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New Year New Destinations

Indian travellers explore new horizons



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NEW JOURNEYS 26-41

The February issue of BOTT Magazine encapsulates the pulse of the travel industry, as it gets ready to attend SATTE this month. We bring you an extensive coverage of the most anticipated travel destinations for 2024. Our focus spans across the diverse landscapes of India and beyond, promising a plethora of exciting adventures and cultural immersions. From Ayodhya and Lakshadweep in India to Saudi, Seychelles and more outside India, the world stands ready to welcome the Indian travellers on lookout for new journeys.

EVENTS AND MORE

Brand USA recently hosted its 10th India Sales and first-ever Media Mission in an offsite destination in Goa. This was Brand USA's inaugural media mission and was attended by 12 PR delegates from various US destinations. 42-44

IATO in collaboration with The District Collector and CEO of the Gwalior Smart City hosted a FAM trip for its members. The trip, which was aimed at showcasing Gwalior was attended by more than 60 IATO Members. 54

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From the

*Editor's
Desk*

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the February issue of BOTT Magazine! As the pulse of the travel industry beats in unison at OTM and SATTE shows this month, we bring you an extensive coverage of the most anticipated travel destinations for 2024. Our focus spans across the diverse landscapes of India and beyond, promising a plethora of exciting adventures and cultural immersions.

In the heart of India, Ayodhya unfolds its spiritual richness, offering a journey through ancient history and revered traditions. The pristine shores of Lakshadweep and the historically significant Port Blair beckon travellers seeking a harmonious blend of relaxation and exploration. The French-inspired allure of Pondicherry creates a captivating tapestry of experiences within the subcontinent.

Venturing beyond borders, our journey takes us to the international stage, where Saudi Arabia emerges as a cultural gem, inviting travellers to explore its historical marvels. Mauritius, Seychelles, Azerbaijan and Krabi each with its unique charm, offer a global symphony of experiences for the avid explorer.

In addition to the exploration of these remarkable destinations, we bring you exclusive interviews with senior industry professionals from Destination Management Companies (DMCs) and National Tourism Organizations (NTOs). Gain insights into the latest tourism trends and updates shaping the industry's landscape. Dive into valuable information about hotels, ensuring you have the perfect accommodation for your next adventure. Discover destination highlights that will fuel your wanderlust and inspire your travel plans.

As we navigate the intricate web of the travel industry, our February issue serves as your compass, guiding you through the exciting world of new destinations, industry insights, and travel news. Whether you are a seasoned traveller, a tourism professional, or someone planning their next getaway, let BOTT Magazine be your trusted companion in the journey of discovery.

Happy travels!

Priyanka Saxena Ray
priyanka@bottindia.com



INTRODUCING SERENITY REIMAGINED : ANANTA SPA & RESORT, AJABGARH

Step into the realm of unrivaled tranquility and luxury with the launch of Ananta Spa & Resort, Ajabgarh. Experience a haven where elegance meets wellness, tailor-made for those who seek an escape into indulgence and rejuvenation.

The Ananta Udaipur | Ananta Spa and Resort, Pushkar | The Baagh Ananta Elite, Ranthambore | Radisson Jaipur City Center
Jagira Ananta Elite, Gir | Lotus Ananta Elite, Kota | 5 Flowers Ananta Elite, Kota | Richmond Ananta Elite, Goa
Classic Sapphire Ananta, Bundi | Leopard Lair Ananta Express, Bera | Ashok Vatika Ananta Elite, Ranakpur
*Ananta Spa and Resort, Ajabgarh | *The Ananta Jaisalmer

Ananta Hotels & Resorts

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Goa Tourism highlights Regenerative Tourism

At the OTM 2024 at Mumbai, Goa Tourism stood out by showcasing the state's pioneering role as the first to launch Regenerative Tourism in the country. Ekadasha Teertha Yatra, the new Homestay Policy, Caravan Policy, initiatives aimed at promoting heritage preservation, celebrating vibrant festivals, immersing visitors in the rich local culture, offering thrilling adventure opportunities and providing world-class MICE facilities in Goa were some of the highlights showcased.



Taiwan opens 'Tourism Information Centre' in Mumbai

Taiwan Tourism Administration (TTA) announces the opening of Taiwan Tourism Information Centre (TTIC) in Mumbai, India, declaring with it, it's determined comeback into the Indian market after more than three-years of Covid-19 pandemic induced break from the market. The Information Centre is located at the famous Raheja Platinum on the prominent Andheri-Kurla Road. Taiwan also announced its strong intent to develop the Indian market with a grand destination splash.



Sensory Indulgences partners with Outbound Marketing

Sensory Indulgences, Sri Lanka's pioneering force in the Experiences market has collaborated with Outbound Marketing Pvt Ltd. (OMPL) in India. Sensory Indulgence, formulated by visionaries Udaya and Brindley, is dedicated to crafting deeply personalized and precisely customized travel experiences.



Breaking Frontiers to represent Travel Hangar in India

BTFL Travel, a Mumbai-based representation company, has been appointed by Indonesia DMC – Travel Hanger as their India Representative to handle the B2B market – Pan India. Travel Hangar Bali stands as the epitome of destination management excellence. The collaboration ensures a tapestry of seamless logistics, authentic encounters, and personalized itineraries.



#BindaasBookKar with Yatra Online's new campaign

Yatra Online has launched their latest ad campaign #BindaasBookKar. Through the campaign, Yatra.com encourages consumers to book their travel plans without hesitation and worry with attractive week-long offers. The first ad highlights Yatra's wide range of offers on flights, hotels, holiday packages & bus; that are available 7-days-a-week offering up to 45% OFF*.





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ITDC reports significant increase in revenue and profits

India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), the public sector undertaking under the aegis of the Ministry of Tourism, announced a notable surge in its turnover for the cumulative period upto December 2023. Following an exceptional financial performance in FY 2022-23, ITDC continues to exhibit impressive results in 2023-24. The total cumulative turnover upto December 2023 amounted to ₹393.56 Crore.



Sterling Holiday Resorts announces new resort in Sariska

Sterling ReWild Sariska is a brand-new resort with a built-up area of 4.2 acres and is spread across 8.2 acres within the Aravalli ranges. With heritage styled haveli rooms and upscale tent structures featuring plush décor and thoughtful interiors, the accommodations are sure to deliver comfortable stays in an outdoor themed holiday. Guests can choose from Heritage (Haveli) Rooms and Thematic Tents.

Signing of Aiden by Best Western @ The Mall, Amritsar

BWH Hotels, in collaboration with TMV Projects, has announced the signing of their newest boutique lifestyle hotel, AIDEN BY BEST WESTERN @ THE MALL AMRITSAR. The hotel will boast of 51 trendy guest rooms, banqueting and meeting facilities suitable for both business and social events, recreational facilities, and F&B venues, including a stylish all-day dining restaurant & bar and a vibrant rooftop bar and grill offering a panoramic city view.



Ramada by Wyndham Arrives in Potheri, Chennai, India

SRM Group has announced the signing of Ramada by Wyndham Chennai, Potheri under a franchise agreement with Wyndham Hotels & Resorts. The hotel will be positioned as a midscale hotel and will have 170 rooms, All Day Dining, Specialty Restaurant, Bar Lounge, Swimming Pool and a Gym.

Radisson Hotel Group added 21 properties in India last year

The Radisson Hotel Group recently announced that it has accelerated its growth in India by signing 21 hotels under a portfolio of nine brands in 2023. These 21 hotels also include the signing and opening of the group's first property at Ayodhya -- Park Inn by Radisson Ayodhya. Globally, Radisson Hotel Group added over 30,000 keys to its international portfolio.



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South African Tourism witnesses 43% Growth in arrivals from India in 2023

South African Tourism concluded its 20th Annual India Roadshow at ITC Grand Central, Mumbai. Kickstarted on February 12 in Jaipur along with a panel discussion on February 11, the trade schedule moved took place in Delhi on February 13, Ahmedabad on February 14 and Bengaluru on February 15. Conducted across 5 cities in 5 days, the roadshows hosted over 12000 meetings and generated more than 1,60,000 on the spot leads for South African Tourism, making the initiative a grand success.



our top-3 focus markets and our 20th Annual India Roadshow is a testament of our unwavering commitment to the Indian travellers,” she added.

Sharing her thoughts on the importance of India market she said, “India is currently sitting at number seven and moving forward, we want to make sure that it is positioned in the top three. It brings us just under 100,000 arrivals. The Indians’ spend is on the higher side and they are the biggest consumers of adventure tourism in South Africa.”

Promoting the destination through the eyes of Indian influencers and entice consumers to explore new provinces, South African Tourism is currently running its flagship “More & More” brand campaign across target cities. The tourism board is also set to host its renown Corporate Think Tank in the coming months to engage with Indian corporates and address their business and MICE travel needs. At present, several stop-over flights fly from India to South Africa, including Emirates, Qatar Airways, Ethiopian Airlines, Kenya Airways and Air Seychelles. ■

Pallavi Sharma

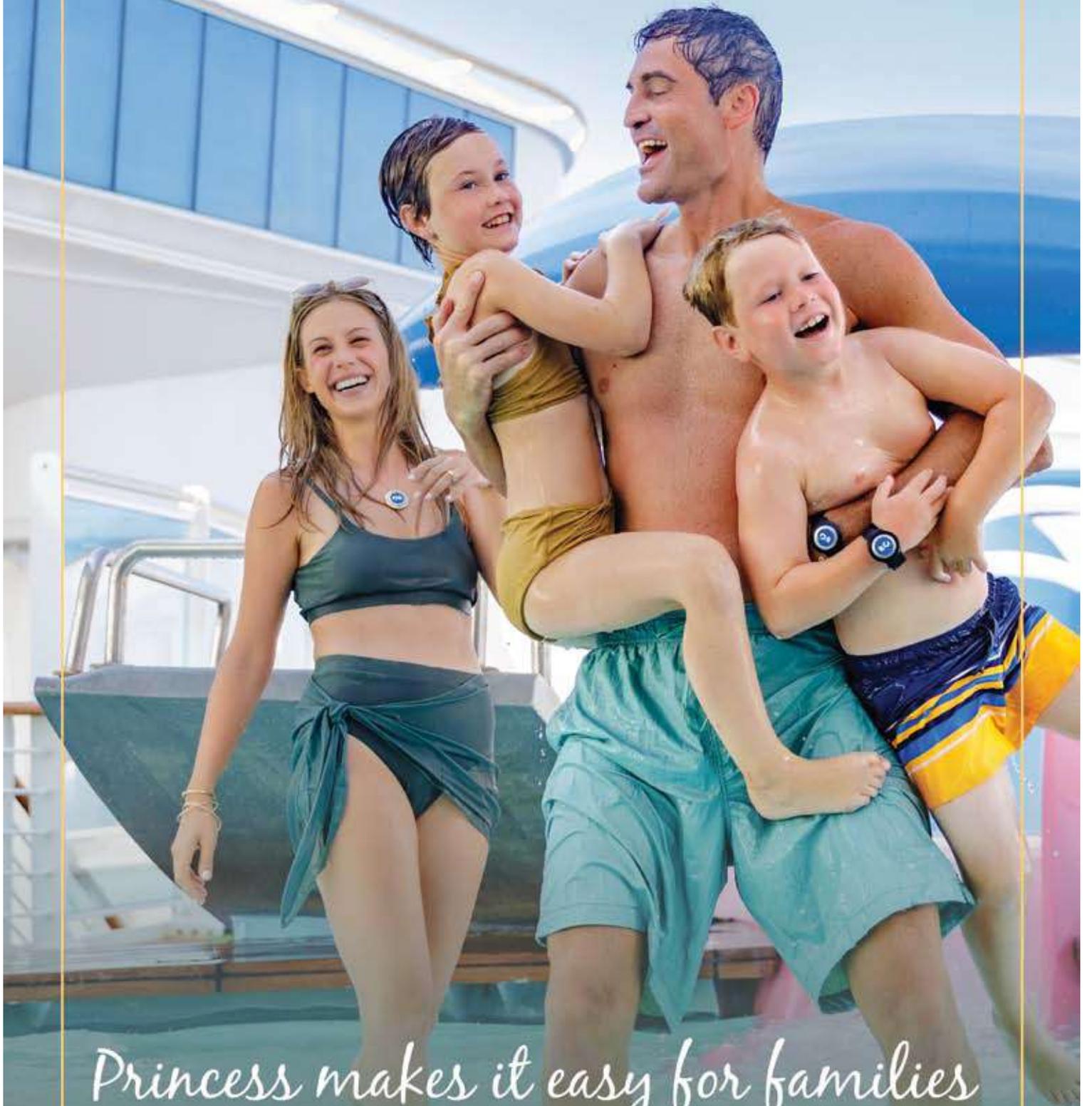
India is currently one of the fastest growing outbound travel markets, outpacing Asia and many countries around the world. The country is amongst the top-3 focus markets for South African Tourism and holds immense potential in the years to come. The 20th multi-city schedule achieves a vital milestone for South African Tourism, marking more than two decades of its growing investments in India.

