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# MP catches tourism pulse

Repeatedly applauded by the Ministry of Tourism for its many initiatives, Madhya Pradesh recently came out with a new Tourism Policy 2016. **Surendra Patwa**, Tourism and Culture Minister, MP, shares insights.



JESSY IYPE AND KANCHAN NATH

The vision statement of the policy states, "To promote such balanced and sustainable tourism which enables socio-economic development and establishes Madhya Pradesh as a destination that provides a complete tourism experience."

## Initiation for growth

Talking about how the state has coped up economically, Patwa says, "I accept the fact that MP was not the way it is today 15-20 years ago. The image that MP has today was not there before. MP has grown in every possible way whether it's in business, hotel business or other industries. In infrastructure development, MP has gone much ahead. The condition of

MP was not good, but since **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** took over as CM, continuously for the last 10 years, in every field he has tried to take the state to a higher level. In 2003, the budget for MP used to be ₹22,000 crore. Today, the budget is ₹1,50,000 crore. Earlier, the roads in MP were not good, but today, 80 per cent of the roads are in a suitable condition."

## Investing optimally

Highlighting the potential to invest in the state, Patwa says, "Earlier because of lack of stability, people were afraid to invest in MP. In any business an individual will look for the security of his investment. I can guarantee that whatever business that you do in MP, it will be secured and you

"Through the Swadesh Darshan scheme, we have got almost ₹90 crore from the central government, while through the Buddhist Circuit we have got almost ₹75 crore."

**Surendra Patwa**  
State Minister Tourism and Culture, Government of MP



will get a return. Whether its tourism or agriculture, the CM has tried to take the state to the highest level. As far as agriculture goes, in 2003, there was just seven lakh hectare irrigated land water, today it is 40 lakh."

## Growing ahead

MP is number one in agriculture in India and in

the world its statistics showcase an excellent 24.99 per cent agriculture growth rate (Central Statistics Organisation (CSO)), and is growing economically. MP has three UNESCO World Heritage Sites, the Khajuraho Group of Monuments, Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi and The Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka. Among its cit-

ies, Bhopal, Gwalior, Indore, Jabalpur and recently Ujjain have been selected to be made into smart cities. An investment of almost ₹3,200 crore was made for Ujjain by the government.

## Honouring hospitality

Enchanting locales along with hospitality is the USP of this vibrant state. "People here are moving ahead with a vision. The people here are known for their hospitality. As per the new tourism policy, whatever investment that you do in MP, you get a subsidy of 15 per cent. In the coming three to four years, we will bring 300 wayside amenities, out of which a tender for 30 wayside amenities has been passed, and 140 participants have already come," says Patwa.

## Offerings beckon

Patwa says the state has a lot to offer, "There is a lot of faith in the government. There is no barrier in investment. We got a lot of support from **Dr. Mahesh Sharma**, Minister of State (IC), Ministry of Tourism & Culture. **Vinod Zutshi**, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, laid confidence in us and held the BRICS Summit in Khajuraho. We are proud of having hosted the event."

"Through the Swadesh Darshan scheme, we have got almost ₹90 crore from the central government, while through the Buddhist Circuit we have got almost ₹75 crore. The tourism budget is almost of ₹220 crore. We are trying to increase tourism in every sector be it adventure, forests, water film or week end tourism," concludes Patwa.

# KTM: The market that Kerala banks on

Bigger and better has been the mantra of Kerala Travel Mart. Held from Sept 28-30, 2016, the ninth edition of the mart witnessed 25,000 meetings between 265 sellers and 1,800 buyers. Attendees of the mart talk about the event.



PEDEN DOMA BHUTIA FROM KOCHI

"KTM is a wonderful experience as one can't see this type of activity anywhere else. Kerala Tourism is doing various activities like KTM, which serves as a model for other states in the country. It's a pleasure that Kerala is the model for tourism and KTM is a pioneer in this field."

**M Vijayakumar**  
Chairman  
Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC)



"This is the ninth edition of the Kerala Travel Mart. This year's speciality is the adoption of the charter, the nine-point agenda, which requires our 600 members to adopt environment sustainability, including community and delighting customers. In a way, Kerala Tourism has been growing from the mid 90s and then the introduction of the KTM has become a force multiplier and KTM has now become India's largest travel marketing event. Using that as a jump start Kerala looks forward towards the next innovation that we will do, and it is people's tourism - for the people, for the land, and for the customer to create an enterprise to back."

**Jose Dominic**  
DDP Game changer, India Hospitality Awards  
Charter President & Chairman - Seminars & Workshop Committee, KTM



**Dr. V. Venu**  
Principal Secretary  
Kerala Tourism

"Kerala Tourism has traditionally been strong in the European markets - the UK, Germany and France, but, of late, the trend that we have seen is that new markets are opening up and we are quite excited about that. West Asia is, in my mind, one of the most important markets that has opened up in recent times and we believe that the West Asian countries and the Gulf countries can offer us much more, we will be concentrating our work on that. The Near East and Australia are important markets that are emerging for us."



**Abraham George**  
President & General  
Convener, KTM

"This is the ninth edition of KTM. We started with a small participation of 92 sellers and now it has gone up to 265, and the number of buyers has gone up from 500 to 1,800. We have seen a growth of almost 300-400 per cent of participation among both buyers and sellers. The uniqueness of KTM is that it is conducted by the members in partnership with the government and it is for the members, so it's conducted by the trade and we showcase all products - small, medium and large."



**Homa Mistry**  
CEO  
Trail Blazer Tours

"We, as a company, have been attending KTM for many years and the reason we attend KTM is that there is always a lot of creativity. There are a lot of excellent homestays that come up and unique things specially related to Ayurveda are happening and we would like to offer those new products to our clients."



**E.M. Najeeb**  
Gallery of Legends, India  
Travel Awards and  
Chairman & Managing  
Director, ATE Group

"Kerala tourism is doing extremely well. We have registered excellent progress and a steady growth rate for Kerala Tourism in spite of the global recession. KTM has been the vehicle for promoting Kerala since the last 15-16 years. The ninth edition of KTM is happening here and in the next three days we will have 25,000 meetings between buyers and sellers."



**Lally Matthews**  
Director  
Vacation Travels and Tours

"I have attended all KTM's and I can see the difference of what it was when it first started in 2000 and what it is now. The event has grown a lot and it has been very professionally managed. I'm confident that the organisers will take it to greater heights with the government and the private stakeholders all working together to make this a great success."

# MOT steps up global footprint

On the sideline of the 51<sup>st</sup> FHRAI Convention, **Vinod Zutshi**, Secretary-Tourism, Government of India, talks about India Global Travel Mart (IGTM) and a slew of measures taken by the MOT post the success of Incredible India Tourism Investors' Summit (IITIS).



KANCHAN NATH FROM INDORE

Talking about IGTM, scheduled for February 1-4, 2017, Zutshi says, "We are planning on having a mega event. We will hold it at Pragati Maidan and it will be a real showcasing of India as a tourism destination. Investors' Summit was to showcase India as the choicest investment destination in tourism at this point of time with the entire enabling environment. However, IGTM will be to showcase India as a tourism destination. Both are the demand and supply aspect. What we did in Investors' Summit was to focus on supply side. Now what we are going to address at IGTM is the demand side."

He adds, "The Ministry will be managing this event, though we will have a few partners. FAITH will be our knowledge partner. CII will be the industry partner. We are going to involve all the stake-

holders, whether it is HAI or WTTC. Any other organisation which is not covered will also be incorporated, of course all the states, we will be setting up a group, comprising people from FAITH, our own India Tourism offices, ministry officials, the travel and trade and CII, that group will screen and see who are the buyers that we could choose. We are going to give support to those buyers. IGTM will also have an outbound element. The difference between the two will be that the inbound will be supported by us. Both in terms of getting them here giving them passage and giving them other facilities. We will invite the SAARC countries and maybe ASEAN countries as well to set up booths and take pavilions."

#### Investment desk

Enumerating planning decisions taken post IITIS,

he says, "We have been so overwhelmed with the response that the Government

take help from us, it will be imparted by the ministry. Investors want to get facilitated

"The Ministry will be managing IGTM, though we will have a few partners. FAITH will be our knowledge partner. CII will be the industry partner. We are going to involve all the stakeholders, whether it is HAI or WTTC."

**Vinod Zutshi**  
Secretary-Tourism  
Government of India



and the Minister and we have decided that it will be an annual event. So the next event of the Investors' Summit would be in September 2017. All these projects that have been put on the website and before the investors, we are going to propagate and handhold them. Between the investors and the state, whatever the state needs to

for which we are creating an investment desk, which will be a permanent body within the tourism ministry."

#### Task Force

Stressing on combined efforts, Zutshi says, "We have also decided that a task force will be constituted, which will have members of the association which are

related to tourism, including CII, FICCI, the trade associations, FHRAI, FAITH, IATO and others. The state governments will be special invitees. Basically to take this investment forward there are many related departments with whom we have to work together. For example, the ministry for road transport, to get certain highways ready, similarly for environmental permissions and for that we need to coordinate."

#### State Investors' Meets

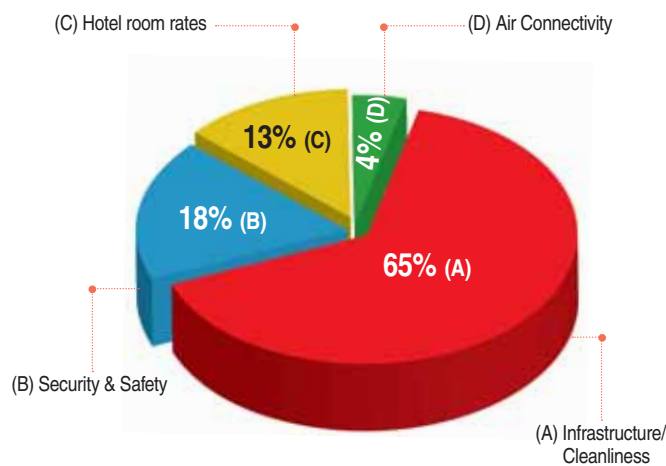
Talking about proactive initiatives to be taken by states for tourism, he says, "We have also decided to ask the state governments to conduct such investors' meets at the state level and it will be in partnership with the Government of India. So now after a common national level meet we will have meets at various states. Some of the states have already requested and these will be tourism specific meets. This is basically to sensitise the states

as well. There are some states that are quite sensitised. There are quite a few who think that only getting an inflow of tourists matters and the investments don't matter. So there are some states that have to be sensitised. So states will be asked to conduct meets at their level. We will ensure that we will try to get investors from outside for these meets."

#### MOT Initiatives

- MOT has instructed state governments to conduct investors' meets at the state level and it will be in partnership with the Government of India
- The ministry has decided to constitute a task force, which will have members of the association which are related to tourism, including CII, FICCI, the trade associations, FHRAI, FAITH, IATO and others. The state governments will be special invitees

# Trade calls for better infrastructure



With e-Tourist Visa being granted to more than 150 countries, the Ministry of Tourism has made its intentions to boost inbound very clear. However, a comprehensive view would be that besides visa problems there are certain other issues that deter or encourage travel to a destination. TRAVTALK reached out to the trade to find out what's the next issue the authorities need to tackle for easy incoming of travellers. From Infrastructure/Cleanliness, Safety & Security, Hotel Room Rates and Connectivity, 65% of our readers chose Infrastructure/Cleanliness. With 18%, Safety & Security was a distant second. 13% chose Hotel Room Rates and 4% voted for Connectivity. Clearly, the industry feels that with the right infrastructure in place, other hurdles can be gradually overcome. Better roads and cleaner monument sites will lead to a surge in inbound numbers.



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## North all set to welcome Maya

The third edition of North India Travel Awards, to be held on October 21 at Hyatt Regency Gurgaon, will acknowledge the achievements of the stalwarts, who have contributed to the growth of the tourism industry.



TT BUREAU

The award statuette, Maya, celebrates the grandeur of tourism and imbibes the best representation of power to change the industry. Sharing details about the event, **Gunjan Sabikhi**, Convener, India Travel Awards, says, "Encouragement is crucial to growth and India Travel Awards is making an effort to grow the industry further. The awards honour the achievers of the industry, those who have gone above and beyond to make a difference. The only awards that recognise the talent at the regional level are now considered a benchmark of excellence for businesses and organisations in the travel industry. We have received nominations from the remotest corner of the



**Gunjan Sabikhi**  
Convener  
India Travel Awards



region, which is very encouraging. These awards are instrumental to improve the relationship of the winners with the suppliers, it helps build credibility and also guide them to break into new markets."

According to **Roger Wright**, GM, Hyatt Regency Gur-



**Roger Wright**  
General Manager  
Hyatt Regency Gurgaon

gaon, the upcoming awards are one of the most coveted awards in the travel industry.

Setting a new benchmark for the hospitality industry, the hotel has made preparations galore for the event. It offers the convention facility space with 40,000 sq. ft. of flexible event space and a pillar-less Regency Ballroom with an area of 20,710

sq. ft and a ceiling height of 28 ft. Wright says, "It is an incredible opportunity to be a part of these awards and a matter of great honour for us. These awards are an inspiration for us to strive towards the growth of our business accordingly.

With India being one of the fastest-growing economies, the tourism and hospitality industry is striving to articulate and deliver the brand promise in the global marketplace. With changing times and push towards an ecological approach, the tourism industry has made its way towards eco-friendly media where the focus has been to build the brand with the maximum number of results by keeping the thought of sustainable approach at a distance."

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# Co-existence of online & offline

The good news is that a majority of the travel trade feels that both – the Online Travel Agents (OTAs) as well as the Offline Travel Agents – besides sharing an acronym, can also share the pie.

## Ladder to development

Tourism has been a steady contributor to the world economy and has also led to the frequent creation of jobs. This is especially true of economies like India where the sector is a major driving force. In 2015, tourism generated 6.3 per cent of India's GDP and supported nearly 37.315 million jobs. India's tourism sector is predicted to grow at an average annual rate of 7.5 per cent by 2025. India is not only the second largest tourism market in Asia after China, the country was also ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in the 20 fastest-growing tourism destinations worldwide by the World Travel and Tourism Council. Hence, special attention needs to be paid when it comes to promoting tourist destinations and products of the country. In a poll conducted by TRAVTALK the industry was asked that while the government has made e-Tourist Visa available to more than 150 countries, what else would help improve inbound tourism for India? The respondents chose infrastructure development and cleanliness as the most important factor while safety and security came a close second.

The writing is on the wall, the policymakers now need to decide how far they want to take this sector.

