A moment alone - almost!

Vivanta
Coral Reef Maldives
By Taj

Taj Exotica Resort & Spa
Maldives

Escape the frenetic pace of daily life and discover two island hideaways in the Maldives, with the best of everything: Taj Exotica Resort & Spa and Vivanta by Taj Coral Reef offer quintessential Taj hospitality, incomparable accommodation, fine dining, relax spa and diving.

For Bookings & Queries Contact Us:
T: +91 22 61453500
W: www.uandiholidays.com
E: marketing@uandiholidays.com / maldives@uandiholidays.com
H.O.: 1C2A/1C2B, Gundecha Oncclave, Kherani Road, Sakinaka, Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400072
Fanatic
sports. tickets. tours & hospitality

Fanatic Sports is amongst Asia’s leading ‘Sports Ticketing’ companies. We offer the lowest prices & high commission to Travel Agents / Tour Operators / B2B Partners.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ICC Champions Trophy
Indian Premier League
European Football
Wimbledon.

WWW.FANATICSPORTS.IN

Famous Studios
Mahalakshmi, Mumbai

Anant Roongta
M: +91 9819989878
E: anant.roongta@fanaticsports.in

MUMBAI . DELHI . KOLKATA
DUBAI . SINGAPORE

Live your dream!
India’s show of strength @WTM

As many as 42 exhibitors, including state and union territory tourism departments, tour operators, hoteliers, resort owners, Air India, IRCTC, ITDC, and other stakeholders were present at the India Stand at WTM London.

Peden Doma Brutila from London

A sk anyone who had visited the WTM London 2016 event about the standout feature of the event and chances are that a majority will say it was the Kerala Tourism stand. It is little wonder then that the snake boat replicas of the Kerala Tourism pavilion helped them bag the Best Stand Feature.

But the snake boats were not the only bright spot; India was literally shining at the event. Being the Premier Partner at the event, it had for its theme – India-The Land of Eternal Heritage. The Indian delegation was represented by Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Tourism and Culture along with Vinod Zutshi, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India; Ashok Chandra Panda, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Tourism & Culture, senior tourism officials from various states.

Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Tourism and Culture, said, “India has set a target to achieve one per cent of international tourist arrivals through a multi-pronged approach, including proactive marketing strategies in partnership with tourism stakeholders.”

Talking about the promising scenario for Indian tourism, Dr. Sharma said that the upswing in Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India (from 7.68 million in 2014 to 8.03 million in 2015 showing a growth rate of 4.5 per cent) is an image booster for Indian tourism. About the host country, he said that tourist arrivals in India from the UK alone was 8,67,601 in 2015, registering a growth of 3.4 per cent growth over the previous year.

With India having invested more than $400 million in developing tourism infrastructure around the country in the last 18 months, Dr. Sharma said the government was expanding its e-Tourist Visa scheme and is also working towards safety and cleanliness.

He added, “India has set a target to achieve 1 per cent of international tourist arrivals through a multi-pronged approach, including proactive marketing strategies in partnership with tourism stakeholders.”

While appraising about various strategies adopted by the ministry, Zutshi talked about the government’s focus on infrastructure development, promotion of niche areas, such as medical, golf, cruise and MICE.

With responsible tourism as one of the themes for a session, Zutshi informed how responsible tourism is being included in India’s tourism policy, adding that India is also looking at adopting the principle of polluter pays for the industry. “We have to study the carrying capacity of destinations. India is prioritising tourism by investing in the public infrastructure in order to facilitate specific tourism investments from the private sector.”

Talking about threats to tourism, he said, “Countries need to be more responsible when issuing travel advisories as perception of safety in destinations is a key factor.”

Book IndiGo on Travelport

IndiGo Airlines went live on Travelport’s Travel Commerce Platform in India helping agents to access the airline’s content in a seamless manner.

Nisha Verma

Celebrating the launch of IndiGo’s fares and ancillaries to all travel agencies on Travelport’s integrated platform, Aditya Ghosh, President & Whole Time Director, IndiGo, and Gordon Wilson, President and CEO, Travelport, discussed the opportunities that they can offer to travel agents and consumers alike.

“With IndiGo going live on the Travelport platform, it means that travel agencies in India can have access to IndiGo with the same fares, content and ancillaries on Travelport as they can on IndiGo’s website or IndiGo’s API. What is progressive about this move is that we are taking it international and making IndiGo available to all travel agencies online or offline using the Travelport system in 180 countries, from where they can generate sales,” says Wilson.

However, IndiGo did take its time to come on board as Ghosh explains, “LCCs traditionally were not on the GDS, but Travelport was the first GDS to be able to bring on board Ryanair and easyJet. I believe Southwest Airlines is also on another GDS platform, which makes three of the largest LCCs in the world in the last couple of years to have figured on a GDS. This gave us the confidence to sign up with a GDS and Travelport itself has undergone a change and evolution, which works in our favour.”

Speaking on how travel agents are going to benefit from this, especially when the prices on IndiGo’s website and the GDS are same, Ghosh says, “Travel agents are a very important part of our business and more than two third of our business comes from travel agencies, both online and offline. This will help travel agents access IndiGo content around the world at more than 68,000 customer touch points, and in a much more seamless manner they will be able to see the inventory on the same screen. They don’t have to toggle through different screens.

This will help agents access IndiGo content around the world at more than 68,000 customer touch points.

We are making IndiGo available to all travel agencies online or offline using the Travelport system in 180 countries.