Speaking to BOTT exclusively at the Curtain Raiser event in Jaipur, Neliswa Nkani, Hub Head – Middle East, India and South East Asia, South African Tourism said, “As we continue to grow our presence in India and enter newer regions, South African Tourism

celebrates more than two decades of investments in India. 2023 has marked another successful year for us and I am deeply grateful to Indian travellers and the trade fraternity for their continued affection and support. Both our nations share a deeply entrenched bond established through shared history, rich culture and longstanding alliance.”

“Over the past couple of years, India’s outbound tourism sector has demonstrated remarkable resilience outpacing rest of Asia and many countries around the world. Building upon the positive momentum, South Africa witnessed 43% uptick in inbound travellers from India in 2023. The country continues to hold its prominence as





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Rohit Shorey

‘We aim to be the No.1 DMC for our all 4 destinations that we represent’

Delhi-based Kazin DMC, the well-known destination management company for Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus in India, is known for delivering quality and unique experiences to their clientele. With an aim to go beyond being just a regular DMC and become global players for the four destinations, the dynamic Rohit Shorey, Founder & CEO, Kazin DMC along with his zealous team is the man on a mission. In a candid and exclusive chat with BOTT, he talks about his journey, the achievements, challenges and plans for future.

Priyanka Saxena Ray



Start of the Journey

I started my professional journey by joining Destination Travel in 1994, a company that was started by my father in 1987 – a typical B2C Company that exists till date. I worked in that company for about 20 years and learned the tricks of travel business. Then in 2014, an opportunity came for a FAM trip to Almaty – a destination that very few knew at that time. During my trip, I realized the untapped potential of that place and steered the direction of my business towards this destination. I saw a window of opportunity and jumped on the bandwagon of promoting Almaty through my DMC – Kazin.

Establishing Almaty in India market

I spent the next 4-5 years developing this particular city (Almaty) in the India market. We were geared towards shedding light and promoting the destination in India as I felt people were still not taking it seriously and also not doing justice to the things it had to offer. We started doing Emailers, taking FAM trips, educating the travel trade on the potential of Almaty as a tourist destination, reaching out to them on WhatsApp, creating some special experiences which helped bring out unique aspects of the place. We did milestone celebrations, adventure tours, honeymoons – changed the image of Almaty from the cheap MICE destination to a high-end luxury destination with offerings that are simply out of the world.

We are strictly a B2B focused company – always have been. Infact, during those years, we did the work of a Tourism Board, spending our own marketing money in highlighting the destination and showing to the world the potential of Almaty. That's how we became, and still are, the No. 1 incoming company for Kazakhstan. The tourism board was formed in 2017 and we started promoting the



destination in 2015. Now, the tourism board supports us greatly. In 2019, I was nominated as their Brand Ambassador for MICE.

Adding New Destinations

Till 2018 we were only focused on Kazakhstan, primarily Almaty, which had picked up in the India market. In 2019 we launched Azerbaijan and Belarus but then in 2020 and 2021 everything went kaput. However, we picked up reins and as we stand today, we are a DMC for 4 destinations – Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Georgia. We do not have any plans to expand our portfolio as we want to remain focused and stay true to our knowledge on these 4 destinations and do justice to our partners. We do not wish to become Jack of all trades and Master of none. We want to become master of a handful of destinations because we own and operate our own offices – we don't deal with local companies. We have our offices in all the destinations that we market and our own team who handles the bookings. The reason why we chose these 4 destinations, besides the fact that they are beautiful and unique, is that none of them are identical to each other in any way. They

carry their own uniqueness, their charm, their individuality and that is what makes these destinations so different. Infact, one client, depending on how much time he has on his plate, can choose to go to multiple destinations at a time or one destination every year and they will not find them repetitive.

USP of the Destinations

Like I mentioned above, each of the 4 destinations are unique in their own way and have a plethora of touristy attractions / experiences to offer. Let's take Almaty for example. It is a huge country, and the landscape varies from one region to another – you can go from seas to mountains to deserts to greenery – it has it all – everything that is known to mankind. The best part is that everything is within an hour or so of each other. You don't have to travel long distances. Shymbulak Ski Resort is the only Ski Resort in the world, which is so close to the main city. It is just 30 mins from the Airport, which makes it s great option in winters. Then there are lakes, mountains, amazing nightlife, weather, shopping, casinos – very European vibe and just two and half hours from India with no visa. In the last few years, since we have

started marketing, we have seen 400% increase in tourist traffic to Almaty with hotels running at 90% occupancy. India is in the top 10 markets for them. There are 4 direct flights from India – 3 from Delhi and one from Mumbai.

Future Plans

Kazin DMC has a very robust marketing plan for the India market. We have Sales Team divided into North, East, South, West who do their meetings and handle their respective regions. We do roadshows – for example we just finished a nine-city roadshow with Air Arabia, which was aimed at promoting Kazakhstan in India. Additionally, we do marketing presentations and FAM Trips. Five years down the line we would be the No.1 DMC for our all 4 destinations that we represent – primarily Belarus and Georgia since we are already No 1. For Kazakhstan & Azerbaijan. We don't intend to continue working as simply a DMC but go beyond it. Thus, we are moving towards becoming a company that owns its own transportation and which is the one-stop shop for these 4 destinations with clientele across the globe and not just in India. ■

Ananta Hotels and Resorts to open Ajabgarh & Jaisalmer properties in next two years

With the aim of curating the most rejuvenating experiences for people while becoming the leading hospitality chain of India, the Ananta Hotels & Resorts is spreading its wings and fast expanding its portfolio of hotels. Working diligently with the mission of nourishing relationships with guests and members through ethical practices, Gagan Katyal, Vice President - Sales and Strategy, Ananta Hotels & Resorts strongly believes that quality deliverance is an astute differentiator in today's competitive world.



Priyanka Saxena Ray

How long has been your association with the Ananta Hotels & Resorts? When did you join the company and what were you doing prior to that?

I have been a hotelier for close to three decades now. I came to Jaipur in 2018 to head S&M at ITC Rajputana, Jaipur – a luxury collection hotel. The potential of the Jaipur city prompted me to stay back and explore it further. Ananta Hotels has been in business for over 10 years and is a fast-growing brand with resorts coming up across the country. My association with the company started two years ago, when I took up the position to lead the S&M function for the organisation.

How has the brand portfolio evolved and grown under your able guidance?

Ananta Hotels & Resorts was a localised brand with resorts in Rajasthan. Since I have joined, we have ventured into Gujrat (Gir) and Goa. The brand now has 12 running resorts and has grown to offering 1000 keys per day across the portfolio. We work on three formats – owned, managed and franchised models. Our resorts have seen fabulous growth in revenue, ADR and RevPar.

Since it's a resort we work on Total RevPar, which means the total revenue

that we can generate from our in-house guests.

All this is thanks to an India wide sales distribution, strong marketing campaigns, yield management and a centralised reservation centre at our corporate office located in Jaipur.

Ananta Hotels is now aspiring to be a hotel company which will cross 250 Cr in next two years.

In your opinion, how is your brand unique / better than its competitors?

All our Hotels & Resorts are close to nature and offer personalisation through local talent, which is what keeps us unique. Sustainability (nature conservation, afforestation, reducing carbon footprint and jobs to locals) is not just a term but a huge focus area for us, which gives us the edge. Our design and architecture is also one of its kind.

Could you share with us the growth strategy of the brand? And your target audience?

As I mentioned we are on a positive growth trajectory across the country. Currently there are two large projects Ananta in Ajabgarh (145 keys) and Jaisalmer (180 keys) which will open in the coming two years. While our target market is primarily domestic, we also lay a lot of focus on the NRI segment, especially from the Middle East and UK markets. ■

Gagan Katyal,
Vice President - Sales and Strategy, Ananta Hotels & Resorts



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Sarova Hotels & Resorts marking 50 years of hospitality excellence

As a historic part of Kenya's hospitality industry, over decades Sarova Hotels & Resorts have acquired a portfolio of exceptional properties. The hospitality group houses eight unique properties in prime locations, each harmoniously individual to its own history and environment, fortified by a vision to impact surrounding communities and build a sustainable future. Mita Vohra, Director of Sarova Hotels & Resorts shares insights into the distinctive offerings of Sarova, their occupancy levels, and the unique experiences that set them apart in the industry in an exclusive conversation with BOTT.

Shreya Shimpi

Tell us something about your properties and the occupancy levels.

Occupancy levels at our properties vary across various segments. Properties such as the Masai Mara, which are full all year round, have an average occupancy level between 85-87 per cent for the whole year. Our 'Whitesands Beach Resort' in Mombasa is spread over 23 acres of land having five swimming pools, a Spa, outdoor restaurants, and many other activities. It has an average occupancy level of 85-87 per cent. Both our Nairobi properties reached peak levels since 2015, and we have seen a huge increment in revenue and the number of travellers. The last two years have been exceptional, thanks to tourism and the need for people to travel. I also think that Africa and nature have gained a lot of significance during the pandemic which has sparked an interest in people to travel and spend time in nature.

What is the USP of your hotel chain?

The Kenyan people in general are very warm and hospitable. We have a very good track record, and our teams rarely leave us. We don't have a high

turnaround of staff. Our teams are one of our biggest strengths. Our focus on the customer is quite deep, and the degree of experiences that we have built in each of our properties is remarkable. At one of our heritage properties, we have someone who has worked for our company for over forty years. He conducts the tours. He, along with his team, have such profound knowledge of the artefacts, the stories of what happened when the Queen of England stayed there, and a lot more. The property offers an immersive experience because the inner part of it showcases a major part of the history of the Victorian Era which Indians can relate to. In the game parks too, we offer our guests a plethora of experiences. We pay great attention to detail and do a sun-downer in two or three different ways. This year we are going to introduce much more diversity within the experiences. The level at which we offer experiences in the middle of the National Park is



Mita Vohra,
Director, Sarova Hotels & Resorts

very transformative, making our guests want to come back and re-experience it. Our properties are very family-friendly. In the Mara, we host MICE sometimes and even though we work with all the DMCs, we also interact with the customers directly as a hotelier to help them understand our product deeply. We have a very strong Food and Beverage story. The King of England was in Kenya last year and the State Dinner was catered by us. It has been an interesting journey and our brand is turning fifty this April! ■

Charting Greece's tourism trajectory

Eleftheria Fili, Head of the Audiovisual Media & Productions Department at the Tourism Promotion Directorate of the Greek National Tourism Organization, discusses Greece's tourism landscape and its aspirations in the Indian market in an exclusive conversation with BOTT.

Shreya Shimpi

How has tourism been post-COVID?

Post-COVID, Greece has experienced a significant surge in tourism. Both 2022 and 2023 were exceptional years, with approximately 32 million tourists visiting the country. Greece currently holds the fifth position globally in terms of tourism. However, there's a need to tap into new markets like India and China, considering the absence from these regions during the pandemic-induced hiatus.

How important is India to you as a market from the tourism perspective?

India was a crucial market for Greek tourism before COVID-19 disrupted travel. However, with a four-year break due to the pandemic, Greece is gradually re-entering the Indian market. Destinations like Mykonos, Santorini, and Athens enjoy popularity in India, but the lack of direct flights poses a challenge. Efforts are underway, including discussions between government officials, to establish direct flight connections, which historically have a transformative impact on tourism.

What are your promotional strategies?

Given Greece's budget constraints, there isn't a clear strategy in place currently. However, post our participation in the trade shows such as OTM and SATTE, we have plans including holding workshops, Fam trips, and Press trips specifically tailored for the Indian market. Despite limited resources, Greece aims to maximize impact through targeted promotional campaigns as we understand that it is important to stay in news to garner interest.

What is your Vision for 2024?

Greece's vision for 2024 is to position itself as an all-year-round destination. By highlighting its diverse offerings and attractions, Greece aims to attract tourists throughout the year, solidifying its reputation as a premier travel destination.