## Making our skies safe

Talking about employment, one industry that contributes to the growing demand for jobs is the aviation sector. With new routes opening up and various developments happening in this sector, it has opened a plethora of employment avenues. However, with reports of flights crash-landing; mid-air mishaps averted; planes flying low; flights landing in a different location from the original destination — airlines all over the world have been grabbing headlines for all the wrong reasons lately. As air travel is made accessible to all, more and more people are jumping onboard and trusting airlines with life and limb. We need to make our flights more secure and assure the flyers that the air transport industry is fully committed to ensuring that air travel remains safe, secure, and environmentally sustainable whilst meeting the need for connectivity.

There is a general feeling that OTAs have taken away a big chunk of business from the traditional travel agents. As such, in India, it is safe to say that OTAs have not put much of a dent into the profits of the more traditional model of offline travel agents. Both the Offline Travel Agents and Online Travel Agents (OTAs) CAN co-exist in the Indian travel market.

Consolidators or wholesalers are, generally, brokers who buy seats up-front in bulk from the airlines availing of 'volume discounts' and then resell them to travel agents or to the public. Obviously, purchasing from a consolidator or wholesaler (either directly or indirectly) thus results in a lower fare than that offered by the airline.

However, in India, with the Productivity-Linked Bonus scheme obtainable from airlines for such bulk purchases, the Online Travel Agents (OTAs) and consolidators have an additional upper hand over the traditional travel agents in the pricing of tickets.

While purchasing tickets through an OTA or an airline

website, payments would have to be necessarily made in cash or by credit/debit card. Often, on such occasions, the travelling public is quite unaware of the hidden hefty penalties for booking changes and/or cancellations. Added to their woes is the fact that there are no virtual offices anywhere to be contacted or communicated with.

Most travel agents have recognised the value and convenience of booking online as it helps in price comparison

Whereas traditional travel agents have established offices staffed with well-trained employees who assist passengers with all the travel requirements like documentation, bookings, custom formalities, foreign currency, etc. In India, most passengers from the rural areas do not have laptops or credit cards and many of them still use their thumb impression instead of a signature. Besides, the prospect of entering a credit card number into an online booking site is still foreign

and suspicious to the majority of Indian travellers. As a result, today, travel agents have representatives in almost all the interior villages too.

Most travel agents have recognised the value and convenience of booking online as it helps in looking at the prices offered by consolidators and OTAs as also the airline discounted pricing through their own booking engine set-ups. As such the traditional travel agents are able to compare three sets of fares and find the lowest fare for their clients.

However, in the present scenario, the agency commission issue is a big piece of botheration to the traditional travel agents. With the airlines denying them the same, the travel agents have been forced to mark-up the costs to cover their remunerations. This goes against the Supreme Court order that prohibits the collection of any additional charges over and above the ticket fare from the passengers.

Since the Indian Aircraft Rules 1937 and the DGCA and MoCA orders of March 5, 2010, and September 16, 2013, affirm the travel

agents' remuneration as the legal compensation, we expect justice to prevail. Once we have achieved this goal in implementing our National Law effectively through the case in the Hon'ble Kerala High Court, sooner rather than later, the disparity in fares will disappear. Whether it is the consolidator, OTA or offline travel agent, every travel agent will have equality. We sincerely hope that a healthy business environment will soon be established for the co-existence for all stake holders in the Indian travel industry.

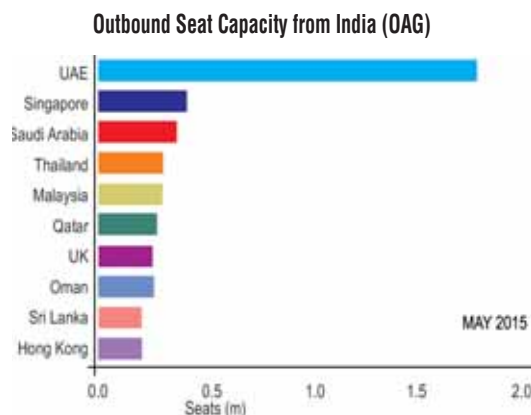
(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same.)



Biji Eapen  
National President, IATA Agents Association of India (IAAI)

# Gauging India's outbound trends

The travel industry is slowly shifting its focus to the fast growing and diverse Indian outbound traveller. We bring you the factors that determine the outbound trends in the Indian travel market.



Most Indians travel out from the major ports with good international air connectivity such as Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad. In its review of the Indian market, OAG8 notes how much of the traffic now flows to and through the UAE with almost half of all seat capacity (47%) out of India flowing to the country.

Tourism authorities in both long haul and short haul destinations observe that Indians tend to have relatively short lead times for overseas trips. Interestingly, there is not a great difference between the two with Singapore Tourism Board noting that the most common lead time is around 30 days – very little different from that observed by Visit Britain, Canadian Tourism Commission or Tourism Australia.

## Planning and Booking Trends



SOURCE: The Connected Visitor Economy- Indian Outbound Travel September 2015, PATA



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# Tamil Nadu sets bait for MICE crowd

**Har Sahay Meena**, Commissioner of Tourism & MD, Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation, says that hosting the IATO Convention has created a positive vibe for the state and apart from spiritual and business, they are also focusing on leisure tourism in the state.



NISHA VERMA

**Q**Chennai recently hosted the IATO Convention. What makes this destination suitable for hosting a big event like this?

Chennai is a lovely city suitable for all kinds of people. We have good properties ranging from heritage to modern as well as budget hotels. There are budget restaurants and speciality restaurants even for sushi and Chinese food. Not only are there good beaches,

tural places, not only for Hindus but Christians and Muslims as well. In fact, Kanyakumari gets a lot of tourists despite not being associated with any religion. All communities and casts from all parts of the world come to see Kanyakumari, and the sunrise and sunset there, as it is the meeting place for all religions.

**Q**How are you trying to promote other activities in the state?

We have adventure tourism, and we have worked on it. We have started hot air balloons here, which has picked up internationally as well. From one part of Kanyakumari, we are doing an international sailing regatta every year. Now we are thinking of introducing

parasailing and paragliding in Yelagiri near Vellore. Manapad is a new destination which we are developing, where a lot of whales camp. It's a backwater area and is good for all kinds of activities like sailing, surfing and all water sports. We have spent a total of ₹6 crore for developing it. We have participated in JATA, KTM and will be going for WTM as well

as ITB. From our side, that should be sufficient for one year, and will give us the required boost.

**Q**What are your expectations for the state this year?

People have understood what Tamil Nadu has to offer and I think that it will play a huge role in increasing num-

bers for us. We get the most domestic tourists from Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat and UP. For inbound, we get the most tourists from Indonesia, Singapore, UK, Canada, US, Germany and Italy as well. We have submitted the draft tourism policy and the Honourable Chief Minister has announced a five year agenda for tourism as well. ↴



**Har Sahay Meena**  
Commissioner of Tourism & MD  
Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation

People have understood what Tamil Nadu has to offer and it will play a role in increasing numbers for us

but there is a lot of heritage around the city like in Mahabalipuram. In fact, Chennai is the only city to have a national park within its boundaries — Guindy National Park, where one can see all kinds of wildlife.

**Q**Why did it take Tamil Nadu so long to host IATO Convention?

When I went to Indore last year for IATO Convention, I invited them to come to Chennai. They approached me in the month of February, but then we had assembly elections. Thus, till May-June, we were not able to take any decision. However, after that it was fixed and happened in September, and I believe that the delegates are very happy. This is the first time that that our department has come close to IATO and have seen what kind of event it is. I believe that it would boost the tourism in Chennai and Tamil Nadu as a whole.

**Q**Would you say Tamil Nadu gets more of business or religious tourists?

Besides Chennai, we have adventure, ecotourism as well as wellness in other parts of the state. There are yoga centres, and other cul-



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# Canada: Delhi's long haul favourite

Destination Canada and Air Canada organised its Experience Canada Workshop in New Delhi, where the team showcased its products and educated travel agents and tour operators about the various offerings of the destination. The attendees praised the educational effort, and revealed how Canada has become a year-round destination today.



“Earlier Canada was a six month destination, but today it has become a year-round destination, especially with the addition of winter sports, adventure sports and other activities. Looking at the attendance at the workshop, we can see how much people are interested in knowing about Canada. The visa process has become simpler and the kind of information that Destination Canada is imparting into India adds to the knowledge that tour operators want to have.”



**Guldeep Singh Sahni**  
President  
OTOAI

“The growth for Canada has been tremendous as people are looking for long-haul destinations from India. The well travelled people are also looking at offbeat destinations, and Canada has a lot to offer. We have provinces like Quebec, Ontario, and the national parks, as well as the Rocky Mountains in Canada. Apart from the natural beauty and picturesque landscapes, the Fairmont Hotels properties have got excellent locations. The destination is good for families and people looking for winter holidays as well.”



**Lokesh Chawla**  
Director  
Xtra Mile Travel and Education Services

“Canada is one of the most upcoming destinations, not only for travellers in metro cities, but also in smaller cities like Tier II and Tier III cities, from where I belong. There is a bigger opportunity as a lot of these cities have flight connections, especially with the Gulf carriers starting operations. With Air Canada bringing in a daily flight from Toronto into Delhi, and three flights from Vancouver, it would really add on the numbers.”



**Harmandeep Singh Anand**  
Face of Innovative Tourism,  
West India Travel Awards,  
2016, and MD, Jagsons Travel



**Sanjiv Nangia**  
Director  
Otilia International

“I think the Indian office of Destination Canada is doing a wonderful job. The gathering at the workshop speaks for itself. The Q&A session made it more interesting. With the taxi and HoHo buses branding for Canada also coming in, their presence is going to be felt in the Delhi market. Ever since I've become a Canadian Specialist, I have had a good number of queries from a lot of customers. We have seen a growth of close to 20 per cent year on year for Destination Canada and it has done wonders for us.”



**Neeraj Kumar**  
VP  
Holidays by Sahibji

“I believe that Canada is an upcoming outbound destination for India. With the support of the airline and Destination Canada, it is only growing. The visa process has become a little more flexible, and now that it will be for 10 years, it's definitely going to increase a lot of outbound tourism from Delhi and other places in India. The event was one of the most fantastic shows I have attended by any tourism board. Thank you Destination Canada for organising such an event.”



**Chitra Bhatia**  
Director  
Aashman Air Travels

“Firstly I must congratulate the Destination Canada team for an amazing event, not only in terms of the attendance it saw, but also for the presentation, and the way it was conducted. I am going back with complete understanding of what Canada is all about. It is beautiful and has so much to offer. Our company has been selling cruises to Alaska, and most of the people who take these cruises stop by at Vancouver, and also see Niagara falls.”



**Ranjana Sharma**  
CEO  
Trav n Tours International

“With my clients, the Canadian Rockies has been very popular. Apart from that, Banff, Calgary and Vancouver are the most sold destinations with my clients. Canada is popular with honeymooners as well. For Indians, Canada is one of the most preferred destinations.”



**Shalini Kriplani**  
Director-Operations  
Click2Travel.in

“Canada has always been a priority for people who tend to go to the US and like to experience newer destinations. It is usually a longer itinerary, but is a destination for mature travellers and families. All the people we have sent to Canada have come back very happy. The India office of Destination Canada has been doing a fabulous job. They are taking efforts for educating us about the destination and keeping us abreast with all the news and activities that are coming up in Canada.”



**Deepika Khanna**  
Founder & CEO  
Anchor Destinations

“The event was very well organised, detailed and exclusive in terms of how Canada can be promoted as a destination. We also saw a good response among the travel agents, who were here to understand the destination and sell it to their customers. We have seen clients who want to travel in every season and Canada has so much to offer or everyone. From Rocky Mountains to Jasper National Park, there is a huge variety on offer. It's a wholesome destination.”

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# Holland eyes 130,000 Indian tourists

Realising India's tourism potential, NBTC Holland Marketing is adopting a targeted approach to increase arrivals from the country. After taxi branding in Indian metros in April, it is now planning a roadshow/workshop for the trade come November, reveals **Carola van Rijn**, Project Manager, NBTC Holland Marketing.

**RUCHI J. SINGH FROM HOLLAND**

**Q Please tell us about the global inbound figures for the year 2015? What was India's contribution to it?**

In the year 2015, 15 million tourists travelled to the Netherlands. Out of these, approximately 101,000 were Indians. There was a substantial growth of visits from In-

With Jet Airways moving its European gateway to Amsterdam, it'll boost the connectivity and the Netherlands will surely gain a lot.

**Q What are your top performing markets in terms of inbound?**

Our top market is Germany with close to 4.3 million visitors, for obvious reasons. No. 2 and 3 would be

er euro, which makes it cheaper to spend the holiday in euro-zone countries. Also, Amsterdam/ Holland has had no security issues and is a safe destination which ensures a steady inflow of tourists.

**Q Would you say the Netherlands receives mostly short-haul travellers rather than long haul, say from Australia or New Zealand?**

Yes, we receive most tourists from our neighbour countries, viz. Germany, the UK and Belgium. At the same time, Australians with families in Europe do visit Holland. Also the ones looking to see the whole of Europe also

do a stopover in the Netherlands. We received 189,000 visitors from the Oceania region in the year 2015 and expect the number to touch 195,000 in 2016, a rise of 3 per cent.

the United Kingdom and Belgium with both nearly 2 million guests travelling to the Netherlands in 2015. We also receive a sizeable chunk of tourists from the US. This is partly due to the recovering economy and the cheap-



dia to the Netherlands. Compared to the year 2014, we received 16 per cent more Indians. For this year we are expecting close to 130,000 Indian visitors, which would be a year on year rise of 30 per cent.

**“For this year we are expecting close to 130,000 Indian visitors, which would be a year on year rise of 30 per cent. With Jet Airways moving its European gateway to Amsterdam, it'll boost the connectivity and the Netherlands will surely gain a lot.”**

**Carola van Rijn**

Project Manager, NBTC Holland Marketing



**Q What are the new markets you are looking to tap into? How are you engaging the trade there?**

As of now, we are looking into the possibilities of India as well as South East Asia (Indonesia and Malaysia). We were active in the Indian market about eight years ago and we are back again. We are represented by Buzz Travel Marketing there and they have all the right contacts and relationship for better marketing of Holland. We did brand radio taxis in New Delhi and Mumbai in April which was a good move. Moving on, NBTC, Jet Airways and Schipol Airport will be

visiting India by the end of November this year for a workshop. The details still need to be ironed out, though.

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# Are hospitality students of quality?

With the mushrooming of hospitality training institutes, many professionals enter the industry every year. However, does this supply fulfil the demands of the industry in terms of quality and attitude? Industry stalwarts opine.

