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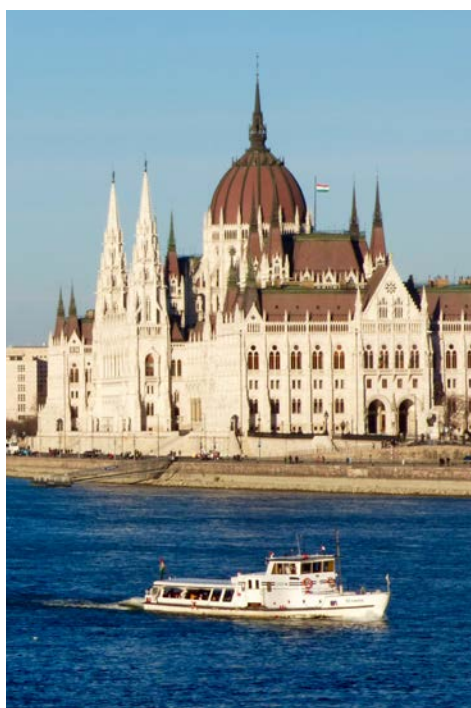
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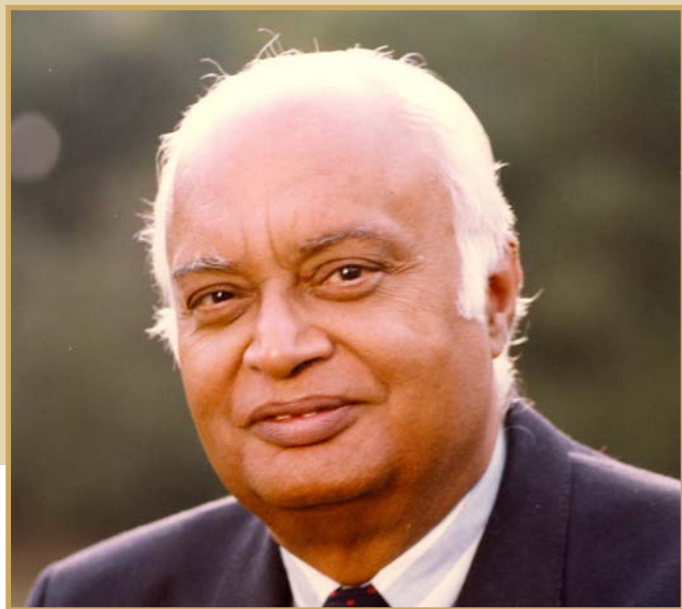
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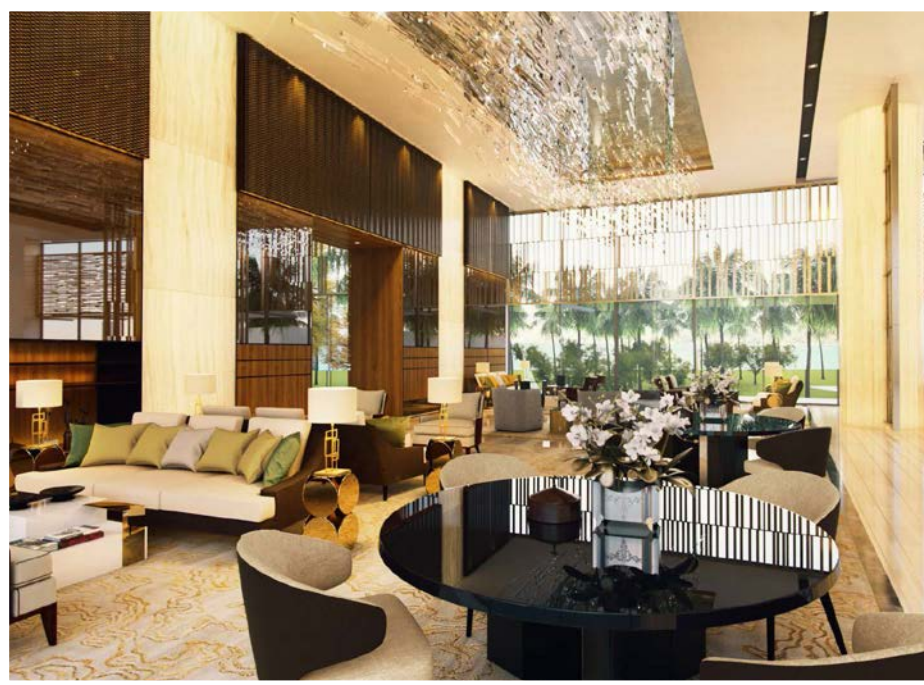
INDUSTRY VETERAN INDER SHARMA
PASSES AWAY

Former Owner and Chairman, SITA World Travels and Chairman, Select Infrastructure, Inder Sharma, passed away at the age of 86. A pioneer in the Indian Travel Industry, Sharma joined the industry in 1953 as a transfer assistant. In 1955, he was selected by SITA World Travel Inc., New York, for a six-month advanced training in Travel Management in USA. After completing his training, he returned to India and opened the first SITA office in 1956. Sharma received numerous awards for his contributions in the field of travel and tourism, including the Padma Shri in 1990, Key to the City of Manila, 1983, Hall of Fame in 1993 by the Indian Association of Tour Operators, and "The Agasthya Award" in 1993 by the Travel Agents Association of India.

CARLSON REZIDOR HOTEL GROUP
EXPANDS IN VIETNAM

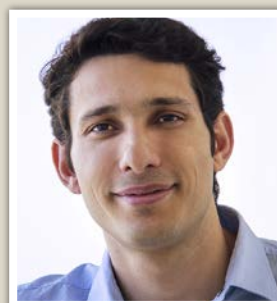
Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group announced the signing of a management contract with Phu Quoc Tourist Investment & Development JS Company to develop Radisson Blu Resort Phu Quoc. Scheduled to open in the last quarter of 2017, the hotel, with 522 rooms and suites, is set to be a focal point of Phu Quoc. The signing marks the second resort in Vietnam for the Group, following Radisson Blu Resort Cam Ranh Bay, slated to open in 2018.

"We are honoured to partner with Phu Quoc Tourist Investment & Development JS Company to deliver the benefits of Radisson Blu, an upper upscale global brand. The growth opportunities in Vietnam are immense and we are proud to be a part of the country's economic growth story," said Andreas Flaig, Executive Vice President, Development, Asia Pacific, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group.

ISRAEL MINISTRY OF TOURISM CONDUCTS
SIX-CITY ROADSHOW IN INDIA

In continuation of its plan to increase the number of Indian arrivals to the country, the Israel Ministry of Tourism (IMOT) conducted their second roadshow for 2017, in India. The roadshow was in a networking workshop format and commenced on August 21, in Mumbai, followed by Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and concluded in Chennai, on August 30. The Israeli delegation was led by Hassan Madah, Director – Israel Ministry of Tourism, India along with Judah Samuel, Director – Marketing, Israel Ministry of Tourism, India and included representative partners from the tourism industry of Israel. The roadshow witnessed a participation of over 100 travel agents in each city.

Speaking at the roadshow, Hassan Madah, Director – Israel Ministry of Tourism India said, "Over 34,000 Indians have already visited Israel in the last six months of 2017 marking a growth of 37 percent in Indian tourist arrivals. The historic visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel has sparked a renewed interest among Indians to visit Israel and we want to leverage this to increase destination awareness among Indian travel trade and MICE agents. The response across the six cities was very positive and promising."



ATLASGLOBAL, FULL-SERVICE CARRIER FROM TURKEY, LAUNCHES OFFLINE SALES IN INDIA

AtlasGlobal, full-service carrier from Turkey and the nation's second largest has decided to open its inventory for sales from India. To initiate this, Atlas Global has tied up with Gurgaon (National Capital Region) based Indian Travel Promotion Company Pvt Ltd, a firm engaged in travel, aviation and tourism since over 30 years. This, they say, is in line with the growing outbound travel from India, which has surpassed 22 million.

Operating 26 aircraft beyond Istanbul, into Europe and within Turkey, the 16-year old airline has over 50 destinations on its ever expanding route network. From Istanbul, European destinations like Paris, Copenhagen, Hamburg, London, Amsterdam, Zurich, Milan and Dusseldorf are very well served, with unique departure timings and connections. To add to this, AtlasGlobal is soon adding Moscow on its network. The other key feature of the carrier's route map is its strong frequency of flights within Turkey. Of interest to Indians touring or visiting Turkey are the destinations operated by AtlasGlobal to Izmir, Bodrum, Antalya, Konya, Kayseri, Trabzon and Gaziantep.

AtlasGlobal is upbeat about its entry into India with offline passenger seat sales given its unique offerings in the marketplace. Some of these are the 77 cm pitch in Economy Class, 30 kg baggage allowance, free shuttles into city centres, seat selection at no extra charge, which are already popular. Frequent flier Atlas Miles advantages and a host of Corporate Programmes that include extra baggage allowance, add to the delight of passengers selecting Atlas Global to travel within Turkey or into Europe.

Agents, OTAs or travel consolidators in India will specially find it convenient to include the airline in their group or FIT itineraries for great business travel or holiday experiences to over 150000 Indians who travel to Istanbul for vacation or on business. Signing the agreement, Semra ERENER OZALCIN, CCO of AtlasGlobal based in Istanbul, said, "We entered into this passenger sales arrangement in India with great hope and are confident that going forward, this effort will reap rich rewards for the carrier, from travelling Indians."



Semra Eren Ozalcin, CCO of AtlasGlobal. She is flanked by Rohan Sivanathan, Director-GSA Management, AtlasGlobal on her right and Sidhartha Roy, Senior VP, ITPL on her left.

ALPHONS NAMED MINISTER OF STATE (I/C) FOR TOURISM

Alphons Kannanthanam assumes charge of the office of Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism. He is a retired IAS officer of the 1979 batch (Kerala cadre). In Time Magazine's list of 100 Young Global Leaders, he pioneered the literacy movement in India by making Kottayam the first 100 per cent literate town in India in 1989. He worked in the Indian Administration Service until 2006, when he was elected a Member of the Legislative Assembly, from Kanjirappally in Kottayam District of Kerala. He came into prominence when he served as the District Collector of Kottayam in 1988. He drove the literacy movement in the State and helped to make Kottayam town as the first 100 per cent literate town in India in 1989.

Alphon's life is nothing short of a miracle. Having passed his high school with 42 per cent from a non electrified village Malayalam medium school, he became one of the toppers of the 1979 batch of the IAS. For 27 years he was the voice of the helpless citizens, running pitched battles against the corrupt system. He was rated to be one of the most competent officers in the history of the civil service. He is an inspirational orator and has spoken to over three million people, mostly students, in the past 35 years. In 2006, he quit IAS, contested as an Independent from Kanjirappally constituency and got elected as an MLA with a huge majority.



EVOLVING CORPORATE SERVICES

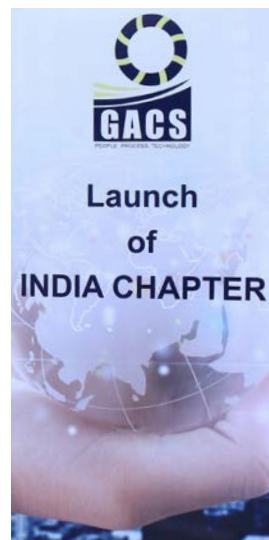
Vikrampati Singhanian, Director of JK Organisation, launched the Indian Chapter of the Global Association for Corporate Services (GACS) on August 4th, 2017

TT BUREAU

The launch started with Vineet Panchhi setting up the stage for a memorable evening and showcasing the GACS Film. The event was attended by senior business leaders and professionals from both, the manufacturing and service sectors in India. Guest speakers at the event included Vivek Tankha, Member of Parliament, and Bibhor Shrivastava, Group Editor, ITP Publishing House. Industry Leaders like Sameer Saxena, Arun Khanna, Bhumes Gaur, Deepak Ohlyan and Rahul Agarwal interacted with the audience, giving them an overview of GACS.

Speaking at the event, Vikrampati Singhanian congratulated the GACS India team and said, "The service industry, today, is an integral part of all industries, including the manufacturing sector, because of its heterogeneous nature. Services, including IT and other services, aid manufacturing processes by supporting both upstream and downstream activities. All together, they create a valuable consumer experience. The two are, in fact, intertwined and hence, it is only fair to say that the services sector has driven growth of the manufacturing sector in recent times by supplementing and complementing operations from product ideation to development and shipping."

There was also a lively and insightful panel discussion on the topic, "Corporate Services: Opportunities and Challenges in the 21st century," where the panel included Sunil Goyal of Sopra



Steria India, Maninder Singh Grewal of Dion Global Solutions, Ashwani Acharya of CAE Simulation Training and Vibhu Narayan from Reliance Jio, who shared their views and insights with the audience. The panel discussion was moderated by Capt Rajesh Sharma of C&W.



Bibhor Srivastav, Advisory Board Member of GACS, congratulated the team and applauded the efforts made by them in the creation of GACS. He spoke at length on the need for such an organisation for the benefit of the larger business community and the country. Renu



Kelkar, Mrs India International 2017, engaged with the audience during her address and interacted with them even after the event. Kelkar, being from the Corporate Services fraternity, promised to extend her support to GACS as needed. The evening came to an end with a formal Thank You note by GACS and a poem by Vineet Panchhi, which enthralled the audience.



FORTUNE PARK HOTELS LTD UNVEILS FORTUNE PARK BBD, LUCKNOW

Fortune Park Hotels Ltd further expanded its bouquet of hotels with the opening of the brand's first hotel in Lucknow, 'Fortune Park BBD, Lucknow.' Owned by M/s Viraj Constructions, Fortune Park BBD has been tastefully designed as an elegant and contemporary hotel that offers a wide range of guest facilities to the discerning traveller.

"We are delighted to welcome this beautiful hotel to our expanding portfolio of Fortune Hotels," said Suresh Kumar, Managing

Director, Fortune Park Hotels Ltd., "M/s Viraj Constructions' investment in this property, coupled with our brand's signature amenities, well-appointed rooms that are tastefully designed, excellent cuisine and efficient service, will lead to an exceptional guest experience."



HYATT REGENCY DEBUTS IN LUCKNOW

Hyatt announced the opening of Hyatt Regency Lucknow, the first Hyatt-branded hotel in Lucknow. Hyatt Regency Lucknow is the 27th Hyatt-branded hotel in India and further expands the company's brand presence in South Asia by offering enriching, authentic and diversified brand experiences for guests.

"The opening of Hyatt Regency Lucknow marks a significant milestone for the Hyatt Regency brand as it continues to expand its footprint throughout India," said Kurt Straub, Vice President, Operations for India at Hyatt.

"We are delighted to announce the opening of Hyatt Regency Lucknow in the dynamic capital of the largest and most populous state of India. Chartered Hotels Private Limited remains focused on developing full service hotels across tier one and tier two cities in India for the ever growing business and leisure traveler," said Varun Saraf, Managing Director, Chartered Hotels Private Limited.

"Our passionate, caring and well-trained team is ready to welcome guests to our contemporary and stylish hotel. At Hyatt Regency Lucknow, we set the stage for dynamic interactions – from a quick coffee meeting to shared culinary experiences, our guests can come together to socialise, collaborate or celebrate," said Kumar Shobhan, General

Manager of the hotel.



DISCOVER GERMANY ROADSHOW A GREAT SUCCESS

Witnessing an astounding growth of 30 per cent in visitor overnights in the month of May 2017, destination Germany emerges as one of the most favoured leisure destinations for Indian travellers yet again. For the period from Jan-May 2017 the country received 3,29,860 visitors, overnights making for a growth of 12.8 per cent from India compared to the same period last year.