Exploring Kenya's tourism terrain

Betty Ingwe, Senior Marketing Officer for Emerging Markets at the Kenya Tourism Board, discussed Kenya's tourism landscape and growth strategies with BOTT, offering valuable insights.

Shreya Shimpi

How important is India as a market for Kenya?

India holds significant importance for Kenya due to both historical ties and the potential for tapping into its outbound tourists. With 1.8 million Indian tourists traveling to Africa, Kenya aims to attract a larger share of this market.

What are your marketing strategies to increase outreach in India?

Currently, we're implementing two campaigns. One targets tour operators to enhance the Travel Trade's reach in India to Kenya, while the other focuses on a Travel Safety Campaign, addressing both operators and consumers. We recognise the importance of investing in this market to address our tourism goals effectively.

How has business been so far?

Post-pandemic, we're observing a positive trend with increasing numbers. We anticipate India's recovery to pre-COVID levels by the year's end.

Which are your top source markets?

Our top source markets are the US, Uganda, UK, and Germany, in that order.

Which market segment are you targeting?

While Kenya is renowned for safaris and beaches, we're expanding our focus to target adventure and solo travellers, diversifying our travel segment.

What are the new attractions Kenya has to offer?

Kenya boasts a plethora of immersive experiences, both inland and coastal, catering to a variety of interests and preferences. While there is no dearth of touristic attractions in Kenya.

What is your vision for the upcoming year?

Our vision entails growth in the Indian market for Kenya, alongside an increase in MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) groups and adventure travellers, aligning with our goal of expanding and diversifying our tourism offerings.





Fiji's allure lies in its visa-free accessibility

Fiji aims to elevate its profile as a must-visit destination for travellers from around the world. Robert Thompson, Executive Head of Regions, Tourism Fiji shares more.

Shreya Shimpi

How has business been for Fiji tourism recently?

We're thrilled with the trajectory; our 2023 figures surpassed those of 2019, a significant milestone.

Globally, performance has been stellar. Although India's restart took a bit longer, December saw record-high figures, a promising sign. Overall, we're just slightly below 2019 levels.

Which markets are Fiji's primary sources of tourism?

Australia leads the pack, trailed by New Zealand, North America, and China, comprising our top four markets. However, we're also eyeing emerging markets and diversifying our outreach efforts.

How does Fiji plan to expand its presence in the Indian market?

With over a decade of groundwork in India, leveraging strong local connections, we're poised to amplify last year's successes. Collaborating with key partners, we'll replicate successful campaigns and forge new alliances. Our focus extends beyond Tier I cities, tapping into the burgeoning interest from Tier II and III cities. Additionally, we're exploring digital marketing strategies tailored to Indian preferences.

What sets Fiji apart as a travel destination, particularly for Indian travellers?

Fiji's allure lies in its visa-free accessibility, a rarity for long-haul destinations. Beyond logistical ease, our unique selling points are rooted in culture and people. Indigenous Fijian culture offers an immersive experience for visitors, with opportunities to engage firsthand. Indian travellers, notably active enthusiasts, can enjoy a diverse array of activities, from snorkelling to floating bars, catering to varied interests. Moreover, we're enhancing our hospitality services to better cater to Indian tastes, including cuisine options and cultural experiences. ■

Embark on a personalised wellness journey at Kavya Himalayas

Embark on a bespoke 'Lifestyle Wellness' retreat at Kavya Himalayas. Hitesh Golchha, Executive Director of Kavya Resort & Spa, shares unique insights into the property's offerings in an exclusive interview with BOTT, highlighting its diverse experiences and personalised approach to well-being.

Shreya Shimpi

Can you provide an overview of the property?

From spacious suites to one and two-bedroom villas, our focus is on delivering personalised experiences. Luxury, for us, is defined by ample space; our rooms range from 70 sq. m to 140 sq. m, ensuring privacy and tranquillity. In today's fast-paced world, our aim is to provide a sanctuary for guests to reconnect with themselves. Emphasising mental clarity and focus, we offer meditation, yoga, and Ayurveda sessions. Our 'Lifestyle Wellness' approach extends to activities such as mountain biking, hiking, and bird-watching, all integral to a holistic experience. Unlike traditional offerings, we maintain flexibility, allowing guests to choose from vegetarian or non-vegetarian menus and providing access to alcohol.

What nationalities primarily visit your property?

While our clientele primarily hails from India, China, Dubai, the Middle East, and Nepal—regions with convenient flight connections to Nepal—we're also witnessing interest from

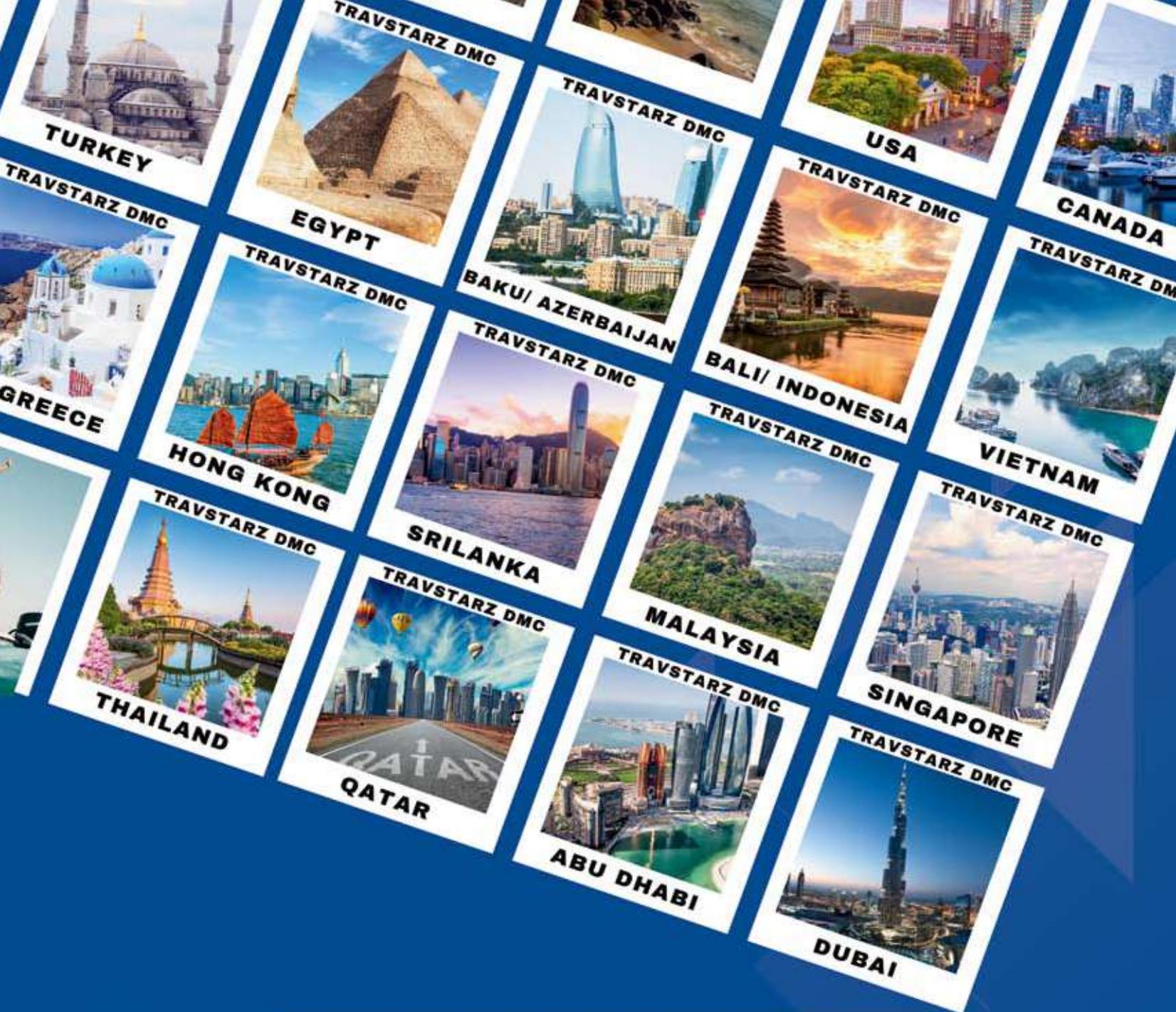
Europe and the US, albeit in its nascent stage.

What distinguishes Kavya Himalayas from competitors?

Our unique offerings include an in-house Guru and transcendental meditation sessions specifically tailored for entrepreneurs. Moreover, we've crafted our programs to accommodate corporate meetings, providing us with a distinctive edge in the market.

With a commitment to providing tailored experiences and a focus on holistic wellness, Kavya Himalayas promises an unforgettable retreat amidst the serene beauty of the Himalayas. Whether seeking relaxation, rejuvenation, or inspiration, guests are invited to embark on a transformative journey at our idyllic sanctuary. ■





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Visa application volume from New Delhi sees 10% YoY growth in 2023

According to VFS Global, the visa application volume from New Delhi registered a 10% year-on-year growth in 2023. When compared to the pre-pandemic numbers, visa application volumes from New Delhi reached 82% of the 2019 levels. This trend of rise in visa application volume from New Delhi is in line with the overall growth trend registered in India, which saw a 16% year-on-year growth in 2023. When compared to the pre-pandemic numbers, visa application volumes from India reached 93% of the 2019 levels.

Priyanka Saxena Ray

In a recent Press Roundtable held at New Delhi, Vishal Jairath, Head – South Asia, VFS Global gave an exhaustive presentation talking about the latest travel trends, top performing markets and the rise in Visa numbers from across India.

According to the stats shared, visa application volumes from New Delhi continued to stay strong in 2023 and closed in further to the pre-pandemic levels with restoration of travellers' confidence to explore global destinations and easing of travel restrictions. According to VFS Global, the visa application volume from New Delhi registered a 10% year-on-year growth in 2023. When compared to the pre-pandemic numbers, visa application volumes from New Delhi reached 82% of the 2019 levels.

This trend of rise in visa application volume from New Delhi is in line with the overall growth trend registered in India, which saw a 16% year-on-year growth in 2023. When compared to the pre-pandemic numbers, visa application volumes from India reached 93% of the 2019 levels. VFS is confident of achieving and going over its 2019 figures in 2024.

Vishal Jairath said, "We continued to witness unprecedented demand from India and the entire South Asia region in 2023 which led to an extended peak outbound travel season with steady visa application volumes witnessed until December. We are confident that this positive travel momentum will sustain in 2024 as well."

A few of the popular destinations preferred by travellers from India in 2023 were Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, UK, US (in alphabetical order).

Strong demand for personalised services continued to be a defining trend in the 2023 visa application patterns as well. VFS Global recorded a strong uptick in customised services such as the Visa At Your Doorstep (VAYD) service that empowers applicants to complete their entire visa application submission process from the comfort of their



Vishal Jairath,
Head – South Asia, VFS Global

homes or any other location of their choice. VAYD bookings in 2023 in India registered around five-fold increase when compared to 2019.

Similarly, the demand for Premium Lounge, an optional service which provides end-to-end personalised assistance with visa application submission from the comfort of a lounge, is rising with the rise in application volumes. Another service named Prime Time, which allows visa application submission outside of working hours and even on weekends, has seen a healthy adoption since pandemic. ■



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NEW Year Destinations

Indian travellers explore new horizons

Come along with us on an exciting adventure as we reveal some incredible and undiscovered destinations that are calling out to travellers in 2024. In this exclusive travel feature, we delve into a kaleidoscope of destinations that promise not just a change of scenery, but an immersive cultural odyssey. From the spiritual allure of Ayodhya to the pristine shores of Lakshadweep and the historical mystique of Port Blair, India unfolds a fine collection of experiences waiting to be woven into your travel memoirs.

Udaipur, with its regal charm, and the surreal landscapes of Kutch beckon adventurers seeking a blend of history and nature. Munnar's verdant hills and the quaint charm of Pondicherry offer diverse escapes for every kind of traveller. As we traverse beyond borders, the allure of Saudi Arabia's cultural tapestry, the tropical paradise of Mauritius, the serene beauty of Bali, the limestone cliffs of Krabi, the vibrant streets of Dublin, and the magical allure of Turkey create a global symphony of exploration.

Whether you're exploring the well-known landscapes of India or the fascinating places abroad, let the year 2024 be the time when your travel dreams come true and take you to amazing places.