Participants ▶	 <p>◀ <b>Piyush Tiwari</b> Director-Commercial &amp; Marketing, ITDC</p>	 <p>◀ <b>Dipak Haksar</b> Chief Executive, ITC Hotels &amp; WelcomHotels</p>	 <p>◀ <b>Dhananjay S. Saliankar</b> India Travel Award Winner and Regional Director of Sales &amp; Marketing &amp; Starwood Sales Organisation (South Asia), Starwood Hotels &amp; Resorts</p>
<b>Supply and Demand</b>	The Indian hospitality industry is short of skilled manpower. In recent times, the spreading of tourism employment has witnessed a steady growth, and a corresponding expansion in the number of trained and skilled manpower.	We need more institutes for getting more trained and skilled manpower, in order to meet the growth in the hospitality sector. We will need a lot more institutes in the future, especially the way tourism is expected to grow.	While the manpower is available, getting trained, well-groomed individuals is still a challenge. There is a shortage of talent with the right finesse.
<b>Quality</b>	Many institutes, both government, private and state bodies offer short term courses for training and management. Government's <i>Hunar se Rozgar Tak</i> scheme is also an example of improving time and quality of hospitality training scenario in the country.	While some institutes are very good, others are not. We certainly need more institutes of the right standard, which can give the right certification, are recognised by the government and are connected to the hospitality industry.	Institutes are churning out manpower, but the real polished individual, who can come to the level of what is expected in a 5-star property is difficult to find.
<b>Initiatives and solutions</b>	Looking at the future requirement and huge gap in the demand and supply of trained manpower in the hospitality industry, AIHTM is focusing more on job-orientated short term courses. It aims to work towards making a difference to the academic culture for the students by offering a globally competitive curriculum and infrastructure.	While we hire from premier institutes, we also have our own hotel management school in Manipal called WelcomGroup Graduate School of Hotel Administration, which is one of the best in the country. We also have our own training programmes, where we take students, who've passed class 12. We train, educate and provide them the skills and convert them into hoteliers of tomorrow.	Foreign universities can join hands with hospitality training institutes in the country, so that the students not only can learn about the culture and emotions associated with hospitality in India, but also about the kind of service expected by global travellers.  <i>As told to Nisha Verma</i>


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# Anantara celebrates new opening in Mumbai

Anantara Resorts celebrated their Sri Lanka launch and held a cocktail and dinner evening for the travel industry in Mumbai. The event held at The Oberoi Hotel had in presence **Tamir Kobrin**, General Manager, Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort and **Yves - Cem Noack**, Cluster Director of Sales & Marketing Sri Lanka.



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# Kerala hosts Skål National Congress

The Kerala Chapter of Skål International organised this year's National Congress from September 23-24 at Marari Beach Resort, Kerala. The gala dinner was held at the Vasundhara Sarovar Premier, Vayalar. The Congress saw the who's who of the tourism and hospitality industry in attendance. It was not all play as some serious issues were also discussed at the meet.



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# Red carpet for trade @Club Med Kani

Club Med Kani hosted the Indian travel trade at their property in Maldives recently. The resort that offers an all-inclusive package is touted to be a prominent destination for Indian travellers. Serving an array of mouth-watering Indian delicacies, the resort is the perfect choice for high-end travellers.



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# Fee hike to boost online applications

Sulaiman Suip, Director, North & East India Operations, Tourism Malaysia, has revealed that they want to encourage online visa applications, which will be much cheaper than the visa applied offline.



TT BUREAU

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Promotional Chapter for Tourism (APCT) India, launched the Visit ASEAN



Sulaiman Suip  
Director, North & East India operations,  
Tourism Malaysia

which is about 6.2 per cent down as compared to the previous year, which recorded 770,000 Indian arrivals to Malaysia. This year, our number is still down, but we are trying to packet one billion by the end of this year. However, the market has become very competitive nowadays. India is one of the fastest growing markets for outbound tourists and has a lot of potential."

However, with the recent hike in Malaysian visa fees, things might just turn sour, as the trade is not too happy with it. Addressing the issue, he said, "The visa fee has a component called the One Stop Centre (OSC), for which applicant will have to pay if they apply directly to the counter. This component will be experiencing the increment in terms of fee charges. However, we also have the

e-visa, which travellers can apply online, and the fee remains the same. Thus, we are encouraging people to apply for e-visa online, which they can do individually, and will only cost around `2,700, depending on the exchange rate."

But will this move cut off the travel agent? Suip says, "The travel agents can help the travellers in applying on-

line through email. One email can make five applications. Thus, if one agent has 20-30 people in a group, he can use multiple email addresses to register. Once that is approved, they can e-apply using the same email. Thus, it's the same thing and the only difference would be that the OCS will be using a sticker." He also revealed that they are trying to focus on Malaysia as a family destination in India.

## Number Talk

Malaysia received around 722,000 Indians, which is about 6.2 per cent down as compared to the previous year, which recorded 770,000 Indian arrivals.

The online e-visa for Malaysia costs around `2,700, depending on the exchange rate

Malaysia has been the Chairman for APCT in India, and this is our second event after Mumbai last year. We are now handing over the Chairmanship to Singapore, for the next two years

@50 Campaign in New Delhi recently. Speaking at the event, Sulaiman Suip, said, "Malaysia has been the Chairman for APCT in India for the past two years, and this is our second event after the one we did in Mumbai last year. Tonight is also the night when we are handing over the Chairmanship to Singapore, which will lead the association for the next two years."

Talking about Indian arrivals in Malaysia, he said, "Last year, we received around 722,000 Indians,

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# Insights into South America

LATAM Airlines Group organised the South America Specialist workshop in New Delhi recently, where they educated the trade about new destinations.

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**Marcio Ma**, Account Manager South Asia, LATAM Airlines Group, informed travel trade partners about the new products and destinations. Speaking on the workshop, Marcio said, "Every year we bring different destinations with the South America specialist programme. This year we have got Columbia, Ecuador and even Argentina. The idea is to offer travel agents a deep knowledge of these countries. LATAM has the largest network in South America, and we wanted to give examples on how to find itineraries for Asians. We also have the Airpass, which is a more tailored customised way to travel in South America."



Marcio Ma  
Account Manager South Asia  
LATAM Airlines Group

For promotion, we have voucher campaigns that we are giving to agents, which are selling more of LATAM

He claimed that they had a great response from the workshop. "We always receive some suggestions on how we can improve, and how can we attend the demand in India. However, in terms of revenue and marketing it's been very good for us." He also added

that India particularly is a good market for LATAM. "India is a fast growing market and is performing better year on year. It is a very important market for us and that's why we have our representatives in India to provide the best

choice and very competitive fare to the market," he said.

LATAM is an offline market for India as it does not have any direct connections to India, but they work very closely with the travel industry, offering a great network within South America. "We have a sales GSA in India with representatives in both Delhi and Mumbai, to work closely with the travel agents to understand their demand and try to offer the best to them. For promotion, we have voucher campaigns that we are giving to agents, which are selling more of LATAM," said Marcio.

LATAM has also launched their new logo, which is in the shape of South America. "The new logo is used to represent the new brand and the company," he added. Marcio revealed that in terms of connections, they are also expanding. "We are launching a new connection to Johannesburg, which travellers can use to go to South America," he said.

# Russia keen on India traffic

Russia Tourism has signed a multilateral agreement on co-operation to promote Indo-Russian tourism in St. Petersburg. This is expected to ease visa procedure.

TT BUREAU

Russia Tourism has signed a five-party agreement to promote the destination for tourism more aggressively in India. The document was signed on September 30, 2016 in St. Petersburg between: Northwest Regional Office of the Russian Union of the Tourist Industry (RUTI); co-founders of Russian Information Center (RIC) in India - Ekaterina Beliakova and Paresh Navani; Adviser on development projects coordinator 'Visit Russia' (Federal State Unitary Enterprise National Centre for Marketing Tourism Rostourism); Director-General of the Union of national and international tourist information organizations (SONATO); and St. Petersburg State University of Economics.



Paresh Navani  
Co-Principle  
RIC

RUTI will help RIC in organising the ground services when we roll out the India-friendly policy later this year

work of the India-friendly policies, which is in the process." The India-friendly policy will involve the tourism and hospitality industry in Russia.

The agreement will enable the parties to effectively coordinate activities to promote Russia as a popular destination of outbound tourism in the Indian market, jointly conduct marketing activities of any size for tourism professionals from India to Russia, and participate in trade fairs and roadshows in India. He adds, "We are discussing holding several congresses in various regions of Russia with different travel trade associations in India, as well as variants of cooperation with Bollywood, Tollywood and television the potential of which is huge.

"This multi-party agreement has been done with the aim of consolidating our resources, to create better synergy, and safeguard the interests of all stakeholders involved. Such concentrated efforts will ensure that we get better and faster results."

The agreement focuses on increasing outbound tourist traffic from India to Russia and creation of comfortable conditions of stay in the country of Indian tourists. Navani, Co-Principle, RIC, explains, "RUTI will help RIC in organising the

ground services when we roll out the India-friendly policy later this year. The university on the other hand will offer the training and certification to all service providers in Russia once RIC draws up the frame-





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## APCT-India celebrates VISIT-ASEAN @ 50



The ASEAN Promotional Chapter for Tourism (APCT) – India organised an evening of drinks and dinner to launch the VISIT ASEAN @ 50 celebrations that endorses ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) as a single and collective tourism destination to the Indian audience. Visit ASEAN @ 50 campaign hopes to attract more than 121 million tourist arrivals to the region and increase tourism receipts to \$83 billion.

## Thailand eyes 10% growth this year

Thailand is looking at increasing the wedding market. **Isra Stapanaseth**, Director, TAT, New Delhi, says that India is a potential market and he expects 10% growth this year.

**SAMPTI DAS**

To promote all women holidays in Thailand especially focusing on health and wellness, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) re-

cently organised an event for only ladies called 'Discover Thainess Ladies Lunch'.

It showcased Thai techniques of fruit carving, live Som Tum (Raw Papaya salad) making and traditional Thai desert making. Women from the industry flocked in for a special session of Thai massage by professionals.

Stapanaseth said, "We have brought some Thai experiences and we want to demonstrate the fruit and vegetable carvings and massages. We would like to create awareness about the spas and hotels in Thailand and our unique experiences amongst the travel agents. We would like to



**Isra Stapanaseth**  
Director  
TAT, New Delhi

We would like to create awareness about the spas and hotels in Thailand and our unique experiences amongst the travel agents. We would like to promote destinations like Phuket and Pattaya

promote destinations besides Bangkok like Phuket and Pattaya. We are also trying to promote only women tours to Thailand."

Thailand has been receiving over one million Indians for the past two years. Stapanaseth says that they expect to grow the arrivals by 10 per cent. He says, "The wedding market has grown immensely from India and we look at good growth in that segment too. Golf tourism is also the next market that we are tapping."

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**PATA upgrades website with universal accessibility**

■ On the occasion of World Tourism Day 2016, the Pacific Asia Travel Association relaunched [www.PATA.org](http://www.PATA.org) designed with greater ease for those with hearing impairments, colour blindness and physical disabilities. "As we recognise and celebrate the vital contribution that travel and tourism contributes to the world, both socially and economically, we understand that both the public and private sector must share the responsibility in affording all people the opportunities of experiencing the incredible beauty and diversity of our world, regardless of race, colour, religion, gender, age and disability," says PATA CEO **Dr. Mario Hardy**.

"We have taken the first steps in making sure all people may access the valuable information and insights available on our website and we hope to be an example for other organisations to follow." Using WWW Consortium guidelines, the redesigned website provides greater ease for those with hearing impairments, colour blindness and physical disabilities. "We hope to bring greater knowledge of this issue and we will continue to look for avenues to incorporate them within our advocacy messages and activities," he adds.



According to **Mohit Batra**, India Representative, Scandinavian Tourist Board, the Indian market is one of the fastest growing markets globally and it is only a matter of time when Indians overtake Japanese and Koreans visiting the Scandinavian countries making it one of the most important Asian source markets for Scandinavia. "This year we have a delegation of 25 partners as compared to 15 partners last year including National Tourist Boards, Regional Tourist Boards, delegates from attractions, cruise and voyage companies and DMCs. We saw 30 per cent growth in certain markets last year which is the year on year for the last seven years and I feel that on a conservative note, we should be able to see 10-15 per cent growth from the Indian market," says Batra.

The average duration of stay of the Indian fixed-

departure groups and leisure travellers in Scandinavia is 10 days while FIT travellers could be staying longer,



**Mohit Batra**  
India Representative  
Scandinavian Tourist Board

added Batra. **Flemming Bruhn**, Director, VisitDenmark, points out that India is the second largest Asian source market only after Japan which is likely to change soon. "We have seen 11 per cent growth in Indian bed-nights till now in 2016 as compared to last year and are hoping to receive 80,000 Indian bed-nights by the end

of 2016," says Bruhn. India is one of our most prioritised growth markets along with China for Sweden too



**Flemming Bruhn**  
Director  
VisitDenmark

points **Lotta Thiringer**, Regional Director-Growth and Development Markets, VisitSweden. "We have seen a steady growth over a few years and in some of our cities like Stockholm, the Indian visitors have surpassed the Chinese visits," says Thiringer. She also explains that travel agents are very crucial to the India market as for a

long-haul destination, being fairly unknown, the travellers certainly need a travel agent to put the itinerary together to make sure optimal experience and uniqueness of the destination is highlighted. Sweden is hoping for a 15 per cent growth from the India market, she added.



**Lotta Thiringer**  
Regional Director-Growth and Development Markets, VisitSweden

Norway saw 20,000 Indian visits in 2016 and the number is increasing quickly informed **Per Holte**, Market Director Tourism-Asia and New Developing Markets,

Innovation Norway. Scandinavian countries are offering a variety of tourism products for all segments of Indian travellers. Batra also informed that in due course of time the marketing budget for the India market is expected to increase as market activation pro-



**Per Holte**  
Market Director Tourism-Asia and New Developing Markets, Innovation Norway

grammes are in line and the tourism board has undertaken a social media initiative — Explore Scandinavia — to connect with travellers directly.

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## The Imperial New Delhi embraces Pink Power



The Imperial New Delhi joined hands with Roko Cancer Charitable Trust to organise a fashion show where ace designer Anupamaa Dayal showcased an exclusive pink collection, titled 'Gulabi', as women women achievers, cancer survivors & oncologists walked the ramp to create awareness about Breast Cancer and raise funds.

## Focus on 'The Ultimate Island'

Reunion Island Tourism Board launched its new visual identity in India, branding it 'The Ultimate Island'.



**William Techer**, Head of Marketing & Promotion India & Indian Ocean, and **Vineet Gopal**, Director India, Reunion Island Tourism Board (RITB), hosted an evening of high-tea for top tour operators (key partners) & media to showcase its new branding. "We wanted to talk about The Ultimate Island, our new visual iden-



**William Techer**  
Head of Marketing & Promotion  
India & Indian Ocean, RITB



**Vineet Gopal**  
Director India  
Reunion Island Tourism Board

tity and tell them that there is another island in the Indian Ocean, which they can reach and have a good time," said Techer.

