

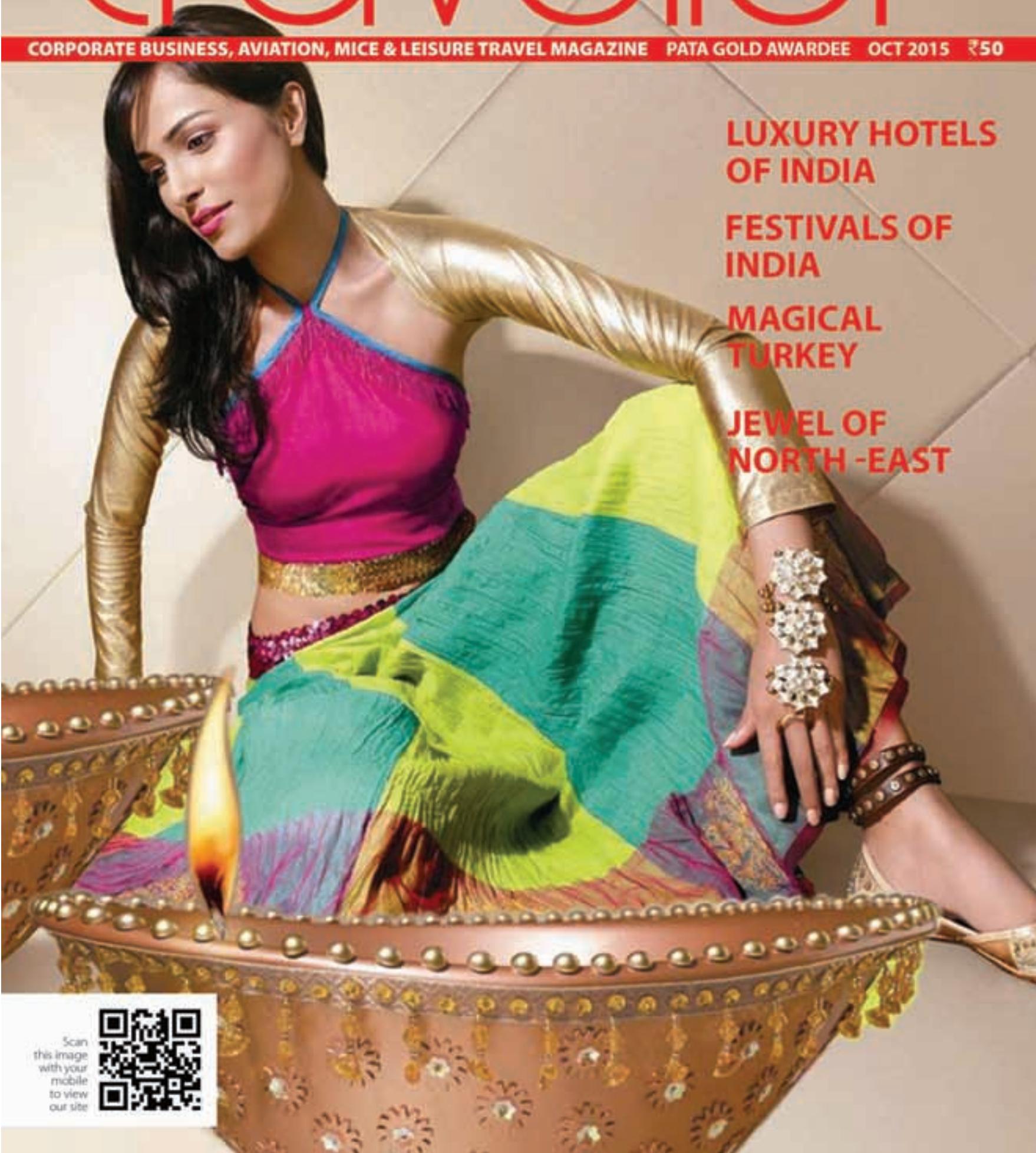
# TODAY'S traveller

CORPORATE BUSINESS, AVIATION, MICE & LEISURE TRAVEL MAGAZINE PATA GOLD AWARDEE OCT 2015 ₹50

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OF INDIA

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INDIA  
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Building No. 73-74, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019  
Tel: 011 41029079, 41029979  
Email: publications@gillindia.com

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# CON

October  
2015

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Lufthansa

# AIR CANADA TO DEBUT NON-STOP NEW DELHI-CANADA

Packed with distinguished in-flight comfort, great on-board hospitality and maximum on-time arrivals, Air Canada is less than a short span away from its maiden voyage, Canada-New Delhi, non-stop

**KAMAL GILL**



Gary Cross

at Air Canada is busy working with the High Commission, the Airport Authority of India and their team members to make this new flight debut a great one.

In conversation with *Today's Traveller*, Gary Cross, Senior Director, International Sales, Air Canada talks about preparations being in full swing and what all we can expect from their maiden flight services.

Says Cross, "This service will appeal both to customers visiting and doing business in Delhi, the capitol region of India and throughout Southeast Asia on our Star Alliance partner network, or other interline partners. We will also start our Dubai service on November 4. So that is to give opportunities to some other cities in India that may be having a connection to Dubai and on the days we don't operate to Delhi, we actually operate to Dubai. So it does give us further options of connectivity and we have a whole lot of European services particularly Frankfurt, Munich, London, we give all of those options as well," said Cross.

The entire team of Air Canada is busy launching its maiden flight New Delhi-Canada non-stop and preparations are in full throttle. The Boeing 787-9 has already been delivered to base and pilot training is underway, before its debut flight

He goes on to add, "So there is the non-stop out of Delhi itself, there is the quick hop across to Dubai, if you have business in Germany or the UK, which a lot of people do, or just visiting family on the way. So that means passengers would go to Dubai, then across to Canada, onwards to Europe, and then back to Canada and Delhi. So all of these combinations that we offer because of our network, gives the traveller several options to select from – which is really what the idea is."

Today, Air Canada serves over 185 markets and by 2020, the plan is to increase this number to 250. With a huge capacity of 30 seats in the Business Class, 21 in the Premium Economy Cabin and 247 in the Economy Class, the 787-9 is a larger air craft than the earlier 787-8.

On the in-flight catering, Cross adds, "We have chosen the Oberoi Group to provide our catering and there are further presentations taking place in two weeks' time. The food offering is very important to us, as an award-winning carrier you need to maintain high standards and we think we have chosen an extremely valuable brand; I mean it's a household name, not just in India but across the world."

On the enthusiasm in Canada, Cross comments, "My counterparts have been running large promotions in Canada. We plan to have a celebration at the gate in Toronto and certainly there will be some functions and we will be flying in some VIP guests on the very first flight. Of course, there will be a grand welcome celebration on their arrival in Delhi. Bringing in the last-lap of celebrations will be the first flight out of Delhi, back to Canada. Over a period of time we will be running lots of press trips, educational, VIP trips and other movements to ensure people take the Air Canada experience. We want them to love it."

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**Q**  
**E**  
**A**

## **ANDREW PHUA** Director Exhibitions and Conferences Singapore Tourism Board

### **Q. How many conferences have you hosted during 2015-16?**

**A.** Singapore's dynamic environment – underpinned by vibrant knowledge, wide networks, ease of doing business and a sense of fun – provides a conducive platform for BTMICE event organisers and travellers to convene and exchange ideas and insights.

Recently named as Asia's top meeting and convention city according to the Union of International Associations (UIA) and International Congress and Convention Association's (ICCA) 2014 global rankings, Singapore consistently draws various notable events each year. Some of the inaugural events in 2015 include:

- World Confederation of Physical Therapy

- Congress 2015
- 22nd World Association for Sexual Health Congress 2015
- Interpol World
- GasTech Asia
- Inter airport Southeast Asia
- Children Baby Maternity Expo
- Innovest Unbound
- INK Talks Asia

### **Q. Your major source markets?**

**A.** Some of our important BTMICE source markets include Malaysia, China, Indonesia, Japan and India; we receive BTMICE visitors from long-haul markets like US as well. In terms of overall visitor arrivals and tourism receipts, India has consistently been the top 5 performing markets for Singapore. In 2014, approximately 25 per cent of visitors from India were here for business or MICE purposes.

### **Q. Your future plans for growth?**

**A.** The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) continues to welcome first-in-Asia and first-in-Singapore events such as INK Talks Asia, seeking new compelling content to establish thought-leadership and maintain a pipeline of exciting, vibrant offerings. We encourage the business events industry to anchor and grow existing quality events as well, and will continue to support the evolving and varied needs of the industry

to build a strong pipeline of business events in Singapore.

### **MICE 2020**

Together with the industry, we have jointly developed a MICE2020 roadmap to build up the skills and capabilities of our hospitality and MICE sector. This medium-term strategy aims to transform Singapore into a smart MICE city with seamless connectivity; curate inspiring Singapore MICE experiences for business visitors; and build Singapore into Asia's MICE capital. Through MICE2020, we hope to propel Singapore into the next stage of growth as a MICE destination that delivers innovative events in a view to connect between Singapore and business visitors.

### **Meetings & Incentives**

STB also recognises that there is a strong focus on incentive travel for India's MICE industry, having hosted several leading corporates for their incentive trips in Singapore. To deliver enriching and personalised experiences for MICE visitors, we launched the Singapore Incentives & Rewards (INSPIRE) India scheme – collaborating with Changi Airport Group, Gardens by the Bay, Resorts World Sentosa, Sentosa Leisure Group, Singapore Turf Club and Wildlife Reserves Singapore to develop bespoke and personalised itineraries to better connect with our MICE visitors.

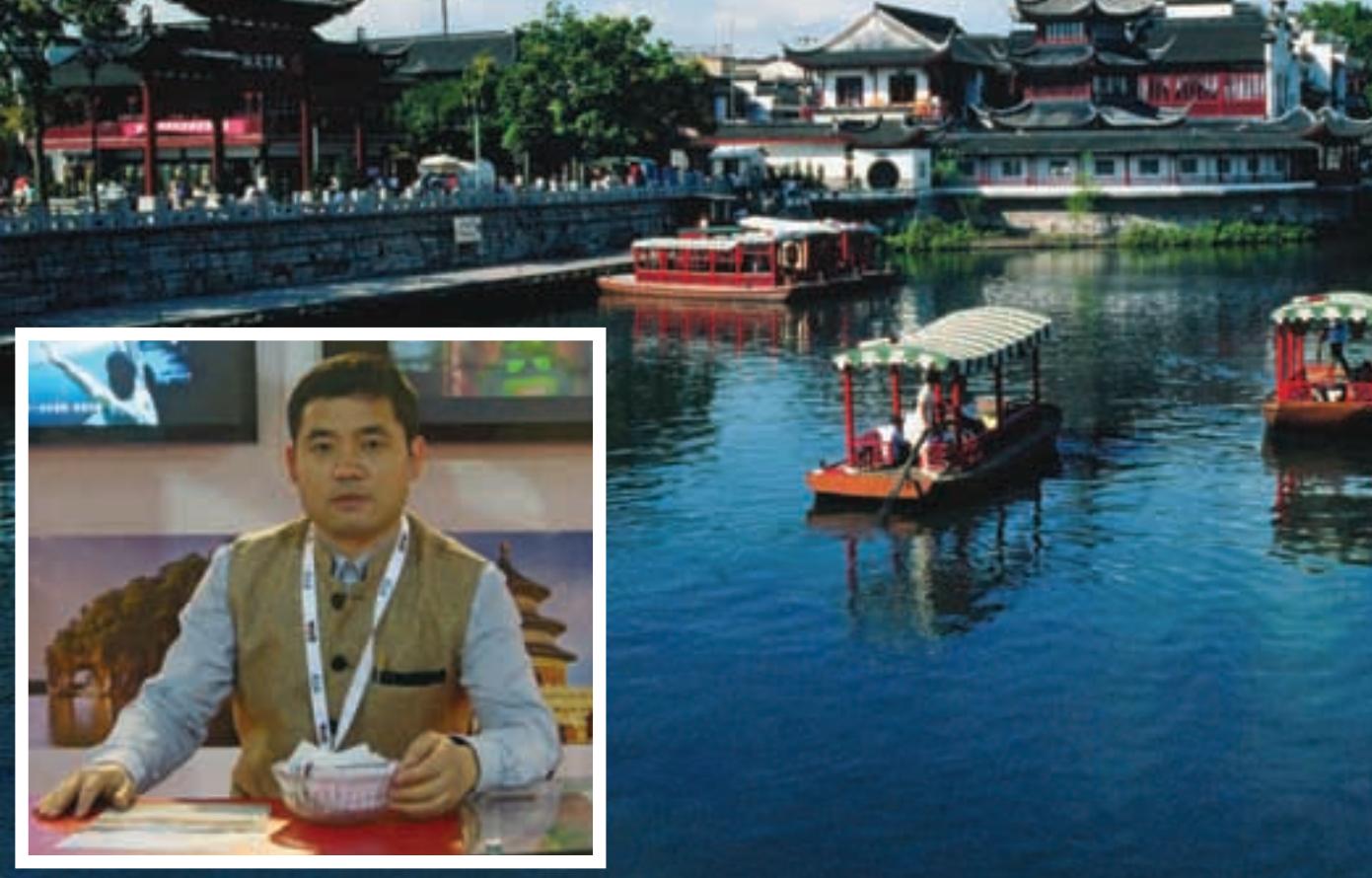
## **HARYANA BAGS DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP AWARD**

Haryana bagged the 'Destination Stewardship Award' at a glittering function organised by the World Travel & Tourism Council, India Initiative (WTTCI), in association with HVS, at The Oberoi, New Delhi on October 05, 2015.

The awards were presented by Vinod Zutshi, Secretary, Tourism, Government of India, and the function was well-attended by various state governments. Expressing delight on being conferred the award, Dr Sumita Misra, Principal Secretary, Government of Haryana, Tourism Department, stated that it is an honour to be lauded for the initiatives undertaken to brand Haryana as a preferred destination in the international and domestic travel market.

She further added, "Haryana is endowed with many religious and historical attractions which create immense possibilities of growth in the tourism sector. Sincere efforts are being made to promote sustainable tourism by encouraging a constructive and mutually-beneficial partnership between public and private sector for economic development and employment generation"





# BEYOND BORDERS

In conversation with Li Qianguo, Director of China National Tourist Office, New Delhi, about India-China tourism prospects

## TT BUREAU

### (Q) Can you give us a background to the 'Beautiful China' campaign?

Since February 2013, the 'Beautiful China' campaign has been going on in full swing in India. Last year in 2014, the visits from India to mainland China were nearly 7.1 lakh, increasing 4.9 per cent over 2013. For the period of January-July 2015, the visits from India to mainland China reached 4.1 lakh, increasing 4.2 per cent over the same period of last year. This trend is very encouraging.

Promotion of China Tourism organised by China National Tourist Office (CNTO), New Delhi, this year, is happening in metropolitan cities, such as, Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and medium-size cities such as, Pune, Armitsar, Ludhiana and Jaipur. The 'Visit India Year' in China 2015 was launched on February 21, 2015, in Beijing, China; next year it will be 'Visit China Year,' held in India. Under this, the two nations will carry out a series of promotional activities to boost a two-way tourism flow and strengthen

people-to-people bonds. And this year has also been designated by China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) as "Beautiful China, 2015-Year of Silk Road Tourism," so as to promote the national initiative of One Belt, One Road.

### (Q) According to you, how will travel and tourism contribute to strengthening ties between the two countries?

China and India are close neighbours, and the two countries are closely linked in multiple fields, including travel and tourism. The nations are building a strategic cooperative partnership for peace and prosperity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and it is without doubt that travel and tourism can work as a significant bridge to friendship and cooperation.

### (Q) What can China offer to Indian tourists in terms of travel?

From the Stone Age to Modern Age, China has everything to offer. It has the unique jewels of exquisite sights with breathtaking natural beauty. Whether it is

leisure, business, shopping or sports, China has everything that a wish list demands.

The destination is becoming increasingly popular amongst Indians due to many reasons, but the first and foremost is the close proximity. China and India are entwined in the roots of history. Buddhism arrived in China via Silk Route sometime in the second century AD, when Chinese traders brought riches of silk and porcelain into India at about the same time. So there is a lot here for Indian travellers.

### (Q) Can you give us a guide to Visa application for visiting China?

The Chinese Visa is issued by the Visa Authority of China in accordance to the laws and regulations of China to a foreigner for entry into and exit from or transit through the territory of China. VFS Global handles Visa process in India and forms are simple and easy.

For more information on China and Chinese visa application, please log on to:  
[www.travelchina.gov.cn](http://www.travelchina.gov.cn) and [www.visaforchina.org](http://www.visaforchina.org)



**Q**  
**E**  
**A**

## CLAUDIO ZEMP

Director India  
Switzerland Tourism

**Q. What are the unique facets of Switzerland Tourism that you want to showcase to the Indian market?**

**A.** We are focusing currently on promoting Switzerland to FIT travellers. For example we have introduced for the first time a self-drive product to the Indian Market. On the Grand Tour of Switzerland the journey is the goal. This route will lead you 1000 miles through four language

regions, over five Alpine passes, to eleven UNESCO World Heritage Sites as well as two biospheres and along 22 lakes. This tour provides a concentrated insight into Switzerland, with exquisite scenic views and cultural jewels.

**Q. Which are the key source markets in India?**

**A.** About 50 per cent of the visitors to Switzerland come from Delhi and Mumbai/Maharashtra. We do however see very strong growth from South India.

**Q. How important is the MICE Market in India for Switzerland?**

**A.** The MICE industry accounts for a total of 19 per cent of the overnights generated in Switzerland and is therefore of great importance to us. As Switzerland is such an aspirational destination in India we are the ideal choice for incentive trips. With the Switzerland Convention & Incentive Bureau (SCIB) we have a dedicated department looking after the needs of the MICE industry.

**Q. How do you rate Switzerland as a family holiday destination? Why?**

**A.** Switzerland is the perfect country for relaxing family holidays. The popular Swiss Travel Pass tickets allow children up to 16 to travel free of charge with their parents. More and more Indian guests also opt to stay in apartments, which are readily available in Switzerland. This gives them the freedom of cooking their own meals, relax amongst their extended family and explore the beauty of Switzerland from a permanent base. Our great outdoor activities are ideal for families to spend some quality time together and are, especially for kids who grow up in urban environments, a real treat. Swimming in a pristine lake, explore the countryside on a scooter or bicycle (also available with the help of a little electric motor), feeling the rush of adrenaline on an alpine coaster or while doing river rafting and playing in a rope and adventure park are all superb family activities.