Compiled by Priyanka Saxena Ray

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Exploring Ayodhya's spiritual and historical wonders

As the birthplace of Lord Rama, Ayodhya holds a special place in the hearts of millions of devotees. The recent Ram Temple inauguration was not just a historic milestone but will also act as a tourism catalyst for Ayodhya in future, a glimpse of which we saw during the ceremony. However, in addition to its religious significance and newly built Ram Janmabhoomi Temple, the city also offers a fascinating array of historical and cultural attractions and with hoteliers queuing to add to the infrastructure of the city, Ayodhya is surely one of the most prominent destinations in the global tourism map.

According to official estimates, Ayodhya is preparing to welcome around 100,000 visitors daily. This surge in tourism is driving substantial improvements in infrastructure, making Ayodhya an attractive spot for both local and international travellers.

The inauguration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya today marks a historic milestone, resonating profoundly with millions worldwide. Beyond its historical significance, this event has unveiled promising tourism opportunities for the city with a rich past. The construction of the temple, a significant project with an estimated cost of ₹1,800 crore, is expected to boost Ayodhya's economy

and turn it into a popular destination for religious tourism.

For the 'pran pratishtha' ceremony of the Ram Lalla idol, Ayodhya has undergone impressive changes. The city now proudly features the newly inaugurated Maharishi Valmiki Airport and an upgraded railway station. According to official estimates, Ayodhya is preparing to welcome around 100,000 visitors daily. This surge in tourism is driving substantial improvements in infrastructure, making Ayodhya an attractive spot for both local and international travellers.

To accommodate the expected increase in tourists, the state government

has unveiled a comprehensive Master Plan 2031, necessitating an investment of over ₹85,000 crore for infrastructure development. The hospitality sector in Ayodhya is experiencing significant growth, with major hotel brands investing in approximately 50 large-scale hotel projects. The recent Global Investment Summit saw the signing of 102 intent agreements, totalling around ₹18,000 crore, highlighting strong investor confidence in Ayodhya's tourism potential.

Investment interest in Ayodhya extends beyond hotels, with the aviation sector also seizing the opportunity. Established brands like Taj and Radisson





Janmabhoomi Temple, Kanak Bhawan is an ancient shrine dedicated to Lord Rama and Sita. According to legend, this palace was a gift from King Kush, Rama's son, to Sita. The intricate architecture and vibrant frescoes make Kanak Bhawan a visually captivating destination for history enthusiasts.

Treta Ke Thakur

Situated near Hanuman Garhi, Treta Ke Thakur is a revered shrine dedicated to Lord Rama. The temple is believed to be built on the exact spot where Lord Rama performed the Ashwamedha Yajna. The serene atmosphere and the spiritual significance of this site attract devotees from far and wide.

Sita Ki Rasoi

Translated as "Sita's Kitchen," this quaint temple is dedicated to Goddess Sita. Legend has it that this is the spot where Sita used to cook for Lord Rama. The temple's architecture and the connection to the Ramayana make it a unique stop for those interested in the epic's mythology.

Nageshwarnath Temple

This ancient temple dedicated to Lord Shiva is believed to be the spot where Rama performed the last rites for his father, King Dasharatha. The temple's architecture reflects a blend of various historical periods, making it an intriguing site for history and spirituality enthusiasts.

Guptar Ghat

Guptar Ghat, located along the banks of the Sarayu River, is a serene spot with historical significance. It is believed that Lord Rama took Jal Samadhi here. The peaceful surroundings and the gentle flow of the river create a tranquil atmosphere, making it an ideal place for contemplation. ■

are making their presence felt in the city, enhancing Ayodhya's standing in the tourism sector and offering visitors a premium experience.

Religious tourism has long been a lucrative source of revenue for India. In 2022, the country witnessed a substantial influx of tourists, with 1433.92 million domestic visits and 6.40 million visits from international tourists. Ayodhya, with its rich historical and religious significance, is poised for a significant increase in tourist numbers, especially after the completion of the Ram Mandir ceremony.

The economic impact of the Ram Temple on Ayodhya is already visible. The rise in tourist numbers has created new job opportunities for locals, and businesses around the temple are thriving, showcasing a variety of native handicrafts. With the Uttar Pradesh government undertaking 187 projects with a budget of ₹30,570 crore for a comprehensive beautification drive, Ayodhya is set to become a bustling hub for both religious and economic activities. The construction of the Ram Temple not only reflects India's rich

cultural heritage but also serves as a symbol of prosperity for Ayodhya.

Ayodhya, with its blend of spirituality and history, offers a unique travel experience. Whether you are a devout pilgrim or a history enthusiast, the city's sacred sites and historical landmarks promise a journey filled with cultural richness and spiritual awakening. As you explore Ayodhya's treasures, you'll find that each site is a chapter in the epic tale of Lord Rama and a testament to the city's enduring cultural legacy.

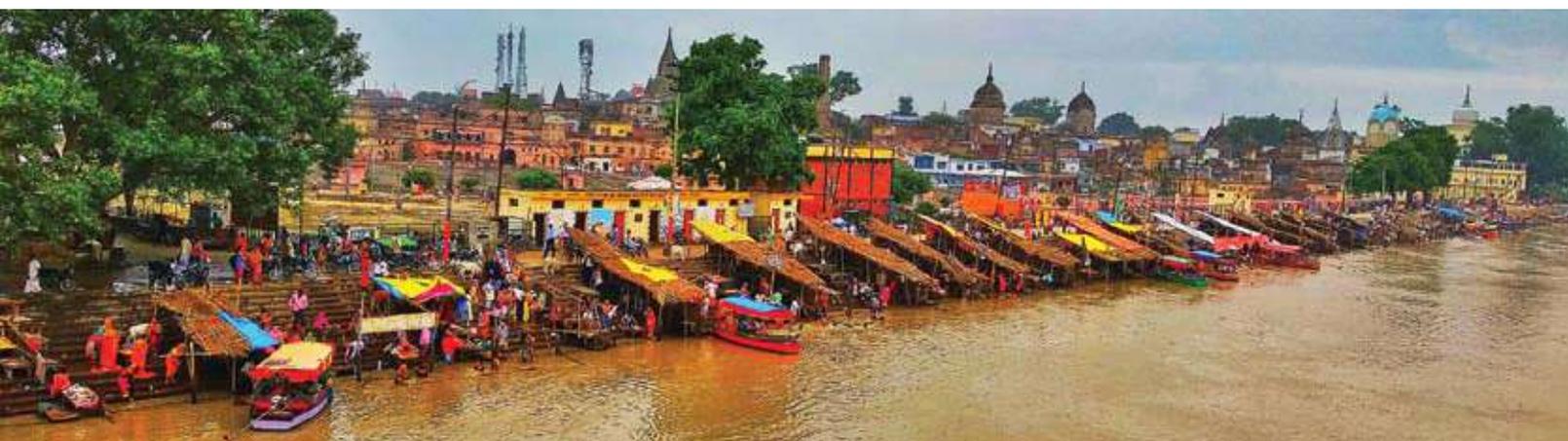
Attractions in Ayodhya

Hanuman Garhi

Perched on a mound, Hanuman Garhi is a significant religious site dedicated to Lord Hanuman. The temple complex is known for its massive statue of Lord Hanuman and offers breathtaking panoramic views of Ayodhya. Pilgrims and tourists alike flock to this site to seek blessings and enjoy the serene surroundings.

Kanak Bhawan

A short distance from the Ram





Lakshadweep's Coral Paradise: A Tropical Haven

With the historic visit of the Prime Minister of India to Lakshadweep, the island is in the limelight for all the right reasons. A hidden treasure awaiting full exploration has been waiting for long for its due share of contribution to the economy, creating job opportunities, and above all to be available as a most preferred option for travellers inclined towards Cruise, Ocean, Coastal, Island and related forms of tourism and related adventure tourism activities.

With this travelogue, allow me to take you on a journey to Lakshadweep. Let's immerse ourselves in the journey of a visit to the western islands of India offering picturesque landscapes, breath-taking beaches, delectable cuisine, and above all get a glimpse of warmth and hospitality extended by the inhabitants to travellers from India and across the globe.

A group of stunning coral islands nestled in the Arabian Sea, is a hidden gem in India's tourism landscape. Lakshadweep is a treasure trove of natural beauty, cultural richness, and adventure opportunities. With its pristine beaches, crystal-clear waters, vibrant marine life, and rich

cultural heritage, it offers a unique and unforgettable experience for travellers.

With this travelogue, I have tried to cover all major must visit destinations.

Bangaram Island is often referred to as the 'Jewel of Lakshadweep.' It is renowned for its powdery white sandy beaches, swaying palm trees, and turquoise lagoons. This serene island is perfect for strolls, sunbathing, and swimming. Snorkelling and scuba diving enthusiasts can explore the vibrant underwater world, teeming with colourful coral reefs and diverse marine species.

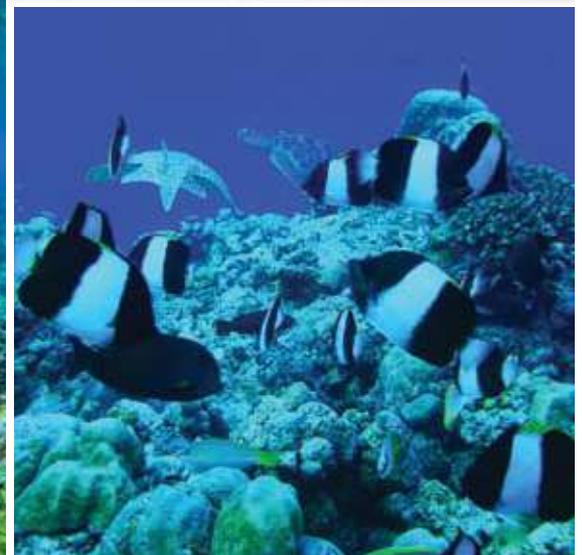
Agatti Island is the gateway to Lakshadweep and serves as the entry point for tourists. The island boasts a picturesque lagoon and a coral-rich

underwater ecosystem. Visitors can indulge in water sports such as kayaking, snorkelling, and sailing. The Agatti Aerodrome provides breathtaking aerial views of the atolls, making it a unique experience for travellers.

Kavaratti is the administrative capital of Lakshadweep and offers a glimpse into the local culture and lifestyle. The Ujra Mosque, with its intricate woodcarvings and beautiful architecture, is a notable attraction. The calm lagoons surrounding the island are ideal for water sports like kayaking and jet skiing.

Kalapeni Island is an ideal destination for those seeking tranquillity and seclusion. The island is home to pristine beaches where you can relax and soak in the natural beauty. Snorkelling and scuba diving in the coral gardens are popular activities, allowing you to encounter exotic fish and marine life.

Minicoy Island, located at the southernmost tip of Lakshadweep, is known for its striking natural beauty. The island boasts a 300-foot-tall lighthouse that offers panoramic views of the surrounding waters. The traditional



dance forms and rich cultural heritage of the locals make for an enriching experience. Water sports, like tuna fishing and kayaking, are also popular activities here.

Kadmat Island is a paradise for water sports enthusiasts. With its vast stretches of pristine beaches and clear waters, it offers the perfect setting for activities such as snorkelling, scuba diving, and windsurfing. The island is also home to a marine biology museum

that educates visitors about the region's diverse marine life.

Amini Island is famous for its stunning beaches and coconut groves. Tourists can explore Amini Beach and the nearby lighthouse, which offers breathtaking views of the surroundings. The island is also known for its rich marine life, making it a popular spot for fishing and scuba diving.