Gopal added, "The new branding is to showcase what Reunion Island represents — nature, culture, gastronomy, wellness and activities. These are the five elements representing the destination." Techer elaborated, "We have a lot of things to do in Reunion Island. Our new communication has 40 pictograms, which represent every activity and experience that one can discover in Reunion Island."

India market is very important for Reunion Island. Gopal revealed, "India is the second market where the new branding has been launched after Paris. In 2015, a total of 1050 Indians visited Reunion Island. However, in 2016, the figures have touched the 750 mark only in six months, which is 66 per cent more as compared to last year."

The island is laying a special focus on B2B engagement. "We need the visibility in India, and we want our B2B colleagues to know that a new destination exists, which everyone needs to know and has to discover.

"We have many activities, wellness and a very beautiful life. The highlight of Reunion Island is living together. We have Christians, Indians and Muslims living together and we want people to experience that," Techer concluded.

### Footfall Meter

- Reunion Island's new communication has 40 pictograms, which represent every activity and experience that one can discover in Reunion Island
- Indian arrivals in 2016 have touched the 750 mark only in six months, which is 66% more as compared to last year



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# 11<sup>th</sup> Annual UNIGLOBE Travel Regional

300 UNIGLOBE Travel Professionals from across South Asia gather in Hyderabad for a weekend of valuable insights on the changing industry climate, networking and celebration of individual and collective achievements.



The recently concluded 11th Annual UNIGLOBE Travel Regional Conference and Excellence Awards, was hosted at the world's largest integrated film city, Ramoji Film City in Hyderabad. Themed 'Master the Change', the conference attracted over 300 UNIGLOBE Travel Professionals from South Asia. With insightful edu-

each other and with key suppliers of the South Asian region," says **Raja Natesan**, CEO, UNIGLOBE Travel (South Asia).

"Our theme for this year, 'Master the Change', was chosen to inspire UNIGLOBE Travel professionals to evolve with the changing industry climate and to continue connecting business to new opportunities by adding value

tivational dialogue with one of the most celebrated cinema personalities, Jaaved Jaferi, during the keynote session, 'Live Wire'. The high octane session was followed by an array of other educational, team building and experiential sessions. These included 'Dialogue in the Dark', a one of its kind and internationally acclaimed workshop, that provided a platform for



"UNIGLOBE Travel (South Asia) organises the conference every year to support inter-agency networking, professional development and to strengthen relationships with each other and with key suppliers of the South Asian region."

**Raja Natesan**  
CEO  
UNIGLOBE Travel (South Asia)

own Mahabharat, for turning industry changes into stepping stones for success in the travel business.

"The UNIGLOBE Regional Conference has emerged as one of the most

ing leisure, technology, insurance, banks, hotels, airlines and destination management companies came together for The Supplier Showcase, that served as a platform for participants to establish, renew and build

agencies from across the South Asia region.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Excellence Awards felicitated the top individual performers for continually pushing the benchmark of excellence

"Our theme for this year, 'Master the Change', was chosen to inspire UNIGLOBE Travel professionals to evolve with the changing industry climate and to continue connecting business to new opportunities by adding value to client relationships through transparency, new-age payment tools and better use of travel content to tailor options and experiences for travellers."

**Ritika Modi**  
Regional President, UNIGLOBE Travel (South Asia)



cational sessions and entertainment packed evenings, the two-day conference turned out to be a great success.

"UNIGLOBE Travel (South Asia), organizes the conference every year to support inter-agency networking, professional development and to strengthen relationships with

to client relationships through transparency, new-age payment tools and better use of travel content to tailor options and experiences for travelers," says **Ritika Modi**, Regional President, UNIGLOBE Travel (South Asia).

The highlight of this year's conference was a

real and meaningful human encounters and interactions.

Another highlight of the conference was an interactive and thought provoking session by Raja Natesan, CEO, UNIGLOBE Travel (South Asia), that shed light on connecting big data, augmented reality, and our very

"The UNIGLOBE Regional Conference has emerged as one of the most sought out events for members of the UNIGLOBE family and we are proud to be a part of it. Like every year, this year's conference has lived up to its promise of offering new perspectives and great insights that will undoubtedly make us better travel professionals."

**Sunil Narain**  
President, UNIGLOBE Franchise Owners Association



sought out events for members of the UNIGLOBE family and we are proud to be a part of it. Like every year, this year's conference has lived up to its promise of offering new perspectives and great insights that will undoubtedly make us better travel professionals," says **Sunil Narain**, President, UNIGLOBE Franchise Owners Association.

Over 20 suppliers from different categories includ-

successful partnerships with their preferred suppliers and gain a better understanding of their offerings.

Top performing agencies were rewarded for achieving the organization's highest standards of growth through professionalism and customer satisfaction at the conference. Awards for top-level sales and revenue growth achievements were given to the owners of UNIGLOBE member

higher across 11 award categories. The awards included recognition for Counsellors, Managers, Sales, Accounts, Leisure and Facilitation personnel at various levels of performance assessment.

Days 1 and 2 of the conference concluded with dinners based on the themes, Wild West and Bollywood, respectively, providing the much welcome fun element to the conference.



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Participants Indulging in Games & Adventure at SAHAS, Ramoji Film City



Interactive Session with celebrated cinema personality, Jaaved Jaffer



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Silver Award for Excellence in Manager Accounts Category



Silver Award for Excellence in Manager Admin, HR Category



Silver Award for Excellence in Manager Leisure Category



Silver Award for Excellence in Travel Accounts Category



Silver Award for Excellence in Travel Counselor Category



Silver Award for Excellence in Travel Facilitation Category



Silver Award for Excellence in Travel Leisure Category



Silver Award for Excellence in Travel Manager Category



Silver Award for Excellence in Travel Sales Category



Bronze Award for Excellence in Domestic Travel Counselor Category



Bronze Award for Excellence in International Travel Counselor Category



Bronze Award for Excellence in Manager Accounts Category



Bronze Award for Excellence in Manager Admin, HR Category



Bronze Award for Excellence in Manager Leisure Category



Bronze Award for Excellence in Travel Accounts Category



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Bronze Award for Excellence in Travel Facilitation Category



Bronze Award for Excellence in Travel Leisure Category



Bronze Award for Excellence in Travel Manager Category



Bronze Award for Excellence in Travel Sales Category



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UNIGLOBE Bharath International Awarded for Highest Sales Growth



UNIGLOBE Flight Travel House Awarded for Highest Sales Growth



UNIGLOBE MKOV Travel Awarded for Top Sales Volume & Top Revenue Volume



UNIGLOBE Shergill Travel Awarded for Highest Sales Growth



UNIGLOBE Sri Sai Travel Awarded for Top Sales Volume, Top Revenue Volume & Highest Revenue Growth



UNIGLOBE Thomas Travel Awarded for Highest Revenue Growth



UNIGLOBE Bharath International Awarded by Tata AIG for Super Performance



UNIGLOBE Le Travelworld Awarded by Tata AIG for Super Performance



UNIGLOBE Mod Travel Awarded by Tata AIG for Super Performance



UNIGLOBE Sri Sai Travel Awarded by Tata AIG for Super Performance



UNIGLOBE Utopia Travel Awarded by Tata AIG for Super Performance

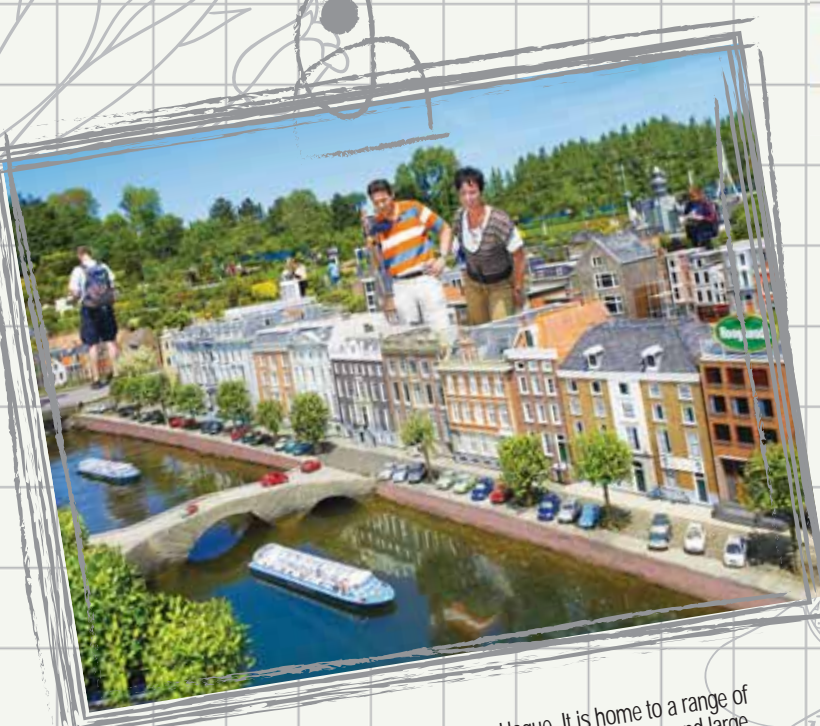


UNIGLOBE ATB Awarded by Tata AIG for Super Performance



# A TASTE OF HOLLAND

If a word association game were to be played about Holland, tulips, cheese and clogs would be the first ones to jump out. However, Holland offers much more than that. Here we showcase five different yet exciting facets of the country.



## ROYAL DELFT EXPERIENCE

In the early 1600s, the Dutch became acquainted with porcelain from China. Owing to its popularity local potters imitated the porcelain and created Delftware. The Royal Dutch Delftware Manufactory 'De Porceleyne Fles,' established in 1653, is the last remaining Delftware factory from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Visit the Royal Delft to understand the history of Blue Delft and Royal Delft and its development and production process. The highlight of the tour is you can see a Master painter at work.



## MADURODAM

This miniature park and tourist attraction is in The Hague. It is home to a range of 1:25 scale model replicas of famous Dutch landmarks, historical cities and large developments. The park was opened in 1952 and received 52,000 Indian visitors in the year 2015. Madurodam shows all Holland highlights on one location and it's a pure, scenic beauty in one theme park, unparalleled in whole of Europe.



## THE HAGUE CITY TOUR

Hire a local guide and explore this magnificent political centre on foot, at least some of it. See the Binnenhof, the oldest House of Parliament in the world. Walking by the city, you can spot the very humble Royal Palace and then there is Peace Palace, home of the International Courts of Justice, The Hague's most famous attraction. Like every Dutch town, museums abound in The Hague too. Escher and Gemeente Museums are some of the not-to-miss attractions.



## THE HEINKEN EXPERIENCE

The Dutch lager beer Heineken's first built brewery in Amsterdam has been transformed into an interactive tour through the world of Heineken. On offer are VIP cheese and beer tasting and a 4D experience that takes you through every step of beer making. It's open Monday to Thursday from 1030 till 1930 hours (last entry & ticket sales at 1730 hours) and Friday to Sunday from 1030 till 2100 hours (last entry & ticket sales at 1900 hours). This is a must-do for all beer lovers!



## ZAANSE SCHANS

This quaint settlement is a sneak peek into the Dutch rural life with the windmills and houses standing tall from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Stroll past the bakery museum and enjoy the smell of fresh bread, or take a look at the warehouse where clogs are made. Don't forget to make a pit stop at De Kraai for their delicious pancakes - both savory and sweet.



## Humble Hotels on expansion spree

Following the success of the chain's first property in Amritsar, it is looking to launch more properties in Ludhiana, Jaipur, Agra and Kasauli.

TT BUREAU

Humble Hotels Amritsar, the first property in the chain's repertoire was launched four years ago and has been running successfully ever since. Located in close proximity to the Golden Temple, the beautiful hotel is ideal for a business or weekend of relaxation, says **Vinay Chaturvedi**, the general manager.

Housing 42 well-appointed guestrooms including two smart suites, the rooms are fully equipped with modern state-of-the-art amenities. Additionally, the conference hall covers an area of 5,600 sq. ft. and makes for the ideal space for corporate events etc. "We felt that Amritsar required a modern smart hotel, so we set out to create a unique



**Vinay Chaturvedi**  
General Manager  
Humble Hotels Amritsar

space that was both contemporary and chic. Our aim is to ensure that our guests are offered the highest calibre of luxury and service possible," explains Chaturvedi.

Owing to the success of the Amritsar property, the group has now expanded with upcoming properties to be launched shortly in Ludhiana, Jaipur and Agra. Chaturvedi elaborates, "Apart from these, we will also be launching a boutique resort in Kasauli called Kasauli Blossom by Humble Hotels very soon. Our aim is to ensure that our guests are offered the highest calibre of luxury and service possible."

Chaturvedi attributes the success to the team's constant endeavour in providing excellent service and keeping tangibles impressive and impactful, which directly or indirectly influence guests' perception of value. He further elaborates, "It is also important to give emphasis on the intangibles which hold the key in delighting our customers. Hence, over and above standard operating procedures

(SOPs), a lot of emphasis is given to need based training and soft skills training. Our banqueting team constantly strives to focus on the right segments of corporate, social and entertainment clients and make all efforts to deliver value to them."

## GPS plans to go paperless

The 2017 edition of the Global Panorama Showcase will strive to be completely paperless with no brochures or literature inside the exhibition.

HAZEL JAIN

Breaking away from the norm that usually leaves a tome of paper wastage during and after every travel exhibition, the Global Panorama Showcase (GPS) will strive to go green this year. The fifth edition of the six-city B2B travel event that will start with Nagpur from January 19-21, 2017, will have a huge emphasis on going paperless.

**Harmandeep Singh Anand**, Co-founder, GPS and Managing Director, Jagsons Travels, said, "The biggest change we are looking at this year is to go paperless. We request our exhibitors to not carry any brochures or literature. We will give them access to our mobile app through which they can showcase their products. They can also use smartphones and tabs for this. We may do away with visiting cards as well and use



**Harmandeep Singh Anand**  
Co-founder, GPS and Managing Director,  
Jagsons Travels

e-cards instead for all exhibitors and buyers. We have

tied up with a technology partner for this."

Speaking about the format, he adds, "We are geared up for the next five years for GPS. We are looking at only six events every year that will start with Nagpur and will be set days: Thursday, Friday, Saturday. The schedule will remain the same with presentations on the first day followed by two days of trade meetings. Education will be the crux of this event."

### Destination Weddings

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C&K does its bit to encourage young artists



In an effort to promote positive social values through art and encourage young artists, Cox & Kings, in association with David Hall Art Gallery, presented an art exhibition in Mumbai titled 'Imprints: Mapping memories' by artist Reshma Thomas in the presence of Rika Jean-Francois, CSR Commissioner ITB Berlin and Sandeep Dayal, Head-Sales, BD, Special Projects, Inbound Travel, Cox & King and Jose Dominic, CEO, CGH Earth.