## BATHUKAMA FESTIVAL TO BECOME GLOBAL CARNIVAL BY 2020

Secretary, Department of Youth Advancement, Tourism, & Culture, Government of Telangana, B Venkatesham, recently launched celebration of Bathukamma in collaboration with PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry to popularise the colourful and vibrant festival of Telangana for North India, with a commitment that it will evolve into a global carnival by 2020.

Addressing the members of media at a press conference held recently was attended by the Vice President, PHD Chamber, Gopal Jiwarajka among others B Venkatesham said that the newly carved out state of Telangana would make the Bathukamma as a pan India festival since in the past, the celebration of this festival stayed confined to Telangana region in the united Andhra Pradesh.

"Now that the 29th State of the Indian Union has come into existence since 2014, the government of Telangana has pledged



to itself to gradually extend it to all part of the country as this is the only festival perhaps in the entire globe that seeks to empower a female child and the women's as a whole", said Venkatesham.



## MTDC LAUNCHES HELI TOURISM

On the occasion of World Tourism Day, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) along with Girisons Airways inaugurated Heli Tourism in Mumbai. The helicopters will operate from Juhu airport every Sunday for 15 minutes.

Paraag Jain Nainutia, Managing Director, MTDC at the launch said, "Mumbai has the most amazing skyline, an impressive and breath-taking view. There are many tourists' spots which look outstanding from an aerial view. The idea is to provide an enthralling experience to the tourists and boost potential tourism in state. Mumbai attracts a lot of foreign and domestic tourist and Heli – Tourism will definitely help in increasing the footfall".



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**Shangri-La hotel**

BENGALURU

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## RADISSON RED TO DEBUT IN INDONESIA

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, recently announced the signing of a multiple-property deal with Saphir Group for Radisson RED Jakarta CBD, Radisson RED Bali Legian Camakila, Radisson Bali Legian Camakila and Radisson Bali Tanjung Benoa. With this deal, Carlson Rezidor will introduce Radisson RED to Indonesia, grow the Radisson brand and almost double its hotel pipeline in this market. The two Radisson RED properties will be new builds, while the two Radisson branded properties will open by January 1, 2016.

"We are pleased to welcome on board a new partner in the key market of Indonesia, where strong growth opportunities are supported by the government's pro-tourism measures. With this four-property deal, that includes three hotels in Bali, one of the country's top tourist destinations, as well as one in the gateway city of Jakarta, we continue to reinforce our presence in Indonesia, a key market for us in Asia Pacific," said Thorsten Kirschke, President, Asia Pacific, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group.

James Kantono, Director, Saphir Group said, "Carlson Rezidor has



From left, Jeani Kantono, (Director), Saphir Group; Pak Djoni Kantono, (Chairman), Saphir Group; David P Berg, (CEO), Carlson Hospitality Group and James Kantono, (Director), Saphir Group.

the right brands, an excellent reputation and deep expertise. We are confident that our partnership will deliver strong returns on our investment."

## INTERCONTINENTAL RESORT UNVEILED IN CHENNAI

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) recently announced the opening of the highly-anticipated InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort in India. The Resort will join InterContinental Mumbai Marine Drive to be the second hotel under the company's luxury portfolio in India.

Shantha de Silva, Head of South West Asia, IHG commented, "The opening of InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort marks an important milestone in IHG's journey in India. Chennai is a city that boasts the perfect mix of diversity and culture with a glossy layer of cosmopolitan glamour. Whether for a leisure break, an intimate wedding or a romantic getaway, our newest property in Chennai will offer unrivalled facilities and access to many cultural opportunities of one of the country's biggest cities."

Vijai Singh, General Manager, InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort said, "The InterContinental brand is trusted around the world for its superior service which guests have come to know and appreciate. InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram



Resort will be one of the first five-star beach resorts on the east coast of India and is sure to offer unforgettable memories to the guests visiting the city."

## STARWOOD HOTELS & RESORTS INTRODUCES SHERATON GRAND

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide recently introduced the Sheraton Grand, a new premier Tier that recognises exceptional Sheraton hotels and resorts for their enticing destinations, distinguished designs, and excellence in service and guest experiences. Starwood revealed the first ten Sheraton Grand properties, which span from Bengaluru to Beijing, Dubai to Edinburgh, Miyazaki to Seoul, Taipei to Bangkok, and Tokyo to Rio de Janeiro. By year end, Starwood expects to have 50 newly-designated Sheraton Grand hotels around the world with plans for 100 by early 2017. Sheraton Grand, is one of many initiatives currently underway for Sheraton 2020, a comprehensive plan designed to solidify Sheraton as a leading global hotel brand of choice, everywhere.

"Sheraton is Starwood's largest and most global brand, and as we continue our work to firmly keep Sheraton in the spotlight, we recognise the need to better match guest expectations

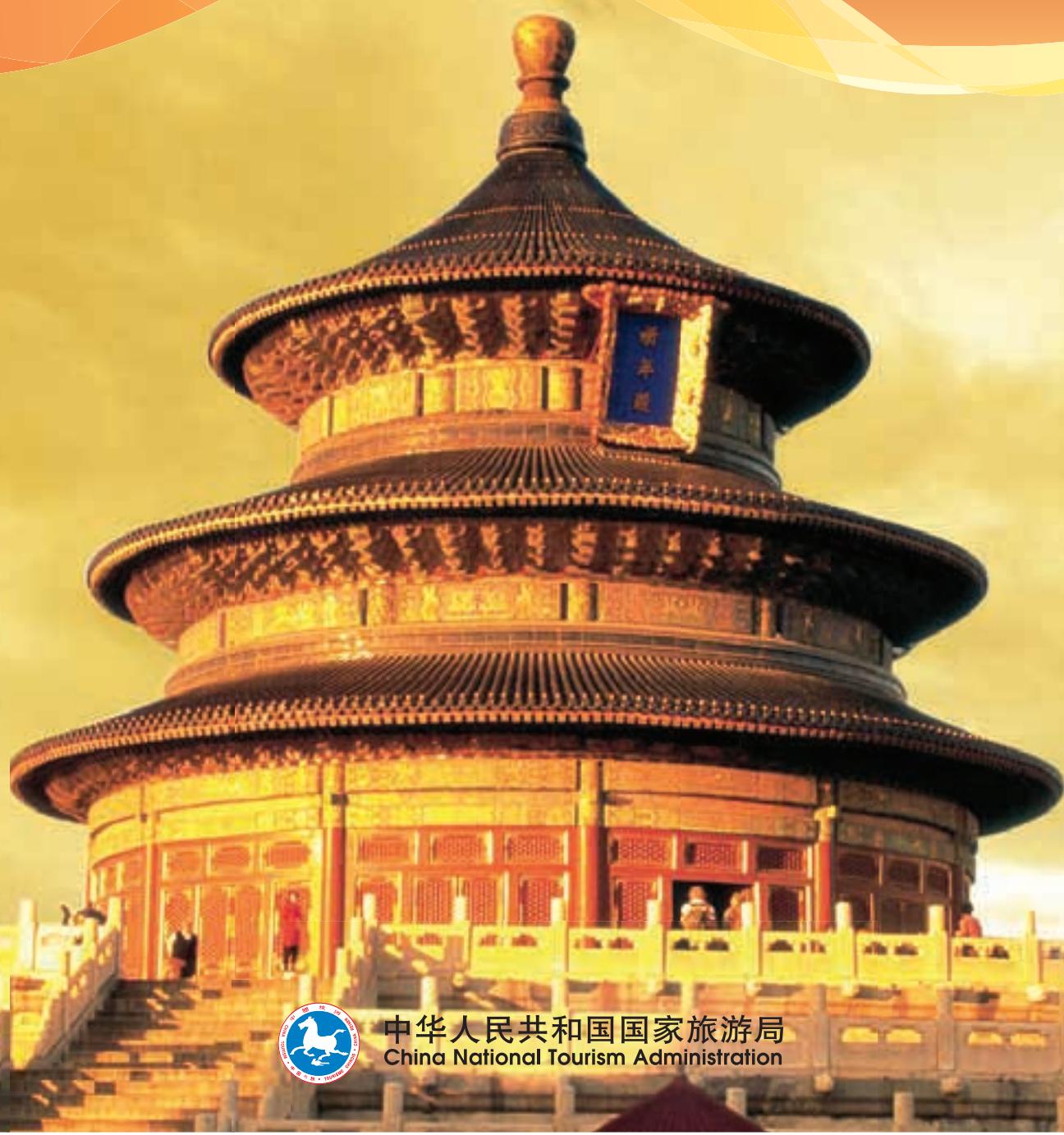


for the brand around the world. Sheraton Grand celebrates our standout hotels and helps us further reinforce Sheraton as a trusted voice in global travel" said Adam Aron, Starwood CEO on an interim basis.



# 2016 VISIT CHINA YEAR

## 中国旅游年



中华人民共和国国家旅游局  
China National Tourism Administration

## **KB KACHRU BAGS IFCA AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, is proud to announce that KB Kachru, Chairman, South Asia, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, was conferred the prestigious Indian Federation of Culinary Association (IFCA) Award of Excellence by the World Association of Chefs' Societies (WACS) at the Global Culinary Exchange 2015 in New Delhi.

"I am grateful for the honour. In our industry, it is imperative to constantly innovate. Today's consumers are increasingly sophisticated and in order to consistently delight our diners and guests, we will continue to champion creativity and nurture passion for the culinary arts," said KB Kachru, who developed the successful 'The Great Kabab Factory' (TGKF) Indian specialty restaurant concept and launched the first TGKF restaurant in Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi in 1998.



## **SITA WORLD TOURS WINS NATIONAL TOURISM AWARD**

SITA World Tours proudly received a top honour in the travel industry recently. In an exclusive ceremony held by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India on September 18, 2015, SITA was awarded the 'Best Overseas Tour Operator to India from North America' award for 2014. The prestigious award was presented to SITA World Tours by the President of India, Pranab Mukherjee.

In addition to the President of India, the ceremony was attended by Dr Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State for Tourism and Vinod Zutshi, Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, as well as others from the Tourism sector and Travel Industry worldwide.

On hand to receive the special award was Laudie Hanou, SITA's Vice President and Max Ali, Director of Group Operations. Hanou, stated, "It is a great honour to be recognised again by the Ministry of Tourism India and to receive the award from President Mukherjee himself. It is SITA's fifth national award from India and



it truly underscores our commitment to the destination from the Americas".

Coinciding with the National award is SITA's 83rd Anniversary in providing excellence in travel.

## **TEAM TAAI POSITIVE EMERGES VICTORIOUS AT 64<sup>TH</sup> AGM**



*Sunil Kumar R*

Members of Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) elected office-bearers and Managing Committee for the 2-year term (2015-17) at the 64th AGM held on September 30, 2015, in Mumbai. Team TAAI Positive, emerged victorious with a sweeping majority. Sunil Kumar R, who headed TAAI Positive, has been elected as President; Marzban Antia, has been voted as Vice President; Lokesh Bettaiah, has been nominated as the Honorary Secretary General and Jay Bhatia, designated as the Honorary Treasurer.

The new Managing Committee of TAAI includes RVenkatachalam, Imtiaz Qureshi, Bhagwan Ramnani, Devaki Thiagarajan, Shreeram Patel, Anil Kumar and Jyoti Mayal.

Sunil Kumar in his speech thanked the members for their faith in the Team and said, "Team TAAI Positive will go all out to attempt meeting the expectations of the members. The focus will be on trying to guide members into a changing industry era, where the challenges will be many while opportunities too will multiply."

To a question on what would be the key focus, he remarked, "TAAI will do all possible to boost their positive image levels and take TAAI to its much awaited next level. It will be our endeavour to

lead members from the "today-we-exist" into an environment called "tomorrow", rather than trying to get the tomorrow's to meet our today's."

He added, "This is one way to make the association relevant in a changing environment and evolution being the order of the day, our approaches and practices must change. Thus training will be an ongoing process to ensure that members can be successful in the current environment."

## **Global Cities: The 2016 Report**

- Bengaluru, Mumbai and Delhi lead the pack with 10.5, 10 and 9 per cent respectively in prime office rental yields
- The DMIC finds a place among the top five global infrastructure projects – expected to create new business clusters and generate unprecedented employment opportunities
- Mumbai and Bengaluru feature among the list of top five global cities in terms of future rental growth – expected to grow to the tune of nearly 22 and 16 per cent respectively
- 67 percent of investments into Indian real estate is coming from overseas investors – highest all among other nations
- While London and San Francisco witnessed the highest rental growth for high-rise offices (skyscrapers), Mumbai has also shown a healthy traction in high rise rentals
- REITs to give a further push to commercial real estate in India; Could attract investments worth \$100 bn in the next few years

**Source: Knight Frank**



# LUXURY AT DANA

Gene Kornota, Principal, Rebel Hospitality LLC, Dana Hotel and Spa, exemplifies the art of giving, both in his personal spirit and delivery of service at his iconic hotel in Chicago

## KAMAL GILL

### **Q What is the Dana Hotel & Spa's positioning in the Chicago market?**

For guests that prefer the individuality of boutique hotels, Dana Hotel and Spa promises to offer a luxury environment that services and celebrates our guests' unique needs and desires day and night. The expression 'dana' translates from Sanskrit to mean 'the pleasure of giving,' and this is the driving force behind all aspects of the 216-room boutique hotel and spa.

### **Q What products and services do you offer for business and leisure travellers?**

At Dana Hotel and Spa, we offer the perfect location for both business and leisure travellers. The Dana Hotel and Spa is located in the vibrant River North

neighbourhood of downtown Chicago and within walking distance to many of Chicago's well known attractions as well as Chicago's business district the "loop." All this makes our location perfect for both the business and leisure travellers. At Dana Hotel and Spa, guests can rely on an adaptable meeting and event space of over 464sq.mt. Here, celebrations and meetings become impeccable and memorable. Airy and open rooms transform into business or reception epicentres, thus keeping our promise to make it as special as you are. Here at Dana Hotel and Spa, guests can avail facilities such as, complimentary Wi-Fi, 24-hour fitness centre, 24-hour room service, 24-hour business centre and concierge service.

### **Q How is your spa distinct from the other spas in Chicago?**

We believe in customising our treatments based on our guests' needs rather than creating specific cookie cutter protocol that some other spas implement. The spa team members here are well-trained in their specific trade and are constantly keeping up with industry trends. We also encourage our team to build connections with our guests; it always makes one feel like home. The therapists and technicians use their knowledge base to educate guests, build trust and an action plan to help the guests reach their specific health goals. This encourages the local guests to re-book often.

## 'VISIT KERALA' CAMPAIGN REACHES LONDON

The famed Trafalgar Square reverberated with the beats of 'chenda' and movements of 'Kathakali' performers as 'God's Own Country' captured the hearts of visitors to the 'Mayor of London' event in the British capital.

"The Trafalgar Square presented a grand stage to introduce the cultural diversity of our state to the people of the United Kingdom and visitors from the rest of the world," said Kerala Tourism Minister AP Anilkumar.

Kerala Chief Secretary Jiji Thomson introduced the cultural extravaganza to the audience at a function attended by Deputy Mayor of London, Roger Evans at the ceremony, held in collaboration with the Indian diaspora's 'Diwali in London' committee. Kerala Tourism Secretary G Kamala Vardhana Rao was also present on the occasion.

"Kerala is a top destination on the world tourism map because of the harmony between



our land and culture as seen in the beautiful backwaters, majestic hills or calm countrysides in the state," Thomson said after the event, which also had cultural presentations like 'Garba' and 'Bhangra' dances, fusion, Bollywood songs and performances by Indian children.

Kerala Tourism will also participate in the influential World Trade Mart (WTM) in London,

which will be held during November 2-5. The Who's Who of global travel and tourism industry attends the WTM, the world's leading tourism show.

James Kantono, Director, Saphir Group said, "Carlson Rezidor has the right brands, an excellent reputation and deep expertise. We are confident that our partnership will deliver strong returns on our investment."

## TAT MUMBAI HOSTS ROAD SHOW

In keeping with the Tourism Authority of Thailand's global focus on quality versus absolute numbers, TAT Mumbai tied up with Thailand's most exclusive standalone and chain hotels for the event titled Amazing Thailand Luxurious Pleasure Road show.

Kittipong Prapattong, Director, TAT ASEAN, South Asia & South Pacific Market Division said, "We want to attract travellers who are looking for a higher quality of experience in Thailand. This doesn't mean an exclusive focus on the niche HNI segment. Even the middle class qualifies as our target audience if they are at incremental spends towards an extraordinary experience in Thailand that might not be accessible (even with extra investment) in many other parts of the world."

Isra Stapanaseth, Director, TAT Chiang Rai said, "We get about 1,000 Indian travellers a year and this is encouraging because Chiang Rai is brand new for India. Chiang Mai, our more popular cousin came up only a few years ago and now Chiang Rai's popularity is on the rise."

Saiphayom Somsuk, Chief of Koh Samui Coordination Centre, TAT Samui said that the island destination welcomes about 10,5000 Indians a year. "What is interesting is that they are amongst the highest spenders



in Koh Samui. Over 70 travel agents visited our booth at the roadshow, showing special interest in adding the area's famous Full Moon Party to their itineraries. This is in keeping with our strategy of opening up Koh Phangan (the island where the party takes place every month) to the Indian market."



## MTPA CONDUCTS FAM TRIP

To build on the success of the recent Roadshow and take advantage of the promotional fare offered by Air Mauritius, MTPA (Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority) organised a Tour Operators familiarisation trip from Delhi and Mumbai in September, 2015.

The agents from Delhi, led by Anuj Singhal of MTPA India, included participants from Flight Shop, Indo Asia, Aerospace Holidays, Dream Travelways, Pearl International Holidays, Ibibio Group, Yatra.com, Worldwide Tour Services and Flag Holidays. Representatives from Mumbai included Raja Rani Travels, Vibrant Holidays, Hi Walk Tours, Zest Tours, Amigo Travels, Heither and Theither Tours, Bhagyashri Travels, Exotic Holidays and Navigator Travels. This group was led by Nelson Samuels of Air Mauritius.

Vivek Anand, Country Manager, MTPA India said: "Overall the FAM trip was successful in achieving its objective to showcase Mauritius as an all-round destination."