Contd. on page 23
Connecting Delhi to Seoul, the heart of Korea and beyond

STARTING 1 DECEMBER 2016

Now we offer 5 times weekly direct flight from Delhi to Seoul with great connections. Commencement flight starts 1 December 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Flight</th>
<th>Departure</th>
<th>Arrival</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>KE482</td>
<td>19:40</td>
<td>05:30+1</td>
<td>SUN/TUE/THU/FRI/SAT/SUN/TUE/THU/FRI/SAT</td>
<td>01 DEC-31ST DEC 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>KE481</td>
<td>12:45</td>
<td>18:20</td>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>01 DEC-31ST DEC 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.koreanair.com

TEL NO: 011-23346514/43512482

Excellence in Flight
OTOAI President Guldeep Singh Sahni reveals, “We are making our regional chapters active. We want our chapter members to be active in association work, and thus apart from having regular meetings, we will be adding more things like trainings, etc. The association will have a meeting in Ahmedabad in December. “We are going to now penetrate regions within the regions. At the Ahmedabad members meet, all the Gujarat members are going to discuss agendas which they will be sending to the main office bearers in Delhi.”

OTOAI recently held a Malaysian visa training event for its members at the Malaysian High Commission in New Delhi in collaboration with Malaysia Tourism. “It was a full-fledged training where we had around 80-100 members attending the workshop,” Sahni says. The association is also organising several webinars for different destinations. “We had a webinar with Scotland Tourism and we are going to have another one with them in the second week of December. In the first week of December, we will have a webinar with a cruise supplier, and we will be doing more such webinars in the future as well,” he adds. He said that January 2017 will also see them partnering for roadshows with destinations like Britain and Scotland as well.

The Turkey Education Tour, which was postponed in September, is now happening in March next year. “It is going to be a purely educational tour, and we are designing it right now. First, we want to educate the members about what is happening in Turkey, and second stage of the tour will be educating our members about the product. It will be a six-day tour and will be sponsored by Turkish-Indian Travel Council,” he reveals.

Sahni said that they are planning to do a celebratory event for OTOAI very soon. “We are going to celebrate the existence of OTOAI, or celebrate a festival in any city within India. It will be an informal event, and we are thinking of doing such an event once in a year.”

While all these initiatives are there, Sahni says that the most important issue is of GST. “We have already written to the government. We are meeting senior people from the Finance Ministry to highlight our concern. The biggest problem is that when the tour operator is booking an international package, he is being charged 18 per cent tax, but the same doesn’t apply when someone goes and books the same services online. This will in turn take a toll on our business. We offer services which are produced and consumed outside the country, and ideally, they shouldn’t be taxed in India. The government can tax our profits, which is not an issue. The tour operators’ businesses can’t be categorised into export or import.”

Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) has its kitty full with visa trainings, webinars, roadshows, a Turkey Education Tour, lobbying for GST rebate and focusing on regional chapters.

NISHA VERMA

Gearing up for webinar marathon

NISHA VERMA

Guldeep Singh Sahni
President
OTOAI

80-100 members attending the workshop,” Sahni says. The association is also organising several webinars for different destinations. “We had a webinar with Scotland Tourism and we are going to have another one with them in the second week of December. In the first week of December, we will have a webinar with a cruise supplier, and we will be doing more such webinars in the future as well,” he adds. He said that January 2017 will also see them partnering for roadshows with destinations like Britain and Scotland as well.

The Turkey Education Tour, which was postponed in September, is now happening in March next year. “It is going to be a purely educational tour, and we are designing it right now. First, we want to educate the members about what is happening in Turkey, and second stage of the tour will be educating our members about the product. It will be a six-day tour and will be sponsored by Turkish-Indian Travel Council,” he reveals.

Sahni said that they are planning to do a celebratory event for OTOAI very soon. “We are going to celebrate the existence of OTOAI, or celebrate a festival in any city within India. It will be an informal event, and we are thinking of doing such an event once in a year.”

While all these initiatives are there, Sahni says that the most important issue is of GST. “We have already written to the government. We are meeting senior people from the Finance Ministry to highlight our concern. The biggest problem is that when the tour operator is booking an international package, he is being charged 18 per cent tax, but the same doesn’t apply when someone goes and books the same services online. This will in turn take a toll on our business. We offer services which are produced and consumed outside the country, and ideally, they shouldn’t be taxed in India. The government can tax our profits, which is not an issue. The tour operators’ businesses can’t be categorised into export or import.”

Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) has its kitty full with visa trainings, webinars, roadshows, a Turkey Education Tour, lobbying for GST rebate and focusing on regional chapters.

NISHA VERMA

Gearing up for webinar marathon

NISHA VERMA

Guldeep Singh Sahni
President
OTOAI

80-100 members attending the workshop,” Sahni says. The association is also organising several webinars for different destinations. “We had a webinar with Scotland Tourism and we are going to have another one with them in the second week of December. In the first week of December, we will have a webinar with a cruise supplier, and we will be doing more such webinars in the future as well,” he adds. He said that January 2017 will also see them partnering for roadshows with destinations like Britain and Scotland as well.

The Turkey Education Tour, which was postponed in September, is now happening in March next year. “It is going to be a purely educational tour, and we are designing it right now. First, we want to educate the members about what is happening in Turkey, and second stage of the tour will be educating our members about the product. It will be a six-day tour and will be sponsored by Turkish-Indian Travel Council,” he reveals.

Sahni said that they are planning to do a celebratory event for OTOAI very soon. “We are going to celebrate the existence of OTOAI, or celebrate a festival in any city within India. It will be an informal event, and we are thinking of doing such an event once in a year.”

While all these initiatives are there, Sahni says that the most important issue is of GST. “We have already written to the government. We are meeting senior people from the Finance Ministry to highlight our concern. The biggest problem is that when the tour operator is booking an international package, he is being charged 18 per cent tax, but the same doesn’t apply when someone goes and books the same services online. This will in turn take a toll on our business. We offer services which are produced and consumed outside the country, and ideally, they shouldn’t be taxed in India. The government can tax our profits, which is not an issue. The tour operators’ businesses can’t be categorised into export or import.”

Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) has its kitty full with visa trainings, webinars, roadshows, a Turkey Education Tour, lobbying for GST rebate and focusing on regional chapters.
Money matters

Prime Minister Narendra Modi may have struck the demonetisation chord in early November but the aftermath is still being felt everywhere. With barely a month left for the old 1000 and 500 notes to be banned, everyone is busy falling in line, albeit at the banks. The rupee closed at a 39-month low against the US dollar and analysts expect the home currency may hit a level against the US dollar and analysts expect the home currency may hit a level

SpiceJet leads PLF in Oct @91.9%

Domestic airlines in India have been booming this year, registering a growth of 23.18 per cent in passenger load factor, with SpiceJet topping the list.

The passenger load factor (PLF) in October this year almost remained constant compared to previous month primarily due to the end of tourist season, while the overall cancellation rate of scheduled domestic airlines for the month of Oct 2016 has been 0.72 per cent. SpiceJet recorded the highest PLF of 91.9 per cent amongst all other domestic airlines.

Carriers passed by domestic airlines during Jan-Oct 2016 were 813.70 lakhs as against 689.60 lakhs during the corresponding period of previous year thereby registering a growth of 23.18 per cent.

(Thus, we are now seeing a return to the old regime of not allowing the use of personal identification cards for travel purposes. However, we wish to reiterate that the use of such cards is not mandatory, and we encourage all passengers to use their own means of identification to facilitate smoother boarding processes and lower overall travel times.)
Make Indian inbound incredible

An airline, a government representative, a hotelier and an international tourism body get together at Thomas Cook’s India Travel Summit to share their perspective on what they think can help increase inbound for Indian tourism.

The good

- India is the only country to offer e-Tourist Visas from 0 to 150 countries within just one year.
- It’s great that we are looking at developing smaller cities and airports because Mumbai and Delhi are choked.
- India’s tourism sector has extraordinary potential and is forecast to grow by 7.5% p.a. over the next decade.
- Foreigners are well aware of India and what it has to offer. It is really about reinforcing that awareness.
- For a country of India’s size and potential, we are hugely underperforming. We need to get cleanliness and security right. We need to capture the $80-100 per night market.
- We are sidled. We need to be more coordinated. Why should only tourism offices sell the destination? Why should marketing of an airline become only the airline’s responsibility? It’s rare to see public-private partnerships in India.
- International arrivals were around 8 million visitors per year, which is substantially lower than other countries. China receives 57 million visitors annually and Thailand 30 million.
- Indian media tends to blow up the negative things. So our brand message is not reaching the existing and potential markets. We need to create a perception that India is safe. Infrastructure like information centres, clean toilets, should be up to the mark.
- MICE will be the leader for growth in India. But we haven’t gotten it right. We have fairly good infrastructure in several parts of India. But one of our failures has been our inability to connect the dots. We need to create an eco-system for bids like the Hyderabad model where HICC, the service providers and the hotels bid together. We must have state or destination level convention promotion bureaus.
- Tourism is a state subject and some states do a fabulous job while some need encouragement from the government to move forward. We want to work with the states and the government and market the destination together.
- Three things India needs to focus on: Have a co-ordinated plan between public and private sectors, co-ordination within governments to have public-public plan and address GST, human capital, policies, and focus on e-visas and infrastructure. India needs to focus on its domestic market before catering to the international market.
- We need to tap the Asian countries because it is under-explored. We also need single-window clearances for hotels.

The bad

- For a country of India’s size and potential, we are hugely underperforming. We need to get cleanliness and security right. We need to capture the $80-100 per night market.
- We are sidled. We need to be more coordinated. Why should only tourism offices sell the destination? Why should marketing of an airline become only the airline’s responsibility? It’s rare to see public-private partnerships in India.
- International arrivals were around 8 million visitors per year, which is substantially lower than other countries. China receives 57 million visitors annually and Thailand 30 million.
- Indian media tends to blow up the negative things. So our brand message is not reaching the existing and potential markets. We need to create a perception that India is safe. Infrastructure like information centres, clean toilets, should be up to the mark.
- MICE will be the leader for growth in India. But we haven’t gotten it right. We have fairly good infrastructure in several parts of India. But one of our failures has been our inability to connect the dots. We need to create an eco-system for bids like the Hyderabad model where HICC, the service providers and the hotels bid together. We must have state or destination level convention promotion bureaus.
- Tourism is a state subject and some states do a fabulous job while some need encouragement from the government to move forward. We want to work with the states and the government and market the destination together.
- Three things India needs to focus on: Have a co-ordinated plan between public and private sectors, co-ordination within governments to have public-public plan and address GST, human capital, policies, and focus on e-visas and infrastructure. India needs to focus on its domestic market before catering to the international market.
- We need to tap the Asian countries because it is under-explored. We also need single-window clearances for hotels.

The Plan of Action

- MICE will be the leader for growth in India. But we haven’t gotten it right. We have fairly good infrastructure in several parts of India. But one of our failures has been our inability to connect the dots. We need to create an eco-system for bids like the Hyderabad model where HICC, the service providers and the hotels bid together. We must have state or destination level convention promotion bureaus.
- Tourism is a state subject and some states do a fabulous job while some need encouragement from the government to move forward. We want to work with the states and the government and market the destination together.
- Three things India needs to focus on: Have a co-ordinated plan between public and private sectors, co-ordination within governments to have public-public plan and address GST, human capital, policies, and focus on e-visas and infrastructure. India needs to focus on its domestic market before catering to the international market.
- We need to tap the Asian countries because it is under-explored. We also need single-window clearances for hotels.
WTM 2016 comes with a new format

With India as the Premier Partner at WTM London 2016, the Indian contingent talks about the event and how this edition has been different from the previous ones. From this year the format has changed from four days to three days.

Last year was good and this year it feels better, the pavilions look very attractive. We have had very good football and there has also been a lot of participation. We have been able to meet the people that we’ve wanted to meet. For any of these travel marts we need to come prepared and we need to make appointments in advance. If you just land up here and expect to get business, then you’ll be wasting your time and money.

This year WTM has been better than last year. There is positivity in the market and people are keen to visit India. The e-Tourist Visa facility that has been launched in India has helped a lot. We have been able to meet the operators who had actually discontinued certain destinations are now showing interest to re-launch. For us it’s been great, the three days were very hectic, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been buoyant, the UK by far is the second largest market for India.