# IHCTM to help upgrade business skills of agents

Offered only to travel professionals, the new program at the Institute of Hotel, Cargo & Tourism Management aims to encourage them to upgrade their business skills.

**HAZEL JAIN**

The Institute of Hotel, Cargo & Tourism Management (IHCTM), a training division of Namaste Tourism, has announced a special trade discount for

those who wish to attend its 'Managing the Travel Business' program. The diploma will be awarded by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Montreal, Canada. **Subhash Motwani**, Director, IHCTM, says, "The

travel industry is changing every day and the Management – level 3 IATA program can equip a tourism professional with the latest global trends of travel and tourism industry. The course will include topics such as Managerial Skills, Negotiation Skills, Special Interest Tours, MICE, Technology in Travel Industry, Financial Management & Accounting, BSP Agent, Billing Reports & Remittance and Marketing."

The total fees for the course including the training, examination and registration for IATA along with applicable service tax is ₹71,300. However, the institute is offering



**Subhash Motwani**  
Director  
IHCTM

The travel industry is changing every day and the Management – level 3 IATA program can better equip a tourism professional

members of the trade a 20 per cent discount on early enrolment before 26 November, 2016. This will take the total course fee to ₹46,900. This offer is exclusively for the travel trade. Classes will be held in Mumbai at Colaba and Mahim centres starting from December 5, 2016, onwards, once/twice weekly from 90 minutes to two hours per session. Passing percentage is 60 per cent and distinction is 85 per cent with a maximum of two attempts in 18 months from the time of enrolment.

Those who pass this course successfully will be entitled to use the title 'Dip. TT (Mgt.)' alongside their names. Enrolment is on first-come-first served basis. Each batch is limited to a maximum of 15 participants.

# Nominate Now for India Travel Awards 2017



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# 25,000+ meetings at 9<sup>th</sup> KTM

The ninth edition of Kerala Travel Mart, held at the Samudrika and Sagara Convention Centre, witnessed 25,000 meetings between 265 sellers and 1800 buyers. The event was inaugurated in the presence of Kerala Chief Minister **Pinarayi Vijayan**; **Suman Billa**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; **Dr. V. Venu**, Principal Secretary, Kerala Tourism; **Abraham George**, President, KTM Society, among other dignitaries at Le Meridien, Kochi.





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# Keep tourism in lowest slab under GST

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) bill is surrounded by many doubts and uncertainties. The stakeholders of the industry have appealed to the government to consider the lowest slabs for this sector under GST in order to boost foreign exchange into the country through tourism.

 ANKITA SAXENA

► **Anuj Bang, Director-Product Development, roomsXML — Entrepreneur of the Year**

## Learn from thy neighbours

**Anuj Bang**, Director-Product Development, roomsXML.com, explains that GST should not be applicable on outbound tourism as travel agents pay taxes to the government for services that are consumed abroad. Bang says, "There is no clarification on abatements for the hospitality industry under GST and if the government has determined 14-16 per cent tax on this segment as we have heard, then it will have an adverse effect on outbound travel. The packages offered in this segment will reflect a hike due to high taxes which will result in more travellers shifting to direct bookings with hotels abroad, bypassing the travel agents thus reducing business. This also makes the travel industry less competitive as compared to its neighbouring destinations." Bang further points out countries like Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Canada have also implemented GST but only on domestic travel which allows their outbound industry to thrive. "We need to be put in the lowest percentage slab if GST is implemented in order to have a level-playing field with the competing destinations," adds Bang.



► **Just Holidays — Best Tour Operator-Outbound**

## Urgent association action needed

"There are so many doubts clouding GST that it has become very difficult to figure out the position of a travel agent in the current scenario. With new schemes on credit cards where services are being rendered without taxes, online travel agencies functioning below purchase cost, travel agents are up for tough times ahead," says **Sanjay Kumar Kothari**, Director and Chief Executive Officer, Just Holidays. Kothari points out that the increase in taxes from 3.5 per cent to 4.5 per cent has already proven to be a burden and that too for services that are consumed outside India. "If the GST slab for tourism and hospitality is high, the revenues will be severely affected. I feel there are more associations than travel agents and not many are taking this issue aggressively with the government. There is no dialogue from the outbound travel industry to address this issue with the authorities which is a disappointment," adds Kothari. Just Holidays has opened its new offices in Guwahati and Bhubaneswar and will soon open its Mumbai office to cater to the increasing demand for outbound travel.



► **East Wind Holiday Tours — Best Travel Management Company-Inbound**

## Travel not a priority

**Samrat Sanyal**, Director, East Wind Holiday Tours, says, "Travel is not the staple requirement of a middle-class traveller but is more of an added benefit even though the purchasing power and disposable incomes have increased. If GST is implemented at higher percentages for this sector, all segment packages will see a hike and most probably travel will drop in the list of priorities amongst the traveller, affecting the overall business." The company is positioning itself as a major player in promoting Buddhist Circuit and adventure tourism in the eastern region.



► **Jet Setters — Best Luxury Tour Operator-Outbound; Best Destination Management Company; Best Event Management Operator**

## Separate tax for inbound, outbound

**Tarakeshwar Singh**, Director, Jet Setters, feels that tourism has to be made a priority segment by the government as it is the one sector that is capable of generating high revenues and employment simultaneously. Expressing concern on the uncertainty of GST, Singh says, "I feel that there should be a different percentage of tax for inbound and outbound tourism but if the taxes are implemented uniformly then the tax per cent should be in the lowest slabs; not higher than 5 per cent. If the slab is high, in all probability the strain on the pocket of the consumer will also lead to loss of business to the F&B and hotel segment. Singh also adds that the Ministry of Civil Aviation should work very closely with the Ministry of Tourism in order to facilitate connectivity issues at the earliest. Pointing out a trend in luxury travel among Indians, Singh says, "We share 90 per cent of the luxury tourism business in the East and have seen that travellers from this region and South India actively pursue luxury travel and have high spending capacities."



► **Voyage Hospitality — Pioneering a New Concept in Hospitality**

## Professionalism in hospitality-need of the hour

According to **Rahul Khandelwal**, Management Partner, Voyage Hospitality, GST bill is a welcome move as it will eradicate the multiple taxes and centralise the procedure. "At this point we are mind-boggled with the number of taxes that need to be paid and is very cumbersome. However with the implementation of GST, the concern lies in the percentage that will be levied on tourism and hospitality industry," says Khandelwal. He feels the lack of trained professionals is a major concern of the hospitality industry. Khandelwal points out that out of the large number of professionals graduating from hospitality institutes, quality students are hard to find. "The young professionals lack practical knowledge and their understanding of the industry is very theoretical. There is a need for training programmes for these professionals that should be done by the institutes before they enter the industry." Voyage Hospitality is soon going to open properties in Gangtok, Darjeeling, Kathmandu, Pelling and Bhutan. Khandelwal explains that Bhutan caters to the high quality of tourists who have the spending capacity of approximately `4000-`5000 per person per day.



► **Choice Holidays India — Best Travel Management Company**

## Shift from domestic to outbound

"I feel that GST should be introduced with lower percentages for domestic tourism and should be kept stable for the outbound segment in order to boost domestic tourism i.e. 4.5 per cent for outbound travel and 2.5 per cent for domestic travel. The percentage growth of domestic tourism which has been nearly 15 per cent till now, will reduce with high percentage slab of GST," says **Ritesh Mundhra**, Chief Executive Officer, Choice Holidays India. He further points out that since international travel is available at minimal extra cost compared to domestic travel, Indian travellers are increasingly travelling abroad and if packages on domestic travel increase, there will be a traffic shift from domestic to outbound.







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# Canada catches trade's fancy in Delhi

'Destination Canada' came down to New Delhi to promote the country as a premier tourist hot spot. It's 'Experience Canada Workshop,' which had representatives from Air Canada and High Commission of Canada, gave the trade players a run-through on the premier offerings from the country.





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## OCTOBER 2016

Connections Luxury	Brazil	16-19
Tourism office of Spain workshop	Kolkata	17
World Tourism Conference	Penang, Malaysia	17-19
Amazing Thailand Luxury roadshow	New Delhi	19
ITB Asia	Singapore	19-21
UNWTO / PATA Guilin Forum	Guilin, China	19-21
India Hospitality Awards –North & East	New Delhi	20
India Travel Awards – North	New Delhi	21
Amazing Thailand Luxury roadshow	Kolkata	21
Business & Luxury Travel Mart	Gurugram	24-25
APEX Expo 2016	Singapore	24-27
Skal International World Congress	Monaco	Oct 29- Nov 2

## NOVEMBER 2016

Rann Utsav	Bhuj	1
5th Global Summit on City Tourism	Luxor, Egypt	1-2
Luxury Travel Fair	London	3-5
Taipei International Travel Fair	Taipei City	4-6
WTM	London	7-9
CITM	Shanghai	11-13
Phocuswright Conference	Los Angeles	14-17
Asia Corporate Travel Innovation Summit	Singapore	15
Switzerland Tourism trade show	Mumbai	16
Switzerland Tourism trade show	Bengaluru	18
Best of Australia workshop	Ludhiana	18
Best of Australia workshop	Lucknow	20
Switzerland Tourism trade show	Hyderabad	21
Switzerland Tourism trade show	Kolkata	22
Switzerland Tourism trade show	New Delhi	23
PATA New Tourism Frontiers	Cox's Bazaar,	23-25
Forum 2016	Bangladesh	
India International Travel Mart (IITM)	Pune	25-27
Germany Tourism roadshow	Mumbai	28
Germany Tourism roadshow	Chennai	29
Germany Tourism roadshow	Kolkata	30

## DECEMBER 2016

Chengdu International Tourism Expo (CITE)	Chengdu, China	2-4
India International Travel Mart (IITM)	Hyderabad	2-4
ITLM	Cannes	5-8
Brussels Travel Expo	Brussels	7-8
Travel Business Show	Delhi NCR	17-18

For more information, contact us at: [talk@ddppl.com](mailto:talk@ddppl.com)

## After VFS meet, TAAI registers a win

Sampat Damani, Chairman (Western India Chapter), Travel Agents Association of India, considers the meeting with VFS as one of the big achievements this year, with many more initiatives in the offing.



HAZEL JAIN

### Q What was the aim of having a meeting with VFS?

The Western Chapter team has been making efforts to streamline the visa process since the last one year. In fact, we had been trying to initiate a dialogue with VFS and finally managed to have a marathon meeting with them in June 2016. Our aim was to exchange views, understand their constraints and limitations and at the same time place before them our challenges in assisting clients in processing visas. There is a perception not only among agents but also travelling passengers that VFS was an impediment. It's a myth that was dispelled through this meeting. VFS and agents both work for the same purpose. VFS is as much a facilitator as an agent and in India, both need to coexist and complement each other.

### Q Was the meeting fruitful?

Yes, today, even VFS has started to look at agents as a support system. We had discussions with VFS for more

than two hours with nearly 20 personnel from their side and five office-bearers from TAAI's Western Region. When we placed our intent to have such a session they were very skeptical.

We assured them that it would not be a session of blame game, but a sincere attempt to understand each other's constraints and challenges. At the end of the long session, a lot of misunderstandings, mistrust, wrong notions were dispelled – a feat that has never been achieved before. Both parties feel that meetings like this should be held regularly. VFS has already started implementing a lot of the discussed initiatives. With the change in perception, I'm sure agents will also be more responsible while doing business.

### Q Have there been any other interesting meetings?

Yes, the Western Chapter team recently met a team from the US Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, National Travel and Tourism office. They reached out to us to discuss how tourism can be tapped



Sampat Damani  
Chairman (Western India Chapter)  
Travel Agents Association of India

VFS has already started implementing a lot of the discussed initiatives. With the change in perception, I'm sure agents will also be more responsible while doing business

to grow numbers between US and India. They had come with the intent of increasing MICE movement. After China, India is next country where they want strategic partnership. They noted our views and suggestions during this hour-long session which will be referred

to when they are formulating certain policies. We will continue to be in talks with them to take this to its logical conclusion.

### Q How would you want the Indian government to liaison with you?

For any policy to be successful it has to be formulated hand-in-hand with the experts – people who are an integral part of the trade, who help the industry grow and have a direct role in success or failure of the policy. I speak not only as part of TAAI but also as an agent. The policies framed for the industry affects us the most – the stakeholders. It directly affects our livelihood.

Whilst I applaud the Central and Maharashtra Government's intent behind its tourism initiatives, I urge the ministry to have a regular dialogue with us, share their plans and policies and take our inputs at the formulation stage itself. Even MTDC, which has so many tourism products in their portfolio, should involve us as an association and agents for training, instead of interacting only with selective agents. ↴

## Working for a 'disciplined' industry

Praveen Chugh, President, Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI), has also been recently elected as the Treasurer of World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA) of which TAFI is a member.



TT BUREAU

Speaking on the association, he said, "The membership of this association is given to only associations, and not to individuals attached to travel and tourism. Currently, the membership has associations from USA, Canada, the entire Europe, Brazil, Hong Kong, Malaysia, India, Australia, New Zealand and quite a few other countries as well. Our aim is to see how we can bring in a discipline within the industry; what are the requirements from a travel agents; as well as expectations from IATA. This is what we try to address, and we do two meetings in a year, where we take global proposals from each and every country and take them forward. Our main aim is to see how the travel industry and airline industry have a smooth relationship."

Talking of TAFI and the Joint Bank Guarantee Scheme (JBG), which they had introduced from July, Chugh said that the members have shown a positive response. "We started the scheme with an upper limit of `12 crore. Within three months, we have increased the slab to `14 crores and `60 lakh. This means that members have started increasing their turnover and are enjoying the benefits.

"We believe that the members under the JBG scheme would save approximately `3.5 crore, which was earlier going to the insurance companies or the banks as commission," he said. He also claimed that they are working hard towards increasing the membership of the association.

Talking of the government policies, he said, "Govern-



Praveen Chugh  
President  
Travel Agents Federation of India

Members under the JBG scheme would save approximately `3.5 crore, which was earlier going to the insurance companies or the banks as commission

ment should take up issues and address the requirements tour operators, who go door to door in different countries and do marketing for India. We are also earning foreign exchange, but are deprived of the advantages that other industries earning foreign exchange get, whether in the form of rebates, compensations, or by taking care of their expenditure overseas. In addition, we need a proper, simplified tax structure.