Romit Theophilus, Director Sales & Marketing, said "Year on year we have been noticing an increased interest from the Indian Travel trade in Destination Germany.

This can be witnessed in the overwhelming response received by us at our roadshows. Furthermore we have witnessed a growth in the overall perception of Germany as a favored leisure destination by the travellers, this is backed by the staggering increase in the number of Facebook fans for the Germany tourism Facebook page launched last year in February. Additionally the forecasted data from Airline seat load factors and our Overnight statistics prove that Germany is fast becoming one of the most sought after leisure destination for Indian travellers."

The roadshow which was conducted in New Delhi, Ahmedabad and Mumbai facilitated interactions between German partners and the Indian travel trade on latest offers, highlights and attractions for the Indian travelers.



IHG TO DEBUT IN BINTAN

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG®) has signed a dual-brand management agreement with PT. Graha Agung Indahsentosa to debut two hotels, Holiday Inn Resort Bintan Lagoi Beach and Hotel Indigo Bintan Lagoi Beach in Bintan, Indonesia. Set to open in 2019, the new-build hotels will be situated in the prime Lagoi Bay area.

Commenting on the milestone, Rajit Sukumaran, Chief Development Officer, IHG Asia Middle East and Africa said: "Indonesia is a key market for IHG; it is a diverse market, with a strong leisure and business pull, and well-placed for easy travel between Australia, Southeast Asia and Singapore. In the past year we have seen a growing demand for the Holiday Inn and Hotel Indigo in Bali, Jakarta and Semarang."



Incredible India



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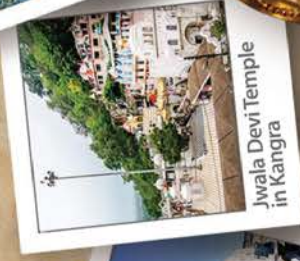
Home Stay facility is also available in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh.



Chintpurni Devi Temple
in Una



Naina Devi Temple
in Nainital



Jwala Devi Temple
in Kangra



Balreshwari Devi
Temple in Kangra



Chamunda Devi
Temple in Kangra



ITDC JOIN HANDS WITH CISF TO BUILD #SKILLED INDIA

India Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. (ITDC) hospitality major under the aegis of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has joined hands with Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to train wards of CISF personnel under "Hunar se Rozgar Scheme" (A Skill Development Programme sponsored by Ministry of Tourism) through The Ashok Institute of Hospitality and Tourism Management (AIH&TM), one of the premier PSU Hospitality Training Institutes of the country under ITDC.

OP Singh, Director General, CISF said, "CISF is committed towards the welfare of its personnel and their families. The partnership with AIH&TM is a step in this direction."

Speaking on inauguration function held at Hotel Samrat, Piyush Tiwari, Director (Commercial and Marketing) ITDC, said "ITDC is grateful to CISF for their faith in ITDC's expertise in hospitality training and management. We are going to plan more programmes in the coming quarters for enforcing strength and leadership quality in other organisations as well."



PATA INDIA CHAPTER LAUNCHES UPGRADED WEBSITE

PATA India Chapter has launched an upgraded website www.pataindia.org packed with dynamic features and graphics. The website was launched at the office of Ministry of Tourism by Joint Secretary Suman Billa in the presence of all Executive Committee members following the 235th EC meeting of PATA India. A presentation was given by Jatinder Taneja, Hon. Secretary, PATA India Chapter, where he informed that the website is CMS-based compatible with desktops, smart phones and tablets such as iPad, etc. He said, the website data is well aligned and informative with member information, and event catalogue. The upgraded website has a well-structured homepage with recent and upcoming 'Events' section. Ministry of Tourism website

is hyperlinked on the homepage for relevant updates. The updated homepage, loaded with attractive graphics, will soon hyperlink member website to add value to membership and has a new 'Members' section with brief profile.



THE LEELA AMBIENCE CONVENTION HOTEL, DELHI RE LAUNCHES SHANAYA

The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi, unveiled their new and unique line of rejuvenation therapies at the recent re-launch of their popular luxury spa, Shanaya.

Speaking on the grand re-launch and new therapy techniques at The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi's spa, Shanaya, Spa Manager Karma Choki said "We are extremely excited to be introducing our new range of exclusive therapies and re-launching Shanaya, our guest favourite spa."

Martina Odyuo, Thalgo facial expert, said: "We are happy to be associated with The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel. We look forward to receiving feedbacks and hope that we at Thalgo have a long and fruitful association with the hotel."



IHG SIGNS TWO NEW PROPERTIES IN DUBAI BUSINESS BAY

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG®) has announced the signing of two new properties in Dubai: Crowne Plaza® Dubai Business Bay and InterContinental Residence Suites Dubai Business Bay. Both properties are in partnership with API Hotels & Resorts, and their location in Dubai's Business Bay area, the planned business capital of the region, is in line with IHG's strategy to grow these brands in emerging business epicentres.

Pascal Gauvin, Chief Operating Officer, India, Middle East & Africa, IHG, commented: "In the Middle East, we are currently engaged in the strategic expansion of the Crowne Plaza brand, as well as growing the footprint of our InterContinental Residence Suites."

Jassim Al Ali, CEO of API Hotels & Resorts, added: "In order to maximize further growth opportunities in the Middle East, we believe that we need to add a global operator with an internationally recognized brand to our portfolio and IHG, as a market leader with over 5,000 hotels worldwide fits this profile perfectly."



TAFI CONVENTION 2017

The Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) has announced the next TAFI Convention 2017 which is to be held at two amazing cities in Turkey

ARJUN GILL

For the first time, the TAFI Convention will be split to encompass the two beautiful, unexplored cities of Dalaman and Antalya. The convention dates are 27th to 31st October, 2017. For the first two nights, delegates will be staying at Hotel Hilton Dalaman Sarigerme Resort & Spa, Dalaman and the next two nights at Hotel Rixos Premium Belek, Antalya. Both properties are par excellence and equivalent to 7-star categories.

"TAFI, in line with its past destinations, chooses off-beat destinations to showcase the region to its members. TAFI Conventions are meticulously planned and laid out for the members. It will offer great world-class business sessions, with speakers from around the world, and entertainment, the kind you would never have experienced before," says Praveen Chugh, President, TAFI.

The convention will be held for 4 nights, with a pre-post tour of 3 nights. Exclusive hotels have been chosen in line with luxurious convention hotels for the pre-post tours, which offer an all-inclusive package to the delegate. TAFI announces the opening of registrations for the convention and they are looking forward to members registering well in advance to avail the itinerary of their choice.

Dalaman is a district, as well as the central town of that district, situated on the Southwestern coast of Turkey, in Mugla Province. The Dalaman area has been attracting visitors since ancient times. In the mythical world it was a destination of choice the Greek gods like Pegasus and Apollo.

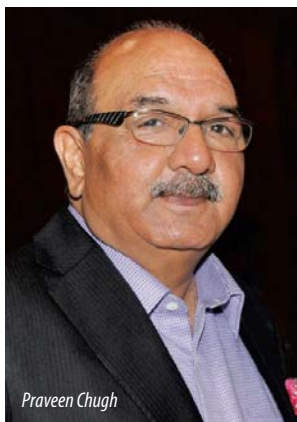


Rixos Premium Belek, Antalya

Today, the area pulls in more than 2 million tourists a year. The region's appeal begins with its beaches. Known as the Turquoise Coast, Dalaman's shoreline is a chain of coves, bays and long stretches of sand. Just 10 Minutes from the airport, Dalman boasts 23 resort restaurants and bars featuring international menu items, private beach, 24 hours fitness centre, tennis court, 10 pools, 6000 sqm spa centre with steam room, whirlpool, roman and turkish bath, water sports, squash, archery, aqua park, evening shows, etc.

Antalya is a Turkish resort city with a yacht-filled old harbour and beaches flanked by large hotels. It's a gateway to Turkey's southern Mediterranean region, known as the Turquoise Coast, because of its blue waters. Remnants from Antalya's time as a major Roman port include Hadrian's Gate, and the 2nd Century Hidirlik Tower with harbour views. Rixos Premium Belek covers a 405,000-sqm area and is just 50km from Antalya.

Rixos is well known for its 7 restaurants, 8 bars, spa, watersports, tennis, football, basketball, Rixy club for the young ones, 700 rooms and suites, along with a 700-m-long beach giving you a magnificent view of the Mediterranean Sea.



Praveen Chugh



Hilton Dalaman
Sarigerme Resort & Spa



PANKAJ SAXENA has been designated as General Manager at Radisson Blu Pune, Hinjewadi. With 20 years of experience in the hospitality domain, Saxena most recently served as General Manager at Country Inn & Suites By Carlson, Mysore. He has completed a Diploma in Business Administration and also holds a Bachelor's degree in Hotel Management from Mangalore University.



ARINDAM SARKAR has been appointed as the General Manager at the Mark's Gradeur by Bangalore. This will be an independently branded property of The Fern Hotels and Resorts. Sarkar brings over 14 years of experience in the hospitality industry, having worked at properties like Radisson in New Delhi, ITC Fortune, Sarovar Hotels and Resorts and Clarks Inn group of Hotels.



KUMAR SHOBHAN has been designated as General Manager of Hyatt Regency Lucknow. Shobhan has spent more than 17 years in the hospitality industry in a number of remarkable roles – from Food & Beverage to Rooms and Spa and Catering. A people-centric professional, Shobhan has acquired a deep knowledge of diverse aspects of hotel management and has gained experience in dealing with different cultural backgrounds while working in the UAE (Dubai), and across India. However, his true passion remains with Food & Beverage operations.



DEBABRATA BANERJEE has been recently appointed as Food and Beverage Manager at Alila Diwa Goa. Banerjee comes with over nine years of experience in the luxury hotel and restaurant space. Having been trained from the Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology, Trivandrum, in his current role he will oversee the Food and Beverage operations of the restaurants, bar and banquets operations for Alila Diwa Goa.



NIHAR MEHTA has been appointed as Corporate HR Manager at Sarovar Hotels. Based out of Sarovar's corporate office in Gurugram, Mehta will be looking after human resources and manage employee development policies and systems. Prior to joining Sarovar Hotels, Mehta had worked in Ravi Jaipuria Corporation as Manager – HR and has led the Human Resources Department for the Retail Division for J Mart brand of Ravi Jaipuria Corporation.

MALDIVES MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS CORPORATION LIMITED APPOINTS TRAC REPRESENTATIONS

Maldives Marketing & Public Relations Corporation Limited have appointed TRAC Representations as the PR representative of Maldives in India, to strengthen trade relations and execute marketing initiatives by promoting Maldives as a destination for diverse segments of travellers. The key objective is to enhance Maldives as a favoured travel destination for leisure and business amongst the niche travellers, focus on trade push, media presence through digital and new age media.

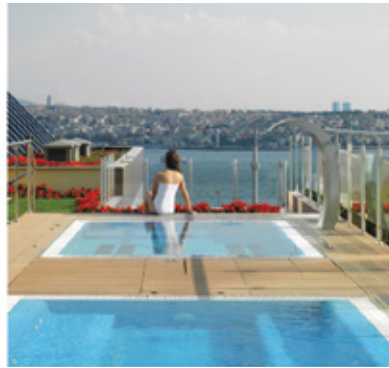
Rajeev Nangia, COO, TRAC Representations said, "We are absolutely thrilled and overwhelmed with this appointment and privileged to be representing Maldives in India."



NUSA DUA BEACH HOTEL & SPA, BALI, INDONESIA APPOINTS INDIA SALES ASSOCIATES

The Luxury Hotel Marketing & Consultancy firm, India Sales Associates has been appointed by the 5-star luxury resort Nusa Dua Beach Hotel & Spa, Bali, Indonesia for their GSA representation services in the Indian market. "The Nusa Dua Beach Hotel & Spa, Bali trade marked as 'Authentically Bali' is an iconic Balinese resort. Its unique design and architecture, much awarded Spa, high class other facilities, superlative personalised services and multiple restaurants and meeting and wedding venue capacity makes this resort undoubtedly a superior choice for Indians travelling to Bali", said Manas Sinha, Director, India Sales Associates, GSA-Nusa Dua Beach Hotel & Spa, Bali.





The Ritz-Carlton, Istanbul

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

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

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

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

Experience the stay of a life-time at The Ritz-Carlton, Istanbul

*Please contact with us for more information and reservation via
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THE RITZ-CARLTON

ISTANBUL

NUMERO UNO SONNET

The Sonnet Hotel, Kolkata, maintains its reputation as the #1 choice over higher star ventures with its special charm, eclectic choice of cuisine and a cosy ambience

TT BUREAU

The Sonnet Hotel, Kolkata, located in the heart of the new business-hub, Salt Lake City, is an extremely business-friendly hotel. It is situated in a vibrant area, within short walking distance to the IT hub of Kolkata, in Sector V, and is surrounded by splendid parks and shopping malls. On entering the hotel, an immediate sense of its special, intimate atmosphere gives you the home-away-from-home feel. The hotel is a class apart with its many opulent artefacts, which reflect a certain persons that sets it apart. Every detail is passionately chosen and executed, whether it's to do with the gleaming floors or the beautiful flowers, all carefully chosen to compliment the hues of cream in the interior spaces. The hotel's style mixes original artworks with an unexpected eclectic, contemporary twist. The special charm, eclectic choice of cuisine and the intimate ambience of The Sonnet, Kolkata will make you feel at home in 'The City of Joy.'

Over the last 7 years, The Sonnet, Kolkata has shown tremendous growth. It has become the preferred choice for corporates and top business executives have chosen this hotel as their favourite destination for most of their business meets.

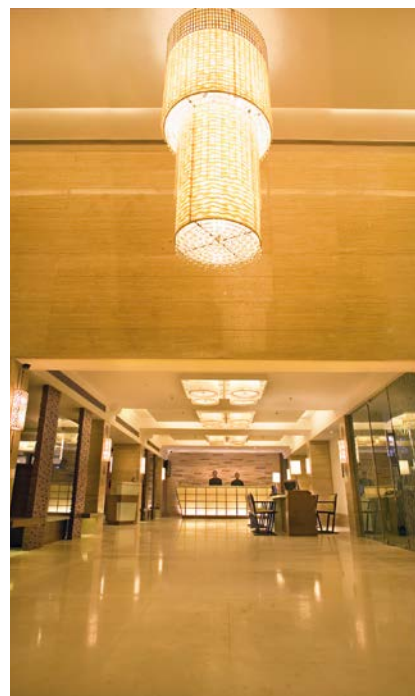
The Sonnet, Kolkata, a heavenly abode for business and leisure travellers, has achieved the greatest guest satisfaction ever. Repeat guest are a yardstick of satisfaction at the hotel. Under Rajib Roy Choudhury, GM, the hotel, for the last 7 years, has successfully built an undisputed reputation of comfortable room and nights stays as well as outstanding cuisine. The brand rose to fame over the years and has successfully led F&B offerings and its unique promotion throughout the city. The tinsel town of Bengal has chosen The



Sonnet as one of their favourite shooting destinations. Revenue-wise, the property has excelled gradually and steadily. It has maintained its reputation as the numero uno choice over higher star ventures.

The Sonnet is one of the leading venues for all major corporate events, ensuring its guests a hassle-free stay and comfort in all aspects, from Checking in/out, transfers to and from airport and railway terminus. Maximum guest satisfaction has always been its primary objective. The service at the hotel is impeccable, down to the minutest of details.