Joe Haney, Chairman and Managing Director, Tail Blazer Tours India

Overall I’m very pleased to see that India is a Premier Partner at WTM London 2016, which is a very good step forward to bring India on the map of promotional activity. This is really important for the destination. A positive message like this is appreciated, we have seen interest being shown and we have had strong meetings. Business from the UK is developing extraordinarily well, despite the influence from the UK is developing extraordinarily well, despite the influence, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been hectic, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been very good, the three days were very hectic, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been buoyant, the UK by far is the second largest market for India.

Mario Nadig, CEO Inbound Business La Passage to India

Congratulations to India Tourism for being the Premier Partner of WTM. WTM gives us an excellent platform to interact with quality tour operators. The interactions have been very good and it helps us to work very closely with the European market, the UK market, North America and other foreign tour operators. As compared to last year, the growth in FTAs has been 1.5 per cent so far, by 2020 it’ll go up to 4-5 per cent. We have come up with new destinations and products that will help us to increase tourist arrivals in Punjab.

Amol Nadig, Deputy Manager Marketing Punjab Tourism

Last year was good and this year after a gap of three years, we are trying to revive our old links and meet as many people as possible. We have come up with a new campaign and are trying to revive the brand of Rajasthan and in the years to come we plan to present on a much larger scale and meet more and more people and promote tourism in Rajasthan.

What we have seen at WTM 2016 is a little difference in terms of appointments. The three days have been hectic for us; besides meeting people with whom we are already doing business we have also met some potential clients. Going forward the three-day format seems to be working for WTM. It is also good for the buyers, and everyone made it on time for their appointments.

Anand Tripathi, Joint Director, The Park, New Delhi

WTM has been very good for us so far. We had some important meetings lined up during the three days and all of them have been very good. Business in general has been very good, we now have our own technology and we have seen exponential growth so far and we hope that this will continue. We have been growing very well and we have opened new offices across the globe — in the Philippines and Thailand. We are into inbound business as well now, and our outbound and inbound business is growing very well, this is something we had been looking forward to.

Trish Shah, Chief Operating Officer, Rezlive.com

WTM was very good this year and the overall experience was very exciting, we had some very good buyers come around, and largely it turned out to be quite an interesting show. The stand, the pavilion, and the participants seemed to be quite satisfying. Marts such as WTM are very important for us, it’s an important show for us.

Sandeep Jain, Director, Special Holidays

WTM has been very good for India Tourism as well now, and our outbound and inbound business is growing very well, this is something we had been looking forward to.

Peden Doma Bhutia, from London

Not just have the African countries and South East Asian countries displayed their products in a very attractive manner, but the India Tourism pavilion is also very eye-catching. Along with WTM London, we will also participate at ITB Berlin. WTM London helps us get more business and it’s very helpful as it’s here we can get in touch with foreign tour operators. In Ossisa we are now trying to encash on coastal tourism as well as the architectural beauty of our various sites.

Jehangir H. Katpura, Chairman and Managing Director, YatraExotic Routes

Overall I’m very pleased to see that India is a Premier Partner at WTM London 2016, which is a very good step forward to bring India on the map of promotional activity. This is really important for the destination. A positive message like this is appreciated, we have seen interest being shown and we have had strong meetings. Business from the UK is developing extraordinarily well, despite the influence, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been hectic, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been very good, the three days were very hectic, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been buoyant, the UK by far is the second largest market for India.

Jehangir H. Katpura, Chairman and Managing Director, YatraExotic Routes

We are coming to WTM after a gap of three years, so we are trying to revive our old links and meet as many people as possible. We have come up with a new campaign and are trying to revive the brand of Rajasthan and in the years to come we plan to present on a much larger scale and meet more and more people and promote tourism in Rajasthan.

What we have seen at WTM 2016 is a little difference in terms of appointments. The three days have been hectic for us; besides meeting people with whom we are already doing business we have also met some potential clients. Going forward the three-day format seems to be working for WTM. It is also good for the buyers, and everyone made it on time for their appointments.

Anand Tripathi, Joint Director, The Park, New Delhi

WTM was very good this year and the overall experience was very exciting, we had some very good buyers come around, and largely it turned out to be quite an interesting show. The stand, the pavilion, and the participants seemed to be quite satisfying. Marts such as WTM are very important for us, it’s an important show for us.

Sandeep Jain, Director, Special Holidays

WTM has been very good for India Tourism as well now, and our outbound and inbound business is growing very well, this is something we had been looking forward to.

Jehangir H. Katpura, Chairman and Managing Director, YatraExotic Routes

Overall I’m very pleased to see that India is a Premier Partner at WTM London 2016, which is a very good step forward to bring India on the map of promotional activity. This is really important for the destination. A positive message like this is appreciated, we have seen interest being shown and we have had strong meetings. Business from the UK is developing extraordinarily well, despite the influence, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been hectic, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been very good, the three days were very hectic, we got to meet new tour operators as well. Business has been buoyant, the UK by far is the second largest market for India.

Jehangir H. Katpura, Chairman and Managing Director, YatraExotic Routes

We are coming to WTM after a gap of three years, so we are trying to revive our old links and meet as many people as possible. We have come up with a new campaign and are trying to revive the brand of Rajasthan and in the years to come we plan to present on a much larger scale and meet more and more people and promote tourism in Rajasthan.

What we have seen at WTM 2016 is a little difference in terms of appointments. The three days have been hectic for us; besides meeting people with whom we are already doing business we have also met some potential clients. Going forward the three-day format seems to be working for WTM. It is also good for the buyers, and everyone made it on time for their appointments.

Anand Tripathi, Joint Director, The Park, New Delhi

WTM was very good this year and the overall experience was very exciting, we had some very good buyers come around, and largely it turned out to be quite an interesting show. The stand, the pavilion, and the participants seemed to be quite satisfying. Marts such as WTM are very important for us, it’s an important show for us.