"While understanding of Service Tax is not clear, there is also GST coming up. We are addressing the GST issue with other associations under the FAITH umbrella as well as individually. We have even made a presentation on easy procedures of GST and the rebate on the ticketing related business in this country." ↴



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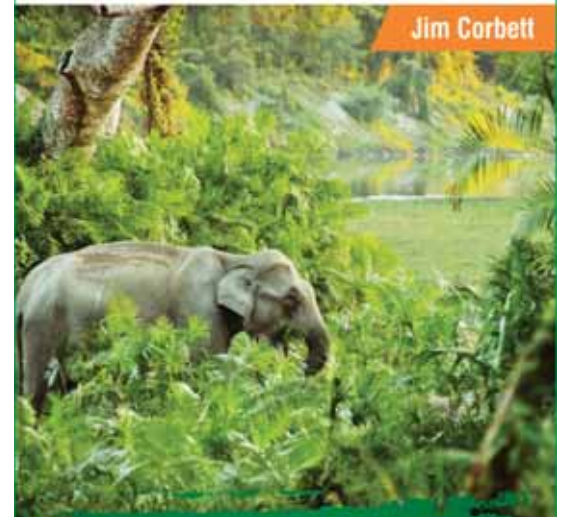
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**The Raviz Resort & Spa, Kadavu**

**Kerala**

**Karan Bakshi** has been appointed as the General Manager of The Raviz Resort & Spa, Kadavu. Previously he was working as the Corporate General Manager of Thomas Hotels & Resorts India. He has worked with brands such as JHM Interstate Hotels India, Brunton Boatyard, Spice Village, Thekkady, CGH Earth Group of Hotels, Casino Group of Hotels, among others. Bakshi has over two decades of experience in the industry. He holds Bachelors in Hotel Management, F&B Production from Bangalore University and BHM, Hotel, Motel, and Restaurant Management from Christ College.



**FCM Travel Solutions**

**New Delhi**

**Gaurav Luthra** has been appointed as the Country Head, Corporate Traveller, of Australia-headquartered Flight Centre Travel Group. Luthra will be spearheading operations and expansion of the newly-launched brand, while continuing to oversee air, hotel, car and insurance products portfolio under the larger corporate brand – FCM Travel Solutions. Luthra has over 20 years' experience in leading profit centre operations and strategic implementation of new revenue lines for all FCM verticals in India. His specific focus has been on building operational efficacy through supplier contracting and relationship management.



**Novotel Visakhapatnam**

**Varun Beach**

**Rajesh Kumar Dudi** is the new Director of Sales at Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach. He holds an MBA in travel and tourism from Hyderabad and has over 11 years of experience in the hotel industry. Dudi started his career with the Hyatt International in F&B operation in 2005 and moved on to Starwood Hotels from 2007-2016. His last assignment was as Associate Director of Sales at The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace.



**Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road**

**Jaipur**

**Indu Khatri** has been appointed as Associate Director of Sales at Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road. Khatri has experience of over eight years in sales and marketing activities and increasing revenues by developing productive customer relationships in hospitality industry. Her most recent position was Associate Director of Sales, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts. She also has been the part of the pre-opening team for Leela Palace New Delhi. She is a Hotel Management graduate.



**Bengaluru Marriott Hotel, Whitefield**

**Bengaluru**

**Deep Preet Bindra** has been appointed as the Director of Sales and Marketing Division at Bengaluru Marriott Hotel, Whitefield. Bindra has over 12 years of experience in the service industry. Before joining Bengaluru Marriott Hotel, Whitefield, he was working at JW Marriott at Aerocity in New Delhi as Director of Sales for the past two years. He has also worked for prestigious brands like Westin, Gurgaon and Westin Sohna Resort, The Oberoi Group, Kingfisher Airlines, Thomas Cook India and American Express.



**Park Hyatt Goa Resort and Spa**

**Goa**

Park Hyatt Goa Resort and Spa has announced the appointment of **Ashish Shome** as the Director of Operations. Shome has more than 25 years of expertise in the hospitality industry. Shome is a Commerce Graduate from Delhi University and has done Diploma in Hotel Management from IHMCT, Pusa, New Delhi. Shome has been a part of the Park Hyatt Goa team from 2002 till 2008 with his last held designation being Executive Sous Chef. Shome's previous assignment was with Hyatt Regency Mumbai where he held the position of Director of Food & Beverage.



**Thai Smile Airways**

**New Delhi**

Thai Smile Airways has appointed **Gaurav Bhatura**, as Chief Representative – India. In his new role Bhatura will head and be responsible for overall Thai Smile Airways operations in India. His key responsibility will include overseeing all aspects of airline sales, marketing through GSA, Ground Handling, catering and commercial activities. With over 16 years of rich experience in varied fields of aviation industry, Bhatura will be responsible for developing new gateways to / from India to Thailand. Earlier he had worked for InterGlobe, GMR-DIAL and Singapore Airlines, KLM to name a few.



**The Raviz Hotels**

**Thiruvananthapuram**

**Sooraj Nair** has been appointed as the Head of Sales at The Raviz Hotels, Thiruvananthapuram. He comes with 12 years of experience in the sales, revenue management, yield management and customer service operations in hospitality industry. He was previously associated with the Oberoi Hotels & Resorts, Chennai, ITC Hotels, JHM Interstate Hotels, Meluha The Fern Hotel Mumbai and The Orchid, Mumbai. He holds Bachelor's degree in Hospitality Administration/Management from IHM Trivandrum.



**Grand Hyatt Mumbai**

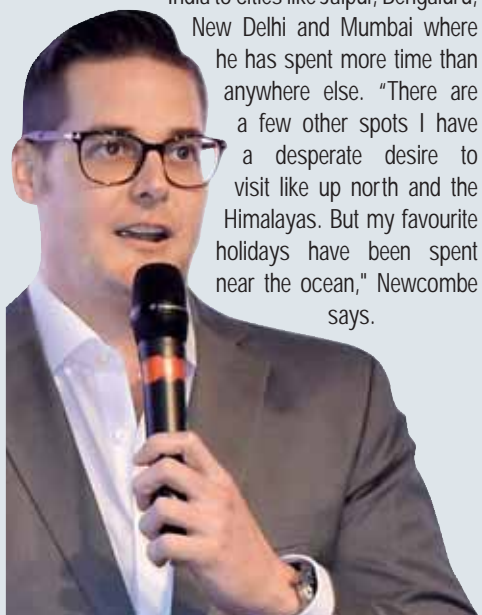
**Mumbai**

**S. Vidyashankar** has joined Grand Hyatt Mumbai as the Director of Human Resources. Vidyashankar, a post graduate in Business Administration, has over 14 years of experience in Human Resources operations. His Hyatt journey began with Hyatt Regency Mumbai in 2002, as a Management Trainee in Human Resources. After a brief stint with Novotel in 2009-10, Vidyashankar returned to the Hyatt world as Human Resources Manager at Hyatt Regency Pune and then at Grand Hyatt Mumbai. Vidyashankar was then promoted to Grand Hyatt Goa as a Director of Human Resources in November, 2012.



**TALKing People**

At 6 feet 4 inches (1.94 m), **Michael Newcombe**, General Manager (South/South East Asia & Gulf Countries), Tourism Australia, pretty much towers over everyone in a crowd. He has travelled across India to cities like Jaipur, Bengaluru, New Delhi and Mumbai where he has spent more time than anywhere else. "There are a few other spots I have a desperate desire to visit like up north and the Himalayas. But my favourite holidays have been spent near the ocean," Newcombe says.



**Gaurav Sundaram**, Regional Director-India, Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) lives by the motto 'strive to be the best' in his field which drives him to work hard. He believes, "One has to keep re-engineering and question the way things are done to improve and do them differently." He spends his free time with his family and pet dog and tries to travel whenever possible. Istanbul, Ulaanbaatar and Madagascar are his dream destinations where he wants to explore the exotic food and culture.



**Teo Keng Chong**, Director of Sales-Travel Experience, Sabre Travel Network Asia Pacific, loves to spend his free time with his family. "The millennial generation should live life to the fullest. Even if they feel that their goals are far away, they should not give up and continue to live life with no regrets," says Chong. Having travelled to many countries, Chong would love to travel to London, Egypt and South America whereas Japan, Seattle in the US and Canada find space in his most preferred destinations where he loves to revisit. Chong always travels with his music system, tablet and smartphone.







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FLIGHT	FROM	TO	DEPART	ARRIVE	DAYS OF THE WEEK
AC 71	DELHI	TORONTO	0:45	05:00 (+1)	DAILY
AC 70	TORONTO	DELHI	21:20	21:40 (+1)	DAILY

Above timings are effective from 6<sup>th</sup> Nov 2016 and are subject to change

FLIGHT	FROM	TO	DEPART	ARRIVE	DAYS OF THE WEEK
AC 73	DELHI	VANCOUVER	6:55	8:20	MON, THU, SAT
AC 72	VANCOUVER	DELHI	23:15	1:55 (+2)	TUE, THU, SAT

Above timings are effective from 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2016 and are subject to change

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# Bullish on India, thanks to trade

Air Canada has announced a slew of direct connections between India and Canada, and that too within a year of starting the first non-stop flight between Delhi and Vancouver. **Duncan Bureau**, Vice President, Global Sales, Air Canada, speaks to **TRAVTALK** and elaborates on the expansion plans.



NISHA VERMA

## Q Tell us about the new India connections on Air Canada?

At Air Canada, there is a lot of growth happening primarily related to the international market. The Indian market is very exciting for us. Last year, we started the Delhi-Toronto service, which has done extremely well and starting from November 6, 2016, it will be a daily service. We have also announced the new service between Delhi and Vancouver from October 20, which would give the fastest elapse time between India and all across Canada as well as to North West US. In addition to that, we have also announced a new connection between Mumbai and Delhi starting July 1, 2017.

## Q What made you start the Delhi-Vancouver flight and make the Delhi-Toronto a daily connection?

As you know there are around 1.3 million Indian nationals living in Canada, which is one of the largest in the world. There are a lot of family ties between India and Canada and a large part of that group lives in Western Canada. There is no direct service and no good connections out of western Canada to India. We believe that the non-stop flight out of Delhi will service that market and will provide a new option for people to get into India out of not only Western Canada but also the US, which would give one of the fastest elapse times. Vancouver has a lot of natural resources and business, as well as software and technology companies. Also, we are connecting Calgary and Edmonton with that network.

As far as the Delhi-Toronto flight is concerned, we are very pleased with both the volume and the yield of the market, which allowed us to go daily as quickly as we did. We always want to make sure that the demand is there, and ensure that the asset will get the right turnaround of invested capital.

## Q What are the expectations from the Mumbai connection?

Our agenda is to fill the airplane as profitably as we can and get to daily service as quickly as we can. That market is also important, as it is the financial and the business hub of India, and so is Toronto for Canada. There is so much activity going on between the two

countries. It was more of VFR traffic into Delhi, but we can leverage high yielding traffic and demand into Mumbai with a non-stop connection from Toronto.

## Q Air Canada now has three non-stop flights within a year of announcing the first such connection. What is the reason behind this expansion?

We are very bullish on India as a whole and we believe that there is a huge diaspora of Indians in Canada and a lot of economic development is happening

between Canada and North America. A tremendous amount of VFR and leisure traffic is moving back and forth. In terms of total revenue, in absolute dollars, the highest volume comes from business segment, for which we have a brilliant Business Class product. On the 787-900s we have a configuration of 297 seats, of which 29 seats are lie-flat bed and 21 are in Premium Economy. We are very flexible with Business Class passengers in terms of the baggage they carry. There is also a lot of student traffic, for which we work with different



“We believe that the non-stop flight out of Delhi will service that market and will provide a new option for people to get into India out of not only Western Canada but also the US, which would give one of the fastest elapse times.”

**Duncan Bureau**  
Vice President, Global Sales  
Air Canada

between the two countries. In fact, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Canada last year had created a lot of excitement and there have been a number of missions ever since and the new flight starting from October 20, would also have a big delegation of government and business leaders. We are very excited to be able to facilitate a lot of economic growth and investment between the two countries.

We have to remember that we are not just selling Canada, but the US as well, as we have a very strong network there. We fly to over 60 cities in the US, and we are the largest international airline serving that market. We offer a better elapse time for all those who need to transit via Canada in both India and the US. A lot of people go via Frankfurt, London or Amsterdam to get to the US, and we think with the introduction of these non-stop services on our carrier, we can service these markets quite successfully.

## Q While VFR traffic is big, what are the other segments important for Air Canada?

Our focus has always been to find that business traveller who is travelling

agencies that focus on student travel. We have special packages and baggage allowance for students at different times of the year.

## Q How are you working with the travel trade to sell Air Canada?

We have a very strong relationship with the travel trade and that's true around our entire network. We work with our travel trade partners very strategically and grow business. Our team in India has a very good relationship with the travel industry as well. We couldn't have done what we have done without the support of the travel trade.

## Q What are you planning next after the Mumbai-Toronto flight?

We'd like to get all these connections to daily and that would be a homerun.

### Expansive Network

✈ Air Canada flies to over 60 cities in the US, and is the largest international airline serving that market



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# Luxury talk



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## THE MIDAS TOUCH

The luxury consumer today is evolving, and meeting their expectations is getting more interesting. It's interesting because service providers, including hotels and tour operators, are pushing their limits and putting their thinking caps on when designing new kinds of holidays for the affluent bunch of travellers. This is because now even the average traveller, who doesn't always fit in the traditional definition of luxury, is staying at the best hotels and is increasingly trying out new experiences at a destination and doesn't mind doling out a packet for it. Luxury, today, is no longer confined to just a chosen few.

A recent report by Amadeus, titled 'Shaping the Future of Luxury', analysed the behaviour of today's luxury consumers and grouped them into different categories. Calling luxury travel subjective, the report claims that luxury travel is different for different people. It further elaborates that curating something that appeals to them on a specific, personal level, which goes above a traveller's 'norms', is what makes the difference.

Taking a cue from offering personalised touch in travel, in this issue we bring to you honeymoon curators, who specialise in designing luxury honeymoons, while taking care of the couple's interests. On the other hand, for those looking at spending a royal 'buck' to live like a king, we have listed some of India's most luxurious suites in a special feature. From land to air, opulence has no limit, and luxury charters might just work for you if you are planning a special occasion.

Indulge. Explore. Experience.

NISHA VERMA

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## CELEBRATE DIWALI AT ATLANTIS, DUBAI

Atlantis The Palm, Dubai, has come up with a special Diwali Half Board offer, with rates starting from ₹25,000 on rooms and 1-bedroom suites, with complimentary half board at 10 participating restaurants including delicious Indian cuisine at Kaleidoscope and Saffron. Valid for two adults or one adult and two children below the age of 12, there are many additional benefits including complimentary unlimited access to Aquaventure Waterpark, The Lost Chambers Aquarium, and swimming with dolphins at the Dolphin Bay.



## Adventures abound at Belmond Eagle Island Lodge

Belmond Eagle Island Lodge in the heart of Botswana's Okavango Delta has introduced the first helicopter and horseback safari. Combining a safari by private helicopter with a horse-ride, the excursion offers a new way to explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site and its inhabitants.