Lakshadweep, with its mesmerizing coral islands and a treasure trove of

natural beauty, stands as an alluring destination for tourists seeking an escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. Whether it's the stunning beaches, vibrant marine life, or rich cultural heritage, Lakshadweep has something to offer to every traveller. ■

(Author - Dr Himanshu Talwar is an industry veteran with various articles, columns, travelogues, and write-ups published specifically on Tourism, Hospitality, and Aviation to his credit)

Pleasantness prevails in 'Pondy'

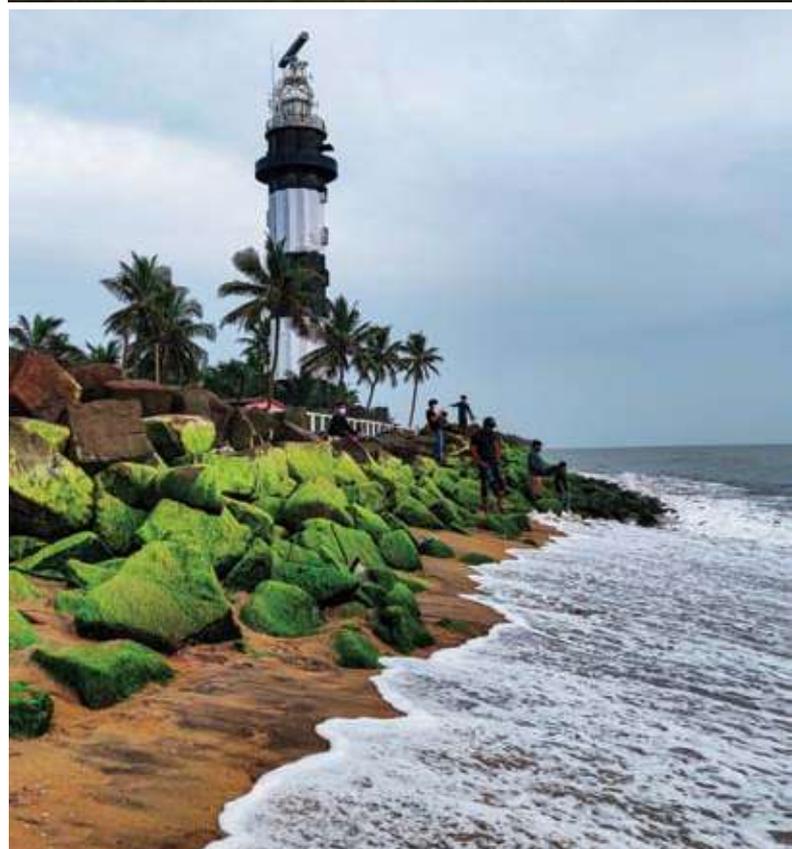
An intriguing history, glimpses of which can be easily spotted as one walks across Puducherry. A trip to Puducherry is like a journey in time with a vibrant present celebrating its interesting past; its history goes back to before Roman times, but factually started with the arrival of the French in 1673, who founded the town and built it to its present form, during the two and a half centuries they occupied it.

"Puducherry" is the French interpretation of the original name "Puducheri" meaning "new settlement".

Puducherry, as many people feel, has a distinct spiritual vibration. Stories of resident sages come down throughout its history from the earliest days. The colonial buildings, some of which date back to the 18th century, stretch along a grid of clean straight streets which house French institutions, Hotels, Guest Houses, Restaurants, Boutiques and private homes, including the sprawling premises of the famous Sri Aurobindo Ashram. Visitors to this area are greeted by mellow hues of cream, yellow, pink and grey compound walls interspersed by flamboyant bougainvillea bursting over gates and walls of courtyards.

Quiet beaches and peaceful resorts in the north and south of the city balance the town's busy, yet easy going life. Pondy, not only offers its own special attractions, but also doubles as the perfect base to explore the rich destinations of Tamil Nadu that surrounds it. Some destinations, namely Auroville, the international City of Unity, the imposing Gingee Fort, the holy temple towns of Kanchipuram, Thiruvannamalai and Chidambaram, the heritage sculptures and magnificent rock temples of Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram) and the cool lush hill stations of Yercaud and Kodaikanal should make your To-Do list.

Some of the must-see / popular touristy places in Pondicherry includes The Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Eglise de Notre Dame des Anges, the Pondicherry Beach, which is a paradise for all beach lovers and best among all the Pondicherry touristy places. It is flanked by a flowing creek on one side and is also known for its tree houses, which are located on the backwaters. Another one of favoured tourist places in Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo Ashram is where people come to seek spiritual harmony and enlightenment. It once served as a spiritual community and is known for being the abode of spiritual guru, Sri Aurobindo. Lastly, Auroville is a strategically planned, experimental township that aims to develop India through the idea of peaceful co-existence. The township, located close to Pondicherry is often referred to as the 'City of Dawn' and is named after Sri Aurobindo. ■





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Saudi A melting pot of Culture, Heritage & Natural Beauty

Saudi is a country rich with culture, heritage, and natural beauty. Boasting mountain-tops, pristine beaches and rivers, Saudi offers a more stunningly diverse landscape than most people imagine. Riyadh is the dynamic capital of Saudi and home to several vibrant social events, festivals and concerts throughout the year. Other cities include Jeddah (the Red Sea port) and Dammam, a large city in the east. These cosmopolitan cities all feature cafés, top-notch restaurants and shops galore, from traditional markets through to gleaming shopping centres with all the latest fashions. Saudi is a multicultural society. The country is made up of 13 distinct regions and differences in climate, food and local traditions. Saudi is not only a country of tradition. It is a modern country that today is emerging as a major entertainment hub in the region.

Saudi constantly surprises visitors with the diversity of its climate. Far from being hot all year round, Saudi has mountain areas that remain cool during the summers and northern areas that often see snow in the winter. For all its differences, though, one thing about Saudi is consistent – the

warm, caring and welcoming nature of its people (Hafawah). Hospitality is central to Saudi culture. In fact, Saudis are known for their hospitality across the entire region.

Visiting Saudi means being among the first to experience a destination that only opened its doors to leisure tourism in 2019. As an emerging leisure destination, we are especially focused on preserving and enhancing the rich cultural heritage and natural beauty that make Saudi a must-visit destination for seasoned international travellers.

Saudi has been named the 12th safest country in the world in 2023 with a safety index of 75.4, according to Numbeo. Madinah has been declared as the world's safest city for solo women travellers by InsureMyTrip

Saudi is the twelfth largest country in the world with around 2,500 km of coastline. Domestic travel is very easy in Saudi, with a network of local airports and three airlines running daily services around the country.

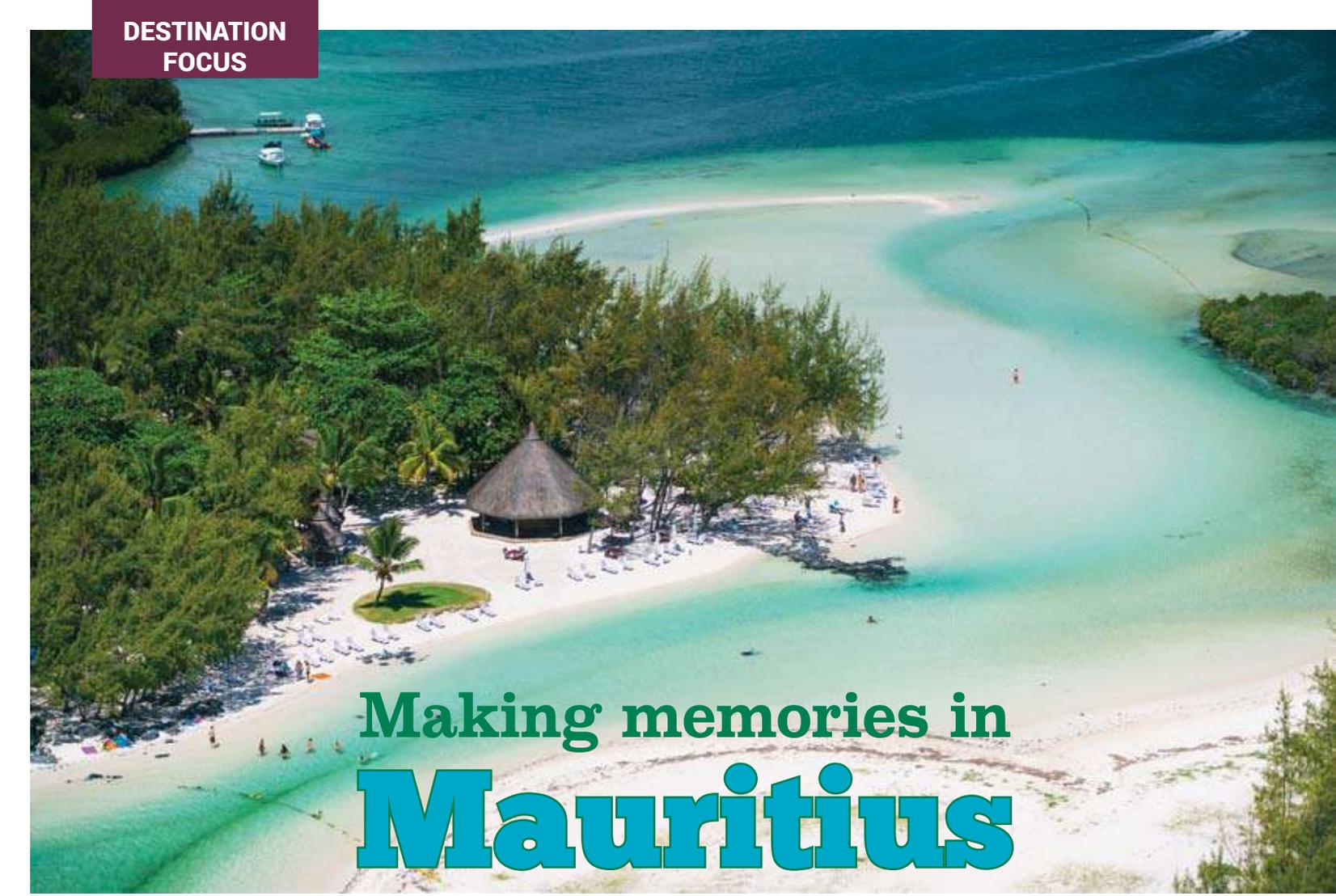
Must see in Saudi

The Red Sea is a super clear blue-green, and it's a must-see during any trip to Saudi. Jeddah is nick-



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- Get closer to nature while enjoying modern luxuries in AlUla's glamping sites.
- Dine with history under the stars
- Enjoy a traditional meal or the best of haute cuisine from around the world.
- Explore traditional markets that offer an authentic glimpse of a traditional way of life that is still vibrant today.
- Shop at thousands of boutiques where you can find everything from traditional souvenirs to modern fashions and jewellery from some of the country's most exciting young designers.
- Dive or snorkel on some of the world's most vibrant, untouched coral reefs.
- Charter a boat for some deep-sea fishing. Or relax aboard a luxury cruise on the gentle waters.



Making memories in Mauritius

Few destinations offer the natural abundance of Mauritius, and although its most famous species is known because it is extinct, there is still plenty to see on family holidays in Mauritius. It's hard to argue with a destination that has repeatedly won travel award titles ranging from 'best beach' and 'best island' right up to the impressive accolade of 'best in world', and family holidays to Mauritius let you and your children judge the quality of the destination and the excellent value for money that it represents.

Mauritius has long been known to the Indian market as a luxury honeymoon destination, however, what most of us miss reading between the lines is that the island has so much more to offer. Apart from the beautiful beaches and world-class hotels, the destination is home to mesmerising sceneries, numerous adventure-related activities, professional and international level golf courses, water sports, ideal kite surf spots and cultural tourism. The Indian travellers, once in Mauritius, can enjoy a plethora of activities all year round.

Mauritius is a complete destination. Activities exist for all ages and categories, be it for honeymooners, families, adventure seekers, nature lovers, senior citizens, young generation, golfers and water sport lovers. For the businessmen, the island is the ideal place to combine

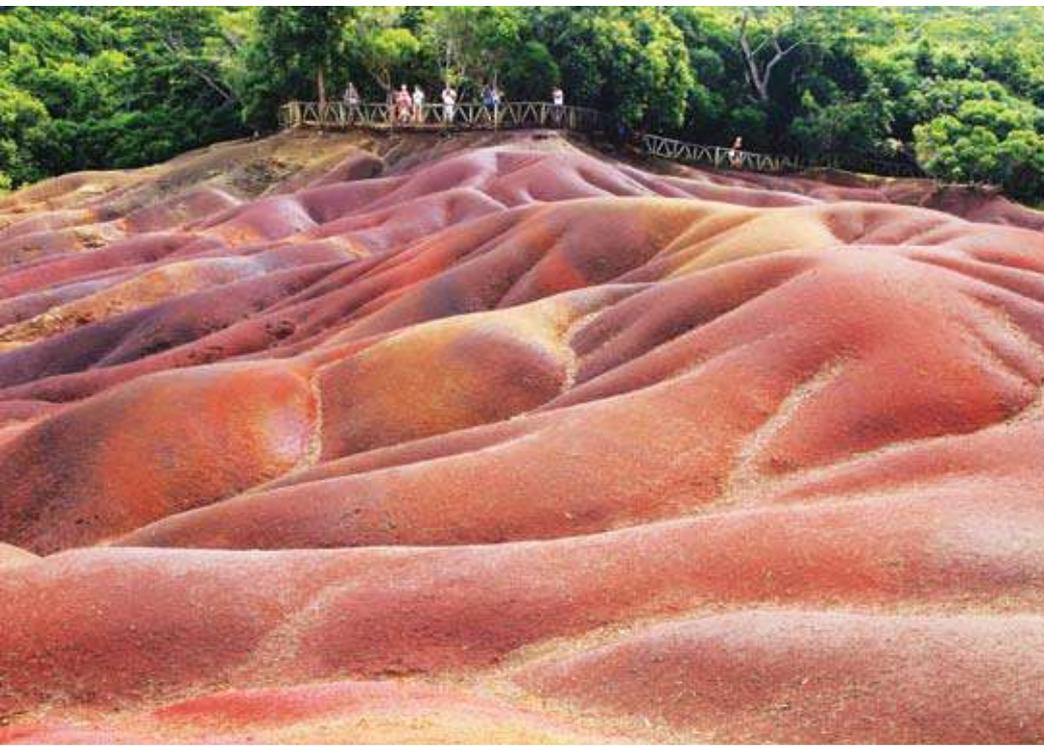
work with leisure. Mauritians have a great fondness for children and are always willing to go the extra mile to ensure that younger visitors are just as well catered for as grownups. Mauritius family holidays are perfect for active visitors who are keen to explore one of the world's most spectacular natural environments, packed with rare wildlife. This, plus an abundance of stunning, sandy beaches and Mauritians' chilled-out, friendly approach, means worn-out families can rapidly unwind and make the most of everything this magical destination has to offer.