The Sonnet Hotel, Kolkata, has been awarded many prizes and distinctions, its most recent and highly notable achievement being – "2017 Best Business Hotel in Kolkata," by Today's Traveller.



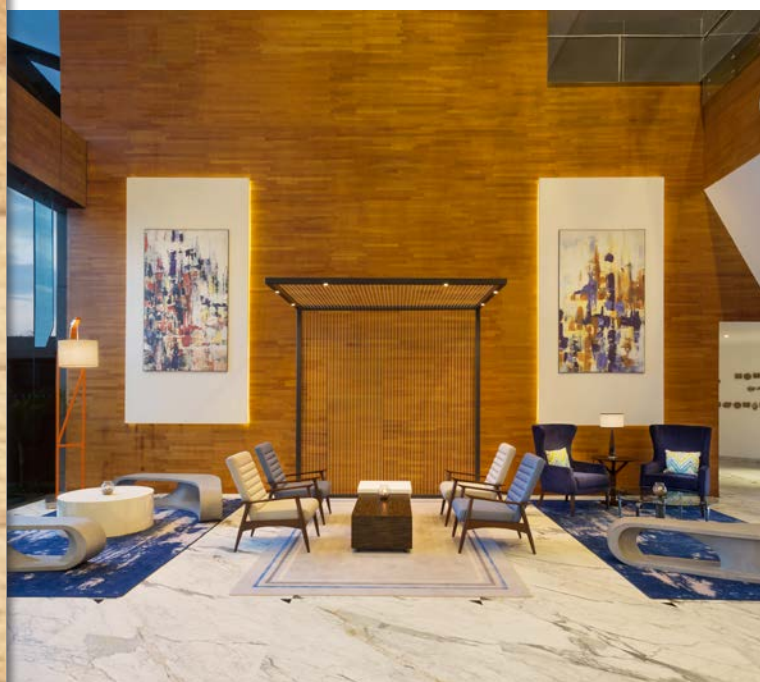
TODAY'S
traveller
20
Years
Est. 1997



CORPORATE

LUXURY & CONVENIENCE

In conversation with Aditya Shamsher Malla, General Manager of Four Points by Sheraton, Visakhapatnam



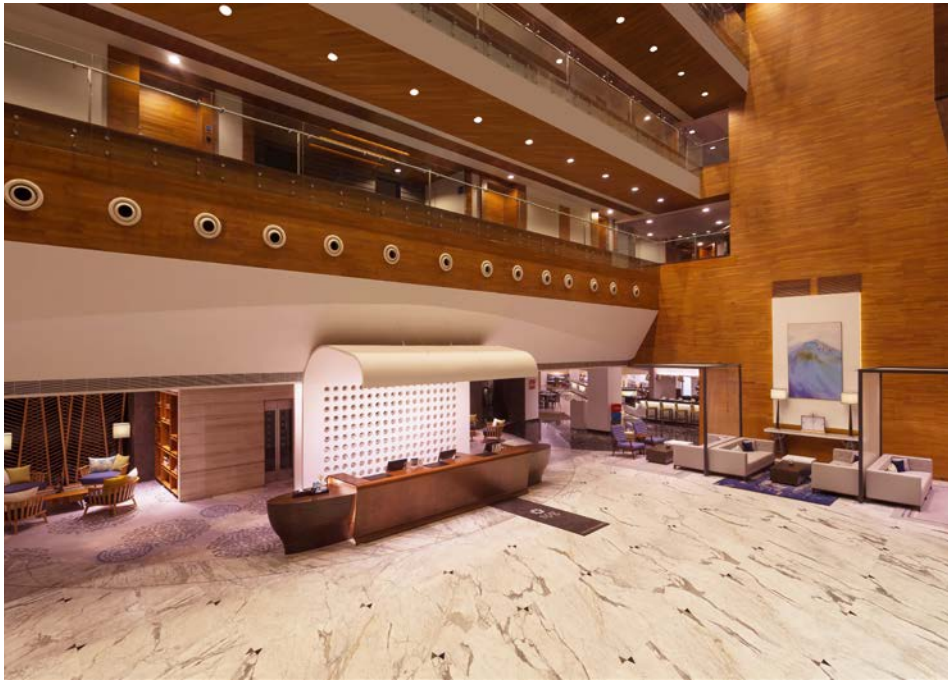
TT BUREAU

Please tell us about your hotel's recently refurbished facilities and signature programmes.

After being acquired by our enterprising new owners, SAMHI Hotels, Four Points by Sheraton, Visakhapatnam went through an extensive renovation involving public areas, banquets and rooms. The hotel now has a vibrant bar offering the Four Points' signature Best Brews programme. Creative menus and The Chef's specials – fresh local delicacies cooked with locally sourced ingredients, are the highlights of the all-day dining. After a fulfilling day of exploring, our signature Four Comfort Bed awaits our guests, ensuring a restful sleep in preparation for the next day. The hotel's unique location is just a few minutes from the seafront and is in the midst of upscale shopping and dining options, which adds to the wonderful experience. Guests are advised to mention this SPG and Marriott Rewards membership number so that they don't miss out on the benefits.

What are the facilities that your hotel offers for banquets and events?

The hotel offers an elegant venue for 300 persons, in theatre-style seating. The addition of a large pre-function area after the hotel's renovations for the buffet layout complements the meeting/ event facilities. A collapsible partition in the main hall, Grand Circars, allows for flexibility in the arrangements and dimensions. The hotel prides itself for consistent quality of its delectable menus offered at each event, which are customised for each customer, be it a special occasion or a product launch.



How is Visakhapatnam developing as a business hub and how is the hotel positioned to take advantage of this?

Visakhapatnam has gained visibility as a venue for large events like the IFR and CII Partnership Summits. Better connectivity with source markets like Kolkata has opened up new channels and segments, including domestic leisure. The Government's continued focus on improving investments in the State have benefitted Vizag, which remains in the news for initiatives like Swachh Bharat and Smart City. Four Points by Sheraton Visakhapatnam, with its signature stay experience, F&B options and personalised service has helped us win the admiration of our customers who have consistently recognised the efforts on platforms like TripAdvisor. An honest, uncomplicated and comfortable experience always helps to gain the loyalty of discerning travellers. The Marriott brand ensures high recognition, and of course, expectations, too. A highly dedicated team of professionals at the hotel ensures the promise is consistently delivered.



What is your corporate outreach programme?

As a Marriott International Hotel, we offer our guests the benefit of preferred corporate rates and value-added programmes including the SPG and Marriott Rewards Loyalty Programmes. The advantage of checking in to a known and familiar brand, coupled with the personalised attention makes our corporate clients loyal. Our efficient sales network connects with our valued clients across the globe to ensure they have a solution to their travel needs instantly. Dedicated relationship Managers and Event planners at each location work tirelessly to assist guests for a seamless experience and ensure they come back for more.



CORPORATE JET-SETTER

MAJOR ROYDEN ANIL D'SOUZA

Senior Vice President & Head
Premises Infrastructure and Procurement
Fullerton India

TT BUREAU

Most memorable trip to any destination?

That would be my visit to Ladakh and the city of Leh. I took a Jet Airways flight, landed at Leh airstrip, on 4th Aug, 2017, for the Stok expedition. It was a long 12-hour summit attempt that started at 10:00 pm of the previous night. The melting of the snow and rocky patches on our path made the climb up steep and cold.

You dream of going to?

My dream is, me climbing some attainable peaks (around a height of 6000m), like Kilimanjaro and Mount Elbrus and also taking my family along with me, at least till the base camp.

Favourite airline and why?

Jet airways, as I am always sure of the service level and reliability they provide.

Best hotel experience and why?

I am more of an outdoors kind of person. A tent suits me better but if I were to rate my experience at the JW Marriott Mussoorie Walnut Grove Resort & Spa, Mussoorie, was by far the best experience I have had.

A place you plan to visit again?

Most of the places I visit alone are on account of my work and most of those places make me want to return to that place with family, but it seldom happens. However, If there is one place I would want to visit again, it has to be Leh.

A family vacation that stands out?

I think it would be my 2014 trip with my family to Hong Kong Disneyland.

Your best holiday with friends?

During the monsoon season, I was at this resort in Mumbai with my friends. We had fun and I enjoyed myself thoroughly.

Great food you enjoyed and where?

The best cuisine for me is the Goan cuisine. I am a Goan and every year, we try to do this small family vacation in Goa, where all we do is eat the lovely local Goan food.

What to watch out for while travelling?

One must try as far as possible to have a well-planned itinerary with details. Just make sure it's a flexible plan. When you plan ahead you can save time and money and get the best value for the time and money invested.

As a travel buyer, what's your philosophy?

Live in the moment and see the travel experience through your eyes and feel it with your heart, not your phone or camera!



CORPORATE JET-SETTER

SAHIL SIGHAT

Associate Vice President
LiquidHub Analytics Pvt Ltd

TT BUREAU

Most memorable trip to any destination?

I visited Goa in 2016, along with family and friends. It is an amazing holiday destination that has everything, be it the sun, sea, sand or siesta. People were friendly, the resorts were beautiful and there was an abundance of good food. The best part was being able to spend my time lazing around the pool or at the beach. The children enjoyed the water sport activities.

You dream of going to?

I would like to visit Europe. It is a beautiful continent with different countries, each astoundingly beautiful. On my list I have the Amalfi coast of Italy, Barcelona, Venice, Lucern and Rome, each with so much history and picturesque landscapes. I would love to visit them and when I do, I would, maybe, visit two countries at a time.

Favourite airline and why?

My first choice will be Emirates. It's a class apart, with its courteous staff and great connectivity across the globe.

Best hotel experience and why?

Atlantis, The Palm at Jumeirah, Dubai, is literally an oasis. It's a luxurious paradise which has, something for everyone. Aquaventure, water-park, in-house gigantic aquarium, spa, shopping, multi-cuisine dining restaurants and nightclubs – they have it all.

A place you plan to visit again?

Dubai, anytime, and any number of times, I wouldn't mind visiting this alluring country.

A family vacation that stands out?

For me, my best family vacation would be when I visited Dubai. It was the epitome of luxury. Atlantis was fabulous. The children enjoyed themselves at the water park, the sand dunes were awesome – loads of shopping in the malls, good food and night clubs, Dubai had it all.



Your best holiday with friends?

Goa is a heaven on earth and I visited this emerald land with my friends and extended family members. While I was there, I stayed at Taj Fort, Aguada. The view from the resort was breathtaking. We spent most part of the day on the beach. I think the nightlife of Goa is unbeatable. Our visit to the flea market at Arpora added more to the Goan effect.

Great food you enjoyed and where?

Thalasa, Goa, is a great choice when it comes to seafood. The shacks are good too. Tito's and Britto's are the popular choices.

What to watch out for while travelling?

Travel light; hotels booked should be very centrally located; reach your destination preferably during the day and take the last flight out. It always helps to be aware about the place in terms of the safety aspects. Carry basic medication. And lastly, leave all inhibitions behind. Travel with an open mind and leave your office work behind.

As a travel buyer, what's your philosophy?

Look out for off season deals, book tickets well in advance, use recommended hotels. Look for deals on sightseeing options as well. Do your homework, if travelling to a new destination, carry local currency if travelling abroad.

HAND ME THOSE CUFFS

Cuffs are fashion accessories that convey a measure of style, personality, taste and poise

TT BUREAU

Many people believe that the whole notion of cufflinks is a little absurd as they are so tiny that they are easy to lose. The plain old buttons are so much more practical – attached directly to the shirt, it prevents them from falling off or getting lost. Nonetheless, to a great many others, cufflinks add a the final touch to a man's wardrobe. Like any other fashion accessories, cufflinks convey a measure of style, personality, taste and help one make a statement.

CUT CANARY DIAMOND OCTAGON BY JACOB & CO EMERALD

Sometimes, a personal statement transcends beyond form, functionality and economy, and speaks of refinements, elegance and heritage. In the world of cufflinks, nothing can rival the statement made by Jacob & Co's emerald-cut Canary Diamond Octagon cufflink. The central 10.76 carat, Asscher-cut diamonds with wide facets and sharp, clipped corners, breathe fire into already gloriously magnificent, yellow Cape diamonds. The entire piece consists of approximately 21.29-carat diamonds in total, embedded on a polished 18-carat white gold cuff with a whale flip-back latch. This truly is fit for kings and merchant princes.



ACORN CUFF LINKS BY TIFFANY & CO SCHLUMBERGER®

Apart from the touch of class, these rare and unusual hematite and 18K yellow gold double acorn cufflinks by Tiffany & Co. Schlumberger make a very eloquent fashion statement. These are much harder to find than the single acorn cufflinks. It's a piece that is beautifully made and strikingly handsome. First of all, it's a piece by Tiffany & Co, a brand who's hallmark is enough to make a fashion statement, but being one of the rarest pieces to be found, just puts these cufflinks on a different plane.



CUFFLINKS "VRUBEL'S SKETCHES"

The image of a pair of interlaced horseshoes is one of the greatest riddles in the world of arts and at the same time is recognised as a sign of fortune. Cufflinks "Vrubel's Sketches" take their cue from two of the maker's horseshoe brooches. After a sensational find by some historians, the artisans of Lobortas Jewellery House attempted to create a piece of jewellery based on Vrubel's basic idea, which the oriental sign of "Yin & Yang," in the two-horseshoe combination. With the help of volume-modelling, the jewellers managed to accomplish this onerous task and in 2007, the masterpiece brooch "Double Horseshoe" saw the light of day. In 2014, this remarkable ornament became an adornment of one of the halls of the State Hermitage Museum, Carl Faberge's Hall. Vrubel's Sketches cufflinks are already recognisable Vrubel's forms and colours. The horseshoes of sapphires and of diamonds which depict fortune are a true work of art!





LE MERIDIEN DHAKA

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lemeridien.com/dhaka

TASTE THE UNCOMMON

Le **MERIDIEN**
DHAKA

Discover Unexpected Flavours At Le Méridien Dhaka

Offering sophisticated cuisine that is rooted in tradition yet informed by the unique local ingredients of the destination, Le Méridien Dhaka adds a decidedly modern twist to classic dishes with the Dhaka's largest configuration of premium dining restaurants and bars under one roof.

