal.

PREFERRED HOTELS & RESORTS CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

Fifty years after 12 North American hoteliers established Preferred Hotels Association as a referral organisation, the Preferred brand celebrates its 50-year Anniversary of curating exceptional independent hotels that deliver authentic, memorable, and inspiring travel experiences. Over the past five decades – filled with expansion into every region of the world and the continued addition of experiential programmes and technology – the company has evolved to become Preferred Hotels & Resorts, the world's largest independent hotel brand with more than 650 one-of-a-kind member hotels, resorts, and residences across 85 countries. To commemorate this major milestone, Preferred Hotels & Resorts has launched a year-long Golden Anniversary campaign that invites travellers to explore its vast portfolio of independent hotels through a series of consumer-driven initiatives. Among the celebratory activities launching today are an inspiring video series; a new social media campaign, #PreferredCelebrates50; a Golden Anniversary package; multiple booking incentives and a dedicated Golden Anniversary microsite that will serve as the hub of all related activity throughout the year.

NEW VERSION OF FRANCE.FR UNVEILED

Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, Secretary of State at the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, presented a new version of France.fr, the on-line portal for destination France, and unveiled its new logo. The goal of welcoming 100 million tourists to France in 2020 involves bolstering the vitality of Destination France and showcasing its globally renowned destination brands.

The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and Atout France wanted to go even further with a major overhaul of the site, which is set to become a veritable reference point and influencing tool across the world. Devised in order to inspire the visitor and create the immediate desire to travel and enjoy experiences, France.fr currently represents a showcase of the very best of 'art de vivre' across territories. The site places an accent on French creativity in the major sectors of touristic development, as well as on tourism knowledge hubs (Eco-tourism, mountains in summer, savoir-faire, nightlife tourism, wine tourism). The 16 globally renowned destination brands defined according to instructions from the Government are highlighted in particular.

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SRI LANKA TARGETS 440,000 INDIAN ARRIVALS FOR 2018

Sri Lanka Tourism has announced a path breaking record of historic growth, with 384,628 arrivals from India market in 2017. Understanding the unique offerings for Indian travellers, Sri Lanka now targets for 440,000 Indian arrivals, for 2018. Sri Lanka is growing as, 'A Destination for All Seasons'. It has recently been awarded as the, 'Emerging Destination of the Year' by Conde Nast Traveller India and 'Asia's Leading Adventure Tourism Destination of the Year' in 2017.

Sutheash Balasubramaniam, Managing Director, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, said, "India continues to be our top source market. We believe that the potential of the Indian travel market is yet to realise in terms of attracting longer stay and higher spending travellers. It is our fervent hope to make Sri Lanka the most preferred destination in Asia for Indian travellers. Sri Lanka offers travellers an array of diverse product offerings and experience spread across the small island and caters to all ages."

The survey conducted by Sri Lanka Tourism highlights that the overall experience of the Indian visitor to Sri Lanka has been very delightful for 69.1% and satisfying for 30.69%. Thus, it would be right to mention that nearly 100% Indians visiting Sri Lanka have had a good and enjoyable visit.



DTCM ANNOUNCES NEW STRATEGIC ALLIANCES FOR INDIA

Dubai Tourism has announced the appointment of Nijhawan Group as its in-market destination representation and trade marketing management firm in India. The decision was driven by the Indian subcontinent's growing outbound demand, witnessed in the steady rise in visitation from India, along with rises in the length of stay and spending power of Indian travellers.

With over 45 years of experience in India, Nijhawan Group will now be responsible for all trade communications, brand partnership conversations and building crucial trade relationships in the Indian subcontinent to strengthen Dubai's position in the market and ultimately bring the Emirate closer to its Tourism Vision 2020 goals.

Issam Kazim, CEO, Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DCTCM) said, "India remains a top priority for us, now consistently being the largest source market for tourists to Dubai. This is a feat achieved through years of establishing and building strong trade ties in the market, in addition to the execution of a segment-specific approach across India. Charson Advisory has played a great role in realising this feat, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their consistently professional approach, enduring commitment and dependable work."

FORTUNE DEBUTS IN HARIDWAR

Fortune Park Hotels, a wholly-owned subsidiary of ITC Ltd., has expanded its bouquet of hotels with the opening of the brand's 46th hotel in the country, 'Fortune Park, Haridwar'. Located on National Highway 58, this First Class full service hotel is just 5km from SIDCUL, the industrial hub, 10km from Haridwar Railway Station and 12 km from Har Ki Pauri.

Fortune Park, Haridwar offers a selection of 48 contemporary rooms, including 30 standard rooms, 6 Fortune Club Rooms and 12 suites. Spacious and splendid, all the rooms are replete with modern amenities for a comfortable stay. The hotel also offers state-of-the-art conference and banquet facilities that can accommodate up to 125 guests.

Commenting on the launch, Samir MC, Chief Operating Officer, Fortune Park Hotels Ltd., said, "We are extremely happy to announce the launch of Fortune Park in Haridwar, an important Hindu pilgrimage site and a growing industrial town. We are delighted to partner with the promoters who have reposed their confidence in our brand. We would put in our best

to uphold this trust and also look forward to more alliances with the Group in the near future. Keeping in mind the rapid strides this city has made during the recent years, we are confident of receiving a good response for this hotel."



VISIT MONACO CELEBRATES NEW YEAR WITH KARAN JOHAR

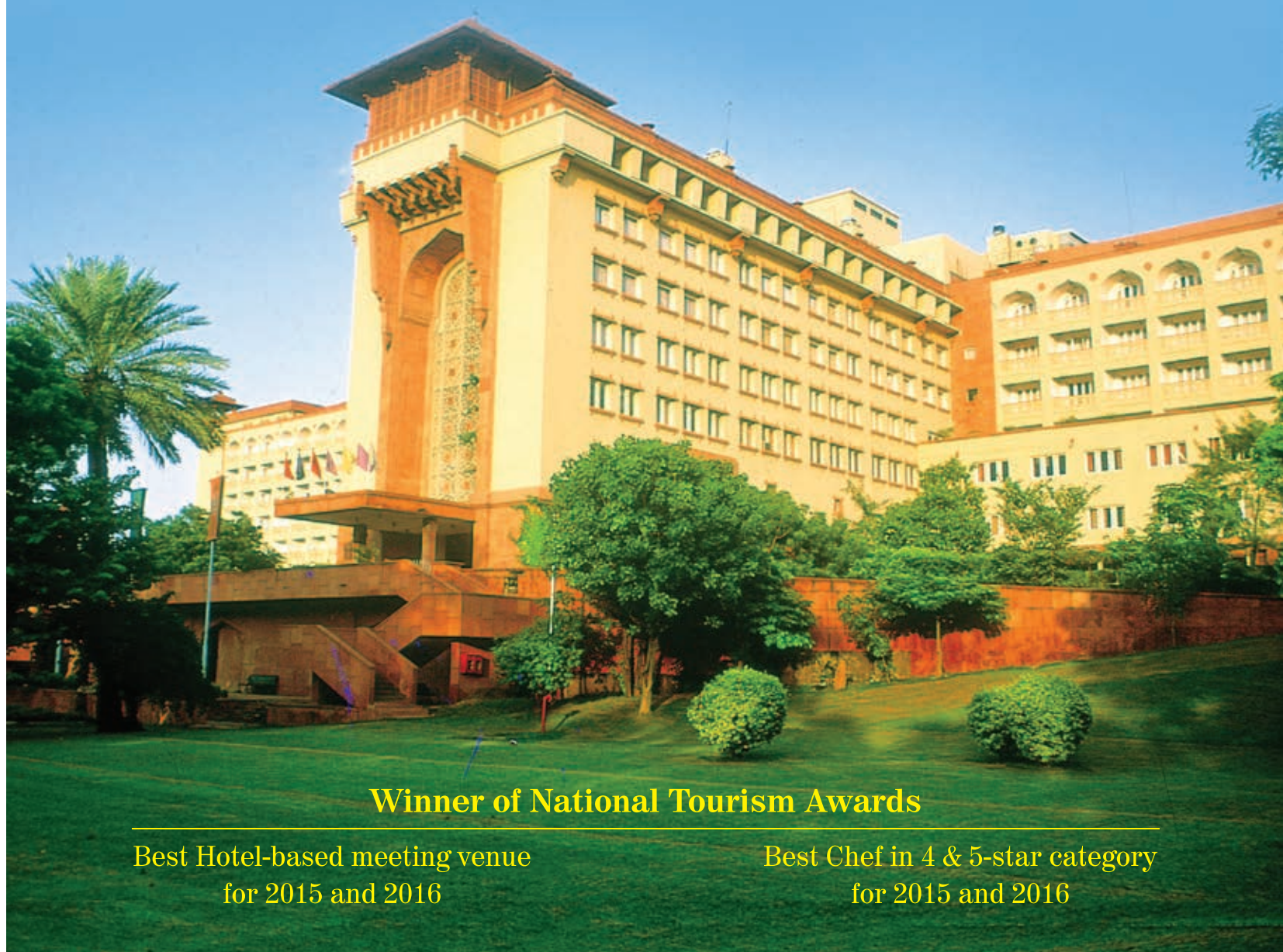
The Monaco Government Tourist and Convention Bureau, along with Millionaireasia India, welcomed 2018 at a spectacular event that featured Bollywood's game-changing icon, Karan Johar.

The scintillating event was the culmination of Karan's visit and photoshoot in Monaco for the cover of Millionaireasia India's Jan-Feb 2018 edition. The director, entrepreneur and ultimate showman of Indian entertainment industry, unveiled the cover of the magazine and also talked about the business of entertainment and its evolution.

Speaking on the occasion, Rajeev Nangia, Director-India, Monaco Government Tourist Bureau, said, "Destination Monaco takes immense pride and happiness in having the invite accepted by the star entrepreneur Karan Johar to the illuminated world of glamorous dreams. We thank Karan for sharing his Monaco memories with the world since his visit."



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EXPERIENCING THE BEST OF GREECE

Inspired by Greek tradition, Electra Hotels and Resorts is known for its hospitality, which blends comfort with luxury

TT BUREAU

Established in 1965, Electra Hotels and Resorts has since then welcomed more than 6.5 million guests and served with the objective of creating a luxurious environment without compromising on comfort. The company's flagship hotel, the new Electra Metropolis, is a retro chic 5-Star hotel, situated in Athens, next to Syntagma Square, the most famous square in Greece. Operating since September 2016, the hotel has 216 luxurious and fully-equipped suites and guest rooms with a stunning view of the Acropolis and the old neighbourhood of Plaka. The Metropolis Roof Garden offers creative Greek cuisines with spectacular views of the Parthenon. The hotel also features five air-conditioned conference halls for hosting meetings, conferences, events and performances, for up to 320 people.

The Electra Palace Athens, classical in its architecture and design, blends beautifully with the noble historical buildings of the Plaka area. Located right in the city centre, the hotel is within walking distance from all major sights and is easily accessible by car or public transport. The hotel's elegant luxury is complemented by the majestic views of the Acropolis that can be enjoyed from the rooftop restaurant, pool, rooms and suites. Marble-tiled bathrooms, soft duvets, jacuzzi bathtubs,

custom furniture, are some of the few details that make for a luxuriously enjoyable stay.

Guests can enjoy delicious contemporary Greek cuisine at the award-winning Electra Palace Roof Garden or at the Motivo, in the lounge, or with a drink at the British inspired bar Duck Tail. The hotel's 5-Star service extends to its five meeting rooms and ballrooms, which are fully equipped, air-conditioned and can cater up to 350 people.



DESARU COAST MEETS INDIAN BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVELLERS

Malaysia's first integrated premium destination and the most anticipated new tourism development, Desaru Coast, held an exclusive preview of Desaru Coast for the Indian travel trade and media at The Claridges. The premium integrated destination met Indian buyers to present its latest developments and various offerings in Johor's hidden gem.

"Desaru Coast's India tour will open doors for us to connect with buyers of all sectors within the travel-value chain commerce whilst positioning Desaru Coast as the destination of choice amongst holidaymakers and business travellers alike within the region. We look forward to sharing a preview of the destination that will appeal to international travellers with its myriad of offerings" said Muhammad Zainal Ashikin, Chief Executive Officer, Desaru Development Holdings One Sdn Bhd.

H.E Datuk Hidayat Abdul Hamid, the High Commissioner of Malaysia, added, "India has always been an important market for Malaysia. In 2016, a total of 6,38,578 Indian travellers visited Malaysia, maintaining its position as the sixth top tourist generating market to the country. Desaru Coast will definitely make the Indian excited and thus giving a boost to arrivals to the country."