Sandeep Jain, Director, Special Holidays

WTM has been very good for India Tourism as well now, and our outbound and inbound business is growing very well, this is something we had been looking forward to.

Jehangir H. Katpura, Chairman and Managing Director, YatraExotic Routes
Hidden jewel in the Mediterranean

Bulktrip.com, in association with Atlantis Voyages, hosted a Fam trip to Tunisia for a delegation of 20 travel agents along with media partners. They covered all major Tunisian cities with an aim to showcase the country as a preferred outbound destination for Indian travellers.
Aiming for 30% growth from India

Minor Hotels was in India for its fourth roadshow along with 19 partners. With about 30 per cent growth this year, they are hoping to see better growth by the end of the last quarter.

Joao Corte-Real
General Manager,
Anantara Lawana Koh Samui Resort

Raghav Kochar
Resort Manager, Anantara Kihavah Maldives Villas

Samapti Das
Regional Director of Sales & Marketing SE Asia, Minor Hotels

Meg E. Evans
Regional Director of Sales - India, Minor Hotels

Shannon Creado
Regional Director of Sales-India, Minor Hotels

Clinton Lovell
General Manager
Avani Atrium Bangkok

Crystal Abrams
Sales and Marketing Manager, Avani Seychelles Barbarons Resort & Spa

Joa Corte-Real
General Manager,
Anantara Lawana Koh Samui Resort

India market is very important for us. We have grown about 11 per cent in 2016 as compared to 2015. There is a lot of potential in this market. India is one of our top international markets and it is very important for us to be physically present here and promote our property to our trade partners. We hope that 2017 also will be a great year for us.

Shannon Creado
Regional Director of Sales-India, Minor Hotels

India is our largest market segment because we are located at downtown Bangkok. Our hotel has a large room inventory. We are doing a lot of MICE events. Our huge range of à la carte Indian cuisine is quite popular among Indian guests. The property is also very popular among the Indian FITs as we have seven different room categories.

Shannon Creado
Regional Director of Sales-India, Minor Hotels

India market is extremely important for all our hotels. We see good growth in Maldives and obviously Thailand is a very big destination. We have seen big YoY growth from the market in both MICE and FITs and also Indian weddings. We anticipate the same for 2017. We want to see more awareness in the India market and are hopeful about a Minor Hotels property opening in India in mid-2017.

Samantha Das
Regional Director of Sales & Marketing SE Asia, Minor Hotels

Crystal Abrams
Sales and Marketing Manager, Avani Seychelles Barbarons Resort & Spa

The Indian market has grown very well for us. Last year we saw a number of arrivals. India comes number fourth in the clientele and it’s raising its position to number three and we have seen 30 per cent growth from the market. It is growing faster by the month and with the weekly direct flight there is a lot of potential for this market to grow in the coming years.

Samapti Das
Regional Director of Sales & Marketing SE Asia, Minor Hotels

Crystal Abrams
Sales and Marketing Manager, Avani Seychelles Barbarons Resort & Spa

Time to Change your Corporate Movement to NORTHERN EUROPE

Baltic Cities with Vibrant Nightlife, Casinos, Location and Indian Food

Vilnius
Riga
Tallinn

Incentive Package Price starting from ₹79999/- (All Inclusive)

SHIVANTTIKA BON VOYAGE
202, Nauroji House, Kashurba Gandhi Marg, Connaught Place, New Delhi – 110001

CONTACTS
info@shivantika.com
www.facebook.com/shivantikabonvoyage

+91-11-47075707
+91-8588644444
+91-9813709999

+91-9813709999
+91-8588644444
+91-11-47075707

+91-8588644444
+91-11-47075707

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444

+91-011-47075707
+91-8588644444
Thomas Cook’s summit to scale the peak

The tour operator’s first shot at initiating a serious discussion managed to do just that. It focused on three pertinent issues: visas for Indians, outbound from India, and inbound tourism.

Thomas Cook India Limited’s maiden edition of ‘India Travel Summit: Facilitating Travel in Turbulent Times’ was recently held in Mumbai. The half-day event was kept exclusive by making it a closed-door affair, which no doubt kept the numbers low but the quality high. Three one-hour sessions focused on visas, outbound and inbound tourism with each topic having huge potential for a meaningful discussion. The tour operator plans to make it an annual event.

The first session focused on visa issues and had Consul Generals from five countries on the panel. This was followed by a discussion on India’s outbound tourism market with four India heads of NTOs. The last and the most interesting session discussed inbound tourism with four speakers: Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism; Ragini Chopra, VP-Corporate Communications, Jet Airways; Renu Basu, Global VP-Sales, Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces; and David Scowsill, President & CEO, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC).

Madhavan Menon, Chairman and Managing Director, Thomas Cook (India), said, “We wanted this to be different from any other travel event. We had a mix of people like government officials, global tourism body in WTTC, tourism boards, airlines and hotels. We started off with discussing visa regulations. One of the biggest challenges we face is about visas. It is not because the visa authorities are being difficult, instead they work hard to help us. But we work in an environment where the accuracy of some documents is highly questionable. The second session involved tourism boards discussing traffic from India. Then we got into the regulatory topics like policies. We tried to create a variety which worked but we have set the bar very high.”

Speaking about the inspiration behind this initiative, Abraham Alapatt, President & Group Head- Marketing & Service Quality, Financial Services & Innovation, Thomas Cook (India), said, “We didn’t really have an India equivalent of WTTC’s Global Summit and saw the need to create a platform which would allow everyone in the ecosystem to come together. We wanted a summit where we could get the opinion-makers and leaders of the industry to come together by invitation only. This year, it was in Mumbai but we are considering Delhi next year. We also got the Consul Generals on stage. These are people we hardly get a chance to listen to and even they hardly get a chance to talk on the public forum. We will be considering the feedback we have received to understand if we need to make any changes in format.”