For more information, please contact
+88 01990 900900 or +88 017666 73443

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ABSOLUTE COMFORT

Rejuvenate, revitalise and relax at The Westin Pushkar Resort & Spa, an oasis of pleasure in the beautiful state of Rajasthan

TT BUREAU

While exploring the ancient and vibrant city of Pushkar, make sure that the Westin Pushkar Resort & Spa is your retreat to fall back to. Surrounded by the picturesque Aravalis, it is an immaculate wellness and leisure gateway that offers everything from serene natural elements and beautiful sunsets to rejuvenating therapies and food for the soul. Ideally located to experience the various cultural and historical offerings of this vibrant city, including the annual Camel Fair which attracts thousands of visitors from across the globe, the resort is a short drive from the Holy Lake as well as the famous Brahma Temple, which dates back to the 14th Century. Pushkar is 11km away from Ajmer, famous for the shrine of Khwaja Muin-ud-din Chishti, the founder of The Sufi Movement



Nourish - Lawn



Royale Ballroom - Theatre Seating



Luxury Villa from Indoor Pool



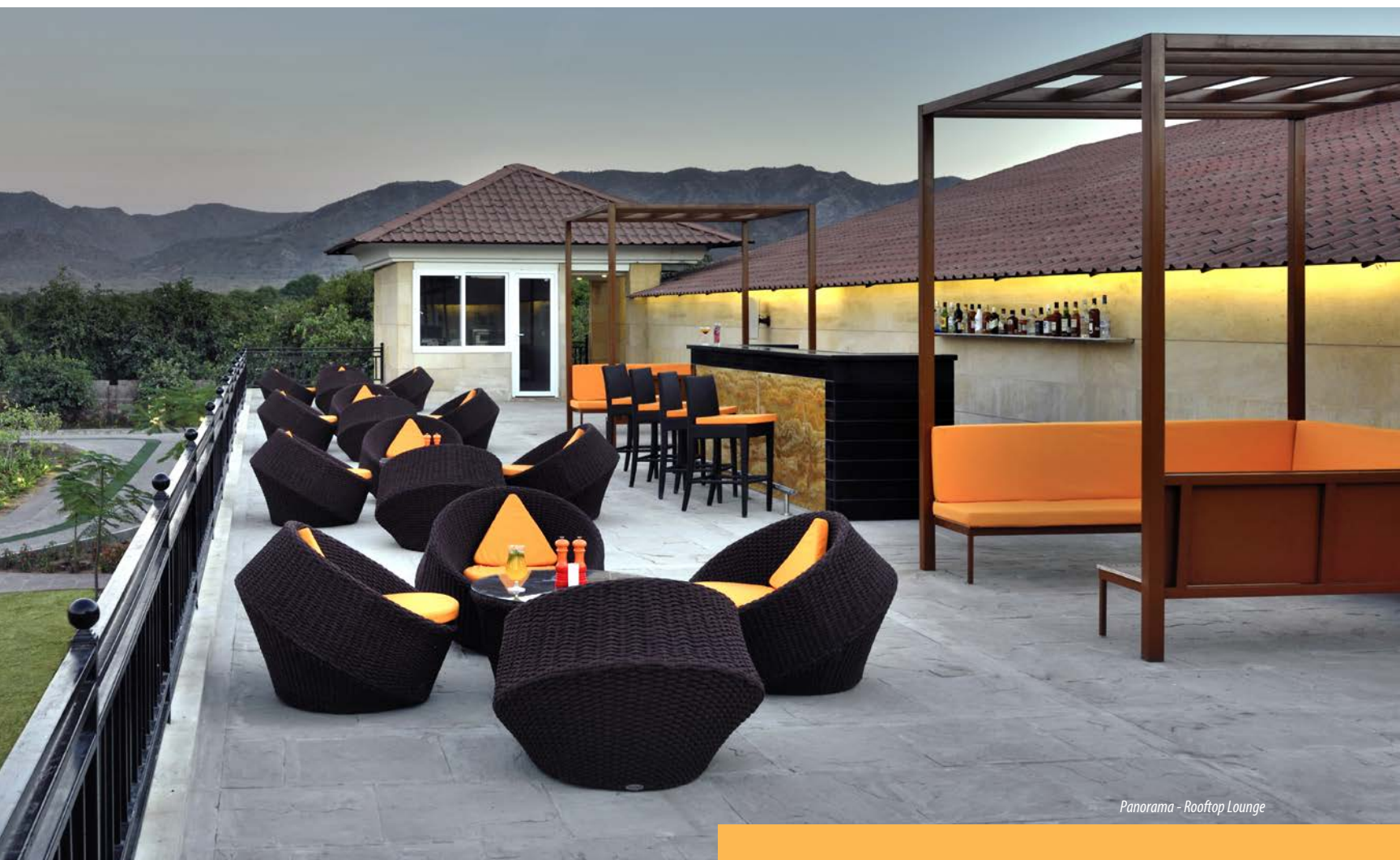
Waterbody overlooking Villa

in India. It is also 158km from the Jaipur International Airport, 53km from the Kishangarh Airport, and is also connected by rail to Ajmer Junction.

Each of the 98 spacious guest rooms and villas of this beautiful resort offer a panoramic view of the surrounding Aravali Hills and feature luxurious amenities, like high-speed Internet access and flat screen televisions. Every little detail at the resort has been thoughtfully designed to leave guests feeling cared for by providing revitalising comfort. For those looking to relax and enjoy a reprieve from the heat, one of the 24 luxury villas or 20 Royal Villas would be a perfect choice. Each of the luxury villas has its own indoor plunge pool, while each of the Royal Villas is spread over 105sq.m and has a private outdoor



Outdoor Plunge Pool - Royal Villa



Panorama - Rooftop Lounge

pool to cool off in. For Westin patrons worldwide, there is the signature Westin Heavenly® Bed, which ensures restful nights and blissful mornings, while other amenities like Heavenly® Bath and White Tea by Westin scented amenities ensure you have a rejuvenating stay.

With over 1,000sq.m of dedicated wellness space, there are splendid options for anyone looking for re-energising and rejuvenating themselves during their stay. Power up at your pace with Westin's WORKOUT® fitness studio or enjoy refreshing laps in the scenic swimming pool. Pamper yourself and achieve

complete harmony of body and mind at the Heavenly Spa by Westin™. A selection of seven treatment rooms and the hotel's menu of signature spa treatments combine ancient philosophy with innovative techniques to restore balance and promote a foundation of wellness that lasts beyond the guest's stay. For a nominal fee, Westin also offers New Balance® clothing and shoes through the Westin Gear Lending Program for guests to use during their stay so they can pack light and stay fit.

The Westin Pushkar Resort & Spa makes sure that it takes good care of all of its guests with services like Concierge, Kids Club



Recharge - Indoor Theater



Premier Villa with Balcony

and Recreation Centre, including a mini-theatre with reclining seats. A Gift Shop, Business Centre and parking facilities are also on offer. High-speed Internet access is available throughout the resort, in all guest rooms, meeting spaces and public areas to keep guests connected with their loved ones.

Dining and entertainment options at The Westin Pushkar Resort & Spa are designed to offer a diverse gourmet experience. Seasonal Tastes, the signature all-day dining restaurant offers an innovative combination of global cuisine with live kitchens,

creating an interactive dining experience. Nourish yourself with the season's fresh ingredients and herbs from the kitchen garden of the resort. Experience the exceptional sunset view from the rooftop lounge, Panorama, while savouring perfectly seared, mouth-watering barbeques, grills and wraps, along with your favorite cocktails, wines and spirits. Guests also have an option to unwind and relax at the stylish two-level Mix bar. Relish a refreshing menu of light bites and drinks served at Splash, the poolside bar. From nourishing SuperFoodsRX™ that promotes wellness to global cuisine and popular Indian fare, guests can enjoy inventive and refined dining 24 hours a day.

The Westin Pushkar Resort & Spa is ideal for any inspiring event, from intimate business meetings and company retreats to extravagant gala functions and spectacular weddings. Westin's four versatile function rooms and a pre-function area, spreads across a total of more than 900sq.m of indoor space, featuring a comprehensive range of amenities and services. Two sprawling venues offer almost 1,700sq.m for themed weddings and corporate events.

Westin's Wedding Specialist is always on hand and is ready to help you transform your ideas into reality and mark your special wedding day as the most memorable celebration of your life. You just need to relax as Westin's professional conference and banquet services teams attend to your every detail, from menu creation and catering to state-of-the-art audiovisual and entertainment systems. Allow Westin's dedicated meeting concierge to take your event to a new level of excellence with customised extra details that add a refreshingly personal touch.



Outdoor Pool with the Dome

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LUXURY ON WHEELS

Train journeys in India offer some of the best views of the coastal and village areas amidst style and grandeur, making each journey memorable in an extravagant manner

AARON JACOB

The Indian railroad offers one of the largest rail networks in Asia, extending the length and breadth of the country. Just as the saying goes, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do," explore this great country in true Imperial style by living the life of a 'Maharaja'. With signature journeys, guests will see India like never before. Indian railways operate some of the most exclusive trains catering to both the domestic and international travellers who are looking for exclusivity, thus, giving a once-in-a-lifetime experience of true Indian royalty.

PALACE ON WHEELS

The train lives up to its name profoundly as one of the top ten luxurious trains in the world. The seven-day-journey takes guests across the land, to regal palaces where the Royal Rajputs lived with finesse and sophistication. The fully air-conditioned 14 luxury saloon train is fully self-sufficient with every modern amenity at the disposal of guests. The lavish interior, beautiful

carriages and each saloon highlight the vibrant culture of the state. The 7-day journey starts from Safdarjung Railway Station in Delhi and has stops at Jaipur, Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, Chittorgarh, Udaipur, Jaisalmer Fort, Jodhpur, Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, Agra and back to New Delhi. Palace on Wheels has two restaurants, namely, Maharaja Restaurant and Maharani Restaurant, serving traditional Indian, Chinese and Continental cuisines, with a full bar serving Indian liquor and the finest wines and Scotches from across the world. The Rajasthan Government and railway department restored the train back to its original glory in 1981, maintaining similar aesthetics of the interiors alive. The luxurious train has a lounge and a library and a new spa to prepare the guests for next day's tour.

DECCAN ODYSSEY

The luxurious Deccan Odyssey is a venture between Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) and Indian Railways. This luxurious hotel on wheels travels the heritage site of



Maharashtra and increases tourism on the Konkan route. This voyage takes guests through spellbinding destinations across India. Each journey undertaken on the Deccan Odyssey is an experience and explores India's rich heritage, culture, diversity, with a completely different angle. This train gives guests a thorough introduction to the splendour of India. Guests are pampered with the wide range of onboard amenities. Deccan Odyssey comprises 21 royal coaches, out of these eleven are guest cabins and each cabin is fully equipped with all the modern amenities, which include 4 sophisticated Presidential Suites. The Deccan Odyssey has two restaurants, namely, 'Waavar' and 'Utsav', offering guests mouth-watering delicacies ranging from local cuisines to international. Gateway-a well-stocked bar, serves the finest wines and international brands of liquor.

MAHARAJA EXPRESS

Maharaja Express is an initiative of the Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), and is the latest luxury train to be inducted in the luxury train line-up in India. The sole purpose is to redefine luxury and exclusive journeys. With 7 journeys that are carefully designed to give travellers an experience like no other, guests get to see India with a completely new perspective. India has always been a land of the royals where kingdoms were founded, art and culture flourished. The exteriors of the train have been designed to replicate the vibrant culture of India; it is the interiors that tell a completely different story. Life aboard the Maharaja Express is all about refinement and comfort. All the Suites and Presidential Suites have their own spacious sitting areas. The Maharaja Express has two fine dining restaurants, namely, Mayur Mahal and Rang Mahal, where guests can enjoy sumptuous meals in a vibrant and calm ambience. These fine dining restaurants can easily accommodate 42 guests. The Maharaja Express has 2 well-stocked bars, namely, The Rajah Club and Safari Bar, providing an exquisite range of wines and cocktails.



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AVIATION



AIR INDIA LAUNCHES DIRECT FLIGHT TO SWEDEN

India's national air carrier Air India launched its first non-stop flight, the Dreamliner B-787, to Stockholm, Sweden, from Delhi. With an all-female crew on board, the cockpit was under the control of Captain Nivedita Bhasin.

The Dreamliner will fly thrice a week, every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday and leave Delhi at 14.50 hours and reach Stockholm at 18.40. The return flight will leave Stockholm at 20:40 hours and reach Delhi at 07:20 hours next day.

With an increase of passenger volume between India and Sweden by 50 per cent in three years, the direct flight is likely to further bolster the growing relationship between India and Sweden. The flying time of passengers will be reduced by at least two hours.

Eminent Olympian and Bronze Medal Winner Gagan Narang and Ace Cricketer Harbhajan Singh were few lucky passengers who boarded AI first Direct flight to Stockholm, Sweden.

Ashwani Lohani, Chairman, Air India said, "We are confident that Air India's first foray to Scandinavia would add new dimensions to trade, commerce and tourism between the two countries - India and Sweden."

The launch event, including lighting of lamp, cake and ribbon cutting ceremonies, was held at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi, in the presence of Air India Chairman Ashwani Lohani and Chargé d'Affaires of Embassy of Sweden, Gautam Bhattacharyya.

Gautam Bhattacharyya, Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Sweden said, "The direct connection will not only strengthen trade between India and Sweden but also create more business, tourism and educational opportunities."

Ewa Lagerqvist, CEO, Visit Sweden said, "There is a growing interest from India in Sweden as a tourist and business destination. The combination of authentic nature experiences, progressive cities and a modern sustainable lifestyle sets Sweden aside as a unique destination. We hope that more Indians will discover Sweden in the near future." tt



FREIGHTER SERVICES TO MUMBAI INCREASED

Emirates recently revamped its award-winning A380 service, onboard Lounge that made its operational debut on a flight to Kuala Lumpur. The Onboard Lounge was first introduced on 1 August, 2008 and has since become a mainstay of Emirates' double decker aircraft. Now in its 9th year, the Emirates A380 Onboard Lounge is arguably the most popular social spot at 40,000 feet.

The latest makeover of the lounge, inspired by private yacht cabins, features a more intimate and social area. With a clientele made up of Business and First Class customers on board the A380, the exclusive lounge accommodates 26 guests and serves the finest wines from around the world. The six wines on offer differ by destination but a champagne offering of Moët & Chandon or Veuve Clicquot is always available. tt



AIR FRANCE CELEBRATES THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS PARIS – MUMBAI ROUTE

In the 1960s, Air France added Mumbai to its "historic" Far East network and launched flights from Mumbai on 7 September 1967. The airline now operates a daily service between Paris-Charles de Gaulle and India's economic capital by Boeing 777-200 equipped with the latest long-haul travel cabins.

On this occasion of completing half a century, Max Smits, General Manager, Air France-KLM, Indian sub-continent said: "We are very proud to celebrate 50 years of service between Mumbai and Paris. Air France has been present in Mumbai since 1967 and has been investing continuously with the aim to provide a great product and excellent connection opportunities to the Indian passengers from its hub at Paris, Charles de Gaulle. We take this opportunity to thank our loyal customers and partners in reaching this great milestone and are absolutely thrilled to celebrate this occasion with our passengers taking the flight 07 Sep from Mumbai to Paris with a small surprise celebration at the Mumbai airport". tt



TIRUPATI AIRPORT: BLENDING HERITAGE WITH ARCHITECTURE



Terminal Building Tirupati Airport

AAI's Tirupati Airport enhances passenger experience by blending heritage with modern-day architecture

TT BUREAU

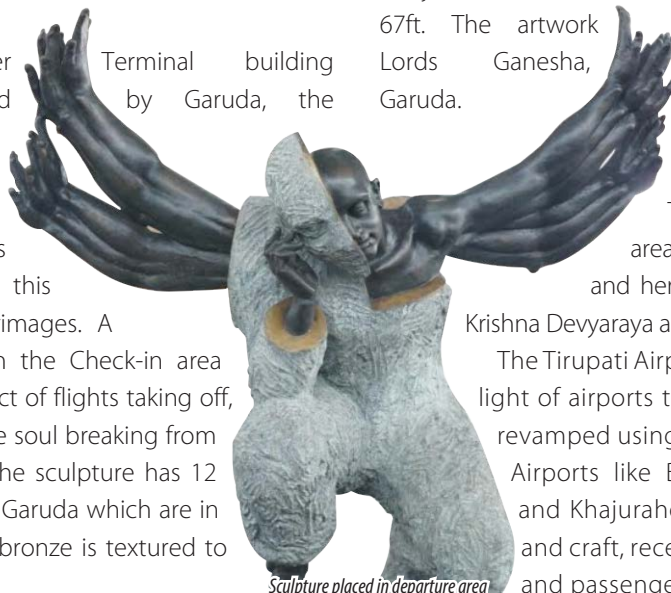
Tirupati Airport is Airport Authority of India's (AAI) effort to connect foreign visitors with the local region and its community. It does this by creating a sense of place within the airport and by showcasing the unique identity and culture of the state. Today's airports are fast transforming into a blend of cultural heritage and modern architecture making sure that the experience of travellers are special as they get a glimpse of the city's unique flavour and history.