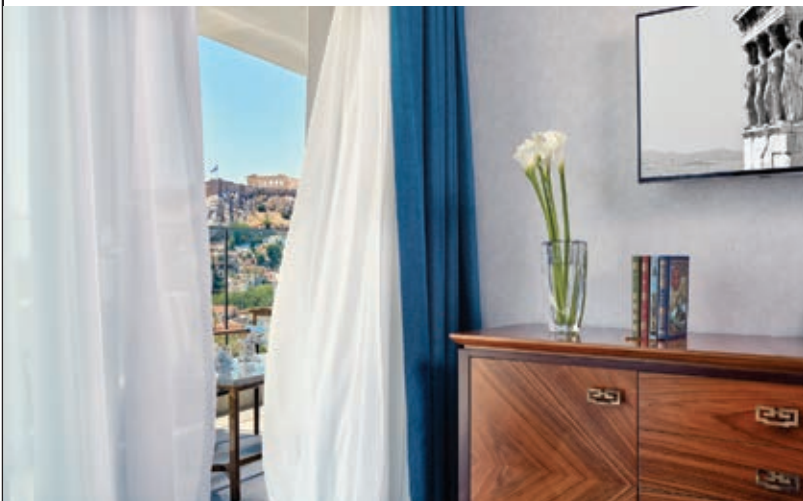
Developed by Desaru Development Holdings One Sdn. Bhd., Desaru Coast is located at the south-eastern region of Malaysia, spanning over 3,900 acres along an unspoiled 17km beachfront facing the South China Sea. Desaru Coast is home to four globally renowned hotels and resorts, two world-class golf courses, a themed water park, a retail village as well as a conference centre.

Desaru Coast will also unveil its destination offerings in stages. The Els Club Desaru Coast – Ocean Course had already opened in September, 2016 while The Els Club Desaru Coast – Valley Course opened in March, 2017. The remaining components will be offered from second half of June 2018.



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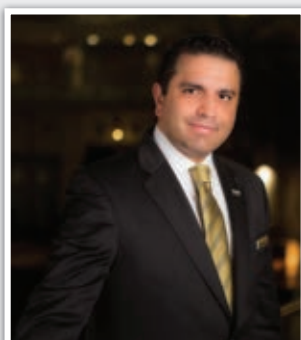


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SHANZHONG ZHU has been appointed as Executive Director of UNWTO, by UNWTO Secretary-General, Zurab Pololikashvili. Zhu, a Chinese national, began his two-year-term on January 1, 2018. Zhu joined UNWTO in 2014 as Executive Director. Prior to his appointment, he was Vice Chairman of China National Tourism Administration (CNTA).



MANISH SODHI has been designated as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Hotel Sahara Star. A seasoned hospitality professional, Manish brings with him an experience of over 20 years in the hospitality sector, working with leading International and Indian hotel brands like Starwood and Leela Kempinski, with his most recent assignment being the General Manager of The Lalit, Mumbai.



AMIT KUMAR has joined The Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan as General Manager. Prior to this, he was serving as the General Manager for Courtyard by Marriott Raipur. After beginning his career in 2000 at the Grand Hyatt, Delhi, he joined J.W. Marriott Mumbai as a part of the pre-opening team in November 2001 as an F&B Team Leader, and within

three years, he was named Assistant Banquet Manager.



VINESH GUPTA has joined The Den Hotel as General Manager. A seasoned hotelier, Vinesh has worked for several international hotel chains such as Starwood, Shangri-La, The Leela Kempinski and Hyatt, along with Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces. Vinesh spent three years working in Seychelles, with Hilton, managing

their Labriz Seychelles Resort. His last stint was with Moevenpick Hotel and Resorts Bangalore.



DANIEL CHAO has been assigned as the General Manager of Novotel and ibis Chennai OMR and General Manager Delegate for AccorHotels in Chennai. He joined the Group in 1999 and since then he has worked in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and South America and in Sofitel, Novotel, Grand Mercure, Mercure and ibis.



SHIPRA SUMBLY KAUL has been appointed as General Manager of Holiday Inn Express & Suites Bengaluru Racecourse. She comes with over 17 years of experience in the hospitality industry and is entrusted with the responsibility of spearheading the opening and successful operations at Holiday Inn Express & Suites Bengaluru Racecourse – the first Holiday Inn

Express business hotel that opened in October 2017.



SURAJIT CHATTERJEE has been appointed General Manager of Park Plaza Ludhiana, by Sarovar Hotels & Resorts. A passionate hotelier with over 20 years of experience in hospitality, Surajit brings with him a hands-on experience in Operation Management, Inventory Management, Quality – Customer Relationship Management, Team Management & Preopening hotels.



SAURABH KADAM has been appointed as the Head of Operations for The Gordon House Hotel by Mars Enterprises, at Colaba, Mumbai. He started his journey with The Leela and went on to gain global experience with brands like IHG. In his current role, Saurabh will manage the operations and will be responsible for the profitability, guest experience and strategic initiatives for the hotel.



MANISH RAJ has joined Tripeur as Chief Business Officer of the Bengaluru-based travel management platform. Raj, a seasoned professional with over 19 years of experience under his belt in the Hospitality & Travel Industry in the areas of Business Development, Marketing & Sales, has joined Tripeur as its Co-Founder & Chief Business Officer.

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BEST FOR BUSINESS



The epitome of hospitality and the ultimate MICE destination, The Leela Mumbai excels in customised services, impeccable facilities and an unrivalled luxury quotient

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When it comes to choosing a business hotel, the best business hotels make it easy for you – you don't have to choose between business and leisure, because they offer you the best of both worlds. Pampering is the key word, whether it's to do with spatial availability in terms of meeting space, ballrooms, rooftop terraces, bowling alley bars, traditional state-of-the-art meeting rooms; or outstanding facilities that enable you to take a conference call by the hotel's swimming pool or spa and host clients in-house at one of many fine dining restaurants. The Leela Mumbai subscribes to this brand of luxury business hotel.

An urban sanctuary located in the heart of Mumbai's commercial district, The Leela Mumbai is aptly named as 'Mumbai's only Resort Style Business Hotel.' A convenient five minute drive from the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport and 15-minute drive from the domestic airport, this premier business hotel with its versatile and multifunctional banqueting space, beautiful landscape, convenient location, luxurious rooms, cutting edge service, warm hospitality and classic architecture is the preferred MICE destination in Mumbai.

The Leela Mumbai understands that the best luxury services are customised to suit the individual – what is known as the

'sine qua non,' or absolute essential, of luxury. The hotel delivers luxury experiences that go beyond the standard, whether it's to do with hosting a residential conference or your dream wedding, organising a corporate event, holding an exhibition or simply conducting a meeting.

This seamless luxury extends like a leitmotif throughout the hotel, in all its spaces and facilities. Defined to reflect 'unrivalled congregational luxury,' the Grand Ballroom, with its modular design, Murrano glass leaf chandeliers from Vienna and avant garde technology, plus eight well-appointed meeting rooms, are versatile and expansive spaces. Located at ground level with a dedicated entrance, the Grand Ballroom measures 12,000sq. ft, accommodate over 700 guests, and can be divided into five smaller sections, accommodating 150 people each.

Aesthetically pleasing well-appointed smaller meeting rooms for seminars, breakout rooms and board meetings are located at the first and eighth floors. Contemporaneity rules, with state-of-the-art facilities like high speed broadband, Wi-Fi connectivity and innumerable other facilities available to all guests. Natural lighting and an outdoor view makes these meeting venues the most coveted.

Customisation is the key word when it comes to conferences, meetings and wedding celebrations, while the



hotel's master chefs vie with each other to innovate and present the best of global fare. A dedicated in-house team ensures that all details are meticulously undertaken so your event is orchestrated smoothly.

The tastefully designed private lounge O59, is The Leela Mumbai's pièce de résistance. Its intimate décor and wooden parquet flooring lends a touch of elegance to both social and corporate gatherings. Comprising an area of 3120sq.ft, this composite and holistic venue boasts a dedicated reception area, separate event and dining space, well-stocked bar and an in-built premium sound system with a DJ console, making it an ideal place for events and celebrations.

If your meeting requires time and concentration, The Leela Mumbai is your best bet for hosting residential conferences. The astounding décor ups the ante for the hotel's luxury quotient, as seen in each of the 391 rooms, which have an innate sense of luxury to them. The Leela Mumbai also offers a versatile range of dining experiences, with four restaurants, a quintessential lounge and a cosmopolitan bar. It also showcases a world-class spa and salon, a well-equipped gymnasium and a beautiful outdoor swimming pool.

The Leela Mumbai is more than a hotel. With its multitudinous offerings, impeccable service and overriding luxury, it is the epitome of hospitality and the complete destination for corporate events and weddings.



COOL COMFORT

The Radisson Hotel Varanasi offers infinite comfort, sumptuous cuisine and a relaxed ambience for travellers visiting the spiritual capital of India

TT BUREAU

If you're looking to breaking away from the humdrum of everyday normal life and looking inwards, then there's no better Indian retreat experience than Varanasi. There is something undeniably therapeutic about the city. And, if your idea of spiritual development requires some creature comforts, check-in at the Radisson Hotel Varanasi, relax, unplug and enjoy your spiritual sojourn in the spiritual capital of India.

The Radisson brand is synonymous with outstanding levels of service and comfort, delivered with utmost style. Totally empathetic to the needs of today's discerning traveller, the Radisson Hotel Varanasi delivers on all accounts. Ideally located for visiting the nearby shrines and temples, the hotel is situated less than four miles from the River Ganges and the Kashi Vishwanath Temple, also known as the Golden Temple.

As you enter the hotel's elegant lobby, you will be warmly greeted by the hotel staff who bear the legendary Radisson brand of hospitality, which translates to exceptional thought and care on the ground level.

Shake away travel fatigue as you enjoy a restful sleep amidst heavenly cotton linens in one of the hotel's comfortable rooms. Reserve one of Radisson Hotel Varanasi's 116 expansive rooms or request a room with city or pool views, and find the perfect



accommodation with your choice of two Suites, 14 Business Class Rooms or 100 Superior Rooms. Marvel at the many facilities on offer, all guaranteed to make your stay snug and contented. Browse the satellite channels on the flat-screen LED TV while sipping your favourite beverage from the in-room coffeemaker or a bottle of cold water.

Beauty sleep over, head to the dining area for a complimentary buffet breakfast. Then, consult the 24-hour travel desk





assistant to help you plan your day. When you have to head home, Varanasi International Airport (VNS) is 45 minutes away and the Varanasi main railway station is 10-15 minutes away.

IMPECCABLE FACILITIES

To help make your mobility easier, Radisson Hotel Varanasi offers a 24-hour travel desk where you can arrange to have a chauffeur take you around town. When you return, take a refreshing swim in the hotel's beautiful outdoor pool. Additional amenities and services that you can avail are On-site dining, foreign currency exchange, a gift and curio shop, free high-speed Internet access, massages at the spa, a state-of-the-art fitness centre, Yoga classes and a full-service business centre.

SUMPTUOUS DINING

When it comes to delectable dining, Radisson Hotel Varanasi shows the way. The hotel showcases four restaurants serving mouth-watering cuisine, from succulent kababs to grilled lamb shanks and Pindi chole. If you have a yen for sampling a rich and constantly changing array of vegetarian and non-vegetarian

kababs, stop by The Great Kabab Factory. For a blend of Indian and international cuisine, try eastWEST. The Oakwood Bar provides a cosy, sophisticated setting for cocktails during happy hour or after dinner, while R the Lounge serves light meals, coffee, tea, beer and wine.

EASTWEST THE COFFEE SHOP

Savour the best of local cuisine or gourmet European fare without ever having to leave the hotel, at eastWEST, which also offers a variety of hot drinks. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, eastWEST can accommodate up to 116 guests and offers À la carte and buffet options. Choose from Indian classics like Paneer Currypata or Western-style favourites like Baked Vegetable Lasagna. eastWEST even features a wood-fired oven for fresh pizzas. After dinner, linger in the cosy atmosphere with a cup of coffee.

THE GREAT KABAB FACTORY

Radisson Hotel Varanasi's signature restaurant, The Great Kabab Factory, is an Indian specialty restaurant. The menu changes on a daily basis, but always offers a wide selection of





both vegetarian and meat kababs. The meat kababs include ingredients like chicken, mutton and fish, while the vegetarian options feature regional produce. Start your meal with speciality Indian breads served with the lentil and vegetable of the day and end with your choice of classic Indian desserts. Service is table d'hôte and unlimited.

THE OAKWOOD BAR

Check out the hotel's colonial-style Oakwood Bar, which offers a warm and elegant ambience for enjoying a cocktail after work or a glass of wine after dinner. If you prefer a non-alcoholic beverage, the bar also serves a variety of flavourful mocktails, all served up in the most sophisticated and classy glassware. Complement your drinks with a range of delightful vegetarian and non-vegetarian snacks, like lamb boti kabab or crispy spring rolls.

R THE LOUNGE

It's tea and coffee time! Make a beeline for R the Lounge to satiate your thirst. Relax with a book amid a palette of soothing

neutral tones. The Lounge also provides a welcoming spot to host an informal business meeting. Located in the lobby of Radisson Hotel Varanasi, the Lounge serves fine tea and coffee as well as imported wine and beer. Drop by in the morning for a cup of coffee as you read the newspaper, or gather with friends after work to unwind with a glass of wine. You can also enjoy a selection of snacks.

REJUVENATE AT THE ON-SITE SPA

Pamper yourself to a full-body massage and one of the spa's herbal treatments that date back thousands of years. Or opt for a special Ayurvedic Marma Point Massage, a long-standing tradition in India that was once common in royal palaces. If you prefer the contemporary to the ancient, the spa's digital module machines are ideal for cardiovascular exercise and stimulating weight loss. Make your appointment upon arrival at the hotel and explore the entire range of treatments available.