TT BUREAU

TT Bureau

Thomas Cook India Limited’s maiden edition of ‘India Travel Summit: Facilitating Travel in Turbulent Times’ was recently held in Mumbai. The half-day event was kept exclusive by making it a closed-door affair, which no doubt kept the numbers low but the quality high. Three one-hour sessions focused on visas, outbound and inbound tourism with each topic having huge potential for a meaningful discussion. The tour operator plans to make it an annual event.

The first session focused on visa issues and had Consul Generals from five countries on the panel. This was followed by a discussion on India’s outbound tourism market with four India heads of NTOs. The last and the most interesting session discussed inbound tourism with four speakers: Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism; Ragini Chopra, VP-Corporate Communications, Jet Airways; Renu Basu, Global VP-Sales, Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces; and David Scowsill, President & CEO, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC).

Madhavan Menon, Chairman and Managing Director, Thomas Cook (India), said, “We wanted this to be different from any other travel event. We had a mix of people like government officials, global tourism body in WTTC, tourism boards, airlines and hotels. We started off with discussing visa regulations. One of the biggest challenges we face is about visas. It is not because the visa authorities are being difficult, instead they work hard to help us. But we work in an environment where the accuracy of some documents is highly questionable. The second session involved tourism boards discussing traffic from India. Then we got into the regulatory topics like policies. We tried to create a variety which worked but we have set the bar very high.”

Speaking about the inspiration behind this initiative, Abraham Alapatt, President & Group Head- Marketing & Service Quality, Financial Services & Innovation, Thomas Cook (India), said, “We didn’t really have an India equivalent of WTTC’s Global Summit and saw the need to create a platform which would allow everyone in the ecosystem to come together. We wanted a summit where we could get the opinion-makers and leaders of the industry to come together by invitation only. This year, it was in Mumbai but we are considering Delhi next year. We also got the Consul Generals on stage. These are people we hardly get a chance to listen to and even they hardly get a chance to talk on the public forum. We will be considering the feedback we have received to understand if we need to make any changes in format.”

roomsXML rated “MSE 2” by NSIC-CRISIL*

It stands for

High Credit Worthiness
Good Financial Strength
Highest Operating Performance

And that, we believe, says it all.

* S&P Global (Standard & Poor’s), established in 1860, is the world’s foremost credit rating agency. Government and Corporate sector rely on S&P Global ratings to make informed investment decisions. CRISIL, an S&P Global company, is India’s leading rating agency.
Currency ban affects leisure & weddings

In the wake of the government’s demonetisation drive, various tourism and hospitality businesses have taken a sharp nosedive. TRAVTalk finds out from India Travel Award winners how this move, despite being applauded as a brave one, will affect the industry in the long run.

TRAVTalk finds out from India Travel Award winners how this move, despite being applauded as a brave one, will affect the industry in the long run.

**Tibet Tours and Travels — Best MICE Operator**

**Move towards technology**

According to Eashita Ghosh, Promotional Manager, Tibet Tours and Travels, demonetisation has come as a boon in disguise as it will bring an opportunity to enhance the functioning of the tourism industry. Ghosh, however, points out that immediate effects have resulted in postponement or cancellation of trips due to current monetary crisis. Explaining the company’s efforts to tackle the situation she informs that in destinations like Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Bhutan and Nepal, the company has introduced payment gateways on the company website and swipe machines as a mode of collecting money from the guests. “Technology in our line of business has been seen as a curse but in the current situation it is a saviour and soon tourists and agents would look forward to the use of technology for faster and smoother money transactions. As per our company policy we majorly deal in cashless transactions with our clients and hence, it has been quite easy for us to overcome demonetisation. Most of our vendors are also opting for online transaction with us,” says Ghosh.

**STHI Holidays India — Best Destination Management Company-International**

**Travel low on priority list**

Gagan Kumar, Founder and Director, STHI Holidays India, feels that demonetisation as a policy move is in the positive direction for the growth of the economy. However, he points out that tourists, both foreign and domestic, have scaled down. Kumar says, “Travel has been people’s least priority, given the current economic scenario in the country. Travel agents are suffering as bookings are being postponed and business is reduced.”
Key to staying relevant in the changing market

OYO says they put in extra efforts to understand guests and believe this to be a key differentiator. The brand has now shifted to a revenue share model.

**Ritesh Agarwal**

Founder & CEO, OYO

“Today, we offer 70,000 rooms across 7,000 partner hotels in 200 cities spanning India and Malaysia,” he says. “Our focus on delivering exceptional customer-experience, building strong partnerships and opening up new market opportunities have been key facilitators for our growth while our strategic investments in customer service, technology and supplier acquisition have further supported this.

OYO’s popularity is highest in Delhi, Bengaluru, Gur- 
aon, Hyderabad and Chennai for both corporate and leisure travel.

One of the most recent innovations is ‘Sunrise Check-in’.

leading OYO to become the first hotel brand in the world to offer guaranteed early check-in to guests. Agarwal explains, “This is keeping in line with major shifts in consumer behaviour. Customers from Ahmedabad to Amsterdam are increasingly used to an on-demand model, where brands cater to their unique preferences and needs - as and when they arise.”

OYO’s self-service platform OYO for Business offers rooms to especially cater to the needs of corporate travel-ers. The platform offers ease of creating bulk bookings via the web and mobile app along with the added convenience of travel-expense management.

So, what does it take to stay relevant in this ever- changing market full of disrup-
tions? "Our size and agility gives us the advantage to test different models, make changes to optimise resources and efficiencies, while continuing to be focused on the big picture.”

Partners’ operations including training staff, conducting regular property audits and collating guest feedback, are of equal importance, he said.

Initially, the group offered minimum guarantee of occupancy to partner hotels during launch phase, a strategy to help onboard hotels in the early growth stage. “This is now redundant, so we shifted to a revenue-share model earlier this year.”

Pacto’s 3rd roadshow

Pacto Indonesia organised its third roadshow in India themed ‘Pacto goes to India 2016’, with the objective of expanding product knowledge for Indian market.