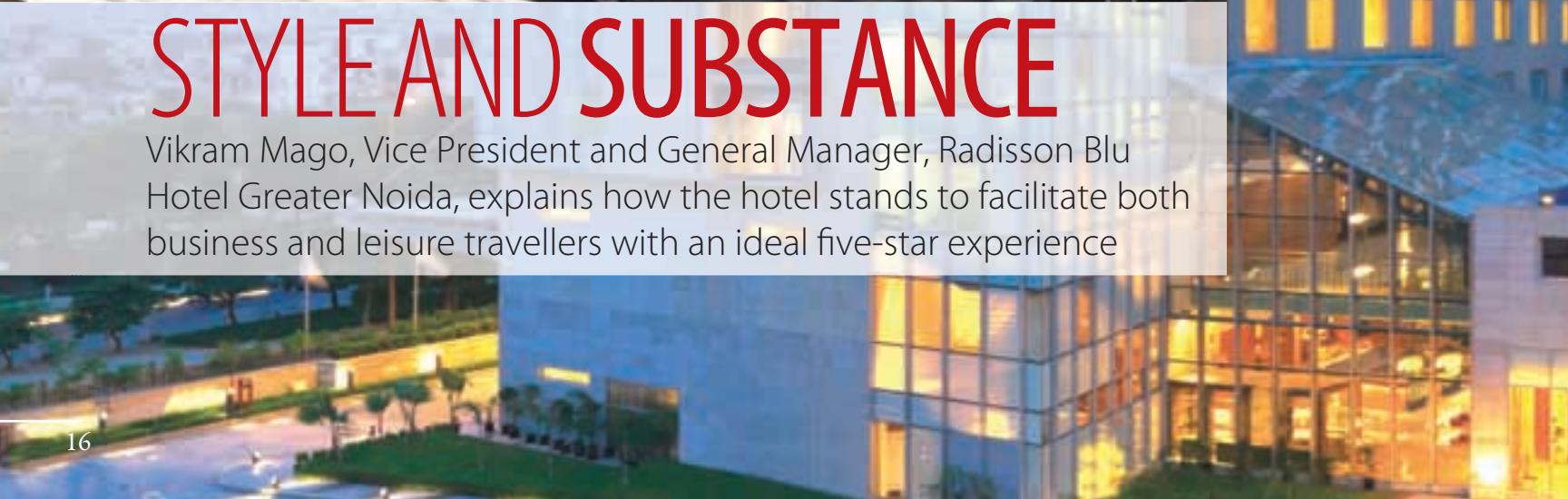
# CORPORATE CONNECT





## STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

Vikram Mago, Vice President and General Manager, Radisson Blu Hotel Greater Noida, explains how the hotel stands to facilitate both business and leisure travellers with an ideal five-star experience



## TT BUREAU

### (Q) What is your hotel's corporate positioning?

Radisson Blu Hotel Greater Noida is positioned as Greater Noida's destination for business and leisure. Being a business hotel it primarily caters to corporate clientele and is strategically located in close proximity to the two major expressways, that makes our hotel a prime property. The presence of big factories around our hotel is an advantage to us and the presence of a five-star hotel close to their factories provides them an excellent place for them to accommodate their international and national visitors. We are an ideal choice for the leisure travellers travelling to Agra. These travellers either choose from our super breakfast menu to act as a kick start to their journeys or they prefer to break their journey by halting here.

### (Q) What are the facilities that your hotel offers for business and meetings?

We have Victoria Ballroom and Lawn as a conference venue that offers an apt setting for holding cocktail dinners along with conferences. It can have a gathering of over 500 people. The Ball Room can be further divided into two halls – Victoria-I and Victoria-II. Audio-visual equipment and catering options are provided on request. We have two meeting rooms

and a business centre to comfortably accommodate a group of 10-15. These are also used as breakaway rooms from time to time.

What helps us stand out from the other business hotels is that we focus on the nutritional needs of our business individuals during their meetings and conferences. We have introduced a new line of delectable dishes that allow us to take care of their health to help them work and at the same time treat their taste buds during business meetings and conferences. The food is not the exclusive solution for meetings and events at our property, but an optional solution. We have morning and afternoon breaks; buffet; board room tray; roll-in buffet and two course lunch. The key objective and main benefit of what we call, 'Brain Food,' is to help guests maintain stable blood sugar levels, resulting in increased concentration and reduced fatigue.

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

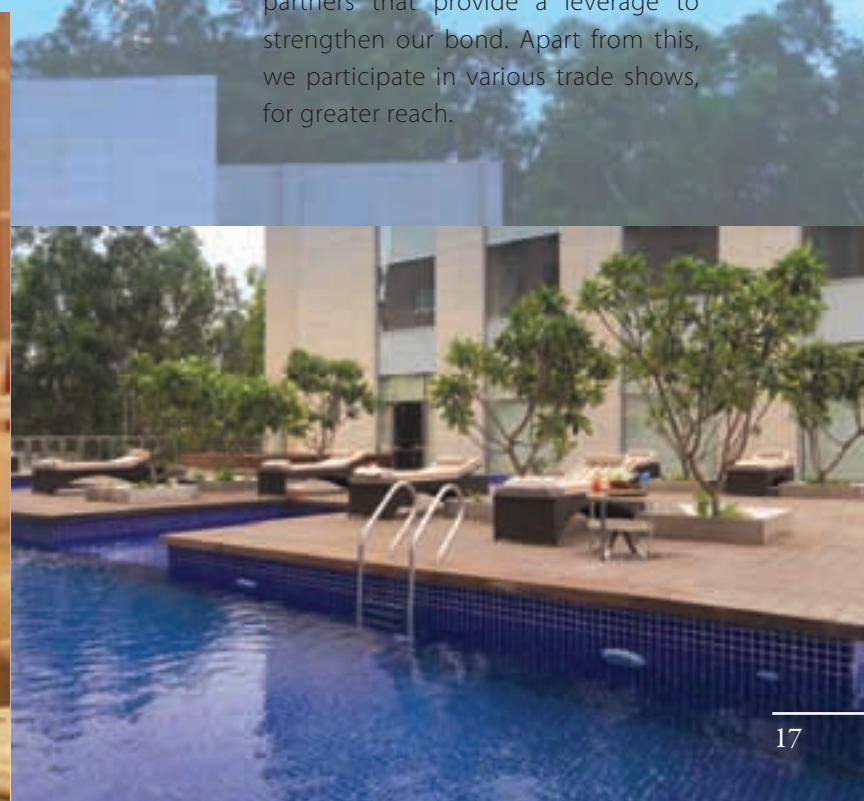
The hotel offers a variety of options for food and drink throughout the day; it ranges from fine dining to short eats. One can treat their taste buds at our all-day dining multi-cuisine restaurant, Cross Avenue, that along with a la carte, has a wide range of buffet served at each meal. Satin, is our fine dining Chinese Restaurant serving Korean and

Japanese cuisine. Scarlet Bar, with its variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverage options served with snacks is a place to unwind. We also have a tea lounge named Mints, serving hot and cold beverage with a confectionary shop that provides a range of short eats. It has see-through roof providing natural lighting during day and blue lanterns that provides a relaxing atmosphere. For recreation we have a gymnasium that is equipped with the latest cardio vascular, body sculpting and weight training equipments along with certified trainers for guidance.

We have an outdoor pool that can be turned into an area to play volleyball and The Cer Spa and Salon to relax and rejuvenate. It provides our guests to plan an extra-curricular activity after the meetings.

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

Our hotel has a dynamic sales team that is not only facilitating in getting business but is also taking steps from time to time to maintain those clients and reaching new market. They act as a relationship management team that manages our corporate relationships as well as our Carlson network of National and International sales structure. We have a loyalty program for our corporate and non-corporate partners that provide a leverage to strengthen our bond. Apart from this, we participate in various trade shows, for greater reach.



# CORPORATE JET-SETTERS

**ANKUR MAHALWALA  
MANAGING DIRECTOR  
SAFEGUARD HUMAN RESOURCING PVT LTD**

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

Our trip to gold coast in Queensland, Australia was fantastic. The place is ideal for relaxing, the beaches are wonderful and nightlife is exotic. You have something for all age groups in gold coast.

**Q: You dream of going to?**

I would love to go to Switzerland, because it is supposed to be heaven on earth. I am sure that it would simply be a mind blowing experience.

**Q: Favourite airline and why?**

I am deeply fond of Quantas. It is by far the best airlines according to me. The ambience, response of staff and food variety of the airlines is superior to other international airlines.

**Q: Best hotel experience and why?**

The Venetian Macau stands apart from the crowd. I was really mesmerised by the size and the interiors of the hotel. It gives you a feeling that you are not in a hotel but in the heart of Venice.

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

I would like to visit Melbourne again, it is simply an amazing place to be. After all, it is one of the most liveable city in the world.

**Q: A family vacation that stands out?**

The trip to Dubai and Abu Dhabi with my family and that of my brother in law's family was a superlative one. The children had lots of fun and the ladies could not stop shopping. The experience is an unforgettable one.



**Q: Your best holiday with friends?**

For that I will have to go back to my college days. Our final year trip to Goa with the entire class was truly memorable.

**Q: Great food you enjoyed and where?**

The seafood platter of gold coast in Australia was very memorable. For the first time in my life I tasted such a large variety of aquatic dishes and it was just fantastic.

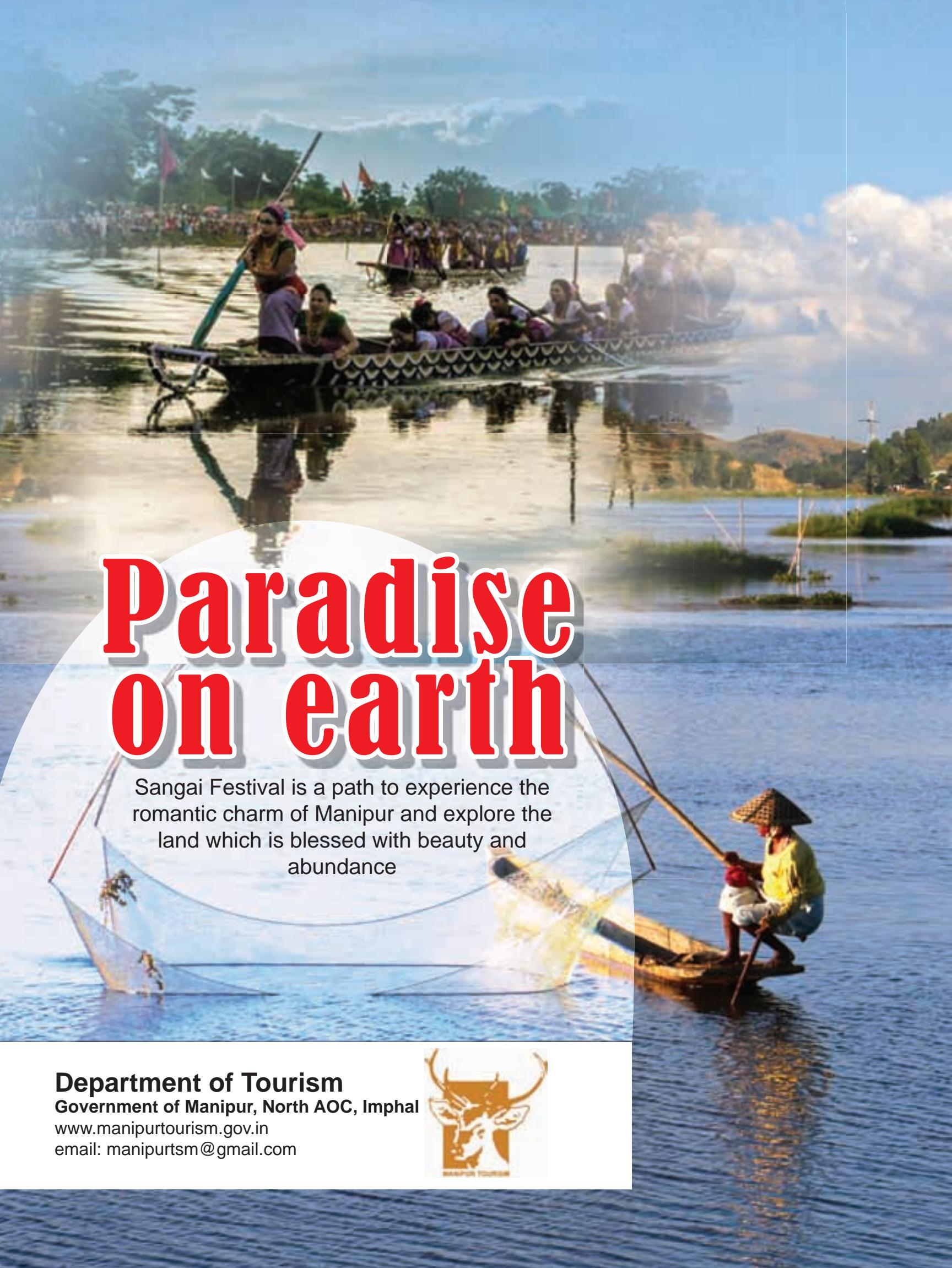
**Q: What to watch out for while travelling?**

It is very important to be well versed with the law and culture of the country you visit. One must also have full knowledge of dishes that are ordered, as you may be allergic to some ingredients used in the preparation. Also, it is important to travel with a health insurance when going abroad as treatment outside is very expensive.

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

I look for quality accommodation, well informed tour guides and a chance to get the feel of local culture and lifestyle.





# Paradise on earth

Sangai Festival is a path to experience the romantic charm of Manipur and explore the land which is blessed with beauty and abundance

**Department of Tourism**  
Government of Manipur, North AOC, Imphal  
[www.manipurtourism.gov.in](http://www.manipurtourism.gov.in)  
email: manipurtsm@gmail.com





## CORPORATE JET-SETTERS



**AMIT K KAUL**  
**MANAGER, ADMINISTRATION**  
**ATRENTA INDIA PVT LTD**

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

I prefer hill stations and therefore I thoroughly enjoyed my vacation at Nainital, Srinagar and Shimla. It is the serenity and the beauty of the lofty peaks that attract me most.

**Q: You dream of going to?**

I would love to take my children to Disneyland, Hong Kong and Dubai. I am sure that they will have a great time in these places.

**Q: Favourite airline and why?**

I prefer Emirates to other airlines, mainly because they have set a high standard for hospitality. It is exceptionally good.

**Q: Best hotel experience and why?**

Hotels such as Raddison, Holiday Inn and Pullman have a range of services that caters to the needs to a traveller. They have excellent dining options and great rooms with attractive interiors.

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

I would love to go back to Srinagar; it is indeed paradise on earth. Most importantly it is simply picture perfect, and there is nowhere I would love to be more than Srinagar.

**Q: A family vacation that stands out?**

We had gone to Nainital recently, and it was a great highpoint of my life. My family really enjoyed the trip and I couldn't have asked for more. That is one vacation which will forever be etched in my mind.

**Q: Your best holiday with friends?**

I had gone to Nainital and Jaipur with my friends, and we had a great time there.

**Q: Great food you enjoyed and where?**

It would have to be the authentic local food I experienced at Nainital and Srinagar. Kashmiri food is simply great, and there is nothing like it.

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

Of course when travelling it is important to seek comfort and this is why travellers should be careful about what they choose, in terms of hospitality, services, food and locations.

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

As a traveller buyer one should always look for authentic buys. Look for handicrafts and handlooms, things that one can only get from a particular place. It is important to explore the culture and traditional side of a place, and it starts with buying indigenous items.

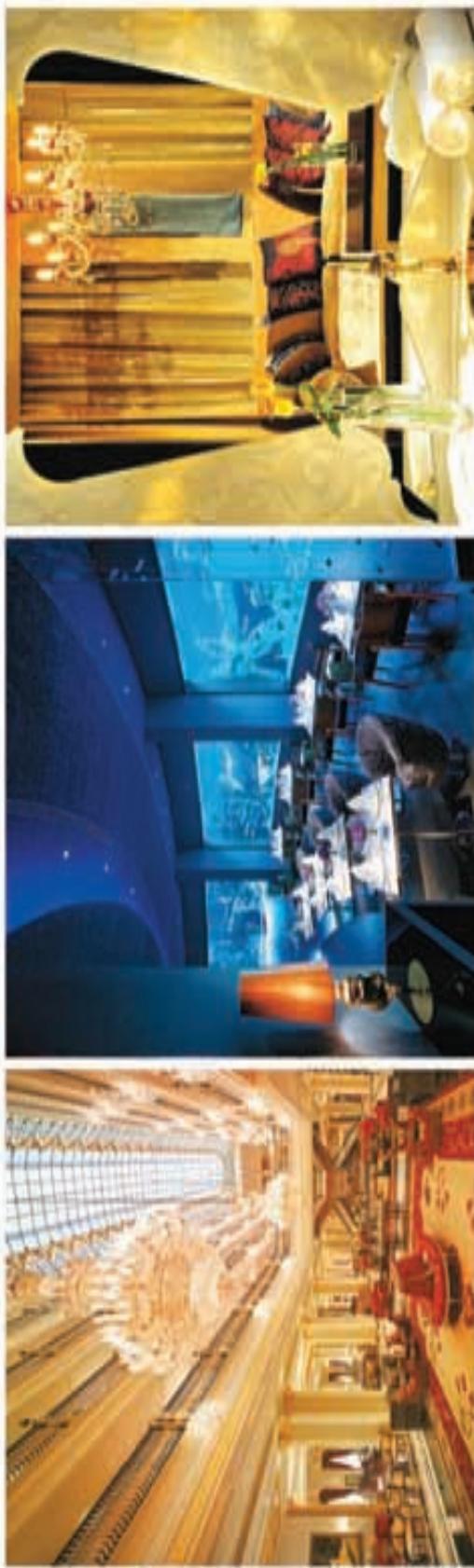




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# THE CONCEPT OF LUXURY

Louis Sailer, General Manager, The Leela Palace New Delhi, speaks about the hotel and the ethos that surrounds it

**INVITED ARTICLE BY: LOUIS SAILER  
GENERAL MANAGER, THE LEELA PALACE NEW DELHI**

**B**eauty lies in the eye of the beholder, and so to each, 'luxury' has its own connotation. To some, it's about avant-garde space, exceptional architecture, breathtaking views, priceless art adorning a lavishly decorated room, whereas to some, it could be sheer privacy. Having helmed some of the most iconic luxury hotels across the globe in the past three decades of my career, in my opinion, a true luxury hotel is a symphony of extraordinary, yet authentic experiences, reverberating its propitious location, opulent interiors, seamless integration of the most advanced technology, state-of-the-art features and par excellence staff services to exceed customer expectations and create life-long memories.

Upholding the royal culture and the essence of Incredible India through its splendid architecture, palatial contours, unique features and the legendary The Leela service, I can confidently say that The Leela is among those few hotels to have set a benchmark for quality services and luxury.