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AN ENTHRALLING BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

Inspired, empowered and motivated, the Amway Leadership Business Seminar 2017 Dubai leveraged a successful business journey

TT BUREAU

The entrepreneurship journey entails the choice of travelling the less trodden path. It begins with a belief in the self and the ability to lead others. Being a leader in Direct Selling, Amway enhances the entire ecosystem of global entrepreneurship in India and provides sustainable opportunities to millions of people around the world to build their own businesses successfully.

Amway's primary goal is to enrich the journey of entrepreneurship with lasting and memorable experiences and live learning opportunities. The

"We act as catalysts, enhancing the experiences of successful entrepreneurs as they propel their individual success towards achieving Amway's business goals."

-Aikta Tyagi, Associate Vice President - Special Events and Facilities, Amway India Enterprises Pvt. Ltd.

company believes that success can be achieved by a compelling recognition platform which will motivate their business leaders to Achieve more, Learn more and Grow more!

With this as their goalpost, Amway organised events and congregations fostering team building and a synergy of ideas. The Amway Leadership Business Seminar 2017 Dubai was one such event, as it sought to leverage a successful business journey and redefined the meaning of engagement.

A truly memorable experience, the Amway Leadership Business Seminar 2017 had 3000+ delegates travelling to the vibrant city of Dubai to celebrate the spirit





of excellence and innovation which are intrinsic components of the Amway family. A Special Events team was given the onerous task of weaving together a unique and inventive experience, which was achieved thanks to circumspect planning, unending diligence and meticulous attention to detail.

A clear logistic plan was needed to successfully navigate the large numbers, but the Amway team rose to the occasion. Thus, Amway Business Owners (ABO) were bifurcated into two sections, both travelling to Dubai between December 9 -17, 2017. Furthermore, to ensure a seamless experience, Amway India created a travel app called Amway Assist 2017, which incorporated features like ticket and visa download, information modules, live notifications, Dubai 360 and many more.

Also on the cards was a social media campaign, which was conceptualised and executed to spread awareness about the launch of the new app – the key objectives of the campaign being to get the ABOs to download the app and get accustomed to its features. At Dubai, both batches were treated to overwhelming experiences that culminated with a grand gala night.

Dubai was Amway's destination of choice, because of its compelling lifestyle offer, iconic landmarks and penchant for record-breaking initiatives. Where else could one be laidback on the beach, go skiing and ride a camel all in one place? The delegates were initiated into Dubai's world of luxury as arrangements for their Check-in were made in JW Marquis Hotel Dubai, the epitome of luxury.

The four-day itinerary demonstrated the significance of making business meetings into memorable experiences. Day two of the trip had delegates revelling in Aqua Venture Water Park, followed by an exclusive lunch at the Lost Chambers, in

Atlantis The Palm Dubai. On day three of ALS 2017, the ABOs gravitated towards Hotel Atlantis The Palm Dubai, the Emirate's most majestic hotel, where the central ball room was booked for the Business Session. Avant garde arrangements included a 100-foot-long stage, equipped with 60-foot-screens, which had the highest pixel density available. The awesome cricket pitch-size screen and the ubiquitous influence of technology were not lost on the audience.

The intensive Business session comprised Business updates from the Managing Director, a Panel Discussion on Direct Selling guidelines with the government official, Sales and Marketing updates, and a stunning prequel about the upcoming Singapore event. Amway India used augmented reality to create a virtual Singapore experience that blew the audience away. Virtual Reality was also used to create an incredible SEA Aquarium Singapore experience through Oculus Rift headsets, which were installed at the VR zone. All experiences were created flawlessly, using unique audience interactions, thereby adding to the adrenaline rush.

Adventure sports marked the fourth day of the itinerary, with the delegates indulging in Dune Bashing, one of Dubai's main attractions. The finale to the extravaganza took place on the fourth night, with an unparalleled show at Lisaili Fort, which was followed by a dinner. The entire experience showcased local dance performances and acts, which truly brought alive the spirit of Dubai.

With a sense of 'Good things having to come to an end,' the ABOs departed for home the next day. And, though they left a part of their hearts back in Dubai, the trip was a nostalgic mix of a thousand memories, experiences and smiles – an extraordinary adventure which delivered on its promises while raising the bar for the next event in another spectacular destination.





CORPORATE JET-SETTER

S. Bobby Jena
Vice President - Operations & Procurement
Indiannica Learning
New Delhi

TT BUREAU

Q: Most memorable trip to any destination?

All vacations are always memorable, but there are a few that stand out, one of them is my visit to London.

Q: You dream of going to?

I would love to visit Jerusalem.

Q: Favourite airline and why?

Emirates. The overall experience, including service, food and punctuality.

Q: Best hotel experience and why?

Hard to single out one, but in terms of comfort and location, I would like to mention the whole Marriot Group.

Q: A place you plan to visit again?

I would like to visit Vietnam.

Q: A family vacation that stands out?

I think Kerala was my best family vacation.

Q: Your best holiday with friends?

I enjoyed the Indonesia visit with my friends.

Q: Great food you enjoyed and where?

Sea food, In Palimebang , Indonesia.

Q: What to watch out for while travelling?

There are many things that need to be kept in mind. First on the list should be the location of the hotel, followed by the itinerary and most importantly, places with good food.

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

Service, flexibility, value for money and overall experience. The idea is to enjoy the vacation and cherish whatever comes your way.



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Farhan Akhtar

(Farhan Akhtar)



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iNFHRA FM EXCELLENCE CONFERENCE & AWARDS 2017-18

Gurgaon becomes the third city to host the prestigious second edition of iNFHRA FM EXCELLENCE CONFERENCE & AWARDS 2017-18

TT BUREAU



iNFHRA, an industry body and member based association representing more than 1500 members from the Facility Management & Administration, Workplace & Infrastructure, Corporate Travel & Hospitality, Corporate Real Estate, Safety & Security & Procurement Professionals, organised the Third City of its Second Edition of FM EXCELLENCE CONFERENCE & AWARDS 2017-18, Six City Award Tour, on December 8, 2017, at Hotel Radisson, Gurgaon.

iNFHRA FM Excellence Awards are the country's only Jury Driven Award for the fraternity, which are supported by CBRE South Asia Pvt Ltd, Cushman & Wakefield and Jones Lang LaSalle as Outreach Partners.

Muttha Group, one of the leading commercial developers and co-working space providers in India, were the Title Partners for the programme. The group believes in enhancing the lives of people through real estate projects and undertaking philanthropic activities.



The prominent jury comprised industry professionals from more than 15 industry leaders from NCR. The evening witnessed an august gathering of some of the biggest names in the fraternity and was well attended by more than 140 corporate leaders.

The programme highlighted interesting and diverse presentations on "How to Build Strong Supplier Relationship Management," "Digital Disruption in Corporate Hospitality" and "Lighting Intelligence for New Age Workplace."

WINNERS & RUNNERS-UP ACROSS VARIOUS CATEGORIES:

Corporate Real Estate Awards powered by Muttha Group

- Winner - Amit Kaul, Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance Co. Ltd.
- 1st Runner-Up - Rahul Lal, Dalmia Bharat Group
- 2nd Runner-Up - Ranjan Biswas, Knight Frank India Pvt. Ltd.

Corporate Travel, Transport & Logistics Awards powered by Treebo Hotels and Via.Com

- Winner - Bala Subramanian, Jones Lang LaSalle Property Consultants (India) Private Limited [HCL]
- 1st Runner-Up - Kausar Raza, Sun Transmovers (I) Pvt. Ltd & Maharaja Automobiles (I) Pvt. Ltd.
- 2nd Runner-Up - Lt.Col Sharad Bhargava, Retd, Alight Solutions (Aon HR Services India Pvt. Ltd.)

Ecological Sustainability Awards powered by Cannon Hygiene and Lithium Urban Technologies

- Winner - Shalender Kumar, Dell International Services India Pvt. Ltd.

- 1st Runner-Up - Capt. C K Bhandari, Aviva Life Insurance Company India Ltd.
- 2nd Runner-Up - Anil Kumar Singh, CBRE South Asia Pvt. Ltd. representing AIRTEL (APO Circle)

Innovation & Technology Awards powered by MoveInSync Technology Solutions and PIKKOL

- Winner - Manoj Prasad, Genpact India Pvt. Ltd.
- 1st Runner-Up - Girish Pandey, Wipro Ltd.
- 2nd Runner-Up - Ajit Jha, Cushman & Wakefield PMSI Ltd. (DLF Towers Jasola)

Safety & Security Awards powered by International Housekeeping & Maintenance Services

- Winner - Charanjeet Walia, Ahluwalia Contracts India Ltd.
- 1st Runner-Up - Lt Col Surinder Mohan, NEC Technologies India Pvt. Ltd.
- 2nd Runner-Up - Rahul Lal, Dalmia Bharat Group

Best Project - Corporate Award powered by Arraystorm Lighting

- Winner - Ranjan Biswas, Knight Frank India Pvt. Ltd.
- 1st Runner-Up - Neelam Chhabra, Bharti Airtel Ltd.
- 2nd Runner-Up - Pawan Kumar Gupta, Ahluwalia Contracts India Ltd.



Best Project - Architecture & PMC Award powered by Arraystorm Lighting

- Winner - Arch. Vistasp Bhagwagar, Architect Vistasp & Associates (AVA)

The Awards were also supported by Chai Point, CIRIL Real Estate Consultants Network, Gram Connect Pvt. Ltd., Gree, Mahindra & Mahindra, Updater Services (P) Limited (UDS), Writer Business Services Pvt. Ltd., Zeta, Commercial Design & Today's Traveller magazine.

The final three Cities of the Tour are scheduled in Hyderabad, on January 24, 2018, Mumbai, on February 23, 2018 and Chennai, on March 14, 2018.

For more information on the awards and to associate with the same, kindly email on support@infhra.org



INSIDE STORY

The defining statement for luxury home décor in 2018 is comfort, elegance and the vibrancy of life itself

TT BUREAU

The New Year offers a spirit of change, a chance to tweak the old or totally break through the old and ring in the new. This applies to all aspects of life, including the home. So, while you may be trying hard to abide by your New Year resolutions, the design world is quietly setting its sights on what styles will be big in 2018. Here are some of the hottest luxury home décor trends for this year as revealed by design experts.

Adding interest to a space isn't just about what you hang on the walls. The salient features of a modern luxury home have progressed as technology has evolved. Luxury homes

now offer a number of new tech-driven amenities. According to interior designers, what matters most for consumers today is the lifestyle a home offers. The more amenities that cater to the luxurious lifestyle the more valuable the home becomes. Like a game changing coffee machine which dispenses your favourite coffee, latte, or tea with the touch of a button on your iPhone. Or a unique chair or sofa that can function as art in the room.

A bedroom in a luxury property has great value. It's your most significant personal space, a retreat, where you can unwind after a long day and feel refreshed in when you begin



a new one. An ideal master bedroom can accommodate a king-size bed with plenty of seating area, which could include hi-tech features with built-in automation systems.

And, when it comes to overriding comfort, the mattress is the most important part of any bed. The bed is the centre piece of the bedroom and you would naturally want it to be stylish and be in sync with the decor, but it is the mattress that will ensure that you get a good night's sleep, which is the primary purpose of the bed.

You cannot decorate your way to a good night's sleep – you need an experienced and knowledgeable master bed maker who has used the latest sleep technology to achieve the ultimate support and comfort expected of a mattress. This is where Sealy comes in. At the forefront of mattress technology, Sealy Mattresses will bring pure luxury to your bedroom and will ensure the best night's sleep of your life. Their exclusive Posturepedic Technology™ –developed with the help of orthopaedic specialists, delivers reinforced support where you need it most. Customised for every kind of sleeper, Sealy offers step up technological variants of mattresses starting with **Sealy Posture Life, Sealy Posture Premier, Sealy Posturepedic & Palatial Crest**.

While Sealy ensures restful nights and ache-free mornings, accessorise with a bed pillow that's compatible with your particular sleep habits. While goose-down and fibre-fill pillows tend to be softer and more malleable than dense memory foam, the trend is more for foam pillows made with cooling covers, vented interior designs, and shredded fill. So, get ready for sweeter dreams!

Make your sleep sanctuary savvy with a host of luxury products, like the best heating pad for those cold winter months and be geared for the best pain relief and usability. Invest in a whole new class of electric blanket that's safer, cosier and emanates a softer heat. If your favourite activity in bed is watching movies, store your DVD collection under your bed in a pull-out drawer the size of your mattress. Then, tuck it away and out of sight after you make your selection. Get a sophisticated lamp that indicates the magic hour when the sun is setting and washes everything in orange



light? Or an app that comes with a light sphere and can give your bedroom any of the mood lighting you're looking for.

Finally, its curtains for boring drapes – add a layer of luxe to your bedroom with velvet curtains, and go with splashy palettes to bring colour into your life.

Today's generation also likes to display their wine collection with a climate controlled wine room. For these collectors the wine cellar needs to be a showpiece with single paned glass, LED lights and clear sleeves that put labels on display.