The island has the perfect recipe to cater for leisure and family time. Ranging from sandy beaches, catamaran trips, adventure related activities to nature parks; the island offers great environment, blue sky and fresh air for families to enjoy quality time together.

The island has been blessed with a multi-cultural society, which results in a blend of different cuisines re-invented the Mauritian way. Tourists from different parts of the world will find a dish connecting to their own cuisine. All the major cuisines of the world namely, Indian, Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Arabic etc are available in Mauritius.

Water Activities

Mauritius is a one-stop shop for outdoors-loving families. Your local aquarium may seem a tad dull after you've brought your kids here, where they will watch tropical fish lapping their toes when they paddle in the sea and work out ways of enticing crabs out of their beachside holes at sunset. Many hotels offer daily glass-bottomed boat rides as part of their inclusive packages, which enable guests to go a bit further



out to spot clownfish, parrotfish, lionfish and sea sponges amongst the coral reefs that ring the island. Some of the local boat operators will even allow very young children to don life jackets and have a go at snorkelling amongst the fish, with parental supervision.

If this is a success, go one step further and take them swimming and snorkelling with dolphins out in the open sea. Spinner and bottlenose dolphins swim in packs around the island, and early morning is the best time to spot them playing. JPH Charters offer daily dolphin swimming excursions year round, as well as fishing trips and day or overnight catamaran cruises to the outlying islands.

Most of the hotels on the island offer a host of water sports activities included in their packages. Waterskiing, wind-

surfing, kite-surfing, pedals, catamarans, sailing, kayaking, stand-up paddle and snorkelling are likely amongst the activities on offer. Scuba diving lessons are also often available too, but are more likely to entail an extra cost.

Inland Activities

Whilst the views from the island onto the almost-white sandy beaches and the turquoise waters beyond are soothingly beautiful, take some time to look behind you. Mauritius's stunning natural inland landscapes include vast plains of sugarcanes, mountains, spectacular waterfalls and forests.

The Mauritians have worked out ways to get children's jaws to drop at all this too. Kids of high school age will relish exploring the literal highs and lows of the picturesque Frédéric

Nature Reserve in the south by quad bike, whilst younger ones will enjoy bumbling around in the back of a guide-driven 4x4. Teens will also thrill at taking one of the longest zip-lines in the Indian Ocean through the Casela Nature and Leisure Park, which you can also explore by Segway and quad.

There are loads of activities to do in Mauritius for families. The little kids and the 'bigger kids' will have tons of fun playing around the Mauritius attractions, while you'll have a blast exploring the best places to visit on the island. But don't forget to get in touch with the locals. One of the best things to do in Mauritius with kids is to discover is the culture of the Mauritian people; many cultures living together peacefully embracing their differences and rejoicing their similarities. ■

KRABI

A tranquil tropical paradise
buzzing with exciting activities



Thailand is a destination brimming with natural beauty, tranquillity, man-made marvels and exotic wildlife. There are numerous destinations within the country that cater to all types of tourist preferences. One of its hidden gems, which is a perfect cocoon for holidaymakers is KRABI that offers pleasures in the forms of island-hopping, relaxing amidst natural beauty, adventure activities such as snorkelling, rock climbing, sea kayaking, jungle trekking and scuba diving and enjoying meditative holiday in one of its many plush luxury resorts and hotels.



Krabi is the perfect holiday destination for those looking for a relaxing area in southern Thailand. The province, located between Phang Nga and Trang, features stunning scenery, on the land as well as at the sea. With over 150 islands off its 150 km-long coastline (many of them featuring fantastic white-sand beaches and turquoise waters), a jungle-covered interior, towering limestone cliffs, caves, waterfalls and exotic wildlife, Krabi a great selection of natural assets that offer its visitors a wide array of leisure activities for the whole family.

Krabi is famous for its scenic view and breathtaking beaches and clear blue islands. Its coral reef vistas are also one of the world's most beautiful, which makes the city a great spot for coral diving. Some of its other attractions include hot springs, a wildlife sanctuary, sea caves, flourishing coral reefs and exotic marine life, limestone cliffs that draw rock climbing enthusiasts from around the world.



One can easily spend weeks in Krabi and yet leave yearning for more.

If that wasn't enough, Krabi features some of the most photogenic sunsets in Thailand, often accompanied by spectacular displays of cloud-to-cloud lightning, that are best enjoyed from a beachside bar or restaurant. There are roughly 200 islands sitting just off the Krabi coastline, some are small rocks jutting out of the sea, some are quite

a lot larger but still remain uninhabited and some are large islands with many inhabitants living a normal life. You can rent a boat from Krabi town or Ao Nang and explore the islands on your own if you are a keen sailor.

Krabi also provides you with great shopping venues such as Maharaj Walking Street, Chao Fah Pier night market and more.

From its most prominent destinations

– Ao Nang, Railay, Phi Phi Islands and Koh Lanta – to its lesser-known areas – Ao Luk, Ao Nam Mao, or Ao Thalane, to name just a few - the province of Krabi is less developed and crowded than Phuket, more laid back than Koh Samui, and just 80 minutes by air from Bangkok. With a range of accommodation from budget to deluxe, this idyllic province truly is an ultimate destination with a plethora of offerings. ■



Seychelles

The land of pristine beauty

The 115 islands of Seychelles contain a captivating Seychellois culture that blends African, European, and Asian influences. From kayaking in the clear waters to feeding the giant tortoises or enjoying warm Octopus creole curry, the main islands of Mahé, Praslin, and La Digue, offer more than just picturesque landscapes. They take travellers on a sensory journey through rich history with vibrant Creole music, bonfire dances, and flavorful Creole cuisine. Explore natural wonders like Jardin du Roi or Valle de Mai, the smallest UNESCO World Heritage site. Hike to the top of Morne Seychellois National Park for the best views of the city. Or Snorkel over the colourful underwater world at the Sainte Anne Marine National Park. Private island resorts provide exclusivity like no other, making you feel like you have the pristine beach to yourself.

However, the true magic lies in the warm hospitality of the Seychellois people. With a unique ethnic blend, the Creole community possesses a special talent for making every traveller feel at home. As voyagers explore this tiny island paradise, they not only witness the richness of Seychellois heritage but also catch glimpses of their cultural threads woven into the vibrant tapestry of this extraordinary destination. ■



Amazing Azerbaijan



Azerbaijan, nestled at the crossroads of Eastern Europe and Western Asia, offers a captivating blend of culture, history, and natural beauty. From the vibrant streets of Baku, the capital city adorned with modern architecture juxtaposed against historic landmarks, to the serene landscapes of the Caucasus Mountains, Azerbaijan promises an unforgettable journey. Explore ancient UNESCO World Heritage Sites like the walled city of Baku and the historic centre of Sheki, while also indulging in the rich flavours of Azerbaijani cuisine. With warm hospitality, a diverse range of experiences, and convenient connectivity, Azerbaijan beckons Indian travellers to embark on a cultural odyssey like no other. ■



Brand USA

hosts its 10th Sales Mission in Goa amidst great networking & fun evenings

Brand USA recently hosted its 10th India Sales and first-ever Media Mission in an offsite destination in Goa. This was Brand USA's inaugural media mission and was attended by 11 PR delegates from various US destinations who actively interacted with the attending media and briefed them on the experiences on offer. In addition to the travel trade professionals from 14 Indian cities, the US delegation comprised 39 partners, 16 of which were participating for the first time. Amidst one-on-one meetings, fun evenings, insightful mornings, Jackie Ennis, Vice-President of Global Trade Development, Brand USA spoke to BOTT about the growing tourist numbers and the importance of India market for the USA. Here are excerpts from

Priyanka Saxena Ray



Jackie Ennis,
Vice President
Global Trade Development, Brand USA



Staci Mellman,
Chief Marketing Officer,
Brand USA



Sheema Vohra,
Managing Director,
Sartha Global Marketing

2023 – The Recovery Year

From our point of view, 2023 was still a recovery year but I am glad to share that from the Indian market, it has been our most successful recovery. Our all-other target markets are atleast 10% down on 2019 numbers, whereas India is 20% up on the 2019 numbers, which is a phenomenal achievement because 2019 was also a very good year. So, we are absolutely delighted with the numbers that we are seeing from the Indian market. Going forward, I am very confident of seeing a further 20% increase this year from the India market.

Indian Visitors

Around 1.76 million Indian visitors travelled to the USA in 2023, making India the fifth largest source market for international visitors, which includes

Canada, Mexico, which are our bordering markets. So, if you take away these two then India is our No. 3 market, which is a big source of achievement considering India just came up in top 10 in 2019. The climb up has been truly impressive.

2024 – The Growth Year

I see 2024 with highlighted connectivity. I am really hoping to see some new direct connectivity with the changes at Air India. We have been led to believe that with the new aviation orders and the fact that Air India is making the United States a priority destination for 2024, we are hopeful that we will have that direct connectivity and more flights. However, we are very happy with the number of one-stops too from the Europe, Middle East and pacific and new connectivity with IndiGo along with Turkish Airlines, British Airways

– it means that more cities in India have greater accessibility and better connectivity.

Target Segments

Students are a huge segment for us and in 2023, India market surpassed China to become the no.1 source of international students to the United States, which is incredible. It is a 35% increase over the previous year. Meanwhile, the corporate and MICE business has suffered post pandemic because of the issuance of small groups visas and MICE Visas has not been a priority but what we are seeing is a spurt in families, leisure, inter-generational trips, small group trips. Prior to the pandemic there were a lot of group tours from India to US, there are still some group tours, but our primary targets are the FITs, couples, families etc.



The 10th India Sales Mission

This Sales Mission is the first time where we have concentrated all our activities in one place. Brought everyone together in one place – our top performers across India to one single location – this is something we have never done before. Also, for the first time we have, running in tandem with the travel trade, a media track, so this year, along with the travel trade meetings, we also have active media interactions. We are always keen to try something different in our Sales Mission. This is the 10th Brand USA Sales Mission – the first one was held in 2008 – so there is a long history to this, and we are always trying to do something different and make sure that it is meaningful and productive for both, the US Suppliers who are coming and also for the travel trade and media in India. What is interesting this time is that we have 40 partners participating in the trade track, 16 of which are new to the Sales Mission, which is a testament to the fact that India as a source market is gaining visibility in the United States. Many industries, partners and destinations are paying attention because numbers from India are significant – Indian visitors are being noticed. When Indian students come, they go to all corners of the US and that propels a visitation from friends and families to go visit and they go to all the corners of the US.

Challenges

In tourism, in general, there is always a fear of over tourism. Some of our National Parks have had some incredible demand over the last couple of years, especially post pandemic lockdowns, people were anxious to get out in open spaces, be in natural landscapes. So, while there are some concerns with regards to National Parks, the reality is that the United States is iso big that there are places and space for everyone.

Situation with regards to Visa is getting better day by day. There have been challenges, however, challenges are prompted by the incredible pent-up demand to visit the US so that is a good



problem to have. According to the latest figures, 1.4 million visas have been issued, which is phenomenal and double of what has been issued in the past.