## Luxury offerings by Dubai Tourism

Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing led a Dubai Luxury delegation to India recently. The 24 member delegation showcased the luxury offerings of Dubai to Indian travel trade in order to promote Dubai as a luxury destination.

## Piaget inspired holiday at Mandarin Oriental, HK

Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong and Swiss luxury watchmaker-jeweller Piaget have launched two new room packages. The Piaget Rose Packages will allow guests to celebrate a special occasion, or a shopping getaway, in elegance at the hotel and bring home a signature piece from the iconic Piaget Rose collection.





## Roseate House New Delhi now parks at Aerocity

Roseate Hotels & Resorts has finally launched its uber luxury city hotel located at Delhi's Aerocity, called Roseate House New Delhi, which is aimed to cater to the next generation of savvy business and leisure travellers. It is a progressive yet relaxed urban hotel that brings a new flavour to the city. Roseate House New Delhi is spread across an area of 1.6 acres and is a 30-minute drive to New Delhi and Gurugram and just 10 minutes away from the International Airport. The hotel features 216 rooms with 15 suites.



## Detox at The Ajman Palace



The Ajman Palace Hotel is offering Detox Tour programmes. The weeklong tour includes well-thought-out routine of exercises and Yoga combined with daily revival spa treatments. The exercises consist of Pilates and Yoga along with other workout sessions. To make the tour successful, food experts at the hotel help the participants with individually created nutritional plan. Equally exciting are the revival spa treatments ranging from cosmetology, scrubs and wraps, to a mix of massage options.

## A luxurious meet at Swissôtel Nankai Osaka

Swissôtel Nankai Osaka has relaunched its 1,120 sq. m. Grand Ballroom, Naniwa, recently renovated at a cost of \$1.5 million. In addition, the hotel enhanced their guest rooms with a complete makeover of Swiss Executive Club floors, converting double rooms to twin and triple rooms to cater to MICE travellers.



## Parisian Macao finally opens its doors

Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao has opened its doors to its latest offering – The Parisian Macao. The Parisian-themed resort boasts 3,000 guest rooms and suites, 150 duty-free retail shops, and 5,200 sq. m. of meeting spaces.

## Accor opens Pullman Miri Waterfront

AccorHotels' Pullman Miri Waterfront, recently opened at the hub of Miri Waterfront Commercial Centre. The hotel is the tallest building in Miri, and features 328 contemporary spacious rooms. It is 10 minutes away from Miri International Airport.



## New culinary venture by Badrutt's Palace

Badrutt's Palace Hotel and Andreas Caminada, the Swiss 3 Michelin starred chef, have come together for IGNIV by Caminada in Grand Resort Bad Ragaz — an innovative fine-dining experience. The brand IGNIV, Rhaeto-Romanic for 'Nest', is being expanded with the second IGNIV restaurant opening on December 21, 2016, at Badrutt's Palace Hotel.



## Luxury talk

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Each bespoke itinerary is 100% custom designed, featuring the most exclusive boutique properties, some of which are the barefoot luxury kinds as well



# PERFECT INDULGENCE ON A *Honeymoon*



PRITHISH SHAH

Honeymoon Crafter **Prithish Shah** gives an insight into how A Travel Duet curates exclusive couples-only holidays and tailor makes it to suit the uber luxurious travellers.

#### **What was the idea behind A Travel Duet?**

I had a regular travel brand – V3 Travels and Tours. Our offerings were generic and there was no differentiation between a honeymoon query and a family query. I then realised the potential of a ‘couples only’ travel brand which would focus on honeymoons, anniversary and baby moon trips. Meanwhile, as per projections, the wedding industry





Our brand is Preferred Partners for Luxury Lodges of Australia, Luxury Lodges of New Zealand, Relais & Châteaux, and many more stand-alone hotel brands



has exponentially grown in the past five years and couples are not shying away from spending big bucks on unique and luxurious experiences. I went to do my Masters in Tourism from the UK in 2010, which gave me a global exposure and we launched A Travel Duet in 2012.

**How do you think the Indian luxury honeymoon market has grown over the years?**

Clients have become more aware than before and the lifestyles have become fast paced. Consumers don't wish to sacrifice anymore on their holidays. Multigenerational holidays and honeymoons are definitely the top category of trips where big money is spent. As per forecast, Asia is anticipated to have the biggest growth on business class flights in years to come.

**What are the most preferred destinations and experiences demanded by the clients?**

We plan honeymoons all across the globe, wherever the couple wishes to visit. Most of the honeymoons

we plan are long haul. However, typically, the busy honeymoon period is during the Indian wedding season (October-March). Countries in the South Pacific, South Africa, Central and South America have good climate during these months of the year and hence these countries end up being the preferred destination choices. Europe and rest of the US becomes an ideal choice for couples having summer weddings.

**Why do you think your customers prefer you over others in the business?**

Each bespoke itinerary is 100 per cent custom-designed. They feature some of the most indulgent and exclusive boutique properties, some of which are the barefoot luxury kinds as well. We have concierge services to provide for all after sales assistance such as dinner, events, clubs and bar recommendations and reservations. We offer Deluxe Collection Itineraries (between ₹5-20 lakh) and Signature Collection Itineraries (above ₹20 lakh). We are raising the bar in the travel trade by charging an upfront service charge to ensure clients aren't just window shopping. We prefer curating experiences, than buying activities off the shelf. In order to give the consumer an above ordinary experience, we keep







Big money is spent on multigenerational holidays and honeymoons. Asia is anticipated to have the biggest growth on business class flights in the years to come

working towards new innovative products and ideas. Honeymoon Photo and Video Safari is one such product introduced by us, where couples get to do a candid photoshoot at exotic locales, which becomes a lifelong treasured memory. All the top liners in our company have travelled to more than 30 plus countries each, allowing us to create a pool of knowledge which not a lot of companies have access to. Our brand is Preferred Partners for Luxury Lodges of Australia, Luxury Lodges of New Zealand, Relais & Châteaux, and many more stand-alone hotel brands.

#### How do you make the experiences different and personalised for your clients?

We make sure both the bride and groom bond over experiences on their trip and get to learn more about each others' likings through the various activities they do on the trip. If the girl likes cooking, we enrol them for a fun destination-specific cooking session or perhaps get the boy to don chef whites and toss up a surprise meal for his lady love. Similarly, if the

boy is more into adventure sports, we get the girl to join him in his kind of fun. No two itineraries are similar as we tailor-make each itinerary as per the couple's preference.

#### What have been the most interesting demands that a client has asked for?

There was one couple travelling to the US, who wanted to experience a white beach wedding, and we did make their wish come true. At another instance, we got a call from a lady who wanted to gift her parents a lavish 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary getaway. We arranged everything secretly with the daughter as a surprise for her parents. The couple went to Sydney and spent a lavish anniversary, staying at one of the most beautiful suites. They started their day with a sea plane ride, followed by a lunch on the chartered yacht, followed by relaxing couple's spa. In the evening, they enjoyed a private dinner in a vintage style ball room. Later, they were taken in a limo, bar hopping in Sydney. The cost for such experience was close to AUD 15000.

#### FACT CATCH

- India is set to become the youngest country by 2020 with the median age being 29 years
- 25 per cent of Indian weddings are destination-based
- Indian wedding market is recession-free, and is pegged to be \$40-50 billion in size in 2017 – the largest wedding market in the world
- Parents of the married couples spend one fifth of their wealth on a wedding ceremony
- The wedding and honeymoon industry growing at the rate of 25-30 per cent annually
- Honeymooners mostly like to travel to long-haul destinations
- People in Tier II and Tier III cities in India are cash rich and willing to spend, but are wanting of guidance





# Luxury

You don't really mind spending a little more, especially when it is accompanied by personalised service, state-of-the-art amenities, designer decor, gourmet dinners and therapeutic spa experiences. Here we bring you 10 of the most luxurious suites in the country, which come with an equally big price tag.



## Maharaja Suite, The Leela Palace Udaipur

Spread over 3585 square feet, The Maharaja Suite at The Leela Palace Udaipur offers a stunning view of Lake Pichola, the historic City Palace and the majestic Aravali mountains. Plush interiors embellished with traditional art and artisan crafts, the suite has a living room, a study, a dining area, a master bedroom with a separate walk-in wardrobe, king size bath tub with Jacuzzi, separate shower stall and water closet. The suite has its own spa studio, spacious plunge pool and sprawling courtyards to make sure that guests relish luxury in their private sanctum.

**Price per night:** ₹6,80,000 + taxes (including breakfast)

*“Our presidential suite offers a unique combination of royal charm and larger-than-life opulence. It has played host to celebrities, heads of state and the who’s who of the business world. It also comes with its own private butler.”*

**RAJESH NAMBY**  
General Manager, The Leela Palace Udaipur



# follows

# SUMMER





## The Kohinoor Suite, The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur

Rated as one of the most luxurious properties in the world, The Oberoi Udaivilas offers opulence at its best at the Kohinoor Suite, which spreads over 2,650 square feet. With two bedrooms, one living room, two working fireplaces, a 20-metre private swimming pool, a garden terrace and patio with a dining and relaxation pavilion, it's the ultimate abode for the connoisseurs of fine things in life. The suite has its own personal butler as well as a well-appointed pantry to make sure that all the needs of the guests are taken care of with utmost detail.

**Price per night:** On request







## The Royal Imperial Suite, The Imperial, New Delhi



Live like a king in the heart of Lutyens' Delhi at The Royal Imperial Suite. Sprawling over 3000 sq. ft., this luxurious condominium has played host to the likes of Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, Prince Albert of Morocco, Kate Winslet, Saudi Arabia's Prince Bander Bin Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz and many more eminent names. Featuring a four poster king size bed, a separate seating for three guests, along with a cloakroom, the suite is opulent beyond definition. The master bathroom is nothing less than a spa, enclosed by a large shower cubicle fitted with beautiful marble baths from Kohler (USA), Gaggenau, study with office equipment and collection of 80 books, antique furniture with rare and fine artworks by Prince Alexis Soltykoff, separate entry for butler, hand-knotted Persian rugs — everything that defines royal magnificence.

**Price per night:** ₹2,00,000 + taxes from Sept 13, 2016, to April 15, 2017

**“Wrapped in ornate luxury with inlaid marble floors and Italian sculptures, the suite boasts a historic library, a grand verandah and royal furniture including the 100-year-old four poster bed.”**

**VIJAY WANCHOO**  
Sr. EVP & General Manager, The Imperial New Delhi



## Presidential Suite, The St. Regis Mumbai

Experience international luxury at the Presidential Suite of The St. Regis Mumbai, and relish the sophisticated take on comfort and elegant style of this 4000 sq ft. space. Offering panoramic views of the Arabian Sea and the glittering city skyline, the suite boasts handcrafted rugs, stunning artefacts and furnishings, all tied together by warm, luminous gilded colours. The expansive master bedroom boasts a King Bed at its centre and a walk-in wardrobe, while the adjoining spa bathroom features a Jacuzzi that overlooks the city's romantic vistas. Add to this a personal butler to attend to all your needs, and you are in for a luxury treat.

**Price per night:** ₹4,50,000 + taxes

**“An alluring mix of elegance, space and sophisticated grandeur, the Presidential Suite offers the ultimate in luxurious accommodation. The magnificent suite is the perfect urban retreat, and its 4000 sq. ft. space boasts impeccable design and a spacious layout.”**

**CAJETAN AROUJO**  
Hotel Manager, The St. Regis Mumbai







## The Tata Suite, The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai

The 5000-sq.-ft. awe-inspiring Tata Suite at The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai, is an apt tribute to the founder of the Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces, Jamshedji Tata. It features the best of colonial art and architecture, adorned with crystal chandeliers, rich and plush tapestry, rare art, antiques and artefacts. The Tata Suite has a total of 15 graciously appointed rooms, a sprawling space, adorned with precious art, and modern technology to suit the needs of the contemporary guests. The suite also comprises a private study with a sit-out overlooking the Gateway of India and the busy Mumbai harbour.

**Price per night:** On request

**“The Tata Suite personifies Jamshedji Tata’s vision of traditional hospitality engulfed in a contemporary setting. Re-defining luxury, each room of the suite offers comfort in an opulent ensemble.”**

TALJINDER SINGH,  
Area Director-Mumbai, General Manager, The Taj Mahal Palace





## Pool Pavilion, Amanbagh, Rajasthan

The Pool Pavilion at Amanbagh offers the utmost in privacy. Sprawling 203 square meters with twin dressing areas, twin vanity and a bathtub carved from a single block of green marble, the suite is luxurious to the core. Taking comfort to the next level, the suite also has 3x9m private pool, which can be heated to 28 degrees in winter. There is also a private outside dining area for those who want some exclusive time with their partners.

**Price per night:** Starting from ₹76,500 plus taxes



**“I love the Pool Pavilions for their space and privacy and of course the pool that is cool and refreshing in summer and cozy and warm in winter!”**

**KARIN VAN ZYL**  
General Manager, Amanbagh



## Presidential Suite, Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai

Perched on the 32<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai, the Presidential Suite here offers panoramic views of the Arabian Sea and the much-coveted Mumbai skyline, added on with the greenery of Mahalaxmi Race Course in the foreground. Relish the contemporary interiors with timber flooring and beautiful hand-tufted rugs, as you relax in the warm ambience of mahogany and maple wood furnishings. Add to these comforts, the world-class service of Four Seasons, and you are in for a lavish stay.

**Price per night:** ₹3 lakhs + taxes

**“Our Presidential Suite is located on the top-most floor of this hotel’s gleaming glass tower. It offers a panoramic view of the city skyline and the Arabian Sea through the floor-to-ceiling windows. It boasts an impeccable design and spacious layout coupled with personalised service.”**

**VIKRAM REDDY**  
General Manager, Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai







If you are looking for privacy, go for riverside sundowners and relish canapés in a wooden canoe or indulge in 'Dining by Design' with a personal chef and butler





# Quintessentially Sri Lankan

Surrender yourself to barefoot luxury and explore a new kind of hospitality with a local touch at the Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort in Sri Lanka.



“It’s an investment of \$100 million in the country, a commitment that the owners have made to ensure that we bring excellence and concentrate on delivering service and develop local staff and talent.”

**TAMIR KOBRIN**  
General Manager  
Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort

## INCREDIBLE ARRIVALS

As you set foot into this exotic abode, get ready to be mesmerised by the enchanting Sri Lankan design of the property. Nestled in a 21-acre coconut plantation that opens onto a crescent of golden sand, the property overlooks the Indian Ocean. Ride on battery-powered eco-friendly rickshaws or tuk-tuks to reach any one of the 152 guest rooms and villas here.