THE ACCENT IS ON INNOVATION

Offering an inventive approach to fine dining Indian cuisine, Indian Accent delivers path-breaking menus

KAMAL GILL

The feeling is one of home. A warm bonhomie, as you relax amidst cushioned sofas, books, deep wood colours and flickering flames of fire in the courtyard. When you have had a drink over conversation, you are escorted to your table at Indian Accent .. and left to enjoy a splendid 7- course tasting entirely at your own pace and time.

I enjoyed two separate tastings on different days...a lunch by Manish Mehrotra and a dinner prepared and presented by Claude Bosi that left me with a firm belief that understanding the goodness of food is what great cooking is all about.

LUNCH AT INDIAN ACCENT BY MANISH MEHROTRA

Indian Accent showcases inventive Indian cuisine by complementing the flavours and

traditions of India with global ingredients and techniques. Opening to global accolades and appreciation, Indian Accent, in Lodhi Hotel, New Delhi, is the only restaurant in India to feature in the World's 50 Best Restaurants 2017 and the recipient of the San Pellegrino Best Restaurant Award in India by Asia's 50 Best Restaurants 2017 for the third consecutive year. It has also been rated as the No.1 restaurant in India by TripAdvisor, for three years in a row.

Says Restaurateur Rohit Khattar, Chairman of Old World Hospitality and the creator of Indian Accent, "My over riding belief in life has been that it takes many years to get it right and till such time that you do, you must keep trying. The idea is to create new concepts, and to have fun doing so. I always had the idea of Indian Accent and when I saw the beautiful greens of The Manor, it clicked. I decided to entrust the kitchen to Manish Mehrotra."



Rohit Khattar, Chairman of Old World Hospitality and the creator of Indian Accent



Manish Mehrotra, Corporate Chef, Indian Accent



Claude Bosi, Chef at Upstairs by Indian Accent

Thanks to the creative genius of celebrated Chef, Manish Mehrotra, Indian Accent has upped its ante where fine dining is concerned, in terms of featuring inventive, adventurous new menus.

Mehrotra reinterprets memorable Indian dishes of the past with his customary ingenuity and openness towards global techniques and influences.

Featuring Delhi's famed 'puchkas', five waters along with a paired veuve clicquot ponsardin brut as a starter, the menu showcases duck khurchan cornet, herb yogurt, chilli chutney with a fine banfi chianti classico, 2014, Tuscany, Italy. Mehrotra does a great take on dishes like baked fish, amritsari masala butter, mint

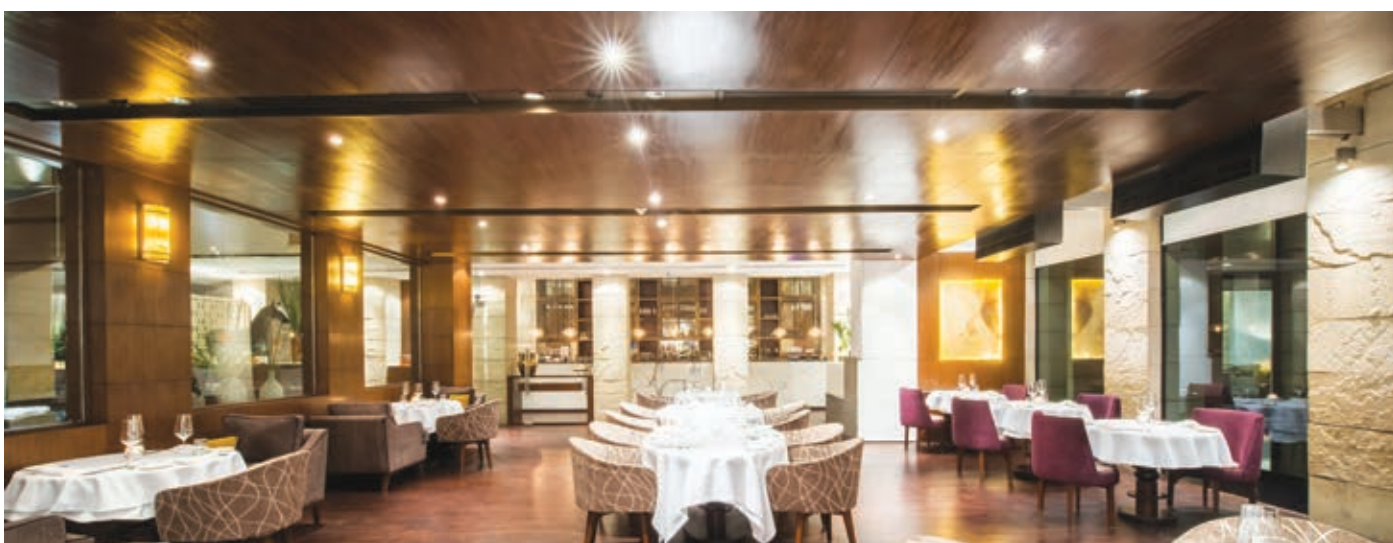
boondi, white bait papad; meetha aachar pork spare ribs, sun dried mango, pickled kohlrabi interspersed with a fresh anar and churan kulfi sorbet; and house-made chicken curry, turmeric rice, preserve onion.

Creatively presented is the smooth daulat ki chaat, roast almond, rose petal chikki or a choice of winter carrot halwa crumble and fig and whisky ice cream.

Not surprisingly, Mehrotra has been honoured by American Express as the Best Chef in India and the Vir Sanghvi Award in 2010 and 2012.

DINNER AT UPSTAIRS BY INDIAN ACCENT

Based on the Old World Hospitality concept, the





restaurant has also introduced another name to reckon with – the renowned 2-Michelin starred chef, Claude Bosi, at Upstairs, Indian Accent. The intimate dining space for 30 (located a floor above Indian Accent) will continue to host leading global chefs and in future, feature adventurous new flavours.

Claude Bosi presented a seven course vegetarian and non-vegetarian menu at dinner, both paired with wines, which were selections from La Cave. He was assisted by his chefs as well as the chefs at Indian Accent.

The menu featured intricate dishes, including Warm Beetroot Terrine Feta Cheese and Passion Fruit; Kanyakumari Crab, Apple and Nimbu Lemon; goat, black lentils, coconut and coriander and Szechuan Pepper Parfait, pineapple, amongst other dishes.

Present during the tasting, genial host Khattar shared, “Upstairs at Indian Accent is a unique space, with its own kitchen, where we want to experiment with different menus. We are delighted to inaugurate the space with Claude Bosi and look forward to welcoming diners to this culinary experience.”

Bosi held 2 Michelin stars at his restaurant Hibiscus, in London. He recently took over the Bibendum

restaurant at Michelin House, where he again achieved 2 Michelin stars – a rare feat, within just a few months of opening. Thanks to his creative take on classic French cooking, Bosi is known as one of the greatest chefs in UK today.

On his experience with the Indian flavours, Bosi shared, “New Delhi is an exciting, vibrant place and home to so many unique flavours and tastes; I am hugely looking forward to this opportunity, and to learn from the heritage of the city.”



INDIAN ACCENT CONTINUES ITS GLOBAL JOURNEY

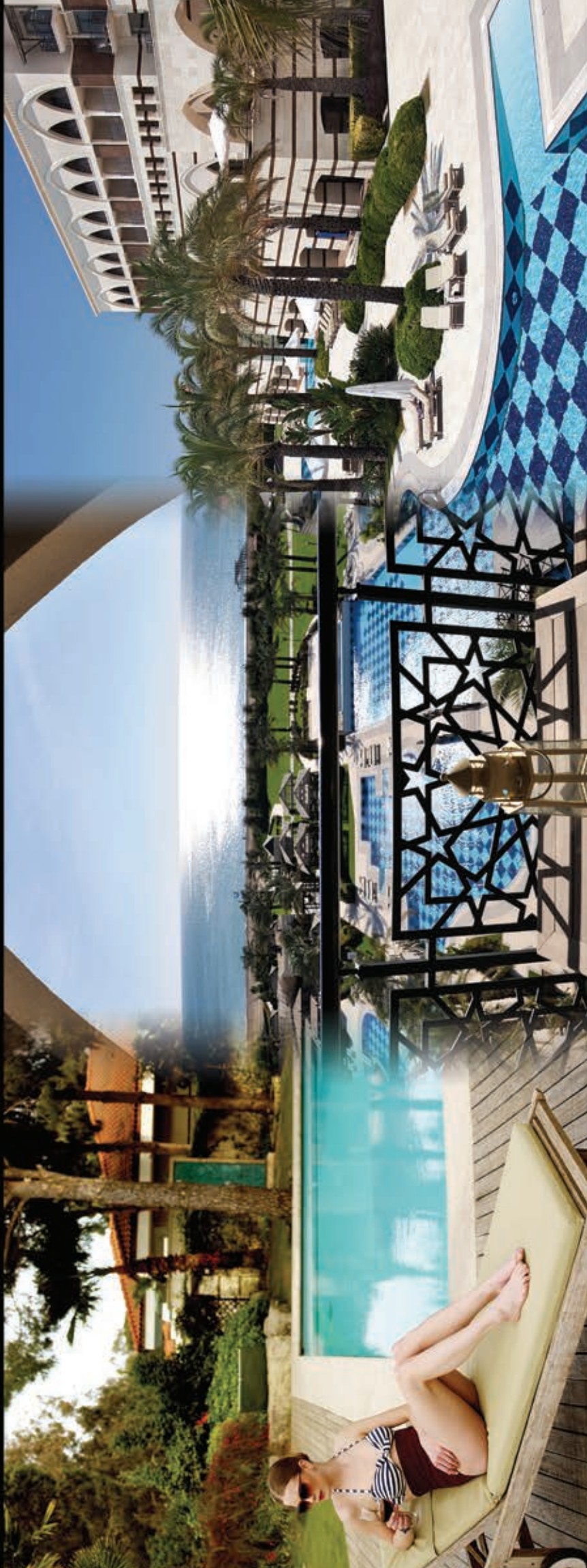
The original restaurant in New Delhi opened in 2009, at The Manor, New Delhi, earning significant acclaim for its innovative approach to contemporary Indian food. The restaurant recently moved to The Lodhi Hotel and its menu continues to explore progressive global influences for Indian cuisine while maintaining traditional integrity.

Indian Accent, New York, opened in 2016, at Le Parker Meridien, to critical and popular acclaim. The restaurant also made its debut in Mayfair, London, recently, on December 2017, with the aim to introduce locals to its signature blend of global desi flavours.





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INTO THE WILD

From stunning wildlife to natural habitats, Odisha is gifted with bountiful nature, luring discerning tourists from across the world

TT BUREAU

There are very few states in India where local communities unanimously work towards preserving nature to promote sustainable tourism. Considered a land of myriad marvels, Odisha houses some of the most dynamic wonders of history and biodiversity.

The region has prompted tourists and researchers to explore its famed lush forests, which consist of a total of 110 species of reptiles, including three crocodilian species, 20 species of amphibians, 479 species of birds and 86 species of mammals.

NADANKANAN ZOOLOGICAL PARK

Nandankanan, also known as the Garden of Heaven, is located 15 km from Odisha's capital, Bhubaneswar. The area is easily accessible as Bhubaneswar railway station is situated at a distance of 18 km while the Biju Patnaik International Airport is 20 km from the region. Nadankanan Zoological Park is a one-of-its-kind zoo, which aims to connect people to wildlife through world-class conservation, education and exciting visitor experiences.

Nandankanan Park boasts achievements which animal lovers rarely hear about, with a tally of 101 enclosures with 202 sub-enclosures. It is the only zoological park in India to become an institutional member of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA). Nandankanan is the first zoo in the world to breed the white tiger and the melanistic tiger. As a result of multi-achievements, it become the only zoo in India to have an express train (Puri-New Delhi), called Nandankanan Express.

With more than 1580 animals, the park houses 634 mammals, 812 birds and 134 reptiles. Moreover, Nandankanan is the only conservation breeding centre for Indian pangolins in the world. If you are an animal lover, Nandankanan is the place to experience the best-of-the-best. Tourist cottages for accommodation are available inside Nandankanan, only by day and on prior reservation.

DARINGBADI

Known as the 'Kashmir of Odisha', Daringibadi hill station is the lone region in the state where snowfall is recorded during winter. The place boasts pine jungles, beautiful valleys and plateaus, dotted with coffee gardens, black pepper and turmeric gardens.



Popular for cultural eco-tourism, the Daringbadi lifestyle is dominated by one of the most primitive tribes of India, namely, the 'Kutia Kondhas' and 'Dongri Khond'. Tourists can experience their culture and traditions during their stay at the eco-cottages. Another option is to visit the Daringbadi-Belghar belt, which provides a glimpse of these popular tribes.

If you wish to maintain your distance from the city, Daringbadi nature camp offers tourists an exciting stay on the hill top, in six tribal cottages. The camp is managed by the local community and keeps you away from the usual cacophony. Daringbadi is a perfect destination to taste the true flavours of Odisha, which blends traditional and modern cuisines.