Centrally located in the heart of the National Capital of India, this architectural marvel inspired by Lutyen's era is ensconced in the most elite neighborhood with all key



attractions including local bazaars, a leading business district, historical monuments, government seats and more, providing guests with well-deserved comfort and tranquility amidst the hustle bustle of the vibrant city.

You may be pleased to know that *Atithi Devo Bhava* is The Leela's signature promise and the way of life instated by our Founder Chairman, the late Captain CP Krishnan Nair. Each member of the team takes pride in going an extra mile to weave memorable experiences for our guests and patrons.

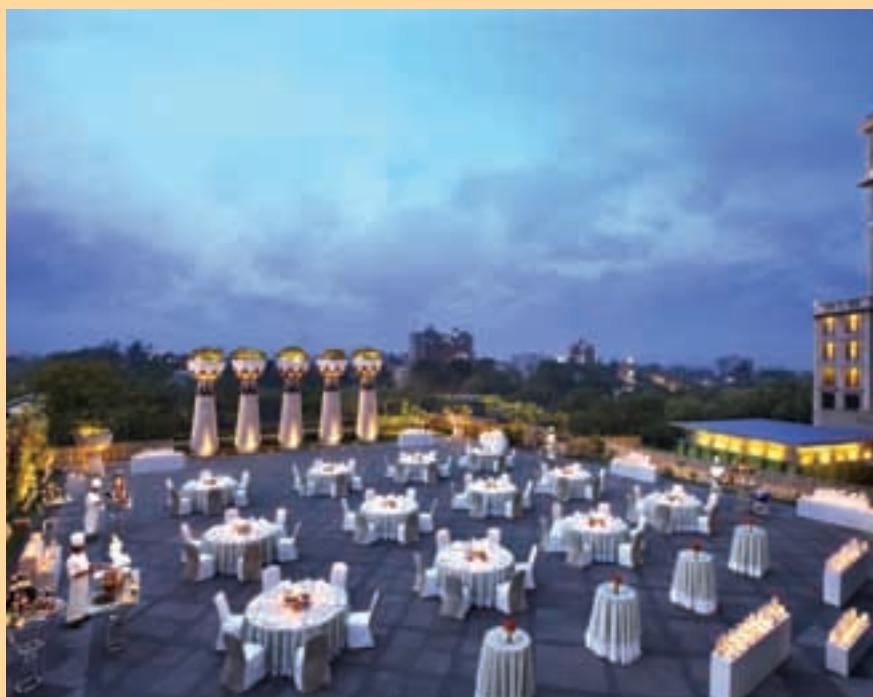
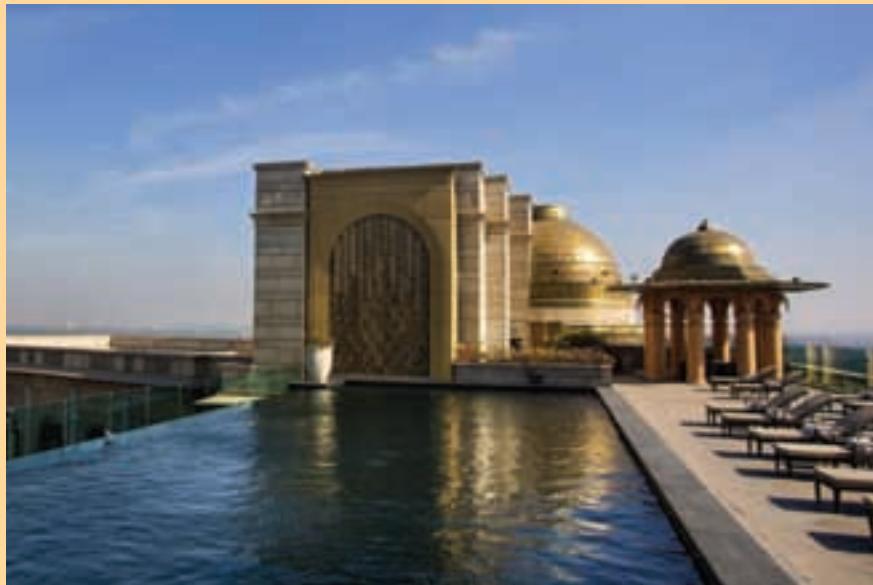
Nothing short of a museum, from spiritually-inspired installations to striking sculptures; time-honoured lithographs to avant-garde photographs; from exquisite floral installations with over 14,000 fresh flowers every day to delicately crafted tapestries inlaid with precious stones; from rare silver objet d'art to gently gracing gold-leaf work; here at The Leela Palace New Delhi, every corner exudes the beauty and grace of India.

Our range of spacious accommodations are designed to offer most of natural light and luxury of space. Our high ceilings; vaulted arches; opulent interiors adorned with finely crafted masterpieces and delicate fabrics instated with the most advanced technologies, offer an experience that both an executive and a leisure traveller will forever remember. Our collection of award-winning restaurants including two New York imports, Le Cirque and MEGU, welcome both our resident guests and local patrons to savour hand curated culinary experiences. Our alfresco settings provide a divine interlude to relax and rejuvenate with friends and family under the stars. Our elegant ballrooms, meeting rooms and party venues are perfect for all your banqueting needs.

The exclusive recreation facilities available here, including the capital's only rooftop temperature-controlled swimming pool with panoramic views of city's skyline and the range of Ayurveda-inspired spa services at ESPA, now open to non-resident guests, assure an incomparable experience.

We don't limit our reverence to nature within our manicured verandas or to our LEED Platinum certification by Green Building Council of India. We have in fact pledged to keep the vision of Captain Nair alive through our dedicated efforts of creating green zones beyond our premise, integrating energy and environment effective initiatives across the hotel and by actively supporting the Prime Minister's Swachh Bharat campaign. We take pride in having our guests discover the simple pleasures of nature's bounty with green plantations in summer and colourful plantations in winters. We love flowers and recycle them in several ways and support a local NGO that turns them into Rangoli and vegetarian dye.

With this, I conclude that very few hotels in the world have been built with such passion, attention to detail and costs. And, I look forward to welcoming you all soon.





# NEW-AGE LUXURY HOTELS

TT takes a look at these new deluxe luxury properties which have debuted in India recently and brings a lot of chutzpa to the luxury portfolio

## TT BUREAU

People of the globalised world seek luxury everywhere they go, and India is not far behind. With changing times, people's needs are also rapidly changing, and catering to these various needs are the luxury hotels. From astonishing architecture to splendid dining options, here are some of the most sought after luxury hotel of India.

### SHANGRI-LA HOTEL BENGALURU

The stunning property located in the heart of India's Garden City is just the right place for guests to enjoy bespoke luxury. The hotel has some of the best dining options, from Shang Palace – a Chinese specialty restaurant offering sumptuous dishes, to Hype bar – your stopover for the best drinks. Apart from these two, there is Yataii, providing authentic Japanese

cuisine; Ssafron, which overlooks the spectacular city, is a destination restaurant with regional chefs preparing dishes from the freshest produce; Caprese, the Mediterranean delight where guests can relish delicious sea food or try some lip smacking Italian; and the all-day dining restaurant b Cafe featuring an interactive buffet and à la carte menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Shangri-La Hotel has a collection of 397 guestrooms and suites. The hotel's 30 suites, including three Governor Suites and the exclusive Shangri-La Suite, are among the finest in the city. The hotel also offers comprehensive meeting and event facilities, including a wide range of customisable floor plans and arrangements. Shangri-La is the ideal destination for Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE), weddings and gala dinners.

## JW MARRIOTT MUMBAI SAHAR

The elegant JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar boasts an unparalleled location in the heart of the vibrant suburb of Andheri. The hotel is a short drive from both Mumbai airports, as well as the area's business hub. The 5-star luxury hotel has 585 exclusive rooms and suites with high-speed internet, coffee and tea makers, a well-stocked mini-bar, flat-screen TV and 24 hours service to please the guests. The exciting dining options here include, JW Café, that serves international cuisine, such as, Japanese, Thai, Arabic, Western and as well as Indian; Romano's, home to sumptuous Italian food brought to your table from the heart of Sicily, Milan, Rome, Naples and Florence; JW Lounge, allowing guests to network and meet over a world of exotic drinks; and the hotel's own adaptation of a classic pastry shop, the JW Backing Company, that offers a range of pastries, cakes and more.

The hotel's pillar-less Grand Ballroom and the elegant lawn are open for the best of business gatherings. Additionally, the Business Centre and secretarial services ensure that all the needs are covered here in Mumbai. Amenities in every meeting venue include a projector, clip boards, TV, Dictaphone and LCD panels.

## ITC GRAND BHARAT

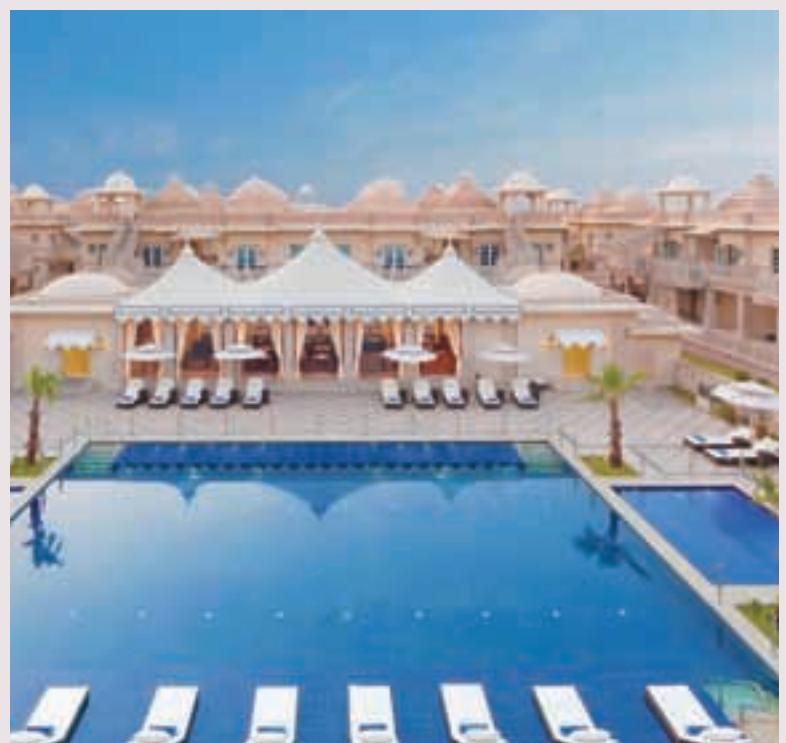
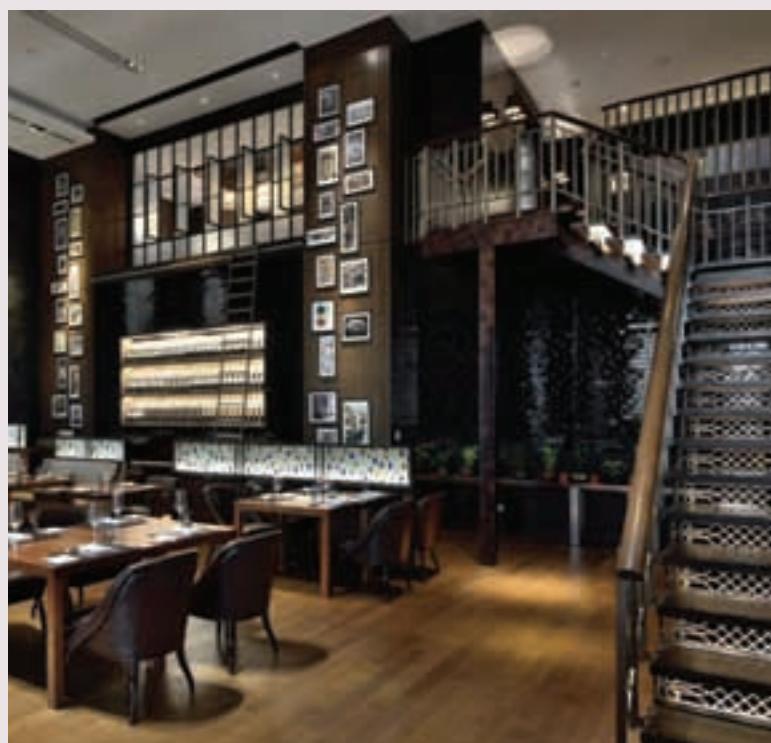
Here is India's first all-suite one-of-a-kind destination luxury retreat. ITC Grand Bharat is an epitome of fine living and fine dining. It symbolises the concept of 'Bharatvarsh,' encompassing the essence of India and bringing to life the myriad facets of the great nation through its architecture, interiors, services, cuisine, decor, and ambience. Set amidst a vast expanse of 1.2 square kilometers, ITC Grand Bharat promises to deliver the finest luxury experience to guests, with its 100 splendid Deluxe Suites and 4 palatial Presidential Villas. The dining options at this luxurious hotel are many; this includes, Aravali Pavilion that offers some

of the finest cuisines of the world – from Swasthya cuisine to breakfasts of the World, from signature Best of Pavilion menu to Modern Indian Mosaics; a bistro named Verandah, where guests can savour delicious dishes and also enjoy al fresco dining. It also houses a mobile bar for coffee, tea, wine and beer; The Indian Room offers some of the best European classics, from Greek, Portuguese, Dutch, French and British; Apas Promenade is a poolside marquee lounge and offers order-to-serve breakfast in the mornings and comfort food during the day. The evening showcases local Mewati barbeques, which forms a part of the 'Food of the Aravalis.'

For Meetings and Incentives, the Prithvi Ballroom spread over 460 m<sup>2</sup> is just the right venue. It can accommodate approximately 400 guests, boasts of a distinct pre-function area and is uniquely suited for weddings of all kinds. Decorative options are limitless, and include team of on-site expert florists.

## INTERCONTINENTAL CHENNAI MAHALIPURAM RESORT

The InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort exhibits ultra-luxury with its simplistic approach. Located by the Bay of Bengal, it is a confluence of cultures rooted in the glorious history and heritage of Mahabalipuram, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The discerning guest would be encouraged to unwind, and be pampered in the lap of luxury but within the underlying spirit of simplicity which also compliments with the rich yet understated culture of Chennai. Guests here can choose between Classic Rooms and Suits, and dine in some of the best places. Tao of Peng is the Chinese specialty restaurant which has an enigmatic pull and dishes out Chinese flavours that have been inspired by classic flavours of Hunan and Canton; The Gatsby Lounge is a celebration of the America in the 1920s, and



# Vietnam - Timeless Charm!



Ha Long Bay

Vietnam is a land of unforgettable experiences. With breathtaking beauty and an incredible heritage, this land is a feast to the senses. Vietnam, an upcoming favourite, will soon be on the 'must-visit' list of every Indian traveller.



Vietnam and India have a longstanding historical and cultural link. The strong Hindu influences form a glorious past, makes Indians feel at home in a land that emits a natural warmth and captivates you with its rich lineage.

Vietnam has a number of must-visit sights, which any yearning Indian traveller will appreciate.

If you are looking to experience some of the world's most beautiful beaches or sea-side wonders, this is the place to be. Explore the limestone islands of Halong Bay by cruise, the reefs and coves of the



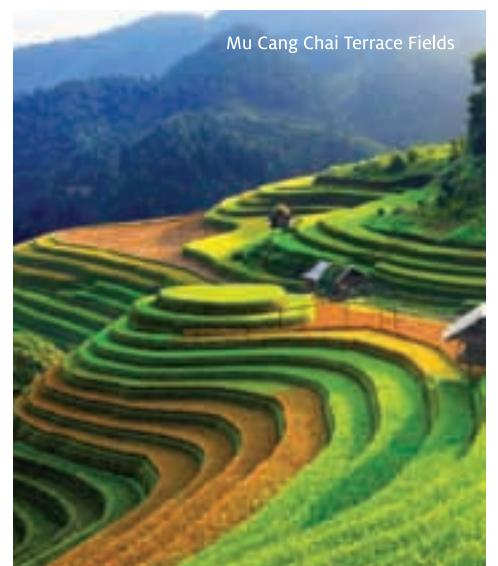
Presidential Palace In Hanoi

Cham and Con Dao Islands or enjoy the lively night-life in Nha Trang.

A strong French influence is evident through the elegant architectural gems in this country. Hanoi and Hoi An, even boast French quarters and Dalat is

another town with a glut of 'Oh la la, architecture français'. The Hoa Lo Prison Museum and the Hanoi Opera House are some of the stunning architectural masterpieces that echo the French influences of the past.

Northern Vietnam offers world class hiking opportunities. Breathtaking mountain paths that weave through tiers of rice fields, highland valleys and limestone mountains will give you a rush you have never felt before. Kayak through Halong Bay's towering limestone karsts, trek the Mai Chau area, and cycle through small towns for a truly authentic taste of Vietnam.



Mu Cang Chai Terrace Fields



Mr Ton Sinh Thanh  
HE Ambassador of the Socialist  
Republic of Vietnam in India

Vietnam is home to eight UNESCO world heritage sites, well-preserved historic relics and beautiful beaches. Indian travellers can find the affluence of Indian culture in Vietnam through the many Hindu temples all across the country. Also, a plethora of Indian restaurants in Vietnam bear testimony to a strong presence of Indian culinary culture there. Vietnam has all kinds of services to satisfy the need of foreign tourists, be it holidays, shopping, leisure, food, wedding, honeymoon or business and conference.

With 13,000 floral species and over 15,000 faunal species, Vietnam holds enormous potential for ecotourism. The Trang An Ecotourism Area is a complexity of caves, mountains, lakes and streams - an ecotourists' paradise!

Vietnam's coral reef ecosystems are another tantalizing attraction, which are closely located to top-end resorts established at Cat Ba Island, Co To, Bach Long Vi, Con Co, Hon Son Tra-Hai Van, Con Dao, Phu Quoc and the islands in Khanh Hoa province.

For those looking to experience the vibrancy of Vietnam, the week preceding Tet (Vietnamese New Year), paints Vietnam in the brightest of colours. A flower market is set up on Hang Luoc street and a two-week flower exhibition and competition, beginning on the first day of the New Year, takes place in Lenin Park near Bay Mau Lake.

Another spectacular festival is the Quang Trung festival which includes wrestling competitions, lion

dances and human chess that takes place on the 15th day of the first lunar month at Dong Da Mound.