**Randhir Narayan**

Director, AHS India & UAE

Similar agenda was set up at the Le Meridien Hotel, New Delhi, where more than 180 tour operators joined the table top and dinner that culminated closing speech by His Excellency Rizal W. Indrakusuma as the Indonesian Ambassador to India.

**Umberto Cadamuro**

Chief Marketing Officer, Pacto Indonesia

The aggressive marketing plan, prepared with the invaluable support of our representative office in India, Absolute Hospitality Services (AHS India & UAE), is another proof of how, to Pacto, we do not aim at capitalise sales in the short term but we rein-vest in marketing to remain market leader, he added.
Domestic offsets fall in foreign travel

Leisure and Travel World — Best Destination Weddings and Events Travel Planner
Shift from international to domestic destinations

Akashdeep Chanana, Director, Leisure and Travel World, applauds the move by the government but also points out that the sudden announcement of demonetisation has impacted the FIT segment of travel majorly. Despite the slow business from this segment, Chanana points out that people will not stop travelling. “People will continue to travel and thus if someone cannot afford a Europe trip right now may shift to Asian destinations and in case that too does not fit in the budget then many domestic destinations are likely to see tourist movement. Business travel may reduce its cost by 20-30 per cent but this essential travel will continue. Tourism business in general has become slow and the next three-six months are very crucial for the industry,” says Chanana.

HotelExpertz.com — Fastest Growing OTA
Business declines by 20-30%

HotelExpertz.com has seen a decline in their business due to demonetisation, informs Raman Kehar, Director, HotelExpertz.com. He says “We have been receiving queries for holiday packages as it is the travel season time but we are forced to decline those clients, which is very disheartening. We have seen a 20-30 per cent reduction in business post this policy was announced and the market has slowed down considerably.” Kehar also adds that the sentiment to travel has not been compromised and travellers are asking to shift from international destinations to domestic ones in order to still travel. “The industry has seen a setback and the effects of the policy will take time to show. Apart from that, the execution plan was poor which has resulted in chaos across industries,” he elaborates.

Cygnett Hotel Group — Fastest Growing Hotel Brand
Slump in weddings business

Sarbendra Sarkar, Managing Director and Founder, Cygnett Hotels and Resorts, points out that leisure tourism business has been affected as the extra spending is being curtailed. “Domestic tourism contributes majorly to the total number of tourists in the country. We handle Goa and Digha as leisure destinations and have seen a reduction in spending from domestic tourists due to less disposable cash in hand. The weddings and events hosted in hotels have also reduced due to client’s attempts to cut cost wherever possible.” Sarkar also adds that international tourists are less affected than domestic tourists as they are managing with plastic money.

DISCOVER MAGICAL WORLD OF DISNEY WITH SHANDONG AIRLINES

FLIGHT TO SHANGHAI FOUR TIMES A WEEK
MONDAY/FRIDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FLIGHT NO.</th>
<th>ORIGIN</th>
<th>DESTINATION</th>
<th>DEPARTURE TIME</th>
<th>ARRIVAL TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SC 8826</td>
<td>DEL</td>
<td>TNA</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>0150+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 1167</td>
<td>TNA</td>
<td>SHA</td>
<td>1705</td>
<td>1840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLIGHT NO. | ORIGIN | DESTINATION | DEPARTURE TIME | ARRIVAL TIME |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SC 1168</td>
<td>SHA</td>
<td>TNA</td>
<td>0714</td>
<td>1445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 8827</td>
<td>TNA</td>
<td>DEL</td>
<td>0630</td>
<td>1400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WEDNESDAY/SUNDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FLIGHT NO.</th>
<th>ORIGIN</th>
<th>DESTINATION</th>
<th>DEPARTURE TIME</th>
<th>ARRIVAL TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SC 8830</td>
<td>DEL</td>
<td>TAO</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>0150+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 4681</td>
<td>TAO</td>
<td>SHA</td>
<td>0220</td>
<td>0900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLIGHT NO. | ORIGIN | DESTINATION | DEPARTURE TIME | ARRIVAL TIME |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SC 4688</td>
<td>SHA</td>
<td>TAO</td>
<td>2355</td>
<td>0040+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC 8829</td>
<td>TAO</td>
<td>DEL</td>
<td>0920</td>
<td>1400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AVAIL FREE STAY FOR OVER NIGHT TRANSIT

For any further information please contact E: mrsf@bird.in, res.sub@bird.in, sales.on@bird.in  
T.: +91 11 43640364/65, 9811862071, 9716191617
Macao Winter Celebration Package

Offer includes

✓ 02 Nights Accommodation
✓ Daily breakfast or lunch
✓ One way Cotai Water Jet Ferry ticket / Eiffel Tower 7th & 37th floor Observation Deck admission ticket / Gondola Ride / Entry to Qube or Qube 2 or Qube Kingdom
✓ Macao Discovery Tour OR dinner for two guest

02 Nights / 03 Days

Holiday Inn® Macao Cotai Central

From US$ 160 pp

The Parisian® Macao

From US$ 216 pp

The Venetian® Macao

From US$ 238 pp

Conrad® Macao, Cotai Central

From US$ 249 pp

Pre HKG stay From US$ 221 pp
Post HKG stay From US$ 254 pp

Extension to Hong Kong (Pre or Post)
Offer includes: 02 Nights accommodation, Daily Breakfast, Half Day Hong Kong Island Tour on SIC, One way transfer from Hong Kong Hotel to HKG Pier on Private basis or VV, One Way Ferry Ticket from HKG Island Pier or Kowloon Pier - Macao or VV, Transfer from Hong Kong Hotel - Hong Kong Airport or VV on SIC

Remarks: Rates are valid till 28 Feb 2017. Black-out Dates & Weekend surcharges will be applicable. For detailed Terms and Conditions, please visit cn.sandsresortsmacao.com

Ottila International

Mumbai (Head Office) : 022 6598 8888 | Ahmedabad : 079 2642 3001 | Bengaluru : 080 4152 9351 | Chennai : 044 4214 8280

Coimbatore : 0422 435 0506 | Hyderabad : 040 4620 0301 | Indore : 0731 4911 373 | Kochi : 0484 401 5516 | Kolkata : 033 2474 0347


Get your dreams to the destination of your choice with Ottila International.
Kyrgyzstan opens skies for Indian trade

To mark the 25th anniversary of diplomatic ties with Kyrgyz Republic, the Embassy of India in Kyrgyzstan and Air Manas hosted Indian travel trade in Bishkek for B2B sessions. Industry stakeholders tell TRAVTALK how tourism ties between the two countries can be strengthened.