SATKOSIA SANDS RESORT

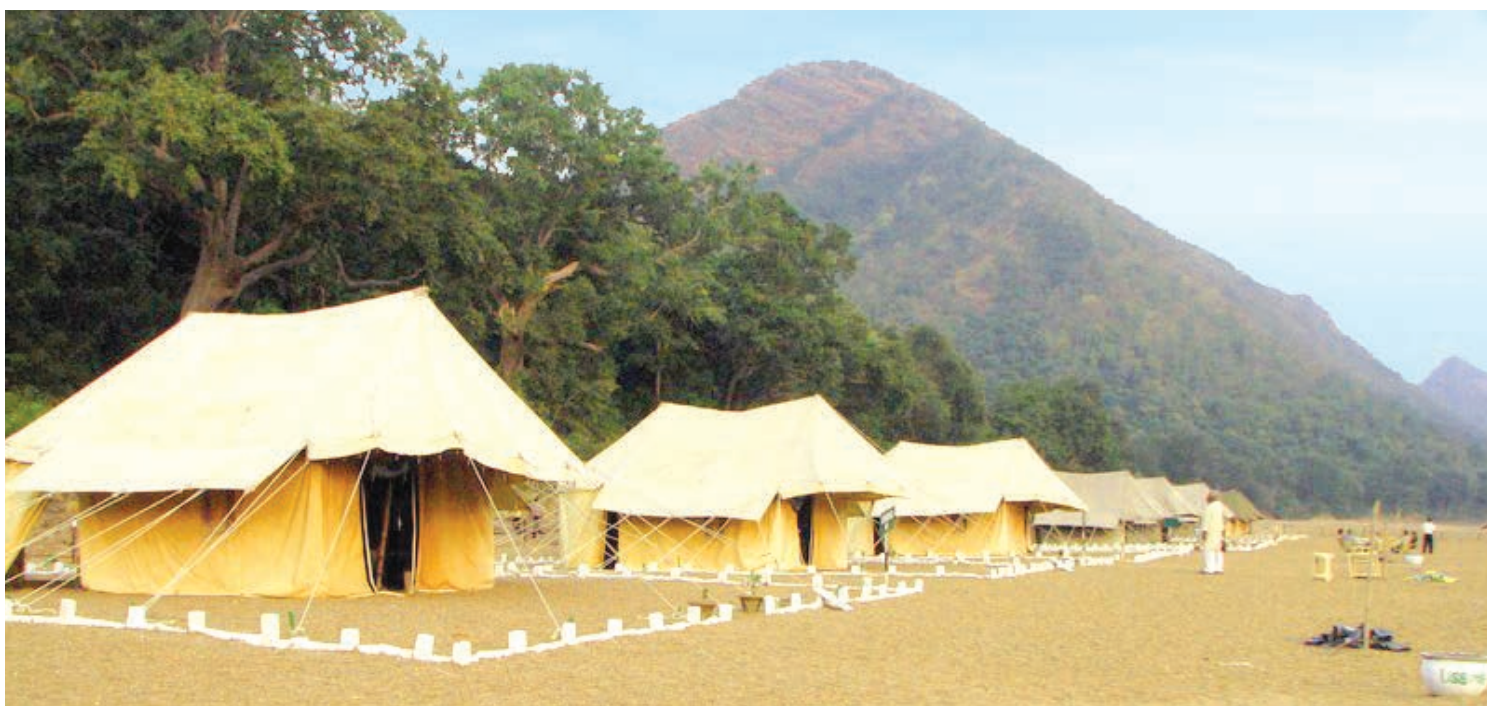
Situated on the banks of the Mahanadi River, Satkosia Sands Resort is home to rich regional flora and fauna. The area is surrounded by jungles of the Satkosia Tiger Reserve, so don't be surprised if you have close encounters with spotted deer, sambar, leopard, dholes and wild cats. One of the best sights

are the shimmering white sands on a winter morning, with the backdrop of the rising sun.

Located at Badmul, this eco-resort has seven luxurious AC cottages on mountain slopes which face the scenic Satkosia Gorge. In addition, the eco-campus has nine luxury Swiss Cotton Tents on the sandbar of Mahanadi River. The resort offers organic and sumptuous Odiya and Indian vegetarian cuisine, as well as non-vegetarian cuisines. Visitors can enjoy the local folk dance performance, followed by an open-sky dinner and bonfire. The resort is favoured by wildlife writers and photographers.

In order to get the most of the Odisha adventure, guests can indulge in sand sports, swimming, boating in the Satkosia Gorge and cycling in the jungle. Veteran eco-guides are also available, who can accompany people while trekking.

Some of the rarely seen species of birds can be found at Satkosia Gorge as it is home to many migratory birds. During winter, around hundreds of Indian skimmers, pintails, bar headed geese, herons, pratincoles, Brahminy ducks, lapwings and gulls can be seen on the sandbars.





TECHNOLOGY DRIVES REAL VALUE EXPERIENCES

Exponential technology development is reshaping the travel ecosystem and the best way to deal with it is to come to terms with the nature of disruption

TT BUREAU

If we study the bigger picture, technology has been at the forefront in simplifying overall Travel and Tourism experiences, thus making it easier for travellers to plan and save time.

However, digital technology is transforming industries and creating new challenges such as cultural transformation, pace of change, measuring the potential of innovations and eradicating bottlenecks in legacy systems.

While technology promises to open doors to new avenues, its range of innovation should be carefully selected keeping in mind the experiences that will drive real value.

'EXPERIENCE' INTEGRAL TO CORE TRAVEL PRODUCT OFFERINGS

Experts say that the role of technology has a much wider impact, capable of sweeping transformations across all verticals. According to a white paper released by World Economic Forum on Digital Transformation Initiative Aviation, Travel and Tourism Industry, "Digitalisation should have a positive environmental impact, contributing to a more sustainable industry footprint through innovations in manufacturing, smart assets and efficient resource use. For customers, the personal impact is expected to be significant



as travel becomes a seamless, frictionless, higher-quality experience."

Adam Weissenberg, Global Leader for Travel, Hospitality and Leisure, Deloitte, considers 'experience' integral to core travel product offerings.

He points out, "While different businesses offer consumers various products and services, there are overarching themes around how expectations are changing – and these generally centre around authenticity, personalised experiences, removal of friction and on-demand functionality."

Weissenburg suggests, "Travel companies must first envision the customer experience they want to deliver. Then, they can explore the technology options best suited to support their goals. Companies should resist the urge to invest in new technology simply because it seems innovative."

The Deloitte report on the Travel Hospitality Industry Outlook 2018, seconds the argument. "The travel industry is on the verge of an evolutionary leap, where the relationship between customer and brand becomes truly real-time and relevant...It's a brand interaction in the digital or physical realm that demonstrates the willingness of a business to go above and beyond to provide their customers with experiences and services tailored to individual needs and preferences."

Rob Torres, Managing Director at Google, believes that mobile devices have the ability to truly transform the core of travel experience. He adds, "Over the next four years, another 1 billion people globally will be coming online in emerging

markets; for the vast majority of these people, a mobile device will be their only computing device."

THE INDIAN TRAVEL LANDSCAPE

This holds true for the Indian travel landscape as well. Deep Kalra, CEO, Make My Trip, believes that technology holds a great future for the Indian travel industry. Kalra said that outbound travel alone from India would peak to 40 million by 2020. He added, "Today, Indians are travelling in great numbers, both inbound and abroad, with airlines, hotels, witnessing almost full occupancy. This is largely because of the social media phenomenon, making tourists more aware of places and the desire to travel. The mobile revolution has also been a game changer for the travel industry and MakeMyTrip alone has seen 70 per cent on mobile, of which 90 per cent is from apps."



The onus of being mobile-first is now on travel companies, but Torres believes that "Travel companies cannot hope to simply add new features to old business models and succeed. Instead, we must always keep our eyes on the horizon, thinking about how certain transformational technology will allow us to reimagine our business in ways that benefit the user and the industry."

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IMPACTS TRAVEL ECOSYSTEM

Subsequently, technology will also impact the industry workforce, with employees empowered by real-time information and decision-making support from Artificial Intelligence (AI) to focus on their core strengths.

Rohit Talwar, CEO, Fast Future, believes that the industry should gear up for the forces that would impact the travel ecosystem in the coming years. Talwar identifies AI, immersive technologies and Internet of Things (IoT) as the three most disruptive technologies of 2018. On the potential of AI, Talwar mentions, "We'll see AI being used for customer service chatbots and in performing detailed multi-parameter evaluations of bids from different possible locations and venues for an event. Within events, AI





in meetings apps can help with better matchmaking between attendees, and in searching for and providing relevant content to presentations – and also fact checking claims made by speakers.”

Talwar says that immersive technologies will be used to improve the overall experience. He adds, “We’ll see far greater use of technologies that enhance the multi-sensory immersive experience at events. We have grown used to seeing fun and engaging demonstrations with augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) in the exhibition area.”

THE QUESTION IS – HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

With technology playing the first hand role in creating bigger opportunities, the question is – how much is too much? Are we able to realise the full extent of technology? Is technology solving the biggest challenges in your business? And does digital transformation make human touch obsolete?

In order to unlock the substantial benefits of technology, it is important that industry and government leaders should address the challenges that restrict innovation.

WEF reports, “In parts of the industry, a highly regulated environment is stifling innovation in products and services. The pace at which new regulations are drawn up and implemented is too slow. To improve this situation, companies should keep policy makers and regulators aligned on recent developments, narrowing the gap between innovation and regulation”

When it comes to complete automation, digital transformation does not take place in a vacuum. World Economic Forum report

explains that, “Technology implementation demands a different skill set from workers in today’s economy, and will create new types of jobs. Challenges such as managing the impact of automation on employment, reskilling the industry workforce for the digital economy, and creating a safety net for workers in a flexible workforce, will need to be tackled collaboratively by industry, regulators and policy makers.”

TRAVEL IS STILL CONSIDERED A PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE EXPERIENCE

The growing role of technology within the travel ecosystem cannot be avoided, but travel is still considered a people-to-people experience. As per the Deloitte report on the Travel Hospitality Industry Outlook 2018, “Technology alone will not give brands all the tools they need to succeed. In fact, for travel suppliers in particular, too much focus on technology has the potential to create cold and robotic experiences and environments.

For today’s travel brands, technology must be leveraged to produce elevated, authentic experiences without losing sight of the human connection.”

On what the future has in store for the industry, the report agrees that the future of travel experience must be a seamless blend of talent and technology, where machines are tasked to do more of the tech work, thus empowering humans to provide better service experiences and more meaningful connections.



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Have close encounters with the Big Five and surround yourself with hundreds of bird and animal species in some of South Africa's iconic game reserves

INDIRA LAUL

There's nothing more exciting than interacting with wildlife in their natural habitat. And, when it comes to wildlife, South Africa houses one of the continent's best safari destinations, offering the Big Five (lion, leopard, buffalo, elephant and rhino) and more, in some incredible parks and reserves.

KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

Your one-stop destination for wildlife, Kruger National Park is located in the northeast of the country, on the Mozambique border. Catch a glimpse of the famous Big Five here and find yourself surrounded by hundreds of species of birds, ancient trees, winding rivers and much more.

The Park enjoys a great sunny climate through the year and offers a range of activities, from guided game drives and bush walks with an armed ranger to three-night walking trails in deep wilderness areas. Keen birders could visit between October and March, when the park is home to more than 200 migrant bird species.

SHAMWARI GAME RESERVE

Famously known as the Born Free Centre, this malaria-free game reserve is located in South Africa's Eastern Cape. The recipient of numerous international awards, Shamwari is the ultimate African adventure and conservation effort coupled with responsible tourism.

You can be sure to spot the Big Five here. Take an open vehicle game drive in the morning or evening with an experienced ranger, for up to three or four hours. For close encounters, choose the popular game walk. Kids can have a blast, with a variety of sporting and social activities, art supplies, games, puzzles and conservation and animated movies on offer.

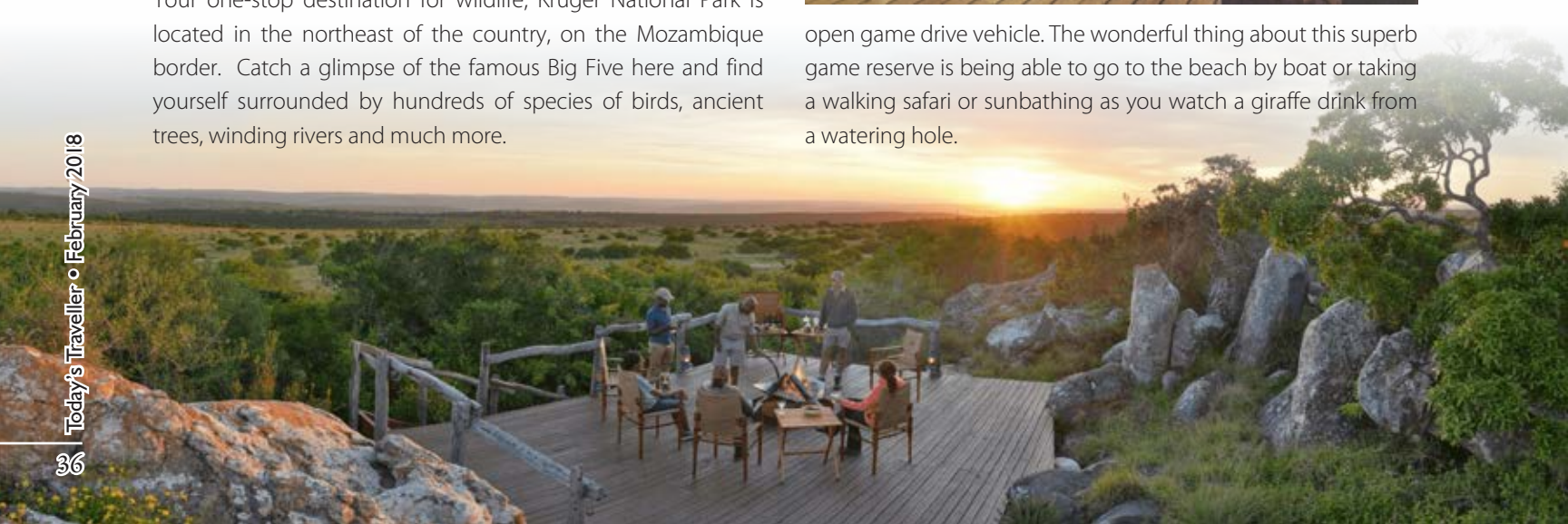
KARIEGA PRIVATE GAME RESERVE

Also in the Eastern Cape, Kariega Game Reserve is a family-owned and operated Big Five private safari reserve. Located along the Garden Route, it is the perfect South African safari destination to complement a Cape Town visit and a trip along the country's beautiful coast.