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND CULTURE

AAI is working at making Tirupati Airport, in Andhra Pradesh, a destination in its own right while incorporating the state's lifestyle and tradition. Perceiving that airports today are not just places you fly to and from, AAI has endeavoured to keep abreast of the aspiration of airport users. The new integrated terminal building of Tirupati Airport's Garuda Terminal is a blend of a modern steel structure, imbibing its form from the mythical Garuda, with impressive artworks showcased in creative spaces that narrate a story of the city.

CELESTIAL DESIGN

The design of the Passenger Terminal building at Tirupati Airport is inspired by Garuda, the celestial mount of Lord Vishnu, with its wings spread. The Garuda-shaped terminal building immediately connects with passengers who visit this temple city for religious pilgrimages. A bronze sculpture of Garuda in the Check-in area signifies not only the physical act of flights taking off, but the metaphysical one of the soul breaking from its shackles to attain nirvana. The sculpture has 12 hands, akin to the wings of the Garuda which are in black ebony shades, while the bronze is textured to create a contrast.



Sculpture placed in departure area



Dr Guruprasad Mohapatra, Chairman with GRIHA Award

DASHAVATARA 2D PAINTING

As a backdrop for the Check-in counters, a 2D relief work, in fusion with the paintings, depict a beautiful story displaying the Dashavatara of Lord Venkateswara. This splendid artwork occupies the central part of the building showing up in earthen hues that are visually soothing.

MAGNIFICENT MURAL

The artwork at International Arrival is a ceramic mural which depicts the 'Namam' (broad symbol on forehead) of Lord Balaji. It measures 9ft in height and stretches another 67ft. The artwork is divided into six parts, featuring Lords Ganesha, Hanuman, Krishna, Vishnu and Garuda.

HAMPI REDEFINED

The artwork at the baggage claim area intricately showcases the culture and heritage of Hampi during the reign of Krishna Devyaraya and creates a splendid ambience.

The Tirupati Airport should be seen in the universal light of airports that are being conceptualised and revamped using innovative ideas and craft. Indian Airports like Bhuj, Kolkata, Jaipur, Chandigarh and Khajuraho have also incorporated local art and craft, receiving appreciation from all visitors and passengers.

AAI CELEBRATES 71ST INDIA INDEPENDENCE DAY

Airports Authority of India (AAI) celebrated 71st Independence Day at New ATS Complex, IGI Airport with fervour and joy. The celebration started with flag hoisting by Dr Guruprasad Mohapatra, Chairman, AAI. While addressing the officials, Mohapatra said that "the progressive initiatives undertaken by the Government of India have led AAI to increase and improve its current infrastructure by developing airports that are modern and efficient to facilitate easier movement of travellers." On this occasion, students of Kendriya Vidyalaya, AAI, Rangpuri, gave cultural performances highlighting the rich and diverse cultural heritage of the country.

AAI also launched its new website, to cater increased requirements and to provide a better platform for the stakeholders for gathering information. A tree plantation drive was also organised at the new ATS complex and upcoming new building of Indian Aviation Academy (IAA) at Vasant Kunj where Chairman and other senior officials of AAI planted saplings. Simultaneously, all the Regional Headquarters of AAI and Airports celebrated Independence Day with full enthusiasm. **tt**

Dr Guruprasad Mohapatra, Chairman, Airports Authority of India hoisting the flag at New ATS Building, IGI Airport on the occasion of 71st Independence Day



QATAR AIRWAYS BRINGS BOEING 777 TO BERLIN

In response to increased demand, Qatar Airways will connect Berlin Tegel and Doha in September and October 2017 on a daily basis with the Boeing 777-300ER. With its "Triple 7", the national carrier from Qatar highlights Berlin's significance.

Frédéric Gossot, Country Manager for Germany, Austria and Switzerland is very satisfied with the way things are going: "Germany, and thereby Berlin, are an important market for us. Operations on this connection started 12 years ago. Since then, demand has constantly grown."

Elmar Kleinert, Head of Operations of Flughafen Berlin Brandenburg GmbH: "Travellers have been able to fly non-stop between Berlin and Doha since 2005. We are pleased that this route has been received in a positive way and that Qatar Airways will descend upon Berlin in September and October of 2017 with the Boeing 777." **tt**



JET AIRWAYS TO OFFER UNIQUE STAY EXPERIENCES WITH AIRBNB

Taking another industry-first initiative, Jet Airways, India's premier international airline, announced a partnership with Airbnb. The partnership will allow Jet Airways to offer a wide spectrum of rapidly growing, global hospitality choices to its guests from India, strengthening its portfolio of choices for stay that the carrier currently offers its guests.

Giving his views on this partnership, Jayaraj Shanmugam, Chief Commercial Officer, Jet Airways said, "An increasing number of Indian travellers are embracing the fresh and highly personalised experiences that a platform like Airbnb offers."

Speaking about Airbnb's first-of-its-kind partnership with an Indian airline, Amanpreet Bajaj, Country Manager – India, Airbnb said, "Airbnb's philosophy is centered on providing unique experiences to modern day travellers, who seek newer and more interesting ways to travel." **tt**



VISTARA ADDS RANCHI AS 21ST DESTINATION

Vistara announced the addition of Ranchi as the 21st destination to its steadily expanding network. Effective October 29, 2017, Vistara will operate two flights a day between Delhi and Ranchi, providing a convenient same-day return option to travellers from both cities. Bookings are now open, with one-way fares starting INR 2,199 inclusive of taxes.

Commenting on the launch of the new destination Phee Teik Yeoh, CEO, Vistara, said, "Jharkhand has immense potential for industrial development, with sectors such as steel, cement, electric, rubber, khadi, handicraft and textile flourishing. Ranchi, the gateway to the state, is also home to many government organisations, PSUs and R&D centres. It is also emerging as an educational hub for the region. The addition of Ranchi as a destination to our network will bring world-class air travel to corporate and business travellers, tourists, and residents of the state." **tt**



LUFTHANSA HELPS INDIAN START-UPS TAKE OFF



L to R- Wolfgang Will, Senior Director, South Asia, Lufthansa, Alexander Schlaubitz, VP, Marketing, Lufthansa

This year, the Lufthansa Start-Up Expo received over 12000 attendees, 7000 plus startups and over 1000 investor meetings

TT BUREAU

The Start-up Expo, India's largest eco-system for start-up success, took place on 23 August, at GoWork, Gurugram. Co-created by Lufthansa and The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE), the unique one-day event brought together all that is needed for start up success – investors, mentors, business experts, industry partners, government agencies, corporates and customers – all under one roof. Participation was free of cost.

Wolfgang Will, Senior Director, South Asia, Lufthansa Passenger Airlines, said, "Entrepreneurship is the driving force of the Indian economy. We, at Lufthansa, feel privileged to be at the heart of this nationwide movement celebrating entrepreneurship. As an integral part of our Lufthansa Runway to Success initiative, the Start-up Expo yet again brings alive our promise to be More Indian Than You Think."

According to Geetika Dayal, Executive Director, TiE Delhi-NCR, "This is the collective strength of India coming together to fuel the drive and passion of young entrepreneurs. Lufthansa's



strong commitment to partnering the success of Indian business is creditable. As the largest global network fostering entrepreneurship, TiE's core philosophy is to support startups and SMEs with opportunities and mentoring them for success. This is why our long-standing partnership with Lufthansa through initiatives such as Runway to Success and the Start-up Expo is unparalleled."

India is the 3rd largest base for startups in the world, witnessing a YoY growth of 10-12 per cent and is expected to grow by 2.2X till 2020, according to an industry report.



Lufthansa Start-Up Expo 2017 – Geetika Dayal, Ramesh Abhishek, Paurus Nekoo, Sangeeta

LUFTHANSA CELEBRATES INDIA'S 71ST INDEPENDENCE DAY

To mark the occasion of India's 71st Independence Day, Lufthansa Group extended a warm Indian reception to passengers making their journey even more memorable. On August 15, 2017, the ground staff and cabin crew of Lufthansa German Airline as well as Swiss International Airlines attired in an Indian tri-coloured scarf, greeted passengers with the same across cities of New Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Pune airport. With this initiative, Lufthansa once again demonstrated that it is "More Indian than you think." **tt**



SRILANKAN AIRLINES HOSTS CULTURAL EXTRAVAGANZA IN KOLKATA

Celebrating its months of association with 'City of Joy', SriLankan Airlines, the national carrier of Sri Lanka, hosted an evening of cultural rendezvous for its patrons and GSA's present in Kolkata and West Bengal.



AIRLINE AND AIRPORT CIOs EMBRACE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Airlines and airports are embracing new technologies and turning to artificial intelligence (AI) to support their customer service. Over the next three years, 52 per cent of airlines plan major AI programs or R&D and 45 per cent of airports will invest in R&D in the next five years, according to the SITA 2017 Air Transport IT Trends Insights.

Jim Peters, Chief Technology Officer, SITA, speaking at the Future Travel Experience conference in Las Vegas, said: "We know that passengers prefer to use technology and when it is well designed it can really improve the passenger experience. Airlines and airports are investing in AI and mobile programmes to make services even better for the passenger, supporting sales and providing customer support, particularly during times of disruption. "The industry is using a healthy mix of in-house and outsourced development which will combine expert and industry-specific knowledge with emerging approaches to tech offerings." **tt**



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EXPLORER



FAMILY FUN IN THAILAND

Packed with special offers, Thailand offers more activities than any destination for a perfect family vacation

TT BUREAU

Thailand has always been the most sorted tourist destination in Southeast Asia. Known for its breathtaking views and lush green environment, it is indeed a traveller's paradise. Thailand is often called 'The land of Smiles' and it truly lives up to its promise as a perfect family holiday destination. This family destination will make you want to come back for more and is sure to make your vacation a memorable one. Thailand is rich in culture and diversity. So, if you visit world-class beaches in the South or the mountain villages in the North, this destination will not disappoint. This family destination is a gateway to Asia and the perfect place for a family holiday.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), in collaboration with True Corporation, has decided to support tourist families travelling to Bangkok by providing them with sim-cards for their Smart Phones, with an application, 'Family Fun Thailand,' to allow families to take advantage of a range of promotions and offers in Thailand during June – November, 2017. This activity is a part of the 'Family Fun' project launched by TAT to promote Thailand as a prominent family destination, targeting families from ASEAN, South Asia and the South Pacific. This project-cum-initiative is primarily aimed at boosting tourism to the Kingdom during the 'Green Season.'

True Corporation has decided to provide



approximately 1,000 sim-cards every month to families during the six-month period. As soon as families register these sim cards, they will receive a text message via Short Message Service (SMS), with instructions to download the Family Fun Thailand application on their Smart Phones. Once the application has been downloaded, visitors can view family-friendly tourism products and services on offer across Thailand, including discounts of up to 60 per cent on some attractions, including the Flying Squirrels, Yoyo Land, Upside Down Pattaya, Vanich Farm, Phuket, Mercure Hotels, Chatrium Hotel Riverside Bangkok, Botanica Khao Yai, Long Beach Garden Hotel and Spa, Pattaya, Life Spa @ Sea, Springfield, Oasis Spa Lanna, and River Star Princess.

The people of Thailand are kind, hospitable and open-hearted. Thailand offers a plethora of wonderful beaches where you can sunbathe, clear waters, extraordinary marine flora and fauna to be mesmerised by as you swim, snorkel or scuba. In the evenings, the beaches explode into a dancing frenzy. There



is something for everyone here: trance, techno, drum and bass, commercial dance and reggae. You will definitely not be disappointed with beach life holidays in Thailand. Thai food is a blend of distinct elements – sweet, sour, hot and salty flavours that include an amazing selection of salads to bring out that foodie in you.

BANGKOK

The capital of Thailand has boomed over the years among many globetrotters as a desired tourist destination. For travellers who are looking to take a comfortable trip to Thailand, Bangkok promises to satisfy the most demanding needs. Luxurious suites with breathtaking city views, gilded temples, vibrant life and amazing hospitality make travel a memorable experience. Bangkok is well-known for its delectable local and international cuisine and while there are plenty of restaurants in the city, it is highly recommended to taste some of the best food at the street stalls.

PATTAYA

Travelling from Bangkok to Pattaya is easy as travellers can take a bus ride or a cab. Pattaya is famous for its daytime activities, bustling nightlife and shopping opportunities to entertain travellers round the clock. Pattaya has a wide range of tourist attractions, places of interest that are all worth seeing and caters to each and every traveller. Over the years, Pattaya has seen the addition of a multitude of attractions that are tailor-made specifically for family travellers and reflect the city's changing tourism profile.

HUA HIN

The ideal way of reaching Hua Hin from Pattaya is by ferry. A royal town and an old beach resort, the town is full of history and attractions. Hua Hin has the highest density of world-class golf courses in Thailand. One of the top tourist destinations, this city has incredible beaches, mountains, water parks for travellers throughout the year. It's a traditional and the oldest Thai resort, and as the evenings offer plenty of entertainment and delicious sea food. An exotic destination, Hua Hin offers an overall family experience.

PHUKET

This is an idyllic destination and the biggest island in Thailand with the largest Chinese influence, so travellers can indulge in some authentic Chinese cuisine. Phuket is surrounded with magnificent beaches and is said to have the best sunset view in all of Thailand. It is hospitable and is famous for its nightlife.. Widely known for its

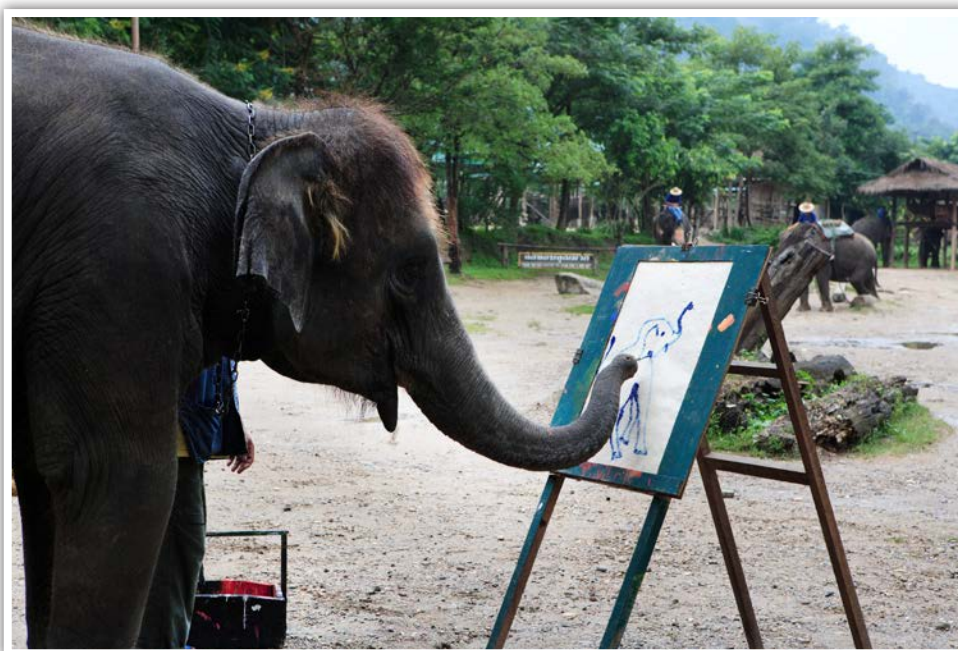


educational centres, it is an ideal destination for tourists who are interested in learning about the region's wildlife and marine life.