Vietnam caters to the interests of a wide range of travel styles. Budding anthropologists can disappear into the stunning mountains, beach enthusiasts can explore the many sea-side wonders, trekkers and bikers can relish miles and miles of scenic trackway and national parks, chic travellers can shop for tailor-made suits in Hoi An's buzzing markets while

food-lovers can linger amongst countless aromatic street food cafés.

No matter how many times you've encountered Vietnam - this is one destination that continues to exceed expectations.

With a gamete of tourist attractions and a convenient visa application process by VFS Global, the beautiful land of Vietnam is poised for the influx of Indian travellers in the coming months.



Mr Vinay Malhotra  
COO - South Asia & DVPC,  
VFS Global

It is a privilege and honor for us at VFS Global to launch our service for the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in India. VFS Global pioneered the service of visa process outsourcing and commits to delivering a seamless and professional service. The opening of the new facilities in these states extends the convenience of the visa application process to the travel trade and travellers in India. We will continue to work together to deliver a professional and well-appointed end-to-end service.



## VFS Global offers Vietnam Visa Services in India at Visa Application Centres in Bengaluru, Chennai & Hyderabad\*

VFS Global is pleased to offer professional and seamless visa application services to visa applicants travelling to Vietnam by providing greater convenience and a comfortable experience through its Vietnam Visa Application Centre, now opened in Bengaluru. The Vietnam Visa Application Centres (VACs) are also present in Chennai & Hyderabad.

### Key Features of the VFS Global Vietnam Visa Application Centres

- Conveniently located, easily accessible and spacious premises
- Professional and responsive staff with local language capability, dedicated to handling visa queries and applications
- Photocopy and photo-booth facility
- In-VAC feedback forms
- Tracking of application status via website
- Convenient and secure doorstep delivery of visa documents through return courier facility
- Dedicated websites to provide information on visa categories, fees, and other application related details
- Call centres and email support to answer queries
- 100% secure handling of documents and personal information

### Vietnam Visa Application Centres

**Business Hours:** (Monday-Friday)

**Application Submission:** 0800hrs - 1200hrs | 1300hrs - 1500hrs | **Passport Collection:** 0800hrs - 1200hrs | 1300hrs - 1500hrs

**Email:** [infovietnam.southin@vfsglobal.com](mailto:infovietnam.southin@vfsglobal.com) | **Website:** [www.vfsglobal.com/Vietnam/India](http://www.vfsglobal.com/Vietnam/India)

#### Bengaluru:

**Address:** Unit No 304, Second Floor, Level -3, Prestige Atrium, No. 1, Central Street, Bangalore - 560001  
**Helpline:** 080 4545 7385

#### Chennai:

**Address:** Fagun Towers, Second floor, No 74, Ethiraj Salai, Egmore, Chennai – 600008  
**Helpline:** 044 4202 8930

#### Hyderabad:

**Address:** Shop No 203, Mekins Maheshwari Mayank Plaza, Greenlands, Ameerpet, Hyderabad – 500016  
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\*VFS Global is not involved in the decision of your visa; all applications will continue to be assessed and processed by the Embassy of Vietnam in New Delhi.

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the place offers guests live music to go along with American beer, bourbon and Prohibition styled cocktails; the hotel also offers Melting Pot: The Market Café, which is an amalgamation of three live kitchens which are continually churning the best cuisine from Europe, South Asia and Peninsular Indian cuisine.

Exclusive to InterContinental Meetings, the hotel's Insider Collection provides a range of delegate experiences that are rooted in the destination and draw on our unrivalled local knowledge to create truly engaging, personalised meetings and events.

### THE KHYBER HIMALAYAN RESORT & SPA

When looking for a winter wonderland, look no further than The Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa. Located in the world's highest ski lift, the Gulmarg Gondola, this astonishing 45-room resort is all you want in terms of luxury. The resort which is surrounded by meadows and forests was built in a style true to the architectural heritage of Kashmir. The hotel offers eighty rooms, four luxury cottages and Presidential Suite offering breathtaking views, with interiors designed with traditional Kashmiri crafts. Delectable dining options are available here at The Khyber; guests have a chance to choose from, Cloves, that brings the world of cuisine to your table, from delicious Kashmiri Wazwan to succulent dim sums and pastas; at Nouf, guests can relax at a spot that offers stunning views for casual dining, whether it is grilled meat or barbeques, guests are sure to get lost in the midst of their meal, given the location of the restaurant; Chaikash is the place for refined tea, coffees, tisanes and kahwah. The resort's very own Tea Lounge is an elegant place for a good private party; and then

finally Calabash, which is all about cigar and sheesha, here you have the chance to light up Partagas or even a Monte Cristos.

The resort can be the ideal place for a fantastic business meet, with more than 10,000 square feet of meeting, banquet and event space including the beautifully landscaped Paradeez gardens and an amphitheater, The Khyber is well set up.

### PARK HYATT, CHENNAI

The Park Hyatt Chennai located close to the serene Guindy National Reserve is a charming place for luxurious stay. The hotel exhibits beauty and sheer grace, through its flowing landscapes, beautiful lily pond and relaxing interiors. Park Hyatt Chennai has 201 luxurious rooms, including 20 suites with elegant interiors.

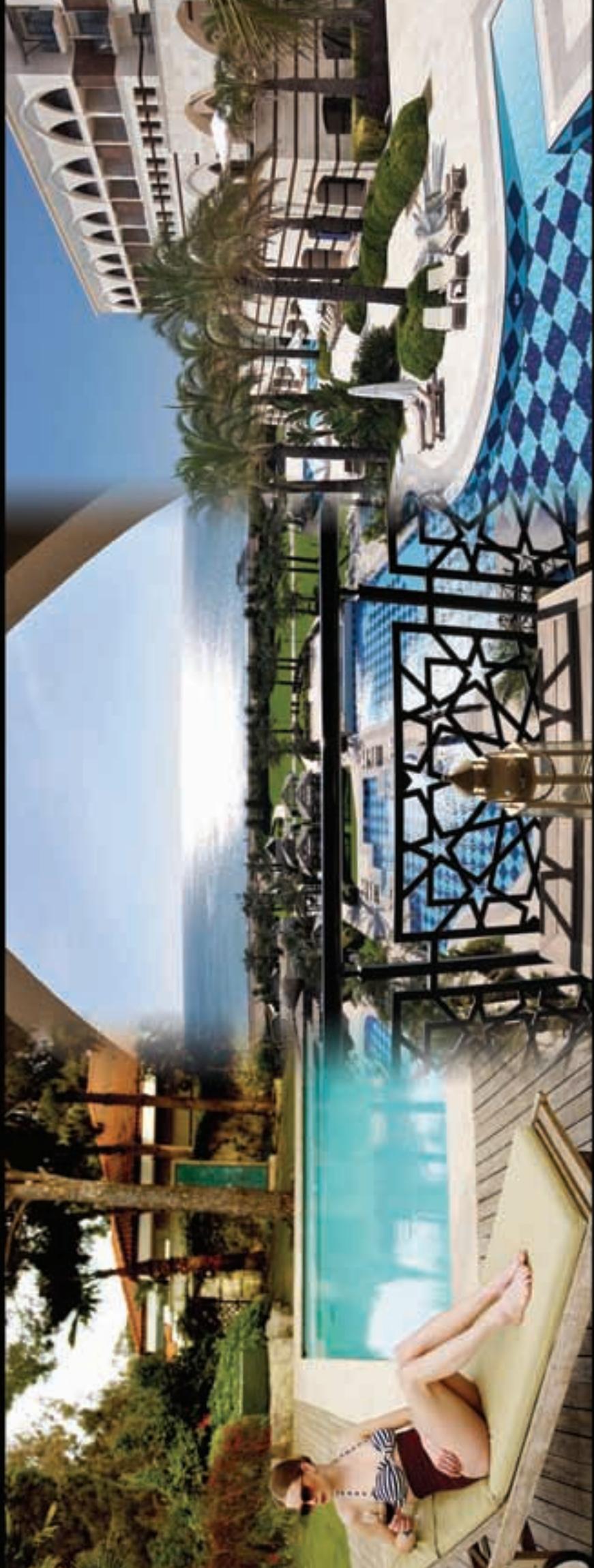
The hotel has various luxury dining options, such as, The Dining Room, whose floor to ceiling glass windows offer the serenity of the lily pond. The recipes here have been inspired from the local household kitchens, providing an authentic taste. A set menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner are available here; Beyond Madras at The Dining Room with its authentic South Indian décor, allows guests to relive their grandmother's style of cooking. The restaurant has a Tawa counter, an Appan counter, a stream zone and a beverage section; The Flying Elephant is a multi-cuisine restaurant with five live kitchens featuring Indian, Turkish, Teppan, Western and Southeast Asian cuisines.

The hotel also offers a function space of 10122sq.ft that is ideal for conferences, meetings, function space and business or personal gatherings. The Apartment Gallery at Park Hyatt Chennai is just the right place for everyone to host their events in Chennai.





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# RELAXING RETREAT

Located in McLeod Ganj, Fortune Park Moksha is the ideal retreat for travellers looking to go far from the madding crowd

## TT BUREAU

**F**ortune Park Moksha, McLeod Ganj, nestled in the picturesque Strawberry Hills with magnificent view of the snow-capped Dhauladhar mountain range and the pristine Dharamshala valley, is an ideal retreat for travellers looking for leisure and peace.

McLeod Ganj, named after Lord David McLeod, who was the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, is a scenic hill station that was explored by the British in the 1850s. The modern day sanctuary of spirituality – McLeod Ganj, is famously the home of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

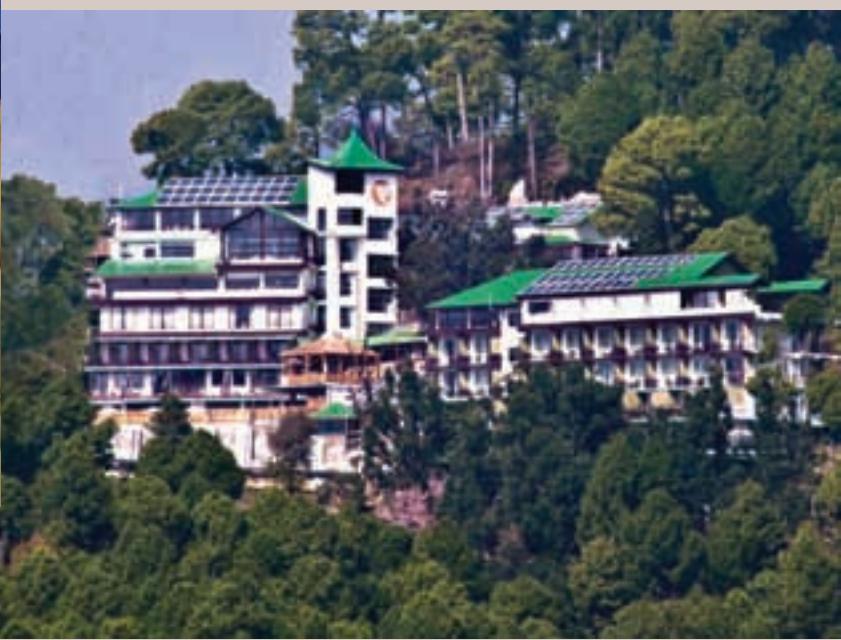
Every year, this picturesque Himalayan town welcomes as many Buddhist tourists as well as adventure enthusiasts. From treks set in its serene natural beauty to adventure sports, and a thriving arts and crafts bazaar, this place has something for everyone. The hotel is located 24km from Gaggal Airport,

Dharamshala, and provides guests an easy access to all the main tourist attractions in and around McLeod Ganj, 6km from the Main Square and 6.5km from The Dalai Lama Temple. Unique for its natural abundance, Fortune Park Moksha is surrounded by pine trees and deodar forests, forming a perfect backdrop for a stay in the lap of nature.

The hotel is spread over three sections – White Mountain, Rifle Horn and Christmas, named after the famous peaks of the Dhauladhar Range. Fortune Park Moksha features 59 well-appointed rooms, each designed with careful attention to detail with its own charm, offering an ideal retreat for travellers looking for relaxation and peace.

## RELAX AND REJUVENATE

At the Wellness Centre, guests can relax at any of its four spas



treatment rooms – Aura, Ananda, Mandala and Nirvana. Fortune Park Moksha allows guests to rejuvenate at these spas which offer body treatments, holistic therapies, facials and foot care therapies and instant indulgence massages for removing stress and strains. Guests can also head to the hotel's steam or sauna rooms or work out in the gymnasium. One can also simply unwind by lazing around by the swimming pool. Children can enjoy a splash in a separate pool for children. For an exciting array of recreation facilities, one must also check-out the Champion's Zone.

#### DINE AND WINE

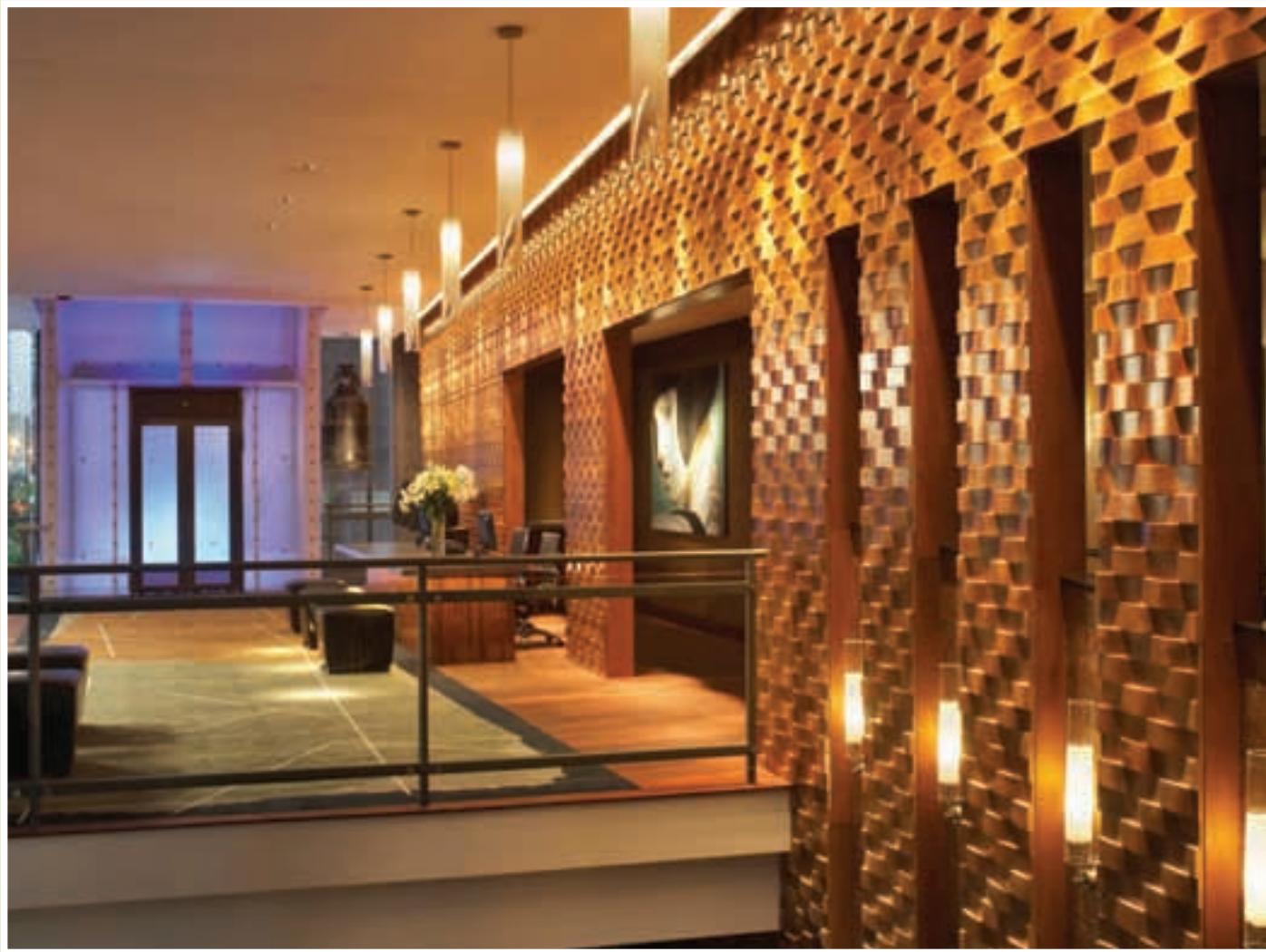
Orchid – the multi-cuisine restaurant has an array of culinary delights and sumptuous buffets that makes this place an ideal venue for an enjoyable lunch or a relaxed dinner. One can also choose from the a la carte menu and relish the food of their choice.

Fortune Deli is a contemporary outlet serving mouth-watering delicacies with a wide range of light snacks, cakes, pastries, chocolates and breads coated with an irresistible aroma. While Neptune Bar & Lounge is an ideal venue to relax and meet friends and business associates in a contemporary and relaxing setting, offering excellent selection of spirits, wines and beers.

#### MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Set in the lap of the Himalayas, Fortune Park Moksha provides a picturesque venue for meetings, conferences and social get-togethers. Backed by new age infrastructure and professional support, the hotel offers two banqueting areas, namely, Dhauladhar Hall, which offers 150sq.m of well suited venue for meetings or social functions and Pine & Peak banqueting terrace, that offers 225sq.m of perfect reception setting.





# DANA: THE ART OF GIVING

Dana Hotel and Spa is a celebration of the human spirit, in the form of its luxurious service and divine philosophy

## KAMAL GILL

located in downtown Chicago's River North neighborhood, Dana Hotel and Spa is the ultimate destination for luxury stay and relaxing spa therapy. The hotel is known for hosting the largest concentration of art galleries in the United States outside of Manhattan.

Apart from the art galleries, there is the Magnificent Mile, one of the hottest shopping streets in the US. The hotel is close to some of the best restaurants, original and Broadway Theatre, and exciting nightlife.