Experience close-up game viewing of the Big Five, as well as multitudes of other South African wildlife from the comfort of an



open game drive vehicle. The wonderful thing about this superb game reserve is being able to go to the beach by boat or taking a walking safari or sunbathing as you watch a giraffe drink from a watering hole.



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AVIATION



AMERICAN AIRLINE & TAL AVIATION INVITE TOP CLIENTELE

American Airlines & TAL Aviation India team organised a prestigious cocktail reception for top clients. Guest of Honour for the event, Erick Keish, Commercial Attaché, U.S. Embassy, New Delhi, was the Guest of Honour for the night. The event took place at ACSA -The American Club, U.S. Embassy, in New Delhi.

TAL Aviation also organised an event for 50 agents from the travel trade to highlight American Airlines and its latest product updates. A full product presentation was provided on the product. Neha Soni, Country Manager, TAL Aviation India, headed the representation for the airline. **tt**



AAI SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH LAO PDR

Celebrating 25 years of India - ASEAN relationship, Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed a historic agreement with Lao Air Traffic Management, Department of Civil Aviation Lao PDR, for providing SkyRev360, a comprehensive e-data gathering, invoicing and collection system. SkyRev360 has been developed in collaboration with the International Air Transport Association (IATA), under the Government of India's Make in India initiative.

The agreement was signed by S. Suresh, Board Member (Finance), AAI, and Somchit Vinitkeophavanh, General Director, Lao Air Traffic Management. Speaking on the occasion, DGCA Laos said that Lao PDR is looking forward to working in close co-operation with AAI in the near future. Ravi Shankar Aisola, Ambassador in Laos, termed the contract signing as a historic moment in the relationship between India and Laos.

Suresh emphasised that considering the 25-year-long India-ASEAN relationship, the signing of this agreement will usher in a new era of friendship and co-operation between India and Laos. **tt**



EMIRATES FINALISE DEAL FOR 36 AIRBUS A380

Emirates announced a USD 16 billion deal for 36 additional Airbus A380 aircraft, with 20 firm orders and 16 options. Emirates' A380 fleet operates both GE and Rolls-Royce engines, and the airline is evaluating engine options for its latest A380 order.

The additional Airbus A380s will be delivered to Emirates from 2020 onwards. Together with the airline's 101-strong A380 fleet and its current order backlog for 41 aircraft, this new order brings Emirates' commitment to the A380 programme to 178 aircraft, worth over USD 60 billion.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive, Emirates Airline and Group, signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with John Leahy, Chief Operating Officer Customers, Airbus Commercial Aircraft, at the airline's headquarters in Dubai. Sheikh Ahmed said, "We've made no secret of the fact that the A380 has been a success for Emirates. Our customers love it and we've been able to deploy it on different missions across our network, giving us flexibility in terms of range and passenger mix." **tt**



JET AIRWAYS REFINES ONBOARD DINING EXPERIENCE

Jet Airways has enhanced its in-flight dining experience for Economy guests, with particular focus on quality and choice of meal services. The new initiatives, including one in which the airline will introduce specially created, innovative, oven-proof meal boxes for shorter duration flights, will help the airline further enrich and strengthen its full-service offering.

Beginning the New Year, meals on domestic flights with a duration of less than an hour (60 minutes) are being served in specially fabricated and designed meal boxes that preserve the flavour and freshness of the food being served. Popular snack options served in these special boxes include Samosas, Vada Pav, Chicken Empanada, or a Vegetarian/Chicken Pizza Stromboli, with complimentary dessert – all guaranteed to be served at the right temperature.

The new boxes, which are recyclable, will also go a long way towards reducing the airline's carbon footprint as they will eliminate the requirement for trays and covers, as also reduce water consumption. The initiative is also expected to quicken Jet Airways' inflight service on shorter duration flights. **tt**



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ETIHAD RECORDS BEST YEAR FOR FLIGHT OPERATION PUNCTUALITY

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the UAE, has posted its best operational on-time performance (OTP) results since 2009. OTP is calculated on actual flight arrival and departure times within 15 minutes of the published schedule and takes into consideration a variety of external factors, including weather disruption and airspace congestion.

In 2017, the airline recorded network punctuality of 82 per cent for flight departures and 86 per cent for arrivals – results that place Etihad Airways as one of the most reliable airlines in the world for 2017. OTP for departures at the airline's Abu Dhabi hub was 79 per cent, and 89 per cent for arrivals. **tt**

LUFTHANSA AND MUNICH AIRPORT RECEIVE TOP HONOURS

Lufthansa has followed as Europe's first and to date only 5-Star airline to achieve Skytrax Awards for the highest possible rating in the international aviation world. In addition, Terminal 2 and the satellite terminal operated by Munich Airport and Lufthansa earned the 'World's Best Terminal' title in the annual Skytrax rankings. Wilken Bormann, CEO of Lufthansa's Munich Hub Operations, joined Munich Airport CEO Michael Kerkloh in welcoming the latest honour, "Together with Munich Airport, we offer our customers a 10-Star product that represents excellent quality on the ground and on board."

The coveted awards are granted in recognition of the premium service and outstanding comfort that make every trip through Munich a unique experience. Terminal 2 and the satellite facility score high marks for the extensive range of services and easy navigation. With relaxation zones, shops and restaurants covering a total area of more than 25,000sq.m., complemented by 11 very pleasant Lufthansa lounges, including two First Class lounges with exclusive service, Terminal 2 offers outstanding comfort and convenience. For passengers changing planes in Munich, Terminal 2 makes the process quick and easy. Passengers only have to change levels once to catch their connecting flights. **tt**



TAL AVIATION LAUNCHES PLANT A TREE CAMPAIGN

TAL Aviation launched a 'Plant a Tree' campaign to commemorate the organisation's 30th Anniversary, in 2017. In doing so, TAL Aviation and its employees, customers and partners celebrate the success of the company. With the campaign, the company is helping to protect the environment and is giving its partners and customers an opportunity of taking part as well. The planting took place in the Thar Desert, Rajasthan, India.

The TAL Aviation website offers detailed information about the company history, its areas of activity and the 'Plant a Tree' Anniversary campaign. For every registration on the website, TAL Aviation has planted trees in India, together with Sankalp Taru, a non-profit organisation that manages reforestation and environmental protection projects throughout the country. **tt**



CATHAY DRAGON WORKS WITH SITA

Cathay Dragon, the regional airline of the Hong Kong-based Cathay Pacific Group, is now enjoying enhanced communications at Clark International Airport. This follows the installation of SITA AirportHub™, the unique shared infrastructure which allows airlines to connect their applications and IT systems at an airport quickly and easily.

Alexander Cauquiran, Acting President and CEO of Clark International Airport, said, "We have worked with SITA to get AirportHub at Clark International, because it allows us to provide the airlines, ground handlers and our other tenants with secure and reliable bandwidth, including wireless connectivity to access off-airport applications."

Both Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon are long-time users of SITA AirportHub, with the service already in place at 74 airports worldwide where the airlines operate. They use AirportHub for critical front and back-office services and require strong, reliable, resilient, and yet cost-effective connectivity solutions for many bandwidth-demanding applications. They achieve this by leveraging the broad footprint of the SITA AirportHub shared infrastructure. **tt**



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PERFECT PUTTING DESTINATIONS

If your idea of being one with nature means chasing an elusive ball across manicured greens, then tee off in some spectacular putting destinations

INDIRA LAUL

CAPE KIDNAPPERS GOLF CLUB, HAWKE'S BAY, NZ

Designed by legendary golf architect Tom Doak, the Cape Kidnappers par 71 golf course measures 6,510m and will challenge golfers of all skill levels. With cliff-edge fairways perched 140m above sea level and with surface that remains firm and fast, this course offers holes unlike anything you will find elsewhere in the world. Every hole has a spectacular view of the Bay, but even keen golfers tend to play cautiously alongside deep ravines as other holes intimidate golfers with deep cliff top bunkers and sheer drops off the very edge of the earth.

FANCOURT LINKS, GEORGE, WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

Designed by Gary Player, Fancourt Links is one of Africa's premier golf resorts and was voted number one in South

Africa, by Golf Digest. Measuring 6,919 yards, par 72 from the club tees, the Links course can be stretched to 7,535 yards from the very back tees to accommodate the world's best players, which it's done on several occasions. For a great golfing experience in the lap of luxury, book a round of golf here. Fancourt has top quality hotel accommodation, a spa and restaurants, along with many other recreational sporting facilities such as tennis courts, volleyball, indoor and outdoor swimming pools and Jacuzzis.

EMIRATES GOLF CLUB MAJLIS, DUBAI

The flagship course of the Emirates Golf Club, the Majlis Course takes its name from the Arabic word for 'meeting place,' and is sculpted from tall desert dunes. The layout features lush fairways and large greens that are covered with hundreds of indigenous species of flora and fauna. Seven



natural lakes come into play as water hazards throughout the golf course. One of the most notably challenging holes on the Majlis Course is the par-4 8th hole, which is a dog-leg that plays uphill and requires a lengthy well-directed drive in order to make it to the small, undulating green.

SENTRYWORLD GOLF COURSE, STEVENS POINT, WIS., US

When SentryWorld was redesigned, one hole that was hardly touched was its famous par 3 with 45,000 blooming flowers encircling the green. Today, it's the 16th – the Flower Hole gets redesigned every year. Petunias, snapdragons, marigolds, geraniums and other annuals grow on-site in nine greenhouses; the flower beds are replanted each spring, always in a different theme. The beds are treated as 'free drops,' meaning you can stop and smell the flowers, but don't play out of them.



CAVING PERFECTION

History astounds with its architectural wonders, especially some of the world's majestic caves, which have existed before humans walked the planet

TT BUREAU

From the mysterious East to the alluring West, nature has never shied away from boasting its larger-than-life marvels. Ancient caves have been the source of inspiration and its grand formations have hypnotised adventurers, historians and archaeologists alike.

Caves are ubiquitous, but what makes them exceptional is their history with the region and their spectacular formations, ranging from stone to ice caves. Studies indicate that prehistoric caves served our ancestors for refuge, storage, resources and religious activity. Some of these caves are around 400 million years old, which is why they stand as marvels of historical and cultural importance.

PETRA CAVES, JORDAN

The Jordanian city of Petra is one of the world's most spectacular archaeological sites and is popular for its famed

caves. The eastern entrance to Petra would lead you to a vibrant red, white, pink 250-foot-high sandstone slot canyon known as the Siq. From there on, tourists would find themselves standing opposite the most breathtaking marvel – Al Khazneh (the Treasury).

Lost to the modern civilization for hundreds of years, Petra was discovered in the early 1800s by a European traveller who disguised himself in Bedouin costume. Petra was once a thriving trading centre and the capital of the Nabataean Empire, between 400 B.C. and A.D. 106.

If you are a Harrison Ford fan, you may notice that several scenes from the Hollywood blockbuster, 'Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade,' were shot in this pre-historic city. Visiting Petra by day is like walking through the ruins of history, but the best way to experience its beauty is at night, amidst 2000 lighted candles.

WAITOMO GLOW WORM CAVE, NEW ZEALAND

Attracting both local and international travellers, Waitomo Glowworm Caves is a must-visit destination when you plan a vacation to New Zealand. The cave houses the glowworm, otherwise known as *Arachnocampa luminosa*. This species of fly are the prime reason for the popularity of the cave.

Thousands of flies radiate luminescent light inside the cave. In order to make the most of it, boat rides are arranged for tourists and expert guides are available, who provide information on the caves' historical and geological significance. The boat ride offers a one-of-its kind experience, as you gaze in mesmerised silence at the starry wonderland of the meandering underground.



ANTELOPE CANYON, ARIZONA, USA

A magnificent force of nature, Antelope Canyon is an awe-inspiring wonder, situated in northern Arizona. This monumental sandstone sculpture is the product of millions of years of water erosion. The sight is frequently visited by professional photographers who are drawn towards its tall, winding walls and wave-like structure.