CHIANG MAI

Set amongst forested foothills, a sprawling modern city has grown up around ancient Chiang Mai, ringed by a tangle of super highways, but if you drive in a straight line in any direction, you'll soon find yourself in the lush green countryside of Northern Thailand. Travellers can take a short motorcycle ride and marvel at pristine rainforest reserves, bubbling hot springs and peaceful country villages. The prominent tourist spot also has adventure camps, elephant sanctuaries and souvenir markets to make your travel more special.

Whether you are looking for a relaxing holiday on the beach or you are into a spiritual journey, whether you are a diehard foodie or just looking for interesting people to meet –don't hesitate to take the next flight out and enjoy this incredible country with its rich history and traditions.



A STATE WITH SOUL

Himachal Pradesh attracts visitors not only because of its intrinsic natural beauty but because of its rich cultural tradition

TT BUREAU

Himachal Pradesh is also known as the Devbhoomi and is famous for its temples. People from Himachal Pradesh celebrate Navratra with much devotion and enthusiasm. It is a time when people collectively pay their respect to the goddess Durga. It is one of the major festivals celebrated in the state, including other parts of the country. The Navratra melas are organised in almost every part of the state. It's an occasion to meet relatives and friends. During the festival, the devotees from India and abroad visit different temples in Kangra, Una and Bilaspur districts of the state, to pay courtesy to goddess Durga. Thousands of devotees from all over India come every year to the Devi temples of Himachal.

Navratra means 'nine nights', symbolising the purity and power that fills every one with utmost 'shakti' to live their lives to the fullest. People conduct ritualistic puja and fast for nine consecutive days and nights, while following the lunar calendar. Chanting of mantras, reciting of hymns and singing of bhajans and folk songs accompany the rituals for nine days. One of the important rituals in Navratra is the veneration of little girls. They represent goddess Durga and are known as 'kanjaks.' It is mainly performed on the eighth day or Ashtami.

In Himachal Pradesh, the last day of the festival marks the start of the Navratra celebrations. This last day is believed to be the day when Lord Rama returned to



Ayodhya after killing the demon King Ravana. Processions along with the deities of various temples of Himachal Pradesh are organised during the festival, when devotees worship the Divine Mother or Devi Shakti, who is worshipped as Devi Durga, Devi Laxmi and Devi Saraswati. Nine forms of the Divine Mother, Mookambika, Bhavani, Bhairavi, Sarvamangala, Jagadamba, Chandika, Bhadrakali, Annapurna and Durga, are worshipped during the Navratra festival.



People adorn colourful attires for the occasion and each day of this nine-day-long festival is denoted by a particular colour. Special arrangements are made by the government of the state to ensure that devotees and visitors have a hassle-free stay during this festive period.

Navratra also brings a multitude of devotees, from all over the country, to the state. It's the time for the Navratra Pilgrimage to famous temples or Shakti Peethas located in various parts of Himachal Pradesh, such as Sri Bajreshwari Devi Temple, Chintapurni Temple, Sri Naina Devi Temple, Chamunda Devi Temple and Jawalamukhi Temple.

SRI NAINA DEVI TEMPLE, BILASPUR

This is a famous temple dedicated to goddess Durga and is located in Bilaspur. During the Navratra festival, the nine-day long celebrations are held here. On the first 3 days, Devi Shakti is worshipped as Devi Durga, the symbol of power. During the next 3 days, Devi Shakti is worshipped as Devi Laxmi, the goddess of wealth and the last 3 days Devi Shakti is worshipped as Devi Saraswati, the goddess of wisdom and knowledge.

SRI JAWALAJI TEMPLE, KANGRA

This famous temple is located about 34km south, in the Kangra valley. During Navratra, huge numbers of devotees gather here and fairs are arranged on this occasion.

CHINTAPURNI MATA TEMPLE, UNA

Famous as one of the Shaktipeethas of the Hindus, Chintapurni Mata Temple located at Una district is situated on the top of Sola Singhi Hills. The temple is also famously known as Devi Chinnamastika Temple. During Navratra, special celebrations and fairs are held at the temple premises, where devotees gather.

CHAMUNDA DEVI TEMPLE, KANGRA

Located about 10km away from Palampur, on the shores of Baner River, Chamunda Devi Temple is another Shaktipeetha of the Hindus. The Navratra festival rituals here are observed meticulously. The first 3 days of the festival are dedicated to the 3 forms of Durga, and she is worshipped as Kali, Parvati and Kumari, representing all woman kind. During this occasion, on the day of Mahanavami, also known as "Kumari Puja," nine young girls are given due importance.

BAJRESHWARI DEVI TEMPLE, KANGRA

One of the famous Shaktipeethas of the Hindus, Bajreshwari Devi Temple is located in Kangra Old Township. The temple that was destroyed in 1905 was reconstructed again in 1920. The Navratra festival is celebrated with great joy at this temple and thousands of devotees flock here to become part of the Navratra celebrations.

The tremendous faith and reverence towards the mother Goddess pervades the air. All the temples in Himachal Pradesh are beautifully decorated. The Navratra celebrations have become a major treat for visitors, making this beautiful Himalayan state a prime tourist attraction.



HERITAGE REDUX

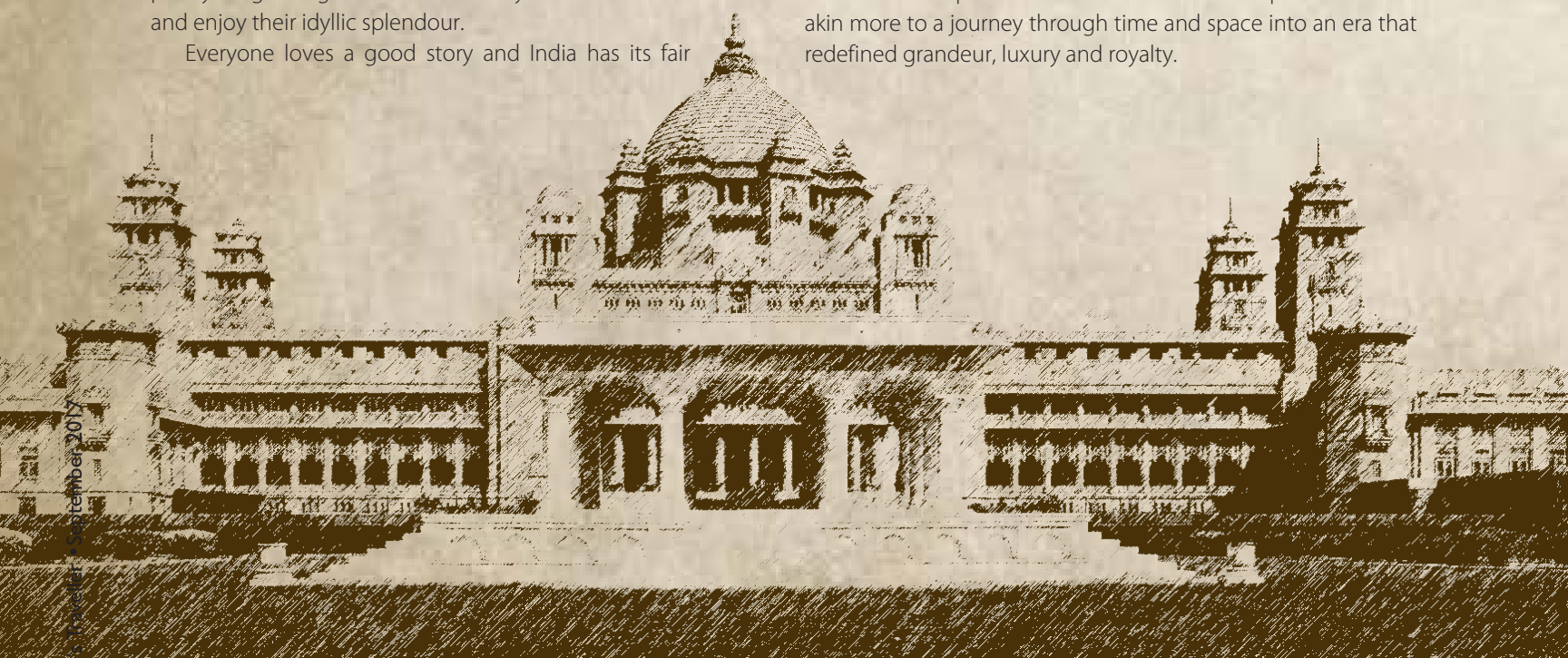
Once the identity of India's royal families, many palaces have morphed into luxury heritage hotels, but retained their grandeur, artefacts and personalised hospitality

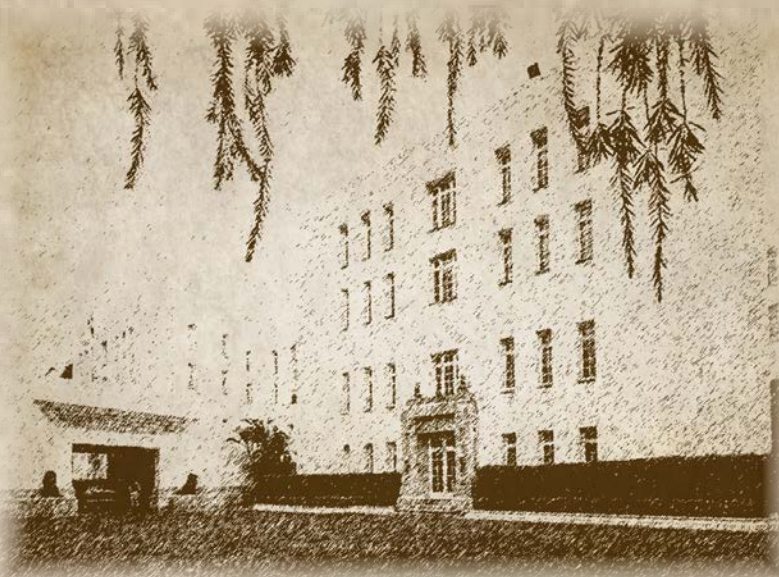
AARON JACOB

India has always been known for its rich history and imperial lifestyle. Its palaces were once the official residences of the royal family and have been converted into luxurious hotels that still retain their old-world charm and provide all the modern amenities that are essential to guests staying in these magnificent heritage hotels. Get a taste of the luxurious lifestyle of the maharajas of yore as they indulge in the lavish ambience, mouth-watering authentic dishes made specifically by royal chefs, and spacious rooms with traditional decor. So, pack your glad rags and take off to any one of these hotels and enjoy their idyllic splendour.

Everyone loves a good story and India has its fair

share of stories to narrate. Visit any one of these heritage hotels and you will find that they have a story to tell. What separates these hotels from other luxury hotels is that instead of the standard cookie-cutter kind of experiences, they offer a sense of history and a personal flavour that comes straight from the heart, art and history. Legacy and tradition blend impeccably with the state-of-the-art services albeit with a local flavour in the cuisine and the cultural vignettes. A section of these palaces has been converted into a museum and is open for guests. Staying in one of these palaces is a once-in-a-lifetime experience and is akin more to a journey through time and space into an era that redefined grandeur, luxury and royalty.





THE IMPERIAL, NEW DELHI

Built in the year 1931, this 5-Star hotel is one of the oldest hotels and the first luxury grand hotel in New Delhi. Earlier known as Queensway, The Imperial has the largest collection of colonial and post-colonial artefacts anywhere in New Delhi, with an in-house museum and art gallery and is well-known for its heritage and legacy. This business hotel, located in Central Delhi, close to Connaught Place, has 9 restaurants serving delectable delicacies from the by-gone era, a pool-side bar, a health club, spa and sauna. The restaurants and bars at The Imperial have a Victorian charm and luxury from the days of the Raj, infusing classic, colonial influences. The 235 spacious rooms with white marble flooring sport rattan furniture, original period art and photographs. Illustrious persons like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Lord Mountbatten are believed to have had a few meetings here.

TAJ UMAID BHAWAN, JODHPUR

Chittar Palace, built in 1943, is named after Maharaja Umaid Singh and is the last of the great palaces of India and one of the largest private residences in the world. The palace is divided into three functional parts – the residence of the royal family, a luxury Taj Palace Hotel, and a museum focussing on the 20th century history of the Jodhpur Royal Family. The hotel wing of the palace, called 'Taj Umaid Bhawan Palace Jodhpur,' and run by Taj Group of Hotels, has 70 rooms that include the luxurious Regal and Vice Regal Suites and the spectacular Maharaja and Maharani Suites. Fine restaurants, charming lounges and fine dining that are not only romantic, but an experience in itself.

THE OBEROI CECIL, HIMACHAL PRADESH

This historic hotel, located in Shimla, was built in 1884, and is located 7000ft higher, in the mighty Himalayan range. Guests can immediately feel the elegance and grace of the Colonial era. The hotel reopened after restoration in 1997 to its original majesty with wooden floors, period furniture and spectacular views of the valley. The 79 centrally heated rooms have all the facilities that can make guests' stay memorable and comfortable. The hotel has a heated swimming pool, billiards

rooms and children's activity centre and a well-stocked library with many opportunities for nature walks. For couples, the hotel provides a private dining room for a romantic dinner. Each room is furnished with Burmese teak floors, and colonial touches from the Ottoman Empire.

FORTUNE THE SAVOY, MUSSOORIE

If you seek a comfortable stay with luxury and heritage thrown in for good measure, Fortune the Savoy is your one-stop destination. Located in Mussoorie, it is an ideal destination for a vacation. The hotel is ethnic in style and boasts modern amenities, perfect for honeymooners, heritage and hill resort lovers. A perfect place for honeymoon couples, heritage travellers or hill lovers. The 50 elegantly furnished rooms include 26 Savoy Chambers, 12 Fortune Exclusive Rooms and 12 Fortune Suites that provide an old-school charm and incredible view of the valley. Guests can relax at the spa or workout at the state-of-the-art gymnasium.





Picnics and excursions are also organised by the hotel. A fine dining restaurant, The Grand Dining Room, allows guests to indulge in delicacies or pamper their palates at Fortune Deli. The Writer's Bar is a place to spend a relaxed evening with premium drinks.