## SOOTHING STAYS

The 120 Premier and Deluxe rooms offer an expansive bedroom and a well-equipped bathroom with a rain shower and separate oval bathtub. For those who love open spaces, there is a terrace with a daybed and dining furniture, where one can get amazing views of the ocean while sipping Ceylon tea.

There are also 32 spacious one- and two-bedroom villas, which are perfect luxury sanctums with private plunge pool, comfy loungers and option of dining under the shade. The two-bedroom Garden Pool Villas also feature an indoor dining room and pantry. Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort is the only property to offer a children’s and teens’ club, which allows the parents to relish some personal time while their little ones have fun in the playground under shade.

## DELIGHTFUL DINING

Treat your palate to the island cuisines and colonial customs at the five restaurants, bar and lounge venues at this beachside retreat. Journeys — the all-day dining restaurant, offers world classics and Sri Lankan, Middle Eastern, Thai and international specialties. There are live food stations offering cuisines savoured by the merchants and traders as they travelled the spice and silk routes of the Orient. For the romantics, there is Il Mare —

the Italian restaurant, which sits on the edge of a dramatic cliff, overlooking the Indian Ocean. Ask for a private dining experience at the intimate cellar El Vino. In the day, The Poolside Bar serves refreshing beverages, light bites and sundowners’ cocktails, while the Lobby Lounge offers High Tea with a Sri Lankan twist. The soon to be opened beachside Verele restaurant will feature Teppanyaki and Kothu — a traditional Sri Lankan dish.

## WELLNESS SANCTUARY

Rejuvenate at the Anantara Spa that offers a concessionaire beauty salon and wellness treatments that come from the healing traditions of the land, Ayurveda treatments, and international techniques. Relax yourself at the double level outdoor swimming pool or at Yoga and meditation classes. For the fitness conscious, there is the 24-hour gym and even bicycles available to explore the resort and the Tangalle village.

## TAILOR-MADE EXPERIENCES

If you are looking for some privacy, go for riverside sundowners and relish canapés in a wooden canoe or indulge in ‘Dining by Design,’ which offers guests a choice of connoisseur menus coupled with idyllic settings, alongside the services of a personal chef and butler. Go for the farm to table experience at the Verele. Those who like playing chef for a day can learn how to create Sri Lanka’s bold and flavoursome dishes in a ‘Spice Spoons’ cooking class. There is a range of guided excursions for the guests to Sri Lanka’s southern attractions including Wewurukannala temple, the amazing rock temple of Mulkirigala and Kalametiya Bird Sanctuary. Explore nature and wildlife with national park wildlife safaris, interactive elephant experiences, a trip to the Rekawa turtle conservation project and the thrill of whale and dolphin watching boat trips.





# A Personal HIGH

With India poised to become one of the biggest aviation markets, charter air travel in the country is witnessing a huge surge.

**NISHA VERMA**





Travellers today are leaving no stones unturned to get the best experience when they travel for a holiday to exotic locales or just for business. **Santosh Kumar Sharma**, Director & Vice President, Foresee Aviation, says, “The private aircraft market in India is set to grow multifold to ₹5,000 crore by 2020 from ₹1,800 crore in 2015, on the back of rising popularity for such services in non-metro markets. More than metro cities, the private jet market is witnessing tremendous expansion in non-metros which makes it confident of higher growth.” **Raghav Narahari**, Vice President, Head Business Development & Marketing, Imperial Air, agrees, “With a financially stable and growing economy, charter travel is growing rapidly by about 15-20 per cent a year. As the infrastructure plans in many states get implemented, it is bound to grow by leaps and bounds in a few years time.”

#### EFFORTLESS COMFORT

**Bhupesh Joshi**, CEO & Director, Club One Air, claims, “Booking a charter flight today is as simple as booking a limousine. One can just call us or drop in an email and our sales team follows up to close the whole process.” Tour operators, too, offer these services when it comes to requests from clients. **Deepak Bhatnagar**, MD, Aamantaran Travel Company (A part of Caper Group), adds, “At times we do get requests for hiring small private jet within India by some of our VIP clients. There are service providers from whom we take costing and provide these services.”

The latest entrant into the market — jetsmart.in, has in fact, made it easier to book a charter. “JetSmart is trying to become the easiest way to book private jet experiences, much in the same way as a consumer can book scheduled flights on any of the





A huge chunk of business for most charter aircraft comes from corporates.

Charters also offer connectivity to remote areas for discerning travellers

online tour website. One only needs to go to the website, enter the details of the city they want to fly from, select a few other preferences and payment details," claims **Abrar Ahmad**, Partner, Travel Capital Ventures, which has invested in JetSmart for an unknown sum.

#### WHAT CLIENTS WANT

A huge chunk of business for most charter aircraft comes from corporates. Agrees Joshi, "Our revenues are generated mostly from the business guests who would like to connect with their properties at remote locations or would like to visit prospective sites or have some M&A meeting. While leisure segment is also picking up along with other verticals but the numbers are still low as compared to business guests." Talking of leisure, it is also to offer remote connectivity for discerning tourists. Bhatnagar says, "Normally we offer

such flights to areas where we do not have scheduled flights, such as area in Rajasthan, Himalayas, etc."

#### OPULENCE EN AIR

**Erfan Haque**, CEO, JetSmart, says, "With scheduled flights, the business class experience is limited only to the flying duration. With us, the experience starts from home, wherein customers get airport transfers in a luxury car. We make them avoid the queues right from the start — starting from the entry point of the airports, to the check-in counter as well as the security."

One can get every possible amenity or state-of-the-art facility when they book a private jet for themselves. Joshi says, "Luxury travel is completely experience based. The journey becomes exceptional if the jet that one has opted for has sliding chair, elegant decor,





perfect ambience, which one usually gets in a 5-star deluxe hotel properties.”

**AFFORDABLE LUXURY**

With luxury travel changing its face, the dynamics of it being affordable has also modified. “The change is not just on the face but the whole concept of business jets has changed. New types of jets are coming up to give a different experience to the guests every time, but the element of luxury has changed into necessity for businesses. Gone are the days when travelling on business jets was looked upon as a luxurious affair from the outside, but now it has become more of a necessity for business houses,” claims Joshi.

“The price usually depends on the number of days one would like to charter a plane, but it can still cost anywhere between ₹6-12 lakh depending on the aircraft you hire,” adds Narahari. While the

price depends on a number of factors, companies are making sure that they make it viable for the upper middle class as well. JetSmart is not only selling individual seats in such aircraft, but also selling empty legs to make it an affordable option for those who want to enjoy this luxury and save time as well. “A typical Delhi-Mumbai flight in business class would cost one somewhere in between ₹33,000-₹45,000. But on a charter with us, it would come to around ₹55,000-₹60,000,” said Haque.

Joshi says, “The policy framework is in place and various campaigns by the Centre have already created a buzz about the country and its growth potential, so we can safely say that the time ahead will only be good for us. The number of queries has increased and business jet utilisation has doubled. All these are strong pointers of where the industry is headed to.”

**TALKING HEADS**



“Booking a charter flight today is as simple as booking a limousine. One can just call or email and our sales team follows up.”

**BHUPESH JOSHI**  
CEO & Director  
Club One Air



“We do get requests for hiring private jet in India. We have service providers with whom we take costing and provide such services.”

**DEEPAK BHATNAGAR**  
CMD  
Aamantaran Travel Company



“The private aircraft market in India is set to grow multifold to ₹5,000 crore by 2020 from ₹1,800 crore in 2015.”

**SANTOSH KUMAR SHARMA**  
Director & Vice President  
Foresee Aviation



“Charter travel is growing by 15-20% annually. As the infrastructure plans in many states get implemented, it is bound to grow.”

**RAGHAV NARAHARI**  
Vice President, Head Business  
Development & Marketing  
Imperial Air





# Serenading Sojourns

Unravel new surprises and destinations as you get driven across the length and breadth of Canada in the most vintage and, at the same time, modern form of travel.

**A**llow the beauty of Canada unfold before you as you sit in the cosy confines of your personal cabin. Pass the peaks and prairies, spot elk, savour gourmet cuisine in the dining car and relax to the rhythm of the rails. Reach where normal automobiles can't, and revel in the beauty of nature

as you pass glacial lakes, forests blazing with fall foliage, streams and canyons. Canada boasts 48,000 kilometres of track, of which 450 communities are served by VIA Rail and one of the rail destinations even has polar bears. Another highlight is the Rocky Mountaineer's GoldLeaf Service Experience on various routes it has on offer.





## The Canadian Prestige Class On Via Rail

Connecting Toronto and Vancouver, the Canadian is one of most popular trains around the world. Experience newfound elegance and comfort, all thanks to the Prestige Sleeper class, which takes the service level of VIA Rail a notch higher. What makes the experience extra special is the personalised service of a dedicated Prestige Concierge as you make yourself comfortable in the luxurious Prestige Sleeper cabins. The Prestige Class travellers can also have many other benefits, which include an all-inclusive bar service; priority access and reservations in the dining car, where they can taste the meals prepared by chefs on board; call centre as well as checked baggage. The passengers have access to the Prestige Park, Skyline and Panorama cars, where they can interact and mingle with fellow travellers and appreciate the views together.

The Prestige Sleeper Car has a total of six high-end Prestige Sleeper cabins adorned with contemporary décor. With double the size of the cabin for two Sleeper Plus class and much larger windows, the cabins are comfortable to the core. There is also a modular leather L-shaped couch by day and a Murphy bed for two by night facing the window. A private bathroom with shower; flat-screen TV with video selection; minibar stocked with a selection of beverages and electric radiant heated cabin floors and walls, these cabins are five-star suites on the go. In addition, all Prestige Sleeper class and Sleeper Plus class travellers have access to the Prestige Park Car, which offers amazing views, complimentary bar service, snacks, and a number of activities. This car has a Prestige Sleeper class cabin and a wheelchair accessible cabin.



### ROUTE FILE

The Prestige Sleeper class can only be booked on the Canadian between the following stations in both directions:

- Winnipeg-Vancouver
- Toronto-Winnipeg
- Toronto-Jasper
- Toronto-Vancouver





**ROUTE FILE**

The GoldLeaf Service on Rocky Mountaineer can be experienced on the following routes:

- First Passage to the West - Covers Vancouver, Kamloops, Lake Louise, Banff
- First Passage to the West - Covers Vancouver, Kamloops, Lake Louise, Banff
- Journey through the Clouds - Covers Vancouver, Kamloops, and Jasper

**GoldLeaf Service Experience on Rocky Mountaineer**

Think of taking in Canada's natural beauty from a bi-level, glass-dome luxury coach while nibbling on gourmet meals created by Executive Chefs. All this feels like a dream, but can very much come true with the GoldLeaf Service Experience on board the Rocky Mountaineer. Guests opting for this experience get a welcome aboard toast, and can relish the gourmet breakfasts and lunches from an à la carte menu. Add to this morning scones and afternoon wine and cheese service, the experience is nothing less than like a fine dining restaurant. The custom-designed bi-level dome coach features an upstairs seating area, and there is also an exclusive outdoor vestibule to soak up the fresh mountain air.

When it comes to service, Rocky Mountaineer Hosts take care of each need of the guests, along with the full culinary team. Savour the mouth-watering, five-star cuisine served à la carte in an exclusive lower-level dining room of each dome coach. Enjoy complimentary beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) and gourmet snacks throughout your journey and engage in conversations with fellow passengers.

Choose GoldLeaf Deluxe Service to experience Rocky Mountaineer's partner luxury hotels at every destination, and avail for superior views or more spacious rooms. Also get complimentary baggage delivery to your hotel.



# Experiences beyond luxury

# Travel

## EXPERIENTIAL SHOW

on

December 17-18, 2016 | Le Méridien, Gurgaon, NCR

This specialised event helps to identify and drive trends in the experiential travel sector, and in turn attract highly sought-after clients. True to its name, Travel Experiential Show is an immersive experience driven by a team of experts, resulting in real business for the clients.

### Travel Show Exhibitors\*



Interested Exhibitors and Buyers, please contact:

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Sarika Bhambhani Rawal: [sarika@travelshow.world](mailto:sarika@travelshow.world) +91 98101 91852





# DATE WITH LUXURY



## NOVEMBER 2016

ReiseSalon Austria 19-20

## DECEMBER 2016

ILTM Cannes Cannes, France 5-8

Love Mexico Mexico 5-8

Masters of LXRY Amsterdam, Netherlands 8-12

Travel Experiential Show Gurugram, Delhi-NCR 17-18

## FEBRUARY 2017

ILTM Japan Tokyo, Japan 27-March 1

## MARCH 2017

Salon Mondial du Tourisme Paris Paris, France 16-19

## APRIL 2017

ILTM Africa Cape Town 21-23

Travelweek São Paulo 2017 Sao Paulo, Brazil 25-28

## It's all about 'that' experience

Even as opulent properties are coming up around the country, the discerning traveller today craves for more. Industry stalwarts feel that luxury goes beyond a well-equipped room to tailor-made experiences.

Year on year there are 20-25 per cent people who say they have done South East Asia and Europe. They are looking at different destinations like New Zealand, Australia and Africa.

VISHAL SINHA  
Chief Operating Officer, TUI India



Luxury means exceeding expectations, meticulous workmanship, sumptuous atmosphere and discerning good taste. Today it entails exclusivity, privacy, relaxation, adventure with pampering.

DHANANJAI SINGH  
Vice President, Operations Eros Hotel  
New Delhi Nehru Place



At IHH we try to engage with the local communities and showcase local material. We also focus on local games like camel polo matches, camel races, etc. to acquaint guests with the local area.

JITENDRA SINGH RATHORE  
Chairman, Indian Historical Hospitality, (IHH)



At TUTC, we offer Glamping, which is luxury camping. We have tailor-made these products for up-end and international travellers. The highlight of our camps is the food.

RAJNISH SABHARWAL  
COO, The Ultimate Travelling Camp (TUTC)



In order to offer luxury, you don't have to be a big five-star hotel. It could be a very small boutique hotel with 20-30 rooms, but what matters is the quality of service and experience you offer.

ZACHARIA GEORGE  
General Manager, Ramada Alleppey







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 100 YEARS  
THANKS  
TO YOU

For more information, please contact:

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Shubhangi Chitre: [shubhangi@buzzindia.in](mailto:shubhangi@buzzindia.in)

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# THE FINEST OF EXPERIENCES NEED THE FINEST LOCATIONS



## URBAN LUXURY

Located in the center of South Delhi's business district, overlooking the renowned Bahai Temple, The Eros Hotel, Nehru Place, stands as a true icon for both business and leisure travelers delivering international standards of hospitality.

Eros Hotel offers multiple activities in its immediate vicinity, elegant and comfortable rooms with magnificent views of the city skyline. Choose from 218 spacious guest rooms and suites and discover luxurious, stylish and multi-functional contemporary avenues that offer fine dining and friendly service.

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