Marketing Strategy for the future

Competition for the long-haul travel is growing and we realise that India is a huge economic engine generating a lot of outbound travellers and a great source market not just for the arrival numbers but also the spend numbers, which is phenomenal. We recognise our competition. However, we are not

afraid of it. The reality is that US have been in the market for a longtime and the Indian market knows the US, is familiar with the US in terms of what we offer and also aware that the vacation you can have in the US – with a multitude of offerings in unlike any other. The depth and diversity of experiences that we offer in the US is unmatched, which along with a 10-year visa is a very positive for any tourist. We are also in a sweet spot as the US has a very strong two-way traffic with a large number of Indian diaspora and students who are living there. ■

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Resorts World Cruises launches RW CruiseBuddy in India

Resorts World Cruises introduced its latest innovation, 'RW CruiseBuddy,' a dedicated web portal tailored specifically for its valued travel partners. The unveiling took place in Mumbai on February 7, 2024, marking a significant milestone in the company's commitment to enhancing partner engagement and streamlining operations.

Shreya Shimpi

RW CruiseBuddy provides travel partners with unprecedented access to real-time inventory and cruise fare information, directly from Resorts World Cruises. With an intuitive user interface, partners can effortlessly navigate and explore the latest cabin availability aboard the Genting Dream and Resorts World One ships. Leveraging Resorts World Cruises' Preferred Sales Partners network, the portal ensures swift response times, elevating the efficiency of the booking process to new heights.

Michael Goh, President, Resorts World Cruises, expressed the company's dedication to nurturing the burgeoning Fly-Cruise sector in India, citing substantial growth over the past two years. "With the introduction of the RW CruiseBuddy web portal, we aim to empower our local travel partners with the tools they need to drive Fly-Cruise bookings forward," he stated

emphatically.

Naresh Rawal, Vice President-Sales & Marketing (India), Resorts World Cruises, shed light on the portal's transformative impact. "Our extensive network of nearly eight thousand travel partners across India often faced the challenge of navigating multiple Preferred Sales Partners for quotations. RW CruiseBuddy streamlines this process, providing seamless access to quotations and the Resource Centre," Rawal explained. Notably, partners stand to benefit from incentives tied to each booking, rewarding their ongoing commitment and performance.

Looking ahead to 2024, Rawal expressed optimism for the industry's trajectory, reflecting on the resilience demonstrated post-Covid restrictions. "Despite initial challenges in 2023, the cruising industry regained momentum, particularly with the resurgence of MICE activities. As we embark on 2024,

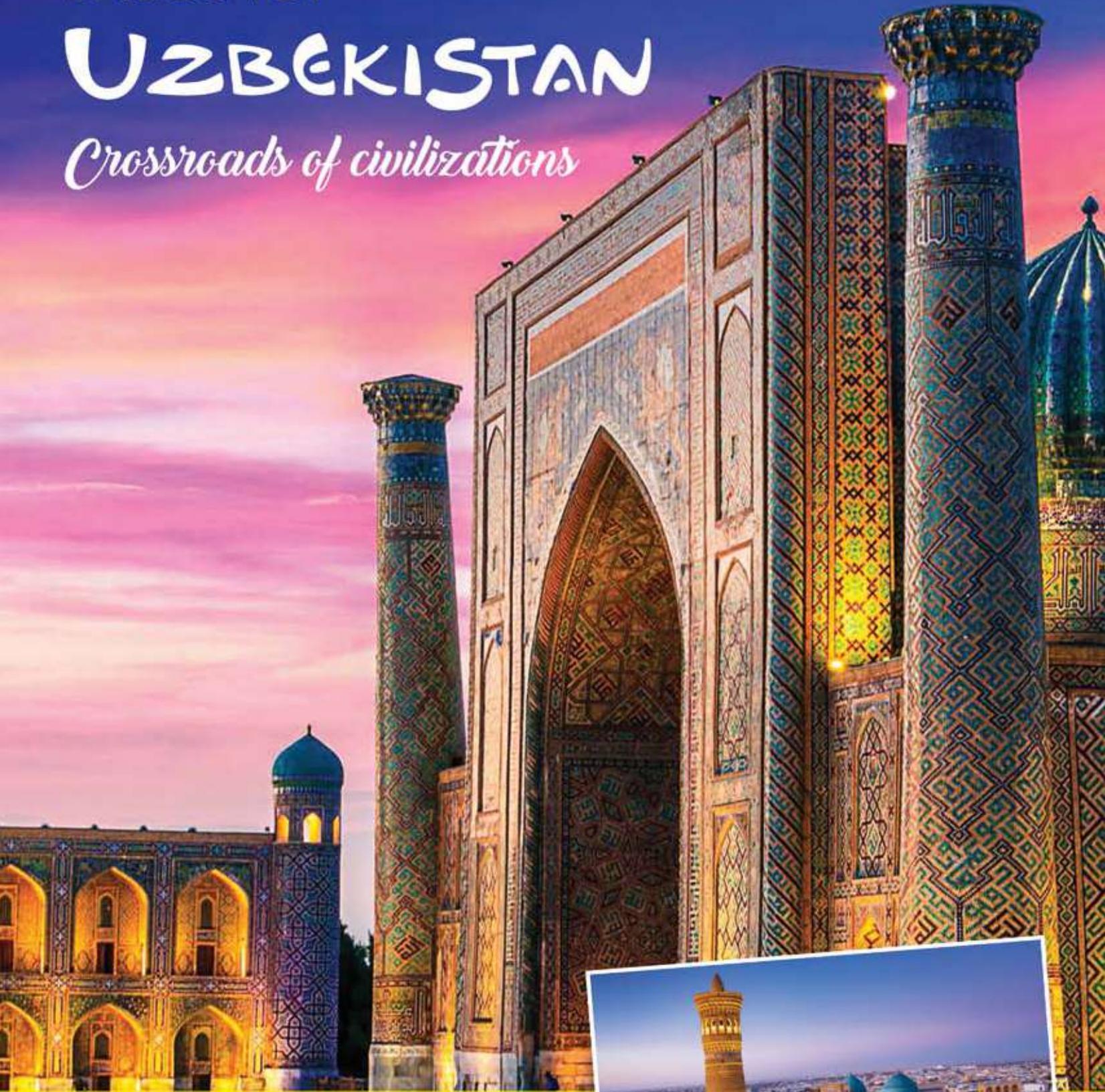


"I anticipate continued growth and prosperity," he remarked, underlining the industry's bright prospects. ■



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Western Australia highlights its offerings at two-city India Roadshow

Western Australia's first India Roadshow post-pandemic wrapped up recently, following three days of meetings with India-based tourism, travel and trade partners from 5-7 February. The roadshow, which was run in collaboration by Tourism Western Australia (WA) and Business Events Perth, saw 16 WA hotels, attractions, experiences, and Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) present their product to more than 300 Indian agents in New Delhi and Mumbai. Melissa Forbes, Executive Director Marketing, Tourism Western Australia shares more.



Melissa Forbes,
Executive Director Marketing,
Tourism Western Australia

Priyanka Saxena Ray

What prompted Western Australia to recognize the importance of India as a market in recent years?

Western Australia's shift in focus towards India stems from a combination of factors. Despite previous emphasis on markets like China and Europe, the recognition of India's growing economy and global prominence became evident. Additionally, the significant Indian community residing in Western Australia, comprising students, business owners, and VFR travelers, highlighted the potential for leveraging existing connections to drive leisure tourism. The emergence of India as a global powerhouse further underscored its importance in Western Australia's tourism strategy.

Could you provide insights into the recent trends in Indian visitor numbers to Western Australia?

India has emerged as our fastest-recovering market post-pandemic. In 2019, we welcomed 31,000 Indian visitors, contributing substantially to our visitor economy. Despite pandemic challenges, the resilience of the Indian market is evident, with 27,000 visitors recorded in the July 2022 to June 2023 period. Impressively, these visitors are injecting more into the visitor economy than pre-COVID levels, signaling significant growth potential moving forward.

With diverse tourism segments like VFR, MICE, weddings, and student travel, do you see opportunities for Western Australia to capitalize on these segments, particularly in light of recent developments in other countries?

Absolutely. Western Australia recognizes the potential across various tourism segments and collaborates closely with organizations like Study Perth to attract international students. While leisure remains a primary focus, partnerships with entities such as Business Events Perth and Study Perth enable targeted approaches for different segments, ensuring a comprehensive strategy to cater to diverse traveler interests.

Could you provide an overview of the tourism offerings in Perth and the ideal months for travellers to visit Western Australia?

Perth and its surrounding regions offer a myriad of attractions suitable for year-round visits. While certain destinations may have seasonal variations, Perth and the southwest provide an all-year-round destination experience. From wine regions and wildlife encounters to stargazing at the Pinnacles, travelers can explore diverse experiences. Perth's cosmopolitan

atmosphere, combined with day trip options like wildlife parks and wine tastings, ensures a memorable visit regardless of the season.

Are there any developments regarding direct flights from Perth to India, and what efforts are being made to enhance connectivity?

Efforts are underway to establish direct flights from Perth to India, although no concrete announcements have been made yet. In the meantime, Western Australia is actively promoting seamless connectivity through key transit hubs like Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

Finally, what are Western Australia's targets for visitor arrivals from India, and what strategies are being employed to achieve these targets?

While setting specific targets is challenging given the current aviation landscape, Western Australia aims for sustained year-on-year growth in visitor numbers from India. Strategies include converting existing demand, forging strong partnerships with travel entities, and enhancing awareness through targeted messaging. Leveraging India's size and population, Western Australia seeks to position itself as a premier destination for Indian travelers, aiming to surpass pre-pandemic figures and ensure continued growth in the future. ■



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Antarctica21

delivering boutique & small-scale expeditions to Antarctica



Antarctica21, a boutique wilderness adventure company, started in 2003, has redefined the way for travellers to explore this untouched land. They combine the convenience of flying to Antarctica from Chile, followed by a cruise experience in Antarctica, eliminating the need to cross by sea, via the infamous Drake Passage. Juan Cristobal Del Pedregal Bravo, Senior Commercial Director of Antarctica21 shares more.

Priyanka Saxena Ray

Having completed 20 years of its pioneering operation in Antarctica, the company has now set its sights on the India market and wishes to mark their presence in the India Outbound market.

Sharing more info on the company, Juan said, “Before Antarctica21, travellers who wanted to reach the Antarctic Peninsula had only one option: a 2-day sail across the notoriously rough seas of the Drake Passage. However, since 2003, our boutique wilderness adventures have offered a more comfortable alternative. Our two-hour flight takes you from Punta Arenas, the Chilean gateway to Patagonia, directly to Antarctica, where you then board your expedition ship. No stormy crossing. No seasickness. Just quick, total immersion in your Antarctic adventure. Thus, with our Air Cruise model, we have created a new way from Chile to reach Antarctica.”

Antarctica21, with its small expedition vessels that feels more like private yachts, offers direct access to areas along the Antarctic shore that larger ships simply can't reach. As a local company in this remote region, Antarctica21 has built a solid infrastructure and an extensive network of key relationships to support your expedition.

A unique aspect of the company is 'Explorers House'. Located only a few blocks from your hotel, Antarctica21's new Explorers House is your exclusive base in Punta Arenas. Feeling like a private club, it is a purpose-built open space where you can prepare for your expedition by attending briefings, practicing your Zodiac-boarding skills, shopping for expedition gear, and more. “As a boutique specialist, we design and deliver adventurous yet comfortable small-scale expeditions to Antarctica. We aim to offer guests the perfect

balance between active exploration and high-quality hospitality,” he added.

“Antarctica is a destination that has seen a lot of interest from the travellers because it has wildlife, it's remote, it's a long trip designed for seasoned travellers who are keen to explore the unexplored. However, doing so earlier through the traditional manner was an uncomfortable journey but with Antarctica21, we take care of all the comforts. India is a market with a lot of potential that has woken up to these tougher trips. They are looking for long-haul trips. India is geographically also positioned in such a way that if you fly to US and Chile, it's the same if you fly to Europe and Chile – it's really in the middle. I think the market will pay attention to a product like ours and I am confident that we will see increased traffic from India in future,” he concluded. ■

Fortune Hotels

opens 50th milestone property with Fortune Park East Delhi

Fortune Hotels, a member of ITC's hotel group recently celebrated a significant milestone with the inauguration of its 50th hotel in India. Branded as Fortune Park East Delhi, the addition of this hotel further fortifies the upscale hotel chain's footprint in the key metropolitan area of the Delhi NCR region and the country.