Tucked within the frenetic city that surrounds it, this luxury boutique hotel and spa evokes a vibe that isn't about seeing and being seen – only about living in the moment. At the Dana Hotel and Spa, the idea is to give to its guests, and it is this fundamental, yet profound principle that is practiced daily. The word 'Dana,' translates from Sanskrit to mean, "The pleasure of giving." Dana Hotel and Spa has 216-room, with a

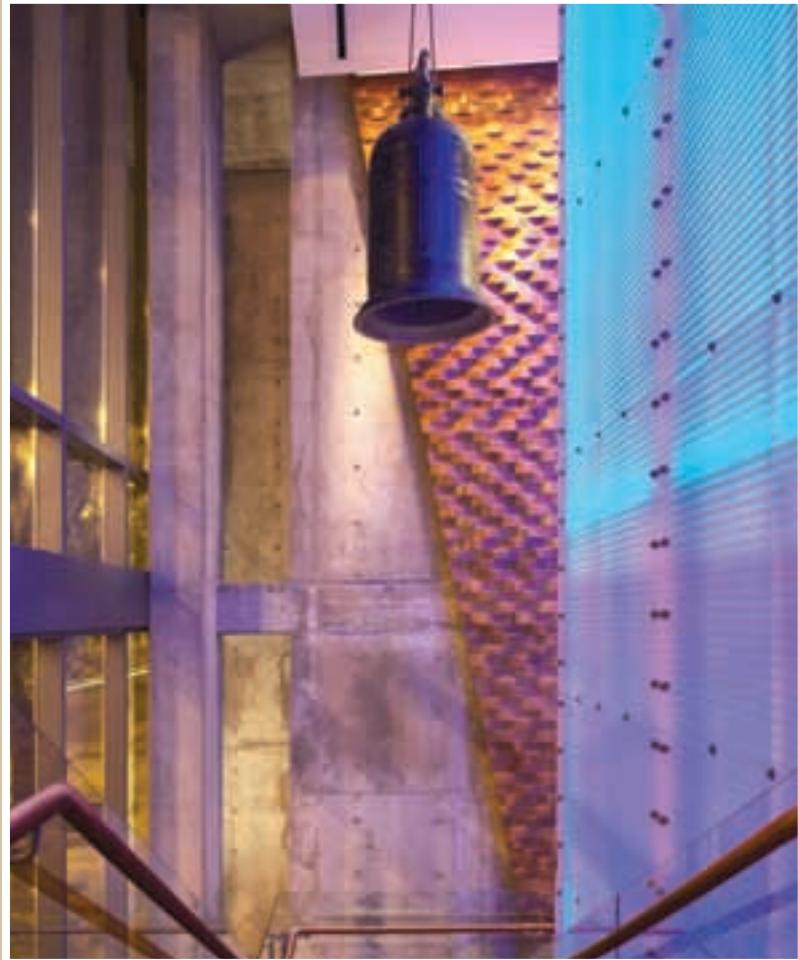
space that is bathed in natural light – open, airy and inviting. Since its opening in 2008, it has become a local gathering place, community landmark, and one of the most revered boutique hotels in the city. Here, passion for hospitality inspires genuine service.

## STAY

Dana Hotel and Spa has been designed for living; natural, sustainable woods, warm earth tones and flawless details are common threads found throughout. Guestrooms feature floor to ceiling windows, spa inspired showers, reasonable priced honor bar and private wine reserve. Tranquil suites feature Italian stone vanities, a two-person shower, twin, imported bath fixtures, glass tiling, and floating stone benches, all skillfully designed to maximise spatial function. Utopian suites offer the same sensual aesthetics with the added highlight of a radial

view of Chicago's famed State Street. The Nirvana Penthouse Suite offers a full Kinesis system by Technogym, penthouse views complete with floor to ceiling windows, Sub-Zero and Wolfe appliances, large soaking tub, and as well as adaptable space which allow our guests to add up to two additional entourage guestrooms transforming Nirvana from a one bedroom to a three bedroom suite.

The hotel has additional amenities, such as, 24-hour room service, complimentary wireless high speed Internet, 24-hours fitness centre, complimentary business center, Spa at Dana, Vertigo Sky Lounge, Freestyle Food and Drink, valet parking, valet laundry, all Dana guestrooms and suites which include rain showerheads, 300 thread count pure Egyptian cotton sheets, Serta Enrapture Euro top Mattresses, and much more.



## SPA

At Dana, personalised service blends with modern technology and luxurious furnishings to create a luxury experience unlike any other boutique hotel in Chicago. Dana's philosophy of wellness and individuality continues through its Spa. Guests experience peace and rejuvenation in its tranquil setting, where attentive and individualised service is delivered with exceptional care. By honouring and nurturing guests, a new sense of energy and calm is created. Spa at Dana has built a reputation of offering and inviting services tailored to meet the unique needs of guests.

Spa at dana is very proud to continually be named to the most popular "Best of" lists locally and nationally, such as Allure Magazine's Best of the Best Spa List in 2014, and "Best Spa: Massage" by Chicago magazine in the August 2014 "Best Of" issue.

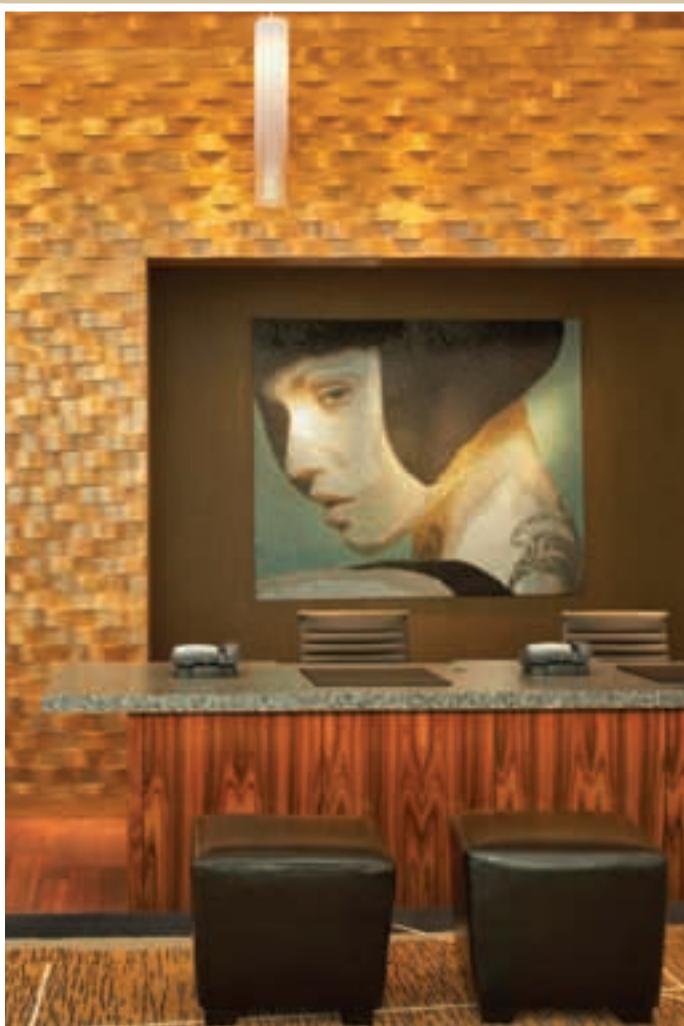
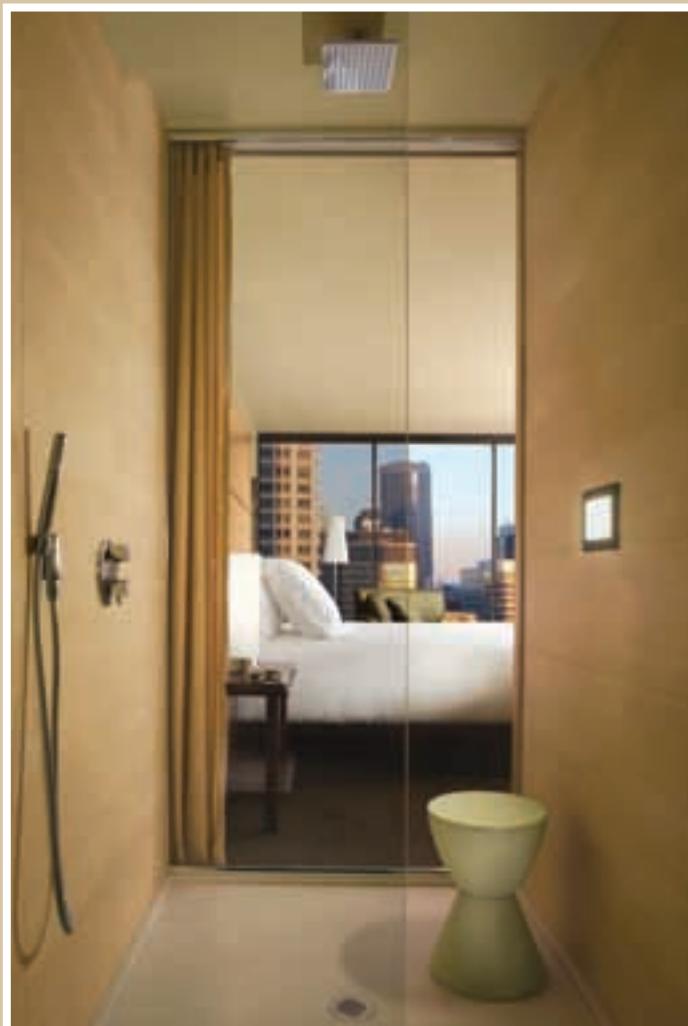
## DINING AND NIGHTLIFE

Dana hotel and spa is also known for the nightlife that is brought to the guests and locals alike. Guests can find, Freestyle Food and Drink located at street level, and overlooking the famous State Street featuring American cuisine with a global twist. It is Dana's belief that the best dining experiences are the shared experiences with family and friends, so many of the dishes come as small plates to provide the opportunity for sharing and sampling a plethora of taste sensations. The patio at Freestyle has also become a very popular destination for hotel and local guests of the four-legged persuasion – with special doggie packages and homemade offerings for those special guests.

After dark, 26 stories above the city, Vertigo Sky Lounge comes alive. A multi-award winning rooftop lounge, Vertigo is known for its astounding city views and craft cocktail experiences. It is by far the

most ideal place for guests to unwind after a long day, or to share a nightcap following a long night. Vertigo's indoor/outdoor rooftop is the only one that remains open year round. Guests flock to experience Vertigo's Fire and Ice in the winter, wrapping themselves in faux fur blankets and robes to cuddle near the dancing fire pit. An ice bar glows in the background to set the cool arctic vibe.

Dana Hotel and Spa also has the right space required for events or meetings. Aspire, a 1,200sq.ft multi-purpose room that seats up to 100 and can be divided into two separate rooms is just the kind of place for meetings and events. Invent seats up to 14 people, and Think and Create seat up to 10 people each. Both are perfect for more intimate gatherings. Dana's meeting rooms are appointed with floor to ceiling windows, multi-line connections to high-speed Internet access, Wi-Fi, telephones, and state-of-the-art audio/visual equipment.



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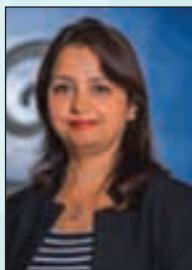
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# MOVEMENTS

**MONICA SURI** has been appointed as the first lady, General Manager at Starwood South Asia. Passionate about the hospitality industry she began her journey as a Hotel Management Trainee, with Taj Hotels and Resorts, in Food & Beverage service department and since then there has been no looking back for her. She has been associated with major brands in the hotel industry, having worked at various challenging levels.



**HARPREET VOHRA** has been recently designated as the General Manager at Park Plaza Gurgaon. With over 17 years of experience in the hospitality industry and a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from Bhopal University along with Hotel Management, Vohra has worked with several leading brands such as Hyatt International, Taj Hotels, Golkonda Resorts and Angsana Spa, The Lalit New Delhi and Hyatt Regency in Mumbai. Prior to this, he was working at Radisson Blu Agra.



**RISHABH JAIN** has been appointed as the Associate Director of Sales at Crowne Plaza Jaipur. A post graduate in business management from ITM Business School Mumbai, he has been associated with Taj, Starwood and The Park. In his current position, he will be responsible for business development, sales operations and ensuring the hotel is set up for success.



**ADITYA SINGH** has been appointed as the Director Sales and Marketing at Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi. In his current position he will be responsible for spearheading the Room Sales, Catering Sales, Marketing and Revenue divisions in addition to building and honing a dynamic sales team. With over 19 years of experience in the industry, he has worked with several renowned brands.



**MOHAMMAD SHOEB** has been designated as the General Manager at Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Dwarka. Shoeb has been associated with the hospitality industry for over 25 years and has completed his Post Graduate Diploma in Tourism & Hotel Management. He has worked with several renowned brands in the hospitality industry, which includes ITC WelcomGroup, InterContinental Hotels Group among many others.



**SAMIR KANT AVASTHI** has been appointed as the General Manager of DoubleTree by Hilton Gurgaon. Avasthi has over 12 years of experience in the hospitality industry and prior to this he was with The Explorers – a destination management company based in New Delhi. Avasthi joined Hilton Worldwide in June 2014 as Director of Sales – ISO and successfully led the company's effort to gain greater share of business from the Indian market.



**VIKASH PRASAD** has been delegated as the Executive Chef at Crowne Plaza Jaipur. In his last position, Prasad headed the The Leela Mumbai as their Executive Chef. In his current position he will be overseeing the complete culinary offerings and ensuring the hotel Food & Beverage outlets are opened on time and set up for success.



**ROSHAN RAJPAL** has been designated as the Executive Assistant Manager for Marketing at Novotel Hyderabad Airport. Rajpal comes with an experience of 24 years in the industry and is a graduate of Accor's International Hospitality Program. At her current position, she will be responsible for overseeing the marketing and sales activities and making sure that it runs smoothly.



# AVIATION



## CIVIL AIR TERMINAL AT CHANDIGARH UNVEILED



Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India inaugurating the New Civil Air Terminal at Chandigarh Airport along with other dignitaries Soulful

The new Civil Air Terminal at Chandigarh Airport, a joint venture company by the name Chandigarh International Airport Ltd with participation from AAI, Government of Punjab and Government of Haryana, has been dedicated to the Nation by Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India in the august presence of Kaptan Singh Solanki, Governor of Punjab & Haryana and Administrator of UT of Chandigarh, P Ashok Gajapathi Raju, Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Parkash Singh Badal, Chief Minister of Punjab, Manohar Lal, Chief Minister of Haryana, Sukhbir Singh Badal, Deputy Chief Minister of Punjab and other dignitaries. The Prime Minister took a walk of the new facility and unveiled the plaque in the Arrival area of the building.

The New Civil Air Terminal is capable of handling 1600 passengers during peak hours. The terminal building is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities such as check-in counters, VIP Lounge and Car Parking. On the air side of the airport, Apron and taxi track have been constructed. Apron is capable of parking eight aircrafts comfortably. The facility will immensely contribute towards tourism in the state in particular and give impetus to economic development of the region.

## CHINA SOUTHERN AIRLINES TO OPERATE BETWEEN DELHI AND GUANGZHOU

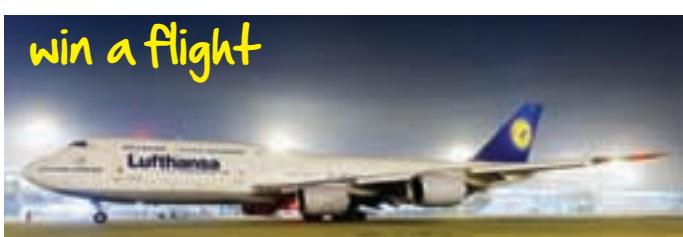
China Southern Airlines will be introducing B787 aircrafts on their evening departures between Delhi and Guangzhou, effective December 9, 2015. This will be the second change after the airlines decided to replace the B737 aircraft with A330 aircraft effective October 25, 2015, till December 8, 2015, for their evening departures.

The China Southern Airlines B787 aircrafts feature a classic 3-cabin layout with a total of 226 seats, with 4 in First, 24 in Business and 198 in Economy class. The seats in first and business class can all recline 180 degrees to lie flat, while all first-class seats feature an independent laptop power source, noise-cancelling headphones, a satellite telephone, and a 17-inch LCD HDTV, allowing travellers to enjoy a world of their own that is spacious, private, and quiet.

Economy class uses the same seats found in China Southern Airlines' A380 economy class, providing each passenger with an individual 9-inch TV for their personal use. The luggage compartments offer an excellent user experience and the extra-large windows allow passengers in every seat to appreciate the amazing view outside.



Fliers on board the flight can enjoy both the finest East Asian cuisine and the best Western food while cruising at 10,000m. The authentic and distinctive Chinese meals and meticulously prepared Western meals mean that there will always be something to suit the taste.



## CELEBRATE DIWALI WITH LUFTHANSA

Celebrate the spirit of Diwali with Lufthansa Diwali Surprise. Just one simple wish has the power to spread love and light across the world and win a flight to meet the one you love. If you win, your friend could win too. For more information and to participate for the Lufthansa Diwali Surprise, visit the official Lufthansa page.

## JET AIRWAYS INTRODUCES 'SEAT SELECT' OPTION ACROSS FLIGHTS

Jet Airways recently announced a new customer-centric initiative, providing guests the opportunity to reserve their preferred seats well before their flight departure date. Guests can now reserve their preferred seats on domestic and select international routes for a nominal charge at the time of making a flight booking on the airline website [jetairways.com](http://jetairways.com), the Jet Airways mobile app or through a travel agent. In case the flight booking has already been made, guests can also use the 'Manage Booking' facility on [jetairways.com](http://jetairways.com) and mobile app to reserve their preferred seats. This feature is available only on flights operated by Jet Airways' Boeing 737 aircraft. This facility is complimentary for JetPrivilege Platinum and Gold members. All guests travelling in Première can pre-reserve their seats at no cost.

Gaurang Shetty, Senior Vice-President, Commercial, Jet Airways, said, "Jet Airways constantly explores new opportunities for enhancing the experience of our guests at all stages of their travel with us. The Seat Select option provides Jet Airways guests another means to plan their travel as per their choice with greater ease and convenience. We are confident that this latest initiative from Jet Airways will prove to be extremely popular with our guests."



## VISITBRITAIN AND TURKISH AIRLINES LAUNCH BRITAIN-SHAANDAAR CAMPAIGN



VisitBritain along with Turkish Airlines as their travel partner launched their latest Bollywood Britain – Shaandaar campaign, carrying forward their Bollywood association in India. This campaign is in association with the Indian Film Industry's prominent film label, Dharma Productions. Shahid Kapoor and Alia Bhatt, who star in the much awaited rom-com Shaandaar, were seen at the launch event promoting the film's alliance with destination Britain and the locations where the film has been shot extensively.

Bollywood Britain – Shaandaar, a contest based campaign, launches the TVC with a strong digital focus in association with sponsor partner Turkish Airlines. The airline is offering two Couple Business Class flights to Britain for the lucky winners to go explore the stunning British countryside.