An almost supernatural effect is created when light beams shine directly into the openings of the canyon. Though exploring is allowed, guided tours are suggested to avoid getting lost. Several authorised tour operators provide detailed information about the geology and history of the Antelope Canyon. The best time to visit the area is between late March and early October, as sunbeams descend in the area during summer.



HANG SON DOONG CAVE, VIETNAM

With an entire lush green jungle thriving inside, the Hang Son Doong Cave is the largest cave in the world. The three-million-year-old cave has become the interest of study for its 200m-high, 150m-wide and 5km-long structure. The cave is situated in Vietnam's Quang Binh province and is one of the most captivating destinations in Southeast Asia. Housing





HANG SON DOONG CAVE, VIETNAM

a unique ecosystem setting, the cave has gained popularity in recent years.

In 2013, Hang Son Doong was opened to the public for the first time by permitting only 10 tourists at a time.

SEA CAVE, ALGARVE, PORTUGAL

Algarve is the most popular destination in Portugal and is known for its serene and idyllic beaches. However, the Algarve coastline is commonly visited for its impressive caves and rock formations.

Originally named Algar de Benagil, it is only accessible by boat or kayak. The best moment during the journey is the entrance cave that leads you to an impressive dome, which reflects different colours of rings at daytime.

As you enter the caves, the sight of the shimmering green waters of the ocean

reflected along the ceilings will mesmerise you. As you step inside the dim chambers you will get a whiff of salt water and hear the echoes of waves crashing into the rocks. These spellbinding moments are treasured by tourists who cannot but help admire the tranquil ambience of the place.



SEA CAVE, ALGARVE, PORTUGAL



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CASCADING WONDERS

The roar of water crashing down from great heights is a surreal visual spectacle

RITIKA BISHT

Dramatic and gorgeous, waterfalls are one of nature's most spectacular forces, with the power to overwhelm even the unanimated elements. Even though there is science behind how the most spectacular waterfalls across the world are created, people are happy to appreciate them as nature's gift. Any destination that comes under the periphery of waterfalls is flocked by tourists. From young to old, everyone is ready to hike, braving great heights just to experience the glimpse of nature's cascading beauty. Even professional photographers trek and carry their tripods and DSLRs to capture that perfect shot that reflects the varied facets of waterfalls.

Waterfalls also serve as ideal places for adventurers and thrill-seekers who want to perform stunts or events on or around them. In constant awe of the power of this phenomenon,

daredevils love to cross waterfalls on tightropes, in canoes, and in barrels.

RUBY FALLS, CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

The history behind these falls is as interesting as its discovery. In 1928, Leo Lambert and his team of excavators found the waterfall located more than 1,120ft below the surface of Lookout Mountain.

He named it after his wife Ruby, and in 1930, he opened it for the public as well. For over 85 years now, Ruby Falls has been one of the most visited sites in Chattanooga, with the annual visitation exceeding 400,000. Ruby Falls is reputed to be America's deepest commercial cave. Listed in the National Register for Historic Places, Ruby Falls is committed to the reduction of environmental footprints.

BIGAR WATERFALL CARAS SEVERIN COUNTY, ROMANIA

Also called by locals as 'The Miracle from the Minis Canyon,' Bigar Waterfall is located in the Anina Mountains, in the western part of Romania. The waterfall is almost eight metres high and what attracts tourists is its exceptional journey as water falls over a surreal and dramatic moss-covered cliff.

Bigar Waterfall is unique as it descends differently than other roaring falls. Water flows over the top of the rounded stone and is segregated into countless streams. The final moment of shimmery water touching the base is no less than a fairytale scene. It certainly qualifies as one of the most beautiful sights to visit in Romania.

CAMERON FALLS, ALBERTA, CANADA

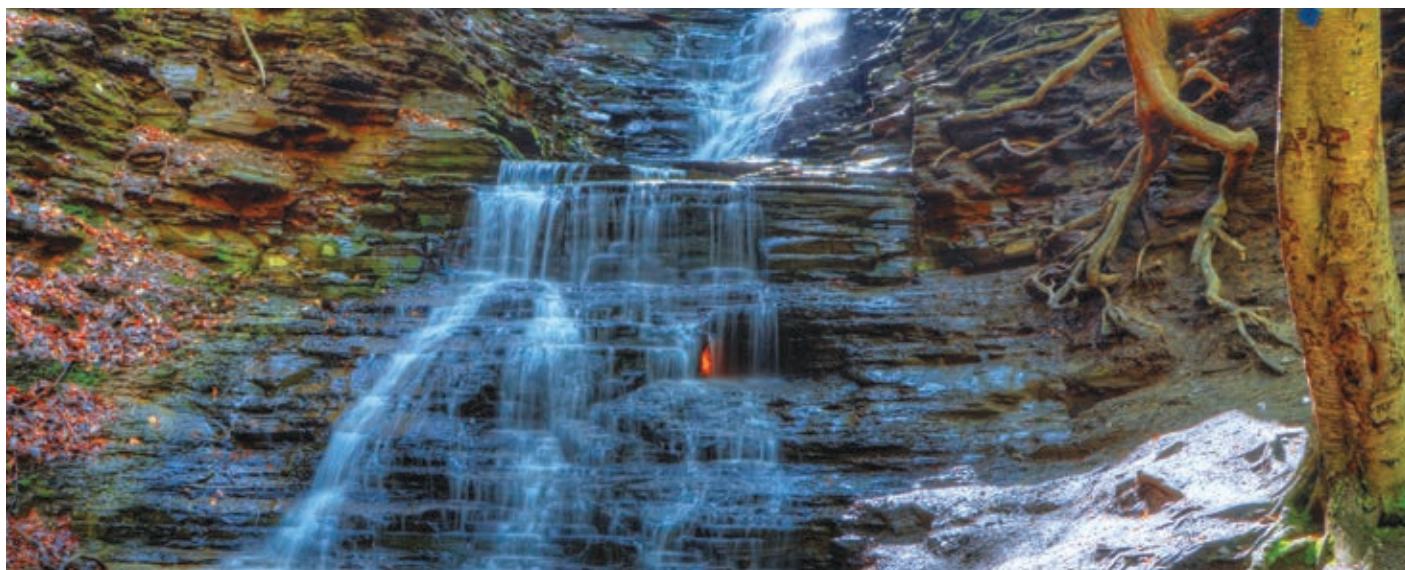
Waterton Lakes National Park, located in southern Alberta, is popular for its most celebrated and photographed landmark – Cameron Falls. The alluring visual of crystal clear mountain water descending steadily over the 1.5 billion-year-old Cambrian rock is incredible.

A different perspective emerges to the right of the falls, one that is worthy of finding a place in your adventure albums. However, it made world headlines, when in a rarest-of-rare occasion, Cameron Falls turned colour from white-blue to tomato red.

One of the photographers captured this phenomenon, which was caused by the excessive rain washing the red coloured sediment, argolite, from rocks and merging the deep red colour with the waterfall.

ETERNAL FLAME FALLS, USA

A relatively small waterfall located in the Shale Creek Preserve in Western New York is famous for its flickering flame caused by emission of natural gas. Interestingly, for years researchers have not been able to find the cause and source of this natural gas which is directly responsible for making it a tourist attraction. It is not everywhere and everyday that one finds waterfall displaying imagery of a lone flame.





HORIZONTAL FALLS, KIMBERLEY, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

One of Australia's most unusual natural wonders, Horizontal Falls demonstrates the power of Kimberley's tides. The tidal waterfalls lie deep within Talbot Bay, in the Buccaneer Archipelago. As the name suggests, water passes horizontally due to intense tidal currents, hurtling through two narrow coastal gorges. English veteran broadcaster and naturalist, David Attenborough, has described the horizontal waterfall phenomena as one of the greatest natural wonders of the world.

The twin gaps are part of the McLarty Ranges, which have two ridges running parallel, 300m apart. Tourists who want to get the maximum from the experience can row their boats through the two gaps to the bay behind.

PAMUKKALE, DENIZLI PROVINCE, TURKEY

A truly spectacular vision, Pamukkale beckons with its brilliant white travertine terraces and warm mini pools. Travertine is a sedimentary rock deposited by water from the hot springs. Aptly named Pamukkale, the name translates to 'Cotton Castle'.

The waterfall has recorded over two million tourists annually, making it Turkey's single most visited attraction. The site is also home to the well preserved ruins of the Greek-Roman city of Hierapolis. With a rare case of both a natural and a man-made wonder at one place, Pamukkale-Hierapolis has been made a UNESCO World Heritage site.



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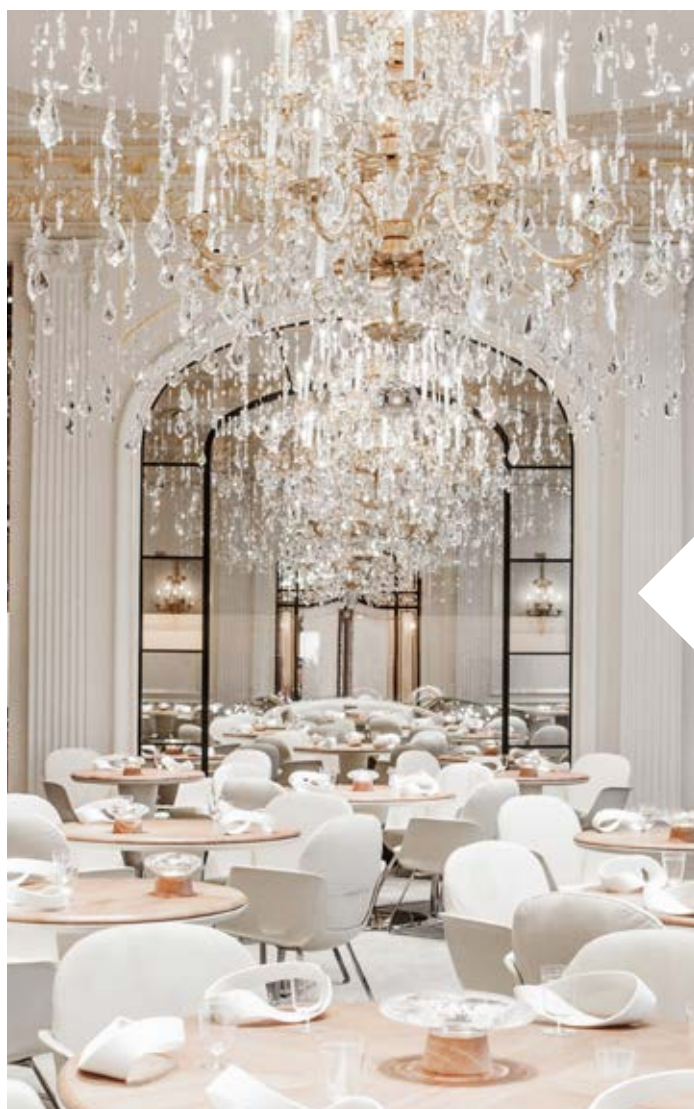
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FOOD TO LIVE FOR

Conscious eating has suddenly become the talk of the town with many popular restaurants incorporating organic cuisines and some creating their entire menu on gluten free food

RITIKA BISHT

Finally, it is that time of the year when festivities are over and New Year resolutions of maintaining a healthy diet can come into effect. With post-Christmas weight on your back, it would seem difficult to shift to a diet which demands all-healthy, leafy greens, no sugar and no carbs. But who says you have to compromise on taste when the healthiest restaurants in the world are offering outrageously delicious cuisines. The culinary creativity at some of these restaurants has redefined the culture of healthy diet. Conceptualised with the vision of serving nutritiously-potent and sumptuous flavours, these restaurants have food lovers raving about their innovative take, which is inevitable for today's busy lifestyle.



ALAIN DUCASSE AU PLAZA ATHÉNÉE, PARIS

Alain Ducasse, the mind behind the restaurant, represents the naturalness cuisine inspired by the fish-vegetable-cereals trilogy. Housed in Hotel Plaza Athenee, Alain Ducasse Au Plaza Athénée is known for its menu which centres on ingredients that are healthier, more natural and respectful of the Planet. Innovative, authentic yet simple flavours build the meal into an experience that engages the entire body. Dishes served are instinctive interpretation of Haute Cuisine, revealing the produces' original flavour. Ducasse menu is strictly no meat; instead it offers seafood (turbot, langoustines, lobster, caviar), vegetables from the gardens at Versailles and a variety of pulses including green lentils and bulgar wheat.



FLAX & KALE, BARCELONA

One-of-its-kind, Flax & Kale is the first flexitarian restaurant in Barcelona. Don't be surprised if you didn't get this term either. To be a flexitarian means you are a vegetarian with benefits. Thus, the menu here comprises mostly vegetarian dishes. The cuisines are created to maximise the organoleptic experience without compromising on their nutritional value. Among food choices 80 per cent is plant-based and the remaining 20 per cent have oily fish.

With a line up that includes, Gluten Free Healthy Pizzas, Healthy Asian Fusion Cuisine and Kombucha Lab, people won't find it hard to follow a disciplined diet. Infact, the vision of Flax & Kale is to feed people happiness that gifts illness-free health for a longer life. For a healthy stop during lunch, Flax & Kale à porter includes Healthy Grab & Go Eatery + Cold-pressed Juice Bar + Coffee Specialty Bar.