BOTT Desk



Following the Fortune Hotels brand promise, Fortune Park East Delhi offers contemporary and chic well-appointed rooms, premium amenities and oodles of comfort ensuring guests have a warm and relaxing stay with them.

Expressing enthusiasm over the brand's latest accomplishment, Samir MC, Managing Director of Fortune Hotels, said: "Fortune Park East Delhi, is a significant value-add to our ongoing, long-term growth trajectory being our fifth operating hotel in Delhi NCR. We have been continuously expanding our footprint across key cities in the country to comprehensively cater to the diverse needs of our guests. Our latest addition embraces the true spirit of Delhi-

blending in the commercial vibrancies and traditional and modern socio-cultural influences that come with it. We stand steadfast in our commitment to delivering exceptional experiences to travellers visiting the Delhi region for work and leisure and look forward to welcoming them."

Premiering at Fortune Park East Delhi will be a plethora of F&B outlets, including Zodiac the all-day dining restaurant, Neptune Bar - the trendy bar and lounge Nakshatra, the soon-to-open sky dining restaurant on the rooftop and La Cafe a trendy outlet that is sure to take coffee and conversations to an all-new high.

To complement the travellers business and social needs the premier

hotel will also house two eclectically designed banquet spaces that are aptly embellished with modern facilities and tasteful décor to make your corporate events and meetings a success. Offering a premium setting for your weddings and special celebrations, the versatile banquets are well-equipped to handle events for up to 1000 guests and come with state-of-the-art facilities, a dedicated team, lip-smacking gourmet options and tailor-made services, to ensure every event is extraordinary and spectacular.

Additionally, the hotel will also have a pristine rooftop swimming pool, a relaxing spa and a state-of-the-art gym offering wellness and rejuvenation options to its guests. ■



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- Cheval Hyde Park Gate, a grand Kensington residence, London
- Cheval Knightsbridge, village living in the city, London.
- Cheval Harrington Court, moments from London's museums, London.
- Cheval Calico House, living in the heart of the city, London.
- Cheval The Edinburgh Grand, located at St Andrew Square, Edinburgh.
- Cheval Old Town Chambers, nestled in Edinburgh's Old Town, Edinburgh.



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Cheval Maison - the Palm, Dubai

A self-proclaimed 'eighth wonder of the world', the Palm Jumeirah, the location of our property in Dubai, is a feat of 20th and 21st century engineering. Built on the land reclaimed from the sea, this unique palm-shaped destination is a holiday maker's haven, designed with fun, relaxation, and indulgence in mind. As you would expect from Dubai, The Palm is home to luxurious resorts, dining options to suit every budget and preference, and an array of shopping options. All set against the stunning backdrop of the Dubai Skyline and the Arabian Gulf, Cheval Maison – The Palm, Dubai is the perfect destination to relax and unwind.



A 11-storey high-rise building, which hosts 131 apartments with a selection of spacious one, two and three-bedroom apartments and a three-bedroom penthouse. Selected apartments come with a balcony or terrace offering spectacular city views or overlooking the palm. On the 11th floor of the building is a fully-equipped gym available to use 24 hours a day. Resident guests also have an access to a roof-top swimming pool. All the apartments and penthouses provide all the facilities needed for an indulgent sunshine getaway, or a longer- term stay. Each apartment is stylishly designed, with the attention to detail and quality you would expect from Cheval. Fully equipped kitchens can be found in all apartments, and most feature their own terrace or balcony, providing the perfect place to unwind in peace.



Cheval Collection has tied up with Black Coffee by Café Younes for F&B Services in Dubai. The Black Coffee brand was created in 2018 by Café Younes, the oldest and the largest home-grown specialty coffee roaster in Lebanon, which dates from 1935. The brand has 12 outlets in Lebanon, three in Egypt and two in Dubai, in addition to Cheval Maison - The Palm Dubai. The café offers a full-service including breakfast, lunch & dinner from till late.

For more information, please contact: Cheval Collection C/o TRAC Representations (India) Pvt. Ltd.

A-61, 6th Floor, Himalaya House, 23, K.G. Marg, New Delhi – 110001.

For queries and reservations, kindly contact: chevaldelhi@tracrep.com (India Office)

Visit our website: www.chevalcollection.com

IATO organises

3-day fam trip showcasing Gwalior's heritage to boost tourism

The Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) organised a three-day familiarization trip to Gwalior from February 3 to 5, 2024, in collaboration with the District Collector and CEO of Gwalior Smart City. The 60-member delegation, comprising tour operators and guides nationwide, aimed to spotlight Gwalior's rich cultural heritage.

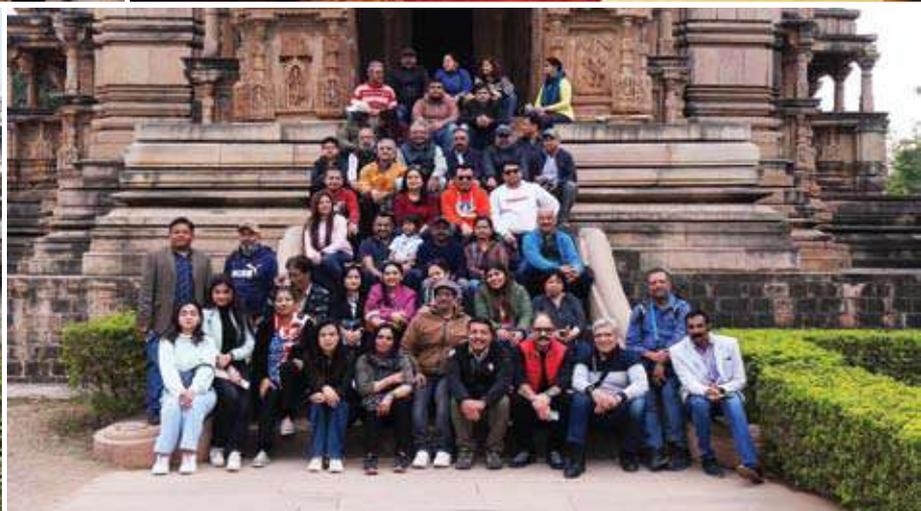
The journey commenced with an immersive tour of Gwalior's historical

gems, including the iconic Gwalior Fort, Jai Vilas Palace, Mohammad Gaus's Tomb, and Gujari Mahal. Detailed insights into the historical significance of these landmarks were provided, enriching the participants' understanding.

The next day's itinerary featured exploration of Maharaj Bada and nearby historical sites, accompanied by a morning bird-watching session at Tigra, enhancing the excursion with natural beauty. The trip aimed not only to

educate the delegates but also to position Gwalior as a premier tourist destination, stimulating growth in the local tourism sector and boosting the economy.

Rajiv Mehra, President of IATO, praised the well-organized tour and urged participants to promote Gwalior as a two-night destination. He emphasised the city's beauty and diverse attractions, encouraging travel enthusiasts to explore its offerings for a fulfilling experience. ■



The Swiss Chocolate Craftmanship



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Know what your stars say about February 2024



Tarot Card Reading is the art and science which helps understand the present status and the future course. It helps to apply course correction, if required. Tarot Card can be used for shaping Career, Health, Finance, Business,, Relationship, Marriage, Match-making, etc. **Ms. Richa Srivastava, a renowned Tarot Card Reader** conducts exclusive Tarot reading under the banner - Tathaastu. Here are her predictions for February 2024.



March 21 – April 20

Harmony and balance will be there at your work front. Career growth is there in your card. Ideal time to getting into business partnership. Recovery from illness is imminent. Indulgence in spirituality will bring harmony. Likely meeting your prospective partner.



July 23 – August 21

To hold the position in your career you need to take a stand. Make smart investments. Make an extra effort to take care of your health. Don't allow a third person to spoil your relationship.



November 23 – December 22

Be practical in your professional work and maintain a work life balance. Be careful while investing. Make effort to strengthen relationship. Start meditation.



April 21 – May 21

Remove anxiety. Be positive and look on the brighter side. Conflicts at career front will be resolved through honest conversations. Plan to manage your finances. Goal will be achieved and bond will be stronger with partner.



August 22 – September 23

Search the job will be successful. Career success is possible by putting thoughts into action. Avoid conflicts in your relationship. Recovery from illness is expected.



December 23 – January 20

Don't be lethargic. Be positive. Take your lessons from past mistake and take your stand. Success is very near. Communication is the key. Spend time with your partner.



May 22 – June 21

Your hard work will pay dividends. If looking for job change or own venture, this is the time. Your investment decision will be good. You may offer support to needy. Take care of yourself and spend quality time with family.



September 24 – October 23

Change of career possible for greater success. Open and honest communication is required for successful relationship. Take care of your health. You will indulge in spirituality.



January 21 – February 19

Time to move forward with positive attitude. Quick healing from illness is expected. Maintain focus with concerted efforts. Search for the new job will take some more time. Spend time with family.



June 22 – July 22

Change in career is possible. Senior will support at work front. Your investments will be rewarded. Balance out your relationship. Take care of your health.



October 24 – November 22

Your confidence will lead to success in career. Leave your past behind for a new beginning in the relationship. Possibility of buying a new property or car. Be optimistic and start exercising for being healthy.



February 20 – March 20

You will be busy this week. Spend your money wisely. Respond intelligently to the questions asked by people. Do your research, as you have to work hard to make things happen. Mind and heart are at conflict. Control the emotions. Spend some time with your spouse.

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Map for illustrative purpose only.

#First Opinion



"Fortune Park East Delhi, is a significant value-add to our ongoing, long-term growth trajectory being our fifth operating hotel in Delhi NCR. We have been continuously expanding our footprint across key cities in the country to comprehensively cater to the diverse needs of our guests. Our latest addition embraces the true spirit of Delhi- blending in the commercial vibrancies and traditional and modern socio-cultural influences that come with it. We stand steadfast in our commitment to delivering exceptional experiences to travellers visiting the Delhi region for work and leisure and look forward to welcoming them."

Samir MC, Managing Director, Fortune Hotels



"We are very pleased to grow our relationship with Gujarat JHM Hotels (GJHM) and introduce the JW Marriott brand to Surat. GJHM is an ideal fit with its vision centred around innovation, creativity and design, while the JW Marriott brand resonates a legacy of extraordinary hospitality. The new JW Marriott Surat Resort & Spa will be built on the Earthspace campus where Auro University - the Sri Aurobindo Integral Life Centre and the Courtyard by Marriott Surat are currently located. The proximity of the hotel to these educational resources will allow Gujarat JHM a unique opportunity to intertwine the hotel operations with Auro University to develop future leaders for the hospitality industry."

Rajeev Menon, President Asia Pacific excluding China, Marriott International



"It gives me great pleasure to be appointed as the India Rep for Arago Travels, which is a preeminent Destination Management Company (DMC) noted for its expertise in Nordic destinations such as Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. This partnership heralds a new chapter in Nordic travel, enabling Indian travel agents to seamlessly connect with Arago Travels' extensive service portfolio. This collaboration marks a pivotal expansion for Arago Travels in the Indian travel market. The partnership with Outbound Konnections (Ark Reps) is poised to facilitate easier access and enhance the visibility of the Nordic region's enchanting destinations among Indian tourists."

Anjum Lokhandwala, Director, Ark Travel Group



"We are excited to collaborate with Mövenpick Resort Al Marjan Island, an iconic property in the heart of Ras Al Khaimah. The resort's offerings perfectly align with discerning vacationers, adventure enthusiasts, and those seeking a dreamy venue for weddings or milestone celebrations. Leveraging our deep understanding of the dynamic Indian market and the Middle East, our result-driven team will curate innovative and targeted marketing & PR strategies to position it as a top choice for Indians."

Lubaina Sheerazi, CEO and Co-founder, BRANDit



"Kerala has become the first state in the country to come out with a comprehensive heli-tourism policy. A micro-site has been created giving details of travel packages offered by the helicopter service providers. This initiative will be of enormous help to tourists planning to visit various destinations in a single trip, making the state an inter-connected tourism hotspot. In the new year, we have drawn up an aggressive marketing strategy to bolster the presence of domestic tourists in the state. Kerala Tourism's campaign - Make up for lost time, pack up for Kerala-- received the prestigious PATA Gold Award in a rousing endorsement of its innovative promotional initiative."

Shri P B Nooh, Director, Kerala Tourism

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