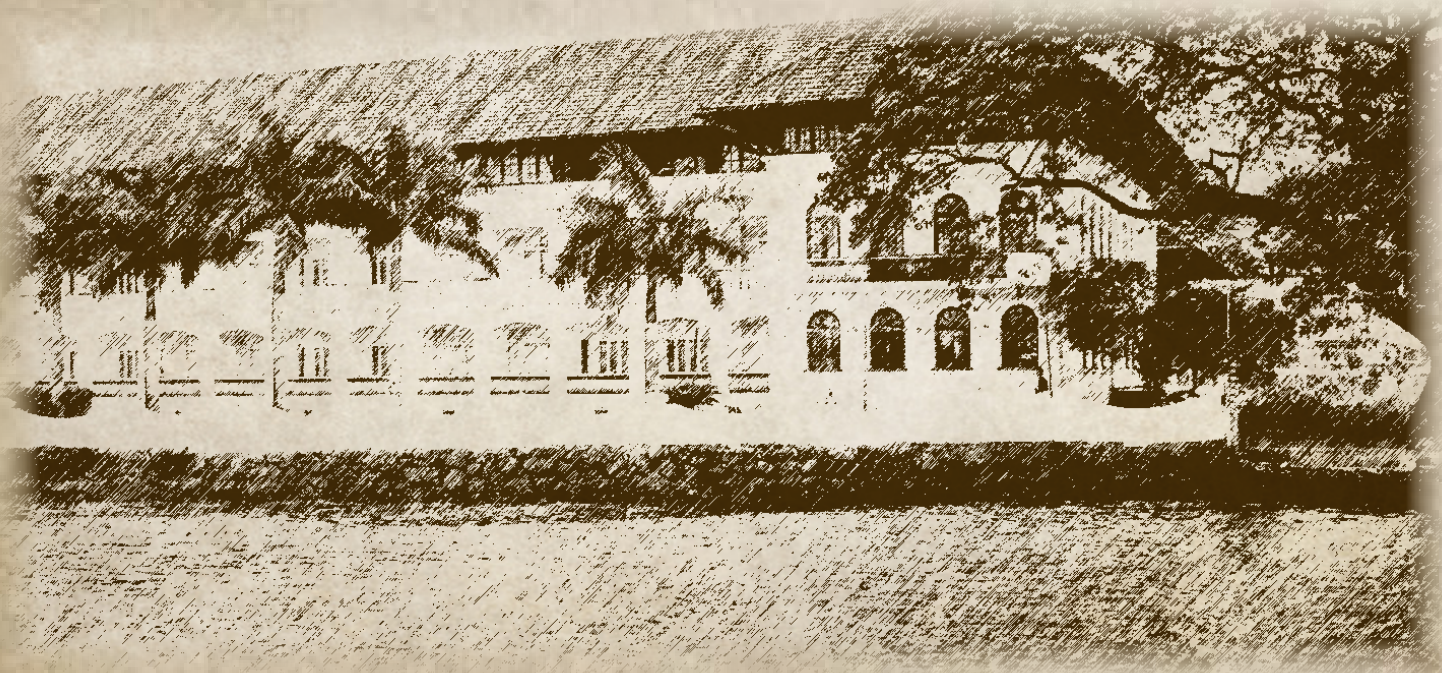
LALITHA MAHAL PALACE, MYSORE

Built in 1921 by Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV, this palace is located on top of a small hillock amidst terrace gardens. It is the second largest palace in Mysore and was built to exclusively accommodate the then Viceroy of India. Designed in Renaissance-style, the palace, meant for special royal guests, has now been transformed into a heritage 5-Star hotel by India Tourism Development Corporation, Government of India. The palace has maintained its original grandeur. The 54 suites include period furniture and gilt framed Belgium mirrors. The multi-cuisine restaurants have live instrumental music during

Lunch and Dinner and feature traditional grandeur. The royalty factor cannot be down played and it's what guests are acutely conscious of in this majestic double-storey building. The Dining Room is the original ballroom of the palace and is in Baroque style. The palace also has a well-stocked library that is open for all guests who enjoy reading.

BRUNTON BOATYARD, COCHIN

Standing proud at the historic Fort Cochin, this is an elegantly styled colonial hotel for the urban traveller. All 26 rooms are sea facing, overlooking working fishermen and huge boats that pass by. A terrace restaurant, Terrace Grill, serves authentic Portuguese, Dutch, Arabic, Kosher, British and local Kerala dishes made with local ingredients that will take guests back into the time of the Raj. Fresh and authentic seafood is available here. The hotel also has a well stocked bar, Armoury, where guests can indulge in new cocktails every evening.





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CHASING THE FESTIVE SPIRIT

Pack your bags and let's go on an adventure, exploring 12 different festivals in 12 different states

TT BUREAU

India, as a country, is the hub of 29 different states and numerous cultures. Each of these states displays an unending saga of festivals, which add the much needed zing to our lives and give us an opportunity to forget all our worries and tensions and make merry. They are the very essence of our vibrant culture.

ANDHRA PRADESH - BRAHMOTSAVAM

Sri Venkateswara Swami Vari Brahmotsavam is celebrated for nine days, from 23rd September to 1st October. A procession with an idol of the Lord Venkateswara, along with his consorts Sridevi and Bhudevi, is taken out in a procession on different 'vahanams' or mounts. This attracts pilgrims and tourists from all parts of India and abroad and is celebrated throughout the state.

It takes an hour and a half by air from Vijayawada International Airport, to reach at Jay Prakash Narayan International Airport, Patna, for our next experience.



BIHAR - CHHATH PUJA

Chhath Puja, also known as Dala Puja, is devoted to worshipping the sun and is celebrated by the people of Bihar. Chhath, this year, will be celebrated on 26th October. Chhath assumes a joyous and colourful event, with people dressed in their best attire and gathering by rivers in large numbers to celebrate the occasion. Lamps are lit and devotional folk songs sung in honour of 'Chhath Maiya' or Ganga. After sunset earthen lamps (diyas) are lit in the courtyards of every house in the state.

As the festival comes to an end, we should grab our bags and head straight for Nagaland. Approximately 1400km further east from Bihar, Nagaland is home to one of the best festivals you could experience.



NAGALAND - HORNBILL FESTIVAL

The Hornbill Festival of Nagaland is a week-long festival and is one of the biggest cultural extravaganzas that can be experienced in the Northeast. This amazing festival is held every year, from 1-10 December. It is a festival to revive, protect, sustain, and promote the richness of the Naga heritage and traditions. All of the Naga tribes get together for this week-long celebration of their cultural and traditional ethos and showcase their age-old traditions.

Having partaken of the extravagant celebrations and delicious delicacies, it's time to make tracks for the next destination – Arunachal Pradesh. The distance between Nagaland to Arunachal Pradesh is around 498km and a road trip is the best way to ensure that your experience is a memorable one.



ARUNACHAL PRADESH - LOSAR

Losar, the Tibetan New Year, is mainly celebrated for 3 days. It starts on 16th February and marks the ancient ceremonies that represent the struggle between good and evil. Losar has people chanting and passing fire torches to each other through the crowds. Various events like the dance of the deer and the amusing battles between the king and his various ministers lend a cheerful angle to the already gay festivities. Losar is characterised by its dance, music, and a general spirit of merry making.

As the dancing gradually slows down to taps and the music dies down, it's time to pack up and head to the emerald paradise of India, Goa. Travel 3489km down South and on the west coast of India, Goa awaits you with its Carnival, which is held in the month of February.



GOA - CARNIVAL

The Carnival is a non-stop, exciting and fun-filled 3-day extravaganza, which is held from 10 to 13 February and is full of fun, frolic, song, music and dance, and that is what makes it so unique. Huge parades are taken out throughout the city, with bands, floats and dances in the evenings. The final day concludes with the famous Red-and-Black dance held by the Clube Nacional, in Panjim.

Next on our travel list is Manipur, 3774.9km up North and home to a clear vista of beautiful landscapes.



MANIPUR - YAOSHANG

One of the most joyous festivals of Manipur, Yaoshang is celebrated for five days and commences from the full-moon day of Phalguna (February/March). The main highlight of the festival is the Thabal Chongba dance, a Manipuri folk dance where boys and girls form a circle and hold hands and sing and dance.

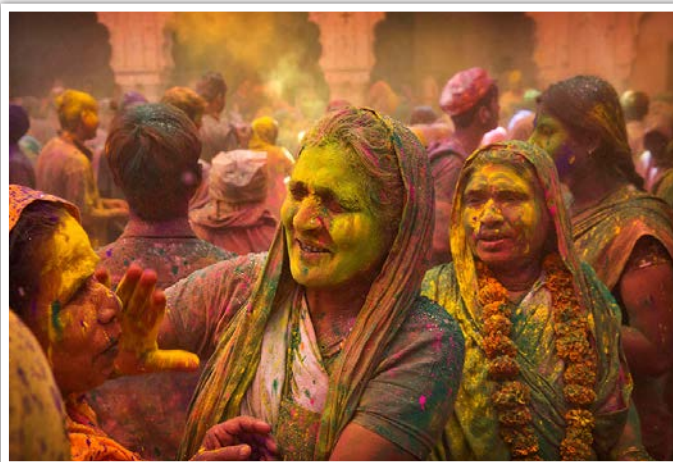
After the festivities are over, it's time to bid farewell to Manipur and head to Jharkhand, approximately 1560km to the West.



JARKHAND - HOLI

Holi, the festival of colours, is celebrated around the first week of March, with great pomp and vigour. This spring festival is one of the most important festivals of Jharkhand. Fun and frolic are also redefined in various forms in the festive celebrations here. People greet each other with colours and thus enhance the feeling of harmony due to which happiness prevails.

As the explosion of colours dies down, happy and content, move 768km up North, towards the peaceful state of Sikkim.



SIKKIM - SAGA DAWA

Saga Dawa is one of the magnificent carnivals of Sikkim and is famous for its masked dancers. The festival is celebrated on 29th April with rare and elegant colours exhibiting the richness and diversity of the state. On the day of the Saga Dawa, the people of Sikkim, especially the Mahayana Buddhists, gather at the monasteries and pay their obeisance to the Lord. They light lamps and the ceremony is followed by a grand pageant which consists of monks who chant the Holy Scriptures and sing hymns in the procession.

About 2,239km away from this peaceful valley, we go to our next destination, which is Kashmir. Book a flight from Bagdogra Airport, which takes approximately 5 hours from Sikkim to Srinagar Airport.



KASHMIR - EID-UL-FITR

If you want to experience the real fun and celebrations of Eid, then Kashmir is the place to be in. Eid-ul-Fitr, celebrated from the evening of 14 June till the end of 15 June, marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan. On this day, Muslims wear new clothes and attend many grand feasts. They also proclaim their joy for the health, strength and the opportunities of life, which Allah has given to them to fulfil their obligation of fasting and other good deeds during the blessed month of Ramadan.

We now travel approximately 2,127km down South, to Telangana. You can book a flight from Srinagar to Rajiv Gandhi International Airport and in a couple of hours will be in Telangana ready to celebrate Bonalu.



TELANGANA - BONALU

Bonalu is celebrated in Telangana, from 15 July - 5 August, and the word Bonalu comes from "Bhojanalu," which is offered to the goddess Mahankali during festival time. Women prepare Bhojanalu in a pot and decorate it with small neem branches, turmeric, 'kumkum,' and a lamp is placed on top of it. Women keep the pots on their heads and take it to the goddess' temple, led by drummers and dancing men.

Time for a road trip! And, 512km by road will take you to Maharashtra, to celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi.



MAHARASHTRA - GANESH CHATURTHI

Ganesh Chaturthi, the most important festival of Maharashtra, is celebrated with great pomp from 12 - 23 September. Ganesh idols, representing the divine guest, are kept in homes for five to ten days by people of Maharashtra. Large Ganesh idols are worshipped at decorated pandals for 8 to 10 days. The idols are then taken out ceremoniously and immersed in the river. This ritual is called Visarjan. Slogans of 'Ganpathi Bappa Morya' rent the atmosphere as the idols are taken out in huge processions during the day of immersion.

Let the last cracker pop and the last morsel be enjoyed, then it's time to grab our bags and travel 1318km up North to Uttar Pradesh.



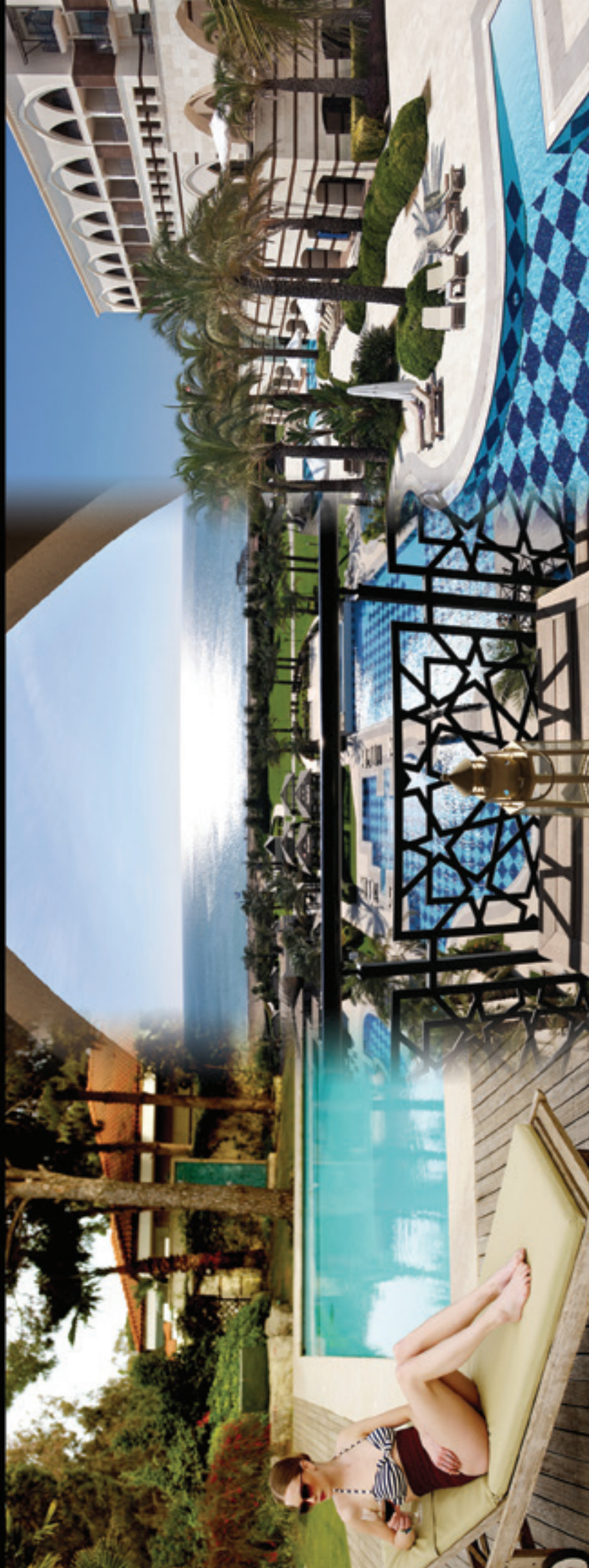
UTTAR PRADESH - NAVRATRI

Navratri is one of the holiest Hindu festivals, celebrated with much joy and grandeur in Uttar Pradesh. Navratri is celebrated for nine nights, from 10 - 18 October, during which people worship goddess Durga and her nine forms and seek her blessings. Special prayers for the Devi are also held by setting up the idols of Durga in beautifully decorated pandals, accompanied by cultural songs, dances, and dramas, after which they are immersed in rivers at the end of the festival.





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LET'S CELEBRATE!

Explore and enjoy one of India's biggest festivals, in different parts of India

TT BUREAU

Dussehra is one of India's biggest festivals and is celebrated throughout the country to mark the victory of good over evil. Every story that we have heard from our elders, even though different, all speak about the struggle and victory of good over evil, whether it's Rama's victory over Ravana or the triumph of the Pandavas over the Kauravas or goddess Durga's victory over Mahishasura. Another story associated with the origins of this day is the raining of gold coins. According to the story Kautsa asked King Raghuraja for 140 million coins to be given as an offering to his Guru in return for his knowledge. Raghuraja, then went to Indra for help, who, in turn, asked Lord Kuber to rain coins over the city of Ayodhya. After offering

140 million coins to his Guru, Kautsa distributed the rest to the people of Ayodhya.