COUNTER KITCHEN, LONDON

Sitting quietly in the heart of Clerkenwell is Counter Kitchen which was conceptualised around mindfully sourced food. It proudly mentions, "Our menu offers a variety of health conscious options and we've said goodbye to artificial flavours, nasty hormones, refined sugars and preservatives."

Focussed on creating a nourishing and balanced diet, the restaurant offers avocado toast with fresh green chilli and homemade cucumber kimchi during breakfast.

Packing world flavours, the lunch menu offers Tarka Dal, which includes ingredients like red lentil & dal stew, onion seeds, curry leaves, kachumber salad, strained yoghurt, black rice and lime. With wholesome, nutritional and mouth-watering ingredients, the resolution of avoiding junk and maintaining good health would barely feel like a task.





TRANSFORMER, MELBOURNE

Proudly vegetarian, Transformer is original and inventive in its concept which is spear headed by a relative newcomer chef Luke Florence's food. It is partly vegan and half plain veggie. It may sound a tad boring but it's outright delicious. The interesting menu depicts the health-conscious nature of the restaurant and ranges fusion dishes from various continents. Its Elixirs and Shots include Ayurvedic elixir, fresh ginger, tumeric, tamarind & coconut water.. Soba noodles with smoked tofu and gnocchi made of golden puffs of rye sprinkled with ricotta and a pumpkin mousse are favourites among the locals. The healthy combination of flavours make you want to visit the Transformer over and over again. Moreover, the interiors have been brushed by the award-winning local architecture firm Breathe. The company turned the place into a fantasia of calm low lighting with evergreen plants, creating an ambience for date night.

SOME OTHER HONOURABLE MENTIONS:

- TENDER GREENS, CALIFORNIA
- SEQUEL BISTRO AND JUICE BAR, MUMBAI
- NINJA CUT, SINGAPORE
- CAFE CLOVER, NEW YORK
- CAFÉ PINSON, PARIS
- EARTH TO TABLE, MELBOURNE



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Vikas Bhola

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Amitabh Mishra

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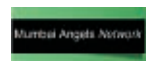
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Bangkok attracts tourists not only for its historical attractions, but also for its undisputed hospitality that reflects the region's vivid culture

TT BUREAU



WAT PRA KAEW AND GRAND PALACE COMPLEX

Also known as the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, Wat Pra Kaew is Bangkok's biggest tourist attraction. This vast compound also houses the former residence of the Thai monarch, the Grand Palace Complex. The area spanning 94.5 hectares, also encompasses over 100 buildings that represent 200 years of royal history.

The Emerald Buddha is the primary attraction of the temple. The buildings of the Grand Palace are largely restricted for tourists as they are now used by the king only for certain ceremonial occasions, such as Coronation Day.

The largest of the palace buildings is the Chakri Mahaprasat, the Grand Palace Hall. Tourists can view Borombhiman Hall, a French-inspired structure that served as a residence for Rama VI, which is situated outside the palace. To the west is Amarindra Hall, originally a hall of justice and now the only palace building that tourists are allowed to enter. The Ratanakosin-style Dusit Hall initially served as a venue for royal audiences and later as a royal funerary hall.

Tourists can hire palace guides at the ticket kiosk. An audio guide can be rented for 200 Thai baht for two hours.

WAT PHO

Located in Maharat Road, Wat Po brings together history, medical science and an educational institute. Officially named Wat Prachetuphon Vimon Mangkararam, Wat Pho is said to be founded during the 16th century.

Wat Pho is popular among tourists for housing the city's largest reclining Buddha, the largest collection of Buddha images in Thailand and the country's earliest centre for public education. Upon entering the main ordination hall, tourists will be mesmerised by the sacred 46-metre Reclining Buddha, whose feet are beautifully inlaid with Mother-of-Pearl, carved with holy signs.

Due to the presence of 1,360 marble inscriptions about medical, historical and liberal sciences, Wat Pho is also known as 'The Nation's First Public University'.

Marble inscriptions on medical sciences, anatomy and orthopaedics are the origins of Wat Pho Thai traditional massage principles. The temple compound is also the national headquarters for the teaching and preservation of traditional Thai medicine. The compound also has two massage pavilions and additional rooms outside the temple for training.





CHINATOWN

If you have already imbibed the rich history of Thailand, then for a change, visit Bangkok's most hectic neighbourhood - Chinatown. You may actually feel glad if you get lost in its crammed streets that are filled with jade shops and flashing neon signs in Chinese alphabets. If you are a street food lover, then Chinatown is an experience not to be missed. Flocked by street-side delicacies and hordes of shoppers along its 1 km strip, Chinatown overflows with vibrancy and energy that is simply contagious. However, the best time to visit this place is during major festivals, especially at the time of the Chinese New Year.

CHATUCHAK WEEKEND MARKET

Whether it is luxury brands or local markets, Bangkok is an ideal destination for shoppers who are looking for the best of everything. Chatuchak weekend market is among the largest markets in the world and remains crowded all day long. You can even plan a full day at Chatuchak as there is plenty to see and buy. From economical daily needs to used vintage sneakers, this weekend market will surprise you with its never seen before collections.

Several vendors selling clothing, food and accessories open their shops on Friday night, from around 8 pm till midnight. Within the Chatuchak, a section known as Tor Kor Market has a food court that offers local cuisines.

There is an information centre and a bank with ATMs and foreign-exchange booths at the Chatuchak Park Office. The market is no less than a labyrinth, so make sure to use the clock tower as a landmark.



FLOATING MARKET

Offering an insight into a bygone way of life, Damnoen Sauak is popular for its world-famous floating market. An early morning visit is a must to experience the region at its liveliest. Once you arrive at the market you will be taken in a traditional wooden boat and your driver will paddle you between hundreds of boats selling fresh produce, souvenirs and delicious Thai food.

The view of dozens of traditional long-tail boats carrying farm-fresh fruits, vegetables and flowers is an incredible sight for tourists and especially for professional photographers. Be sure to visit a coconut farm where the process of how sugar is created for authentic sweets and desserts is shown.

WHAT WHEN WHERE


What: The Rio de Janeiro Carnival
When: 9th-14th February, 2018
Where: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The Rio Carnival is an annual party celebrated in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It continues until Ash Wednesday, which also marks the beginning of the Lent period, characterised by abstinence from worldly pleasures and fasting for Christians. The carnival attracts approximately a million people from all around the world, where they dance to the pulsating beats of the regional samba. Tourists are intrigued by the level of the festivity, which is mainly attributed to the influence of African immigrant slaves. It is said that African slaves, brought to Brazil by the Portuguese, gave life to the first samba rhythms.

What: World Championship Bar-B-Que Contest
When: 22nd-24th February, 2018
Where: NRG Park, Houston

Witnessing participation from more than 250 teams, the World Championship Bar-B-Que contest is a three-day event that includes presenting new cuisines to visitors who arrive here from all across the US. Most team tents here are by invitation only, but visitors can spend their time enjoying various delicacies at The Garden, Rockin' Bar-B-Que Saloon and the Chuck Wagon. The Rockin' Bar-B-Que Saloon features live performances by upcoming artists along with funky beats played by the DJ.


What: Winter Olympics
When: 9th-25th February, 2018
Where: PyeongChang, South Korea

Athletic calendar's biggest winter sporting event, Winter Olympics 2018 will be held in PyeongChang, South Korea, from 9th – 25th February 2018. The sporting event will witness world-class athletes who would compete across a wide range of winter sports, from alpine skiing and ice hockey to bobsleigh and figure skating.

PyeongChang's vision for this year's winter games is to present a legacy of new growth and new potential. If you are a sports fan and love the icy chill, mark your calendar for the event that will expose new generations of potential athletes of winter sports.



What: Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships**When: 19th February – 3rd March, 2018****Where: Dubai Duty Free Tennis Stadium, Dubai**

Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championship score participation from the top seeds from the women's and men's segment. The championship will be staged at the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Stadium in Garhoud from the 19th February to 3rd March, 2018. This year's men's week will be headed by world no. 3 Grigor Dimitrov (Bulgaria) while women's segment will be charged by Garbine Muguruza (also seeded 3) from Spain. Spectators are welcome to enjoy the picturesque surroundings of the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Stadium, which include the hugely popular Irish Village and Century Village offering varied dining options.

**What: Pingxi Sky Lantern Festival****When: 2nd March, 2018****Where: Taipei, Taiwan**

Pingxi Sky Lantern Festival is a glorious and breathtaking annual celebratory event where people release hot air balloons. With over 100,000 lanterns, the visuals of the night sky are stunning. The festival is celebrated across Asia, but it is highly recognised in the Pingxi district of New Taipei city, due to the history associated with the region. The purpose behind releasing the lanterns changed over the decades; initially it was used to transmit military information. It has now become a tradition and a major festival, when tens of thousands of people gather in Pingxi, buy the paper lanterns, write their wishes on them and free the lighted lanterns in the open sky.

What: ITB Berlin**When: 7th-11th March, 2018****Where: Berlin, Germany**

ITB Berlin is the world's largest travel trade fair, which provides a unique opportunity to look closely at different facets driving the global tourism industry.

Each year, ITB witnesses around 10,000 exhibitors from more than 180 countries and regions. Cities, tour operators, booking system developers, airlines, hotels and other businesses from tourism introduce themselves and their services. As ITB Berlin is also conceived as a B2B platform, trade visitors get additional opportunity to introduce their products and expand their base at a global stage. ITB Berlin serves as an ideal platform to discover the who's who of the travel industry.



PICK OF THE MONTH

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



MUSIC: JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE, MAN OF THE WOODS

Justin Timberlake has not shied away from adopting mixed-up genres. Since splitting from NSYNC in 2002, JT has gone on to become a very successful solo artist with several multi-platinum albums. His forthcoming album, 'Man of the Woods,' is centred on his Tennessee roots, which is in stark contrast to the songs he had released before.

But, his new album didn't come as a surprise as over the past few years, Justin had been interested in collaborating with more country artists. But, to critics it's not clear whether Timberlake is taking a deep dive into country music or going towards the folk-pop of Ed Sheeran and Mumford & Sons. Narrating the

record's themes, JT stated, "This album is really inspired by my son, my wife, my family, but more so than any album I've ever written, where I'm from". As of now, album's lead single 'Filthy', co-produced by Timberlake, Timbaland, and Danja, will pave the way for upcoming songs.

Genre (s): Pop,

BOOK: THE LARGESSE OF THE SEA MAIDEN, BY DENIS JOHNSON

From National Book Award winner and two-time Pulitzer Prize finalists, Denis Johnson comes a haunting new collection of short stories on mortality and transcendence. Finished shortly before Johnson's death in May 2017, The Largesse of the Sea Maiden contemplates ghosts of the past and how unavoidable forces shape the future.

Among many critics, New York Magazine quoted, "These four stories rank with Johnson's best work, but the title story, a catalogue of singular moments related by a man who tells us he's passing through life as if it were a masquerade, ranks with the best fiction published by any American writer during this short century."

Johnson's latest work forms a direct connection with his 1992 collection, Jesus' Son, which is concerned with wasted youth. The new release is about the realisation that the end is closer than the beginning.

Genre (s): Fiction

DVD: BATTLE OF THE SEXES

Directed by Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris, Battle of the Sexes is based on a true story of the 1973 tennis match held between Billie Jean King and the ex-champ Bobbie Riggs. The story dramatises the rise of the women's movement in the 1970s. Academy Award-winning actress, Emma Stone plays Billie Jean King and Steve Carell does justice to the portrayal of Bobby Riggs. The match became the most watched televised sports event of all time with 90 million viewers around the world.

The creative minds behind 2006 Comedy/Drama, 'Little Miss Sunshine,' ingeniously portrayed the personal and complex battles both King and Riggs had to confront off-court.

King was not only championing for equality but also struggling to come to terms with her sexuality. Riggs tries to battle his gambling problems at the expense of his family and wife. From the quest for equal pay to fighting personal dilemmas, Billie and Bobby sparked discussions that went beyond the on-court rivalry.

Genre (s): Drama

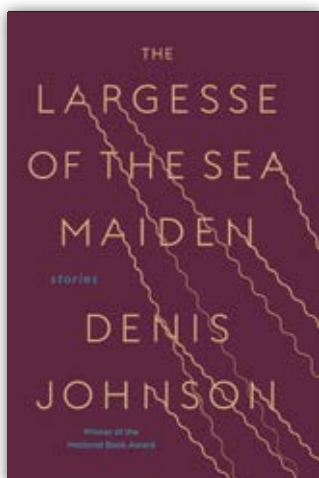


GAMES: SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS (REMAKE)

One of the most awaited games of 2018, Shadow of the Colossus Remake has entered with a big bang. This PS4 remake retains old-school challenge but doesn't disappoint with its renewed graphics which are drop-dead gorgeous. Definitely an improvement over its PS3 segment, Shadow of the Colossus is a one-of-its-kind genre which pits you and your companion horse against massive colossi who you then have to climb and tame.

Shadow of the Colossus will mesmerise gamers with its HDR graphics which is reflected in the journey through its beautiful forest. As you journey through this forest, you will notice certain elements that feel dream-like. For example, the lighting effect as the sun rises over the mountains is truly a spectacle. Bluepoint has done a stellar job bringing this game to Sony's latest console.

Genre (s): Fantasy/Action



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