Turkish Airlines General Managers, Mehmet Akay from Mumbai and Ozer Guler from New Delhi, said, "We are delighted to be the airline partner of choice, for the VisitBritain – Shaandaar campaign. Britain is one of the most picturesque places in the world; an ideal romantic get-away with its scenic beauty, food and nightlife. Turkish Airlines flies

daily to Britain from across 109 countries via Istanbul, with quick 3 hour connectivity."

VisitBritain's Regional Manager for Asia Pacific & Middle East, Sumathi Ramanathan adds, "We are very pleased to be working with this movie and the fantastic star cast in it. We are honoured to have partnered with Dharma productions for this campaign."

## ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES WINS CAPA AIRLINE OF THE YEAR AWARD



Ethiopian Group CEO Tewolde GebreMariam receiving the award from CAPA Executive Chairman Peter Harbison

Ethiopian Airlines has won the CAPA Airline of the Year Award, one of the top airline awards, at the 2015 CAPA Aviation Awards for Excellence, at Helsinki as part of CAPA's 2015 World Aviation Summit.

Tewolde GebreMariam, Group CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, remarked while receiving the award at a gala dinner, "I am humbled to be honoured with this prestigious award of CAPA Airline of the Year which is a demonstration and recognition of our fast and continuous growth, outstanding performance and our Pan-African stance in bringing Africa together and closer to the world. I wish to thank CAPA and the panel of judges for recognising our contribution in serving Africa and our contribution to the development of the African Aviation.

"Ethiopian has doubled in size since the beginning of the decade while most other major African carriers have grown only slightly or not at all, successfully expanding its hub operation. It has been consistently profitable over this period while most of its competitors in Africa have struggled financially in recent years." said Peter Harbison, Executive Chairman of CAPA.

Ethiopian Airlines  
to commence  
its double daily  
operations Addis  
Ababa – Mumbai  
– Addis Ababa,  
effective  
October 26, 2015.

## AIR INDIA TO DEBUT SAN FRANCISCO-DELHI NONSTOP



Air India, national flag carrier of India, will start its first-ever nonstop flights between San Francisco and Delhi from December 2, 2015. Air India officials said the airline plans to launch service with three flights per week, on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday, using Boeing 777 long-range aircrafts. Since the flight will connect to Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Hyderabad, in-bound visitors from all these destinations will have more air choice to visit San Francisco, which is one of the most preferred cities for Indian travellers travelling to the West coast of the United States.

"We are pleased with the announcement of the new route by Air India from New Delhi to San Francisco. San Francisco is a major gateway city in USA specially the west coast. We are confident that this new service will not only enhance travel and trade between these two cities but also connect other key cities in the region. With this enhanced air connectivity, we hope to welcome even more Indian travelers," says Joe D'Alessandro, President and CEO of the San Francisco Travel Association.

"I am excited that Air India has selected SFO for their newest route in the United States," said Airport Director John L. Martin. "This service firmly establishes our Airport as the premier gateway to Asia and the Subcontinent, and provides an unparalleled level of global access to our guests."

Tourism, San Francisco's largest industry, generated record-breaking numbers in 2014. More than 18 million people visited the destination, spending in excess of \$10.67 billion. More than 87,000 jobs are supported by tourism in San Francisco. The same year, the city witnessed 149,000 Indian travellers as India ranks among the top ten international markets, in terms of arrivals as well as of spending per visitor.

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# EXPLORER



# FESTIVE SPIRIT

The incredible spirit of India keeps the vibrancy of the nation alive, there is never a moment of dullness in this vast nation, which celebrates numerous festivals throughout the year

## TT BUREAU

India is probably the only place where the air of festivity is year-round. The credit goes to India's diverse culture which makes it possible for everyone to celebrate life in their own unique way. Festivals in India are not mere occasions, but a testament to the nation's rich social, religious and cultural history. Here are some of the major Indian festivals that celebrate the divine Indian spirit.

### RATH YATRA

Associated with Lord Jagannath, Rath Yatra (Chariot Festival) is celebrated on the second day in the fortnight of Ashadha month. A much revered festival in the state of Odisha, it marks the annual visit of Lord Jagannath to Gundicha Temple – his aunt's house. The deity of Jagannath is accompanied by that of brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra, who are taken to the Gundicha Temple in a rath or chariot. They remain there for nine whole days, after which they return to the main temple. The return journey is known as, Bahuda Yatra. The celebrations are concentrated on the first and last day by the general public who throng the streets to get a glimpse of the Lord, which is considered to be very auspicious. The festival not only attracts Indians from all parts of India, but also visiting tourists from abroad. Rath Yatra is mostly celebrated during the month of June or July.





## DIWALI

Kumbh Mela is regarded as one of world's largest religious festival. The extravagant affair is held every 12 years on the banks of 'Sangam'—the meeting place of three holy rivers of India, Ganga, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati. Every 4 years the festival alternates between Haridwar, Ujjain, Nasik and Allahabad. Apart from its mythical history, the festival holds a special spiritual significance. A huge congregation of pilgrims come from far off places as the festival marks the direction to wisdom. Various clans of sages assemble at Kumbh and the attending devotees consider it as a rare opportunity to seek blessings from them. The uniqueness of this festival lies in the fact that it doesn't belong to any particular religious group. Though it is largely celebrated by various Hindu communities, the basic philosophy of this festival is applicable to everyone. Kumbh Mela is a celebration of the eternal forces of nature which encompasses all.



## DUSSEHRA

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



## ONAM

Onam is a major Indian festival celebrated in the Indian state of Kerala for 10 days during the Malayalam month of Chingam (August – September). The festival is celebrated to commemorate Lord Vishnu, while it also represents homecoming of the mythical king Mahabali. The origin of the festival is pre-historic and this makes it a unique event to attend. Onam is also considered to be a harvest festival and is celebrated to bring prosperity. The festival is all about vibrancy and richness and is celebrated amidst rituals, traditional cuisine, dance and music. The historic Thrikkakara temple in Kochi City is the main centre of the festival as the place is believed to be the ancient capital of King Mahabali. Another major feature of the festival is Pookolam – a delicate work of art that involves making floral carpets using flowers found in Kerala. A competition is also organised to gratify the best work of art. Other important features of Onam are ambrosial Onasadya, snake boat race and exotic Kaikottikali dance.

## HORNBILL FESTIVAL

The beauty of Nagaland is unprecedented, with its rolling green hills and mist laden sky, the state is just the right place for a holiday.

Nagaland is also known for its famous tribes, and to get both these experiences in one, Hornbill Festival should be visited.

The annual Hornbill Festival of Nagaland brings together some 16 odd tribes who showcase their culture and traditions amidst vibrant fanfare. The aim of the festival is to display the tribal culture of Nagaland.

The festival includes a display of arts and crafts, food, herbal medicines, flowers, along with beauty contests, Naga wrestling, traditional archery, tribal song and dance, music concert, etc.

It is a celebration of the state of Nagaland as a whole, coming under a single roof. Needless to say, this one should not be missed.



## **BIHU**

Bihu is a cultural festival of Assam and is celebrated not only in India but all over the world. The main feature of Bihu is the Bihu Dance, a treat for the eyes. Bihu is not a singular affair as it encompasses three different festivals – the Bohag Bihu, Kongali Bihu and Bhogali Bihu. The Bohag Bihu is regarded as the most popular festival among all the Bihus.

It marks the onset of Asamese New Year and coming of the Spring. As part of the celebration, farmers prepare paddy fields for cultivation and women make traditional cuisine called, Pitha. Bhogali Bihu glorifies the significance of cleanliness to attract goodness, hence, during this festival people wear new clothes and clean their household. Kongali Bihu is celebrated in mid October. This festival doesn't stress on merriment but is mostly about protecting the growing paddy fields.



## **PUSHKAR MELA**

Pushkar Fair is an annual five day festival held in the town of Pushkar in the state of Rajasthan. It is the world's largest camel and livestock fair which is also locally known as Pushkar Ka Mela. The festival is not only a major tourist attraction, but also a melting pot of cultural assimilation. During the festival, various aspects of rich Rajasthani culture is highlighted through folk dances, music and traditional exhibitions.

Pushkar Fair also has a spiritual significance, as pilgrims from all over India gather to take a dip in the holy Pushkar Lake. Legend has it that the water contains mythical power which can cure ailments and bestow salvation.

At dusk, tourists can experience the beautiful Deepdaan Ceremony. As a part of the ceremony, hundreds of clay lamps are lit and set afloat on the sacred Pushkar Lake to seek divine blessings.





# IN THE CRADLE OF HISTORY

Turkey has a major presence in world history and its various old cities are proof of this

## TT BUREAU

**O**n the crossroads of cultures lay the historical Turkey. Located in the heart of European, Asian and African continents, the nation is a geographical and historical splendour. Of all its fascinating surprises, one of Turkey's most interesting charms lies in its historical cities. Turkey's history boasts a 10,000 year old civilisation that was once the hub for ancient cultures from, Sumer, Babylon and Assyria. It was here in Turkey that the unique Anatolian civilisation was born, which fascinates the western world even to this day. The land of Turkey also has a great cultural significance and its influence in the various other cultures and civilisations of the world is unprecedented. Here are some ancient cities of Turkey which has had a direct or indirect influence on the history and culture of the world.

## TROY

The historical city of Troy has been the subject of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey. It is one of the richest cities of the ancient times and is considered to be a great tourist attraction. Troy, which is located in the heart of Canakkale province was founded 5,000 years ago and is today part of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Troy is a rare gem of world history that has been inhabited by settlers for more than 3,000 years. The city hosts a large reserve of historical monuments, and is a real treat for history enthusiasts.

## APHRODISIAS

The city of Aphrodisias was built in 5,000 BC and is dedicated to Aphrodite, the Goddess of love and beauty in the Greek mythology. The city was established during the famous Roman era and is one of the most important settlements of the current times. Aphrodisias holds the magnificent

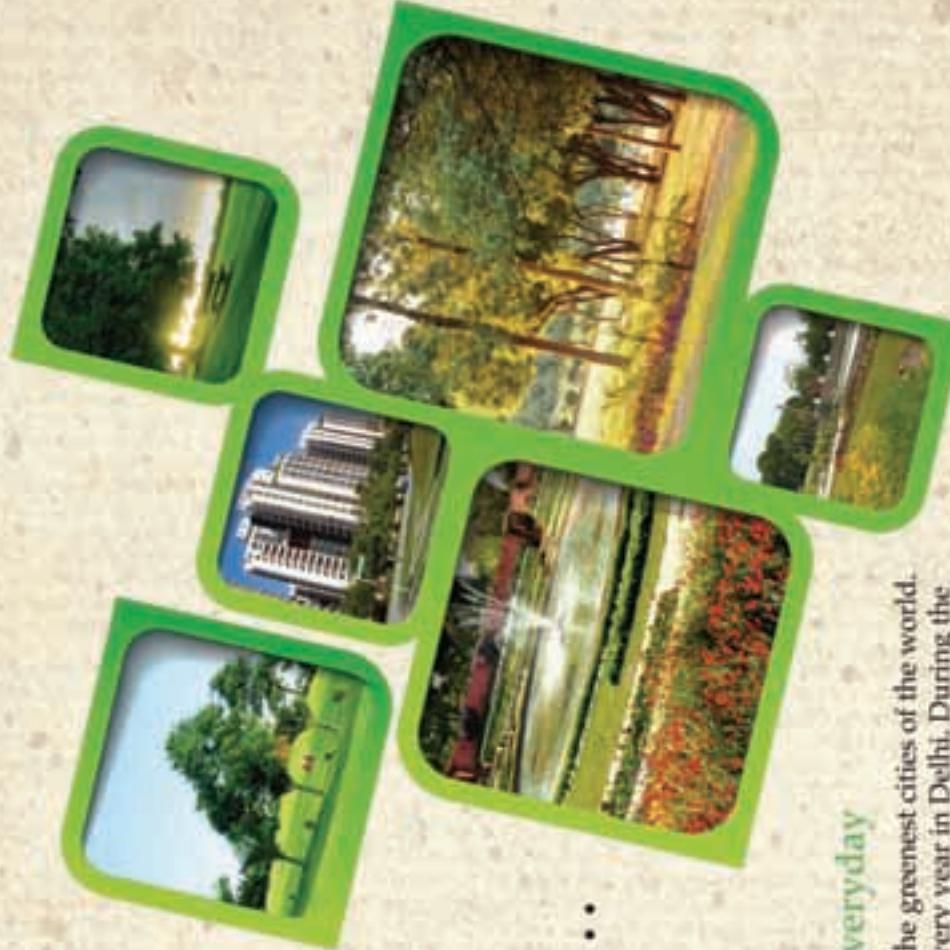
Temple of Aphrodite, which is a well documented proof of past glories. Being the centre of art, sculpture, architecture and worship, the city is one of the most important ones in Turkey. This city today also has an archaeological museum.

## KNIDOS

Located on the edge of the Datca Peninsula, Knidos is located in the famous Mugla province which is famous for its natural wonders. Another hub of art, architecture and science, Knidos is known for one of the Seven Wonders of the World – The Lighthouse of Alexandria. Knidos is a beautiful place with is a seaside resort, attracting tourists every year. Knidos is home to some magnificent ruins, such as, the Temple of Apollo., besides being known for its round temples, sacred groves, the necropolis, hillside houses and a large ancient graveside.

## DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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A legacy of 57 years...  
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An unwavering effort of DDA has made Delhi one of the greenest cities of the world. Over 5 lakh saplings of trees and shrubs are planted every year in Delhi. During the last year, many acres of land was converted into green zones. In DDA's journey of 57 years, about 5050 hectares of greens have been developed in the form of various parks, lawns, children's corners and many more, acting as the lungs of the city.



# THE SKY OVER BUSAN

A bustling port city, Busan is the South Korean equivalent to Bach's symphony

ARKA ROY CHOWDHURY

A breezy September morning greeted me at the Gimhae International Airport in the western end of Busan – South Korea's second largest city. And at that very instant I felt what the Portuguese refer to as, Saudade – a deep longing, a sense of nostalgia, like the great clouds looming over my head on the Busan sky are looking down to forsake me. And just like that, Busan became my own.

The airport taxi soon arrived and before long, I was crossing a great cluster of toy-like buildings, with an unknown mountain range spread on its back. The cheerful K-Pop music coming from the radio was quite a contrast to my Busan-mood, a musical stigma to my romantic Saudade. On asking the driver about my hotel, I was told that we weren't far, and right when I was getting used to the K-Pop, he decided to stop. Cheerfully he informed me, that my hotel is very close to the main tourist area – Haeundae, a beautiful locality by the beach which attracts thousands of tourists during summer. I later learned that it has also been hosting the annual Busan International Film Festival every year.

After eating at a beach-side cafe, my curiosity about the mountain range which I had earlier seen from the taxi, led me to Geumjeongsan, on the slope of which lies the 1,300 years old Beomeosa Buddhist Temple. I was told by the local guide who had a fairly clear idea of the English language that a monk named Ui Sang had built it in the 18th year of King Munmu, who reigned from 661-681. Standing there, far from

the madding crowd, I surely was lost, while a patch of Busan cloud was now hovering above me. The temple area had a lot to explore, as it holds numerous cultural relics, like the Pagoda and the main hall Daeungjeon.

Around the same area is a magnificent mountain fortress, considered the largest. It was built before 1700, and was destroyed during the Japanese occupation. It is locally known as, Geumjeongsanseong.

In the evening I headed straight to Haeundae Beach, which was pretty much crowded. My guide had earlier informed me that I was lucky as the beach would soon be closed until June next year. I picked a white sandy spot to lie, from where I could see weekenders making merry. It was rather interesting to note the hair-cuts of Koreans, but soon, I dozed. I ended the day after eating at Changseondong Meokja Golmok.

I reached the Taejongdae Resort Park on the second day. Once again, the Busan sky was playing the role of a romantic, and from the resort park, it was a stupendous view. A natural park of Busan, Taejongdae has magnificent cliffs facing the open sea on the southernmost tip of island of Yeongdo-gu. I spent quite a lot of time there, after which I went shopping.

By evening I was back at the airport holding my duffle bag watching the Busan sky for the last time. It had turned dark now, and as I stepped inside the airport, outside the rain poured down on the city. I then learnt that my flight has been delayed, and in a sudden change of events, I think the Busan sky was raining Saudade for me.



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## MESMERISING MAHARASHTRA

The Maharashtra Government's latest effort in putting Maharashtra on the global map saw the successful implementation of the Maharashtra International Travel Mart

### ARJUN GILL

Taking a giant step towards a promising travel and tourism industry in Maharashtra, the Maharashtra Government organised the 'Maharashtra International Travel Mart' (MITM), which was launched on 28 September and concluded on 29 September 2015. Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, launched the Government's ambitious programme in Mumbai in a grand ceremony, amid international guests of travel and tourism industry from various countries.

The inauguration ceremony was lit up with superstar Amitabh Bachchan and eminent dignitaries like Dr Mahesh Sharma (Union Minister of State for Culture, Tourism (Independent Charge) and Civil Aviation), Vinod Tawade, Minister of Education and Culture, Government of Maharashtra, Prof Ram Shinde, Minister of State, Tourism, Home

(Rural), Public Health, Government of Maharashtra, Poonam Mahajan, MP, Parag M Alavani, MLA, Valsa Nair Singh, Principal Secretary, Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, Maharashtra, Paraag Jain Nainuttia, Managing Director, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation and Satish Soni, Joint Managing Director, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation.

In the first ever edition of the MITM – a strategic initiative to take Maharashtra's tourism globally to international buyers and sellers of tourism industry, the Government of Maharashtra and Tourism Department vowed to offer 'the ease of doing business' in the tourism sector of Maharashtra to global investors.

Citing the importance of bringing the world closer to Maharashtra and empowering communities socially by

boosting tourism, the Chief Minister announced a slew of reformative decisions to make Maharashtra's tourism sector vibrant. With a view to encourage the hospitality industry to set up hotels in Maharashtra, he further announced that the State would soon start giving online permissions to the hotel industry.

Steps have also been taken to promote the city of Mumbai as an international event destination; the Chief Minister stated that the Government would soon earmark locations in the city where events and fairs can be held without seeking previous permissions. Leveraging the existence of the film industry in Mumbai and for boosting it further, it was announced that for shooting a film in Mumbai and anywhere in Maharashtra, one would need to apply online and the permission would be granted in seven days.

The Maharashtra International

Travel Mart is a flagship global tourism promotion platform conceived by the Department of Tourism, Maharashtra State, to attract buyers and sellers from the global tourism industry to explore common growth opportunities in the robust tourism prospects of Maharashtra. A single forum of MITM

witnessed an exciting response from the global tourism stakeholders with more than 250 registrations coming in from hoteliers, travel agents and tour operators from abroad and India.