Over the years, Dusshera, one of the most colourful festivals of the country, has turned into a symbol of joy and is celebrated with great splendour and excitement. Different parts of India celebrate this festival in varied ways. Some have performances of Ramlila (a short version of the epic Ramayana) whereas others hold the festival by taking out processions, including that of goddess Chamundeshwari on a throne, seated on top of an elephant. Some bless their household and work-related tools, such as books, computers, cooking utensils and vehicles, whereas at some places special delicacies are prepared.





DELHI

Delhi is a hub of people from different cultures, each bringing its own flavour to the celebration of Dussehra in the city. Every community in the city celebrates this festival in its own special way, and all of them are incredible. The Gujarati community organises Dandiya and Garba nights. Ramlila seems to be the most appropriate way of reminiscing the epic of Ramayana and is conducted at several grounds in Delhi. With loud make-up and costumes, it is played out in a grand manner. The Ravana Dahan, an essential part of this festival, can be experienced at various parts of Delhi. Effigies of Ravana are burnt, in order to commemorate Rama's victory over Ravana. In Delhi, Jagrata is quite popular, too. It's an all-nighter where people get together and praise goddess Durga through songs or prayers. Many societies conduct Jagratas throughout Navratri and it finally comes to an end on Dussehra.



BASTAR DUSSHERA

Chhattisgarh is the perfect place for those who want to savour the traditional fervour associated with Indian tribes. The best example of this is the 75-day-long celebration of Dussehra in the Bastar region. The tribals celebrate Dussehra by hailing Devi Maoli (Bastar's native deity, the elder sister of Devi Danteshwari, family goddess of the ruling Kaktiya family) and all her sisters.

Bastar Dussehra is replete with historical facts and cultural legacies. During the course of the festivities, along with Danteshwari Mai, representing the Hindu Goddess Durga or Kali, the people of Bastar pay obeisance to various tribal deities. Amid all this, one of the most-awaited events is the rath yatra. The massive rath (chariot) might appear as primitive to people from outside, but it is symbolic of the king's wish to patronise locals instead of bringing a fancy chariot from elsewhere. It is built afresh each year and the sight of 400 Marias pulling is indeed a true indication of tribal faith in India.



ODISHA DUSSHERA

Dussehra is celebrated in two different ways in Orissa. The Durga Puja is celebrated for almost 10 to 16 days, with rituals known as Shodasa Upachara, which is observed in various Shakti peethas (temples of goddess) throughout the state. In Bhubaneswar, a large number of people gather to witness the Ravana Podi at Saheed Nagar, Nayapalli, Rasulgarh, Jharpara and other locations. Similarly, the crowd at many locations, as in neighbouring Cuttack city, millions of people enjoy the five-day-long Durga Puja by visiting the pandals across the city. The burning of effigies of Ravana adds colour to the annual Puja celebrations in the city. The women offer Dahi-Pakhal (cooked rice soaked in water and curd), Pitha (baked cake), Mitha (sweets) and Fish fry to the goddess. The idols are carried in processions known as Bhasani Jatra or Bisarjan Jatra, around the locality, and finally immersed in a nearby river or lake.



MYSORE

In Karnataka, Dasara (Dussehra) is observed as a State festival, Nadahabba, and the celebration of the festival is steered by the royal family of Mysore, who perform special rituals during this occasion. The entire city is decorated and illuminated, including the palace and other important buildings. Cultural programmes are arranged in the palace along with sports, wrestling, poet's meet, food festival, film festival, etc. The best part is the sight of beautifully decorated elephants, camels and horses walking together in a procession and the idol of the goddess Chamundeshwari installed on a golden 'Mantapa' (a temple made from wood, steel, gold or silver), placed on the top of an elephant. Processions with vibrant music are taken out and cheerful recitals take place. The processions end in an enchanting destination known as Bannimantap.

MAHARASHTRA

Dussehra or Vijayadashmi is celebrated with great pomp in Maharashtra and falls in the month of October. The name 'Dussehra' is taken from the Sanskrit term 'Dasha-hara' which means taking away of bad luck. The Apta tree holds immense significance among the Maharashtrians as the leaves of this





tree are worshipped on this day. It is believed that this brings good luck and a wealthy future for them. The marigold is used by Maharashtrians, all through Dussehra, for rituals and also to decorate their homes and work places. Dussehra marks the conclusion of the sadhana, mantra and havan, which raise the soul's energy to help in creation and realise the spirituality within. Maharashtrians consider Dussehra an auspicious occasion to buy gold, so people exchange 'bidi leaves with friends and family, as it signifies gold. In the evening, much like in other parts of the country, effigies of Ravana are burnt. In Nagpur, the Ambedkarite Buddhists celebrate this day as Ashok Vijayadashmi, because it is believed that Emperor Ashoka converted to Buddhism on this day.

WEST BENGAL

In West Bengal, Dussehra is celebrated primarily for six days, all through the ten-day festivities of Navratri. On the tenth

day, Durga's victory over evil is celebrated as Vijayadashami throughout the state. Durga Puja also celebrates the annual visit of Durga and her children to her ancestral home, and her reunion with Shiva on Vijayadashami. Durga Puja or Durgotsava is the largest festival of the year for the people of West Bengal. In the months leading up to Durga Puja, highly decorated, life-sized idols of Durga that depict her victory over the evils of Mahishasura are prepared by potters. In large open spaces around West Bengal, elaborate pandals, or make-shift temples of bamboo and cloth are created to house the idols. The idols are worshipped for five days and then carried out in magnificent procession to a local river for immersion, symbolising Durga's reunion with Shiva. The five-day period of worship is a time of personal introspection and bodily purification for devotees, with many avoiding non-veg foods; alcohol, onions, wheat and grains. The end of Navratri and Durga Puja further marks an auspicious time for starting new activities or business ventures.

DIVINE DESTINATION



Sublime and spiritually rich, Andhra Pradesh attracts visitors with its many pilgrimage centres and temples, showcasing amazing ambience and architecture

TT BUREAU

It is a given that religion plays a significant role in the lives of the Indian people. This is in evidence across the country, where different religions, cultures and ethnic values reside.

Andhra Pradesh rooted in this spiritual tradition, showcases many ancient pilgrimage centres. Notable amongst them is Srisailam. Located on the picturesque hills of Nallamalai, Srisailam, the abode of Siva and Sakthi, stands on the right side of the River Krishna, in the Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh. This celebrated mountain

“We are now planning a set of branded development on Srisailam round the lines of Tirumala-Tirupati, Rs. 300cr worth of work is already in progress. Srisailam town has 3000 room capacity and we are now planning hallmark accommodation facilities.”

- N Bharat Gupta IAS, Executive Officer, Srisaila Devasthanams



goes by many names, namely Siridhan, Sirigiri, Sirigiri, Sriparvatha and Srinagam famous for Mallikarjuna Jyothirlingam. As per Hindu legend, the presiding deity in the form of Linga (an iconic form of Shiva) was worshipped with jasmine (locally called Mallika), leading to the name of presiding deity as Mallikarjuna. A popular centre for Saivite pilgrimages for centuries, the presiding deities of this area are Mallikarjuna Swamy, one of the twelve Jyothirlingas, and Bhramaramba, one of

the 18 Mahasakthis, and both of whom are believed to be self-manifested. The unique feature of this Kshetram is the co-existence of Jyothirlingam and Mahasakthi in one temple complex, which is rare and only one of its kind.

The main temple is a huge complex comprising separate temples venerating Mallikarjuna and Bhramaramba, along with several sub shrines, pillared halls, mandapas, springs, etc. The entire complex is fortified by a most impressive Prakaram, a wall built with massive stones. The Prakaram wall contains four Dwaras (principal gates) at four cardinals, surmounted by the Gopuras. The eastern entrance is the Mahadwaram.

Abounding in natural resources, Andhra Pradesh has the longest eastern coastline and houses many splendid heritage sites, such as the forts, citadels and architectural masterpieces built by the erstwhile rulers of Andhra Pradesh. The magnificent palaces and places, monuments, memorials, tombs and stately structures built by them reflect the art and artisanship, architecture and culture that originated in this land.



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24 HOURS IN BUDAPEST

An architectural gem, Budapest, in Hungary, is one of Central Europe's most interesting cities, the Hungarian Capital is the largest and offers incredible reach for a fun-filled 24 hours

TT BUREAU

THE HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENT

Also known as the Országház (which means 'House of the Country'), this is one of the most photographed tourist attractions in Hungary. The main façade overlooks the Danube: a beautiful combination of Gothic design and a Renaissance character has managed to capture every traveller's mind for decades. The House of Parliament is home to the Holy Crown of Hungary, a spectacular jewel that was used for most of the coronations throughout the kingdom of Hungary.



FISHERMAN'S BASTION

If you want a spectacular view over Budapest and the Danube River, then just head up to the Fisherman's Bastion. This is a wonderful balcony which takes its name from the fishermen who were responsible for protecting the area during the Middle Ages. The famous balcony has seven towers. This is a popular traveller destination and it can get busy during peak times. Bring your camera gear and take spectacular pictures during sunrise or sunset.



SZÉCHENYI CHAIN BRIDGE

This stunning early 19th century bridge links Buda to Pest. The Széchenyi Chain Bridge looks amazing during the blue hour and many go to great lengths to capture its true splendour. The bridge has an individual lane for pedestrians, so just cross the Danube back and forth. It is one of the representational buildings of Budapest, the most commonly identified bridge of the Hungarian capital.

MATTHIAS CHURCH

One of Hungary's prevalent churches, this beautiful Gothic-style building sits magnificently on Castle Hill, right next to the Fisherman's Bastion. This famous church, once destroyed by the Mongols, was rebuilt from its ashes during the late 13th century. Matthias Church has seen many coronations and royal weddings.

GELLÉRT HILL

Spare some time and stroll in the park surrounding Gellért Hill and make your way to the 'Statue of Liberty', by Citadella. Enjoy superlative views over the Széchenyi Chain Bridge and The Hungarian House of Parliament. It is indeed true that the Hill will definitely give you one of the best panoramic views of Budapest. It is one of the most preferred expedition locations besides Margaret Island, the Buda Hills, or the Kopaszi Dam.



GULYÁS

A country famous for its varied culinary repertoire, Hungarian goulash is the most famous and often cooked dish outside the Hungarian borders. Every other housewife or chef will have her/his own way of cooking it; however they would all call their gulyás the most authentic. If you like trying authentic dishes, then look no further, as Hungary will suit your savoury and sweet taste buds.



WHAT WHEN WHERE



What – The New Generation Festival
When – 31 August – 3 September 2017
Where – Florence, Italy

This unprecedented event takes place in the private gardens of Palazzo Corsini, that belongs to the oldest families in the Florence region. The event is famous for its opera singers from all over the world in a breathtaking Italian ambience. Inspired by the young generation, the festival inspires new audiences and introduces them to the world of classical music, that includes live streaming at cinemas and global audiences.

What - Epcot Food & Wine Festival
When - 31 August - 13 November 2017
Where - Orlando, Florida – USA

The main highlights include food and offerings from 19 nations at themed stalls with live seminars and demonstrations from famous chefs, wine tastings and even a film on the festival. This festival will bring out the foodie in you and even test your culinary skills.



What – End of Electric Picnic
When - 1 September - 3 September 2017
Where – Laois, Ireland

This year, the fest will open up a world of art and culture at the all-new Hazel Wood area with a programme of mesmerising storytelling through interactive theatre, immersive haunting, shadow puppetry, visual displays, commedia dell'arte workshops, visual art, including incandescent visuals and lighting.

What - Matchmaking Festival
When - 2 September – 9 October 2017
Where - Lisdoonvarna, Ireland

If you are single and ready to mingle then this festival is meant for you. This fiesta has a 150-year-old-history. Main highlights of the event include speed-dating, pub crawls, barn dances, horse racing. Even if you are not single, travel to this festival and enjoy local delicacies with freshly-brewed beer and locally produced wines.



What - Wizard World Madison Comic Con
When - 22 September - 14 September 2017
Where - Wisconsin

Hosted by Victor Dandridge and Brit Bliss, the Wizard World Comic Con Costume Contest is one of the wildest Comic Con. The best of the best will be dressed to impress in their superhero & pop culture finest, so be prepared for some serious cosplay. Grab your buddies and suit up to take a chance at bringing home the gold!

What - Durga Puja
When - 26 September - 30 September 2017
Where - West Bengal

This pan India festival is also celebrated in Delhi, Assam and Bihar. The beautiful festival is famous for music, dance, art and food. Visit any of the pandals to the sound of conch shells and drums. Try some authentic Bengali delicacies with your family and friends and get blessed by goddess Durga.



PICK OF THE MONTH

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

BOOK: THE GRAVEDIGGER'S SON BY PATRICK MOODY

Sky Pony Press has bought Patrick Moody's middle-grade debut, *The Gravedigger's Son*, in which an 11-year-old boy must reluctantly embrace his ability to speak to the dead after awakening the inhabitants of the graveyard his ancestors have spent centuries tending. Publication is planned for spring 2017.

Genre (s): Fiction

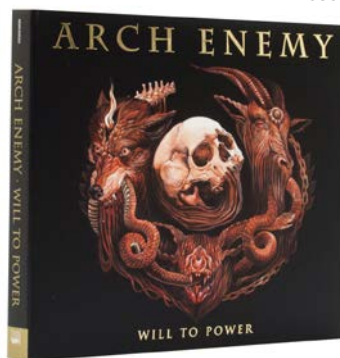


MUSIC: WILL TO POWER

Arch Enemy's 10th studio album, *Will to Power*, was released via Century Media Records, on the 8th of this month. *Will to Power* is Arch Enemy's second album with Alissa White-Gluz

on vocals. As one of metal's most beloved vocalists, male or female, the departure of Angela Gossow could have been a fatal blow to the Swedish Melo-Death band. However, the powerful gutturals of White-Gluz fits right in, helping Arch Enemy make their 2014's album, *War Eternal*, the highest charting album in many countries.

Genre (s): Melodic Death Metal



GAMES: FALLOUT 4: GAME OF THE YEAR EDITION

Return to the Wasteland on September 26 with *Fallout 4: Game of the Year Edition*. With all the latest gameplay updates (including Survival mode), graphical enhancements, the ability to play Mods for free on PC and consoles, plus all official add-ons included, this is the ultimate way to experience the award-winning post-nuclear adventure from Bethesda Game Studios. Winner of more than 200 "Best Of" awards – including the 2016 BAFTA and 2016 D.I.C.E. Game of the Year – *Fallout 4* is the studio's most ambitious game yet. As the sole survivor of Vault 111, you enter a world destroyed by nuclear war. Every second is a fight for survival, and every choice is yours. Only you can rebuild and determine the fate of the Wasteland. *Fallout 4: Game of the Year Edition* includes the fully updated original game along with all six add-ons: Nuka-World, Vault-Tec Workshop, Contraptions Workshop, Far Harbor, Wasteland Workshop and Automatron.

Genre (s): FPS, Open World, Sand Box



MOVIE: KINGSMAN: THE GOLDEN CIRCLE

Kingsman: The Secret Service introduced the world to *Kingsman*, an independent, international intelligence agency operating at the highest level of discretion, whose ultimate goal is to keep the world safe. In *Kingsman: The Golden Circle*, our heroes face a new challenge. Their headquarters destroyed and the world held hostage – they have to embark on a journey, which brings them to the discovery of an allied spy organisation in the United States of America, called *Statesman*, dating back to the day they were both founded. In a new adventure that tests their agents' strength and wits to the limit, these two elite secret organisations band together to defeat a ruthless common enemy, in order to save the world, something that's becoming a bit of a habit for Eggsy.

Genre (s): Action





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