A strategic promotional forum of MITM assumes a special significance; particularly when Maharashtra Tourism is going through an exciting phase with ever increasing footfalls from global and domestic tourists crossing the 4.5 million and the 8.4 million mark in the recent past. It also bears a great significance when the State Tourism Department and its flagship agency MTDC have been strategically building and promoting the unexplored tourism wealth of Maharashtra besides boosting conventional tourism assets on Indian and global circuits.

In his address, actor Amitabh Bachchan acclaimed the efforts of Maharashtra Tourism in taking the State's tourism to global levels. Expressing the

will to extend any help required by the State to promote tourism and the film industry, Amitabh Bachchan appealed each and every citizen to spread the culture of India and Maharashtra when they are on a global travel.

Dr Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Government of India hailed the efforts of Maharashtra tourism to take tourism on global levels and guiding other States. He expressed his wish to see Maharashtra's tourism progressing on global circuits.

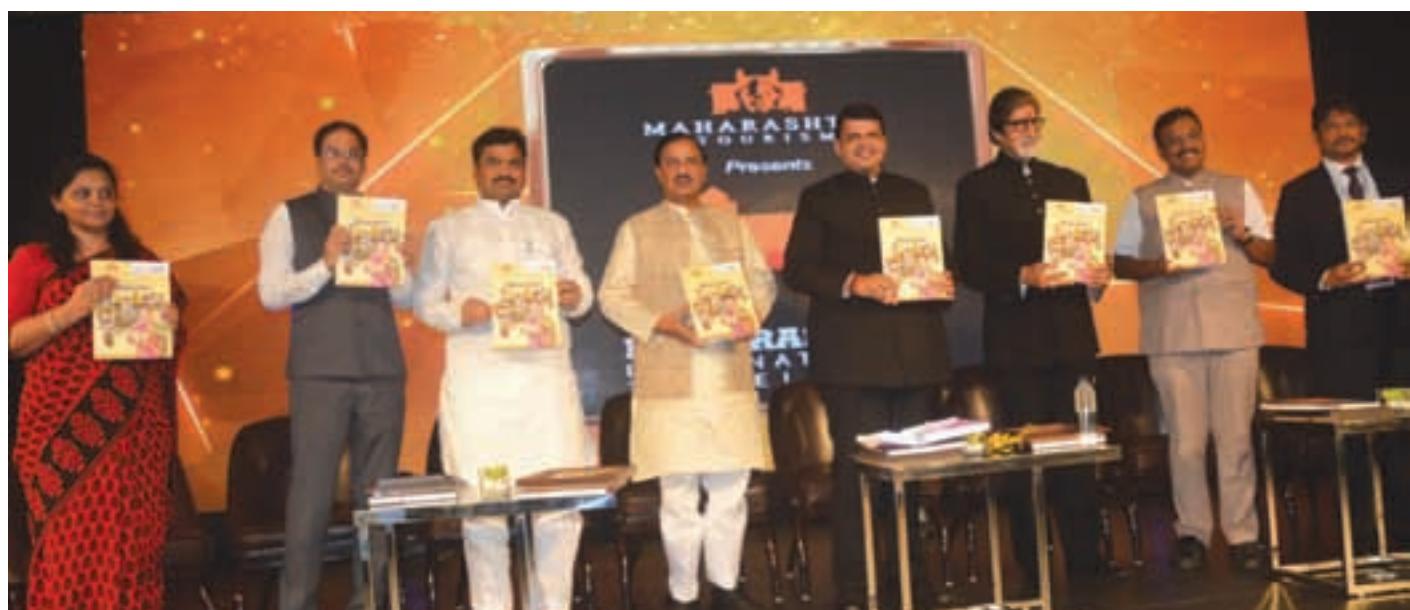
Vinod Tawde, Minister of Education and Culture, Government of Maharashtra, assured that the Government would extend every support to Bollywood to promote films, while Ram Shinde, Minister of State, Tourism, Maharashtra State, promised the Government's continued support to tourism initiatives.

Valsa Singh Nair, Principal Secretary, Tourism and Culture, Maharashtra State

said, "Tourism is a people-based economic activity achieved through social connect. We want to build a robust ecosystem in tourism by empowering the community to take the benefits of tourism opportunities. We look at tourism as a tool to generate employment, and with global participation coming in; the tourism in Maharashtra will see a complete boost."

Shri Paraag Jain Nainutia, Managing Director, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation, said, "Maharashtra is well poised to showcase its tourism wealth to the entire world. MTDC's efforts of raising the state's tourism profile globally will get new impetus with MITM, as it will open up a plethora of economic opportunities for trade exchanges among global buyers and sellers of tourism industry."

The event also witnessed Maharashtra Tourism's launch of 'Maha Explorer-Travel App' and the new website of Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation. Chief Minister and dignitaries also launched specially designed Coffee Table Books showcasing the wealth of Maharashtra's tourism potential and various cuisines. A cultural show and a fashion show by ace fashion designer Vikram Phadnis were





# ROMANTICISING MANIPUR

The romantic aura and rich cultural background of Sangai Festival (November 21-30, 2015) are reasons enough to make anyone fall in love with Manipur

**TT BUREAU**

**M**anipur emits a romantic aura which has the power to make anyone spellbound. Surrounded by blue green hills, with an oval shaped valley in the centre, this place is heaven on earth. The 'out-of-this-world' magnificence of Manipur has made it a major tourist attraction where one can find true inner peace. Manipur has been on the crossroads of economic and cultural exchange for more than 2000 years. But Manipur's antiquity is however much older and it dates back to 50 BC. History has it, that the place was ruled by Lainingthou Pakhangba, the first King of Manipur, in 33 AD.

Unlike other major tourist destinations, a large part of Manipur is still unexplored and this is a major factor for preserving the place's originality. Manipur is a confluence of cultures and the

land is inhabited by diverse ethnic groups, such as, Meitei, Nagas, Kuki-Chin-Mizo, Gorkha groups and Muslims, who co-exist in absolute harmony. When it comes to celebrations and pursuing traditions, the Manipuris are extremely passionate.

Manipur Sangai Festival is a major occasion where the inhabitants pay tribute to their motherland. The name of the festival is derived from Brow-Antlered Sangai Deer which is the state animal of Manipur and is found in Keibul Lamjao National Park which is the only floating National park in the world. The festival showcases the unique and shy behaviour of Sangai Deer and ultimately creates an atmosphere to project Manipur as a global tourist destination. A large number of tourists from around the world flock to Manipur every year during November

to witness this world famous affair and to get a firsthand experience of the rich cultural heritage of the State through ten day festivity. Tourism Department Manipur organises Sangai Festival from 21-30 November with great pomp and grandeur.

The festival showcases rich heritage, tradition, arts and crafts of the State to the outside world. Cultural performances by different communities of the state, indigenous sports, eco and adventure tourism, cultural exchanges with neighbouring States and countries of South East Asia are major highlights of the Festival. Manipur International Polo Tournament is organised every year during the festival. Polo Teams from France, Poland, England, USA, Mongolia, Thailand, South Africa, India (A) and India (B) Manipur participated last year. An interesting aspect of Sangai is that the festival serves as a platform to bring diverse cultures together. The Manipur Sangai Festival 2015 will showcase the rich legacy of heritage, culture,

art and craft, through traditional exhibition huts representative of various communities and their ethnicities. Traditional sports like Mukna, Kang, Martial Arts like Thang Ta, Hiyang Tannaba (Boat Race), Asian Theatre Festival (India-China-Japan), Keibul Lamjao (Classical Ballet written by celebrated writer M. K. Binodini Devi), Myanmar-Manipur Heritage Conference, Folk cultural performances, local cuisines and Made in Manipur products with 'Go Green' theme will be major highlights of the Festival this year.

The festival is full of opportunities and is indeed a big platform for the State to showcase various aspects of culture, art, craft, and its rich tourism potential which in the long run will put Manipur on the global tourism map. With the advent of Act East Policy and the opening of India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, the Festival is likely to strengthen bonding with Southeast Asian countries and prove Manipur's worth as India's Gateway to Southeast Asia.





# UNMATCHED ODISHA

Odisha is a confluence of culture, history and heritage, which is indeed a large contributing factor to India's cultural unity

TT BUREAU

**A**s a distinctive travel destination, Odisha's importance is paramount. Odisha's numerous wonders and attractions have made this place a paradise for travellers. Apart from natural and breathtaking beauty, the state of Odisha has a rich cultural lineage dating back to 2000 years. Since ancient times, the strategic location of Odisha was cultivated and the place provided a ground for thriving kingdoms and empires. Bordered by the Bay of Bengal, Odisha had maritime trade relations with countries like Java, Bali, Sumatra, Vietnam and Thailand, which finally resulted in cultural assimilation, fusion in art forms and architecture. Traces of this unique antiquity can be found in various tourist destinations within the state and they clearly give an impression of the place's glory. Situated in the central part of India, Odisha is a bridge which brings the northern and southern halves of the country together to create a new brand of cultural flavour. Here are a few popular picks for you.



## DEULAJHARI

If the purpose is to enjoy the winter with utmost cosiness and at the same time, satisfy your travel bug, then there can't be a better option than Deulajhari. Situated in the Angul district of Odisha, Deulajhari has an ancient Shiva temple. But this is not its only identity. Deulajhari is known for its hot water spring which originates from beneath the shivalinga. Though the origin is a mystery, it is a proven fact that the hot water coming out of the spring has immense medicinal qualities and is capable of curing numerous ailments and diseases. The temperature of the hot spring varies from 40 degree Celsius to 60 degree Celsius and is collected into 36 man-made ponds. So if you want to enjoy a warm and cosy natural Jacuzzi then Deulajhari is worth visiting. You can visit other prominent hot



water springs like Atri, Taptapani and Tarabalo.

## KATHINACHA

This festive season has a lot to offer, especially if your choice of travel destination is Odisha. You will get to experience a unique dance form known as Kathinacha, which is performed by the cow herd community of coastal Odisha. Young boys perform this dance using long sticks attached to their feet and they form geometrical patterns with continuous tapping of sticks. During the event, the performers sing traditional songs amidst loud musical improvisations. A similar form of dance is also performed by local communities of Mayurbhanj and Bolangir. Using smaller sticks, the pace of performance takes

speed and often accompanied by the rhythm of madal – a local drum.

## BALI YATRA

Though most fairs and exhibitions held in India are based on modern trade practices and incorporate modern commercial principles, Bali Yatra still retains an ancient charm. It is perhaps the only exhibition which has historical roots. Popular as a major tourist attraction, the festival commemorates the ancient maritime trade relations of Odisha with Bali.

The festival also marks the beginning of Kartik Purnima which comes around October or November. Major features of the festival include thematic installations depicting Boitas –traditional boats which were used during ancient maritime trades, food stalls offering Oriya delicacies and various other stalls selling toys, household items,



handicrafts and gifts.

## BARIPADA

Ordinary memories fade away. But, to make a lasting memory of Odisha, you must conclude your trip with Baripada. Situated in the Mayurbhanj region, Baripada is an extraordinary hot bed of ethnic creativity. The place is famous for handloom products which are weaved by local craftsmen. Besides, the place is also famous for stone carvings. The art form is antique and the same precise stonework can be found in the large temple of Kichakeswari in Khiching, dating back to the 7th or 8th century. By buying a piece of art from here you will actually return with a piece of marvellous history.



# PRODUCTIVITY APPS

HERE ARE SOME OF THE BEST MOBILE PHONE APPLICATIONS THAT YOU CAN USE TO UP THE PRODUCTIVITY OF YOUR INDISPENSABLE SMART PHONE



## MAILBOX

This great app takes care of your emails in the most efficient way. Mailbox has a minimalist interface that is easy to use, helping users to quickly scan through the messages and conversations. The app also has an option called 'snoozing,' which means that it returns to the inbox until the user is ready to read the message. There is also a learning feature which adapts to the common actions learning to snooze user's conversations with friends until the evening, or automatically muting certain conversations. The app works for those with Gmail or iCloud email users.

Platform (s):



## TRELLO

Here is an app that is highly customizable digital bulletin board and helps users to set up almost everything, from lists, tasks, notes and more. This app allows users to create lists that are containers which are filled with cards. These could be tasks, notes, ideas or pictures that one could drag or drop up and down the line or even move to other lists, and these can be shared with other users. The design for the app is flexible and could be used for a variety of tasks. It is of great help when you are coordinating a team, keeping track of a project or creating some ideas.

Platform (s):



## WORKFLOW

Here is an application that manages your time. Workflow is built so that you can utilise time in an effective manner. The app allows users to customise the phone so that work which is unnecessary can be bypassed, and in this way, you will save time. Workflow also allows you to create as any type of button for any type of regular activity. Therefore, with the use of Workflow, most of your daily activities are completed with just a single click of a button.

Platform (s):



## ASANA

Here is a phone app that is easy-to-use and hassle free. Users can keep track of multiple threads by putting all the project related information in one place. Users can create projects and assign the tasks to individuals, while at the same time they can set deadlines, comment, put in requests and more. The app allows users to look up important information, such as, who are supposed to do what and to check what has been done already. The app also allows the entire team for a given project to communicate in an efficient manner, and to create projects with teams of up to 15 people for free.

Platform (s):



## EVERNOTE

The Evernote application is a great way to help create digital notebooks. The notebooks are for everything, from keeping a track of your personal expenses to your calendar and appointments; they can even be used to create slideshow presentations and plans for your tours. Also, you can now keep a track of your business expenses and receipts. The app's digital notebooks permit you to take screen-shots of your receipts after payment. The application becomes increasingly valuable with more notebooks you add.

Platform (s):



## LAST PASS

An application that saves the users' time by saving logins and passwords, Last Pass acts as a password vault, password generator and browser. You can sync the password vaults and then have the browser to automatically fill in the forms and login details when using the web. Last Pass also generates new passwords as mentioned before, while adding and updating list of Form Fills. The app includes what is known as, Secure Notes, for important information that you could bring in encrypted form.

Platform (s):

# SICIS O'CLOCK



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**WHAT:** Dashain

**WHEN:** 22 October

**WHERE:** Kathmandu / Patan –Nepal

Dashain is an annual festival of Nepal celebrated during early or mid October to mark the start of a rich harvesting season. The festival is basically a version of Durga Puja which is celebrated majorly in eastern India. The underlying philosophy of the festival is to seek blessings from the revered Goddess in order to triumph over the evil forces of nature. As part of the celebration, people plant seeds on freshly prepared soils. On the important day of Fulapti, flowers are presented to the king as the flowers represent the Goddess of the royal family.



**WHAT:** Halloween

**WHEN:** 31 October

**WHERE:** USA

Halloween is a popular October festival celebrated across the US. Though various modern elements have been incorporated, the festival has an antique root. It is said that the basic practices and customs of Halloween got its inspiration from Celtic age beliefs. The main features of Halloween are uniform which include activities like trick-or-treating (or the related "guising"), attending costume parties, decorating, carving pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns, lighting bonfires, apple bobbing, visiting haunted attractions, playing pranks, telling scary stories and watching horror films.

**WHAT:** Jidai Matsuri

**WHEN:** 22 October

**WHERE:** Kyoto Gosho, Kyoto, Japan

Jidai Matsuri is not just a festival, it is actually a way to revisit memory lane. The festival is all about re-enactment and time travel as local people celebrate it by wearing period dresses dating back to 794 AD. The festival first started formally in 1894 to raise the city's morale when the imperial capital shifted to Tokyo from Kyoto. As a part of the festival, portable shrines or Mikoshis of the first and last emperors of Kyoto are carried through a mass 4.6 KM procession to a shrine built to imitate earlier palaces. The festival is a major tourist attraction as it gives a glimpse of Japan's ancient past.



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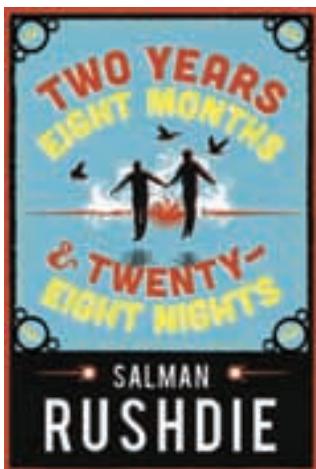
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# PICK OF THE MONTH

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



## BOOK: TWO YEARS EIGHT MONTHS AND TWENTY-EIGHT NIGHTS

Acclaimed author, Salman Rushdie's new release, titled "Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights," is a storytelling marvel. The book starts with a storm in New York City set in the near future and goes on to narrate stories of people involved in it. The novel involves a down-to-earth gardener who find his feet can no longer touch the ground, a graphic novelist who wakes up to a mysterious entity in his bedroom, a baby who has been abandoned and a

seductive gold-digger who has to combat forces beyond imagining. Rushdie's characters are all descended from wanton creatures known as the jinn, who live in a separate world. Rushdie's latest is all about the conflicting nature of the world we live in.

**Genre (s): Fiction**

## MUSIC: HONEYMOON

The fourth studio album of singer Lana Del Rey, Honeymoon is pure Lana Del Rey signature style music. The album takes influences from various styles of music, such as, jazz, trap, blues and hip hop. The songs seem to be largely composed in tune with her classic, "Born to Die." This album is yet another great one from the singer. Lana Del Rey focusses on themes of tortured romance, bitterness, lust, drugs, escapism and violence. A music in this one is touted to be timeless according to critics, so what are you waiting for, grab one now.

**Genre (s): Baroque pop / Dream pop**



## DVD: JURASSIC WORLD

Twenty two years after the path breaking film, Jurassic Park, we have another theme park now, where things could go horribly wrong. Jurassic World, stars Chris Pratt, who trains the Velociraptors who regard him as the alpha of the pack. Things go out of hand when an Indominus escape and all hell breaks lose. Now the park which is full of guests is in terrible danger and troops are called in to secure the area. An action packed film, Jurassic World has some really intense high speed chase that will leave you on the edge of your seat. This one is a must buy for action lovers.

**Genre (s): Science Fiction Adventure**

## GAME: METAL GEAR SOLID V: THE PHANTOM PAIN

The legendary mercenary, Snake, has almost been swept away from history and left in a coma. Now Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain, is a complex story of the Snake soldier line which connects the older storylines and the rest of Metal Gear. Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain, has a sandbox game-play which offers complexity, and tons of gadgets and abilities. Users must be warned that the game has PEGI 18 rating for blood and gore, intense action and strong language.

**Genre (s): Action Adventure**



17 December 2015  
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