Shivani Kaul from Bishkek

“It’s for the fourth time we organised this, but not on such a big scale. It is very important for people to know about our culture, our people, and what kind of experience India can offer. From that point of view, roadshows of this scale are very important. We are very prompt and flexible in giving visas and usually give it in a day eTV will also help, especially for people who are living in different regions and we will go into that when even Kyrgyzstan agrees for it. Involving the trade is very challenging as Kyrgyzstan is a landlocked country, the route is a bit longer. Our focus is now how to make travel to Kyrgyzstan quicker and faster, what are the bottlenecks to address, to link it with international north-south transportation corridor. Last year we had 45 pharma companies coming to Kyrgyzstan and out of that we are going to have a joint venture with a Gujrat-based pharma company. As part of medical tourism this year 100 patients have gone for treatment as India is very cost effective. Hospital groups like Apollo, Medanta, Fortis, Jaypee and Woodland are very active here. They sometimes operate OPDs here, or through telemedicine network some hospitals conduct live surgeries from India with hospitals in Kyrgyzstan.”

Jagjit Khadrapal
Ambassador of India to Kyrgyzstan

“We want to increase the destinations we operate to in India, especially for the winter season from Goa, Hyderabad, and Kerala. If there are passenges between Mumbai and Bishkek we would certainly start operations there. We have a Boeing 737-800 new generation aircraft that can fly six hours distance, which is perfect for Delhi, Doha. Maybe we can start Kerala soon. We are planning a code share with Malindo Air. Our GSA in India is working towards involving the trade. Next year again we will have our roadshow in Delhi.”

Sharad Goel
Managing Director
Lark Logistics, Air Manas’ GSA in India

Gagash Chokhet
Owner & CEO, Paryatan

“Kyrgyzstan is the perfect destination for honeymooners, family, & MICE tourists. This destination has a lot of activities and sightseeing places like Issyk-Kul and Bishkek. It’s a new upcoming destination and if little efforts are put into marketing this it can develop very well. The flight between Delhi and Bishkek is only three hours so travelling is easy. We want to have B2B sessions between travel companies in India and Kyrgyzstan here as well as in our country. We are planning to have these sessions in April.”

Gajesh Girdhar
Owner & CEO, Paryatan

“I think this is a brilliant effort to bring the two countries closer for tourism. Kyrgyzstan, speciallly with the direct Air Manas flight with Delhi, has a huge opportunity for short haul tourism out of India. Personally I am looking at promoting adventure travel in Kyrgyzstan. It has all the natural resources from rafting and riding trips, camping and hiking, skiing is really good here too. We are looking forward to doing some good business with Kyrgyzstan in the future. We have not had any inbound coming from Kyrgyzstan to India till now. We are still exploring that market. I have met a couple of people from here so hopefully we will take that forward.”

Akshay Kumar
President, Adventure Tour Operators Association of India and CEO, Mercury Himalayan Explorations

Ilgar Alptekin
Director General
Air Manas

It’s for the fourth time we organised this, but not on such a big scale. It is very important for people to know about our culture, our people, and what kind of experience India can offer. From that point of view, roadshows of this scale are very important. We are very prompt and flexible in giving visas and usually give it in a day eTV will also help, especially for people who are living in different regions and we will go into that when even Kyrgyzstan agrees for it. Involving the trade is very challenging as Kyrgyzstan is a landlocked country, the route is a bit longer. Our focus is now how to make travel to Kyrgyzstan quicker and faster, what are the bottlenecks to address, to link it with international north-south transportation corridor. Last year we had 45 pharma companies coming to Kyrgyzstan and out of that we are going to have a joint venture with a Gujrat-based pharma company. As part of medical tourism this year 100 patients have gone for treatment as India is very cost effective. Hospital groups like Apollo, Medanta, Fortis, Jaypee and Woodland are very active here. They sometimes operate OPDs here, or through telemedicine network some hospitals conduct live surgeries from India with hospitals in Kyrgyzstan.”
The entire world is looking at India as an emerging economy. However, the policies and the infrastructure must be in place, says Sharma. "There are a lot of people who want to charter in India, and there are a lot of foreigners who want to come to India and charter aircraft. However, we are still not geared up for that," he adds.

Only Delhi and Mumbai have separate entry for charters. Sharma observes that those who are paying a heavy amount for a charter would like to be treated like a VVIP. Moreover, the reason they charter a flight is to save time, especially when they plan multiple meetings at different places in a single day. "We are still 25 years behind the Americans and Europeans as far as private charters are concerned," he claims.

He asserted that most of people today are looking at Tier II cities like Ludhiana, Rajkot, Indore, Bhopal, and even Tiruppur in Tamil Nadu. "Our clients are industry leaders who take charters to these places for meetings, and most of the airports in such cities do not operate after a certain time, which becomes a hindrance for us as well as our clients. There are several limitations. Unless we resolve these problems, this industry cannot grow," Sharma adds.

However, he was quite hopeful about the Ministry of Civil Aviation's Regional Connectivity Scheme. "The basic concept behind charters is flexibility. With more airports being operational, and the permission procedures getting simpler, there will be ease of operation for charters."

Sharma says that instead of owning the aircraft, Foresee Aviation has bought hours on many aircraft from their operator. "We pull out one aircraft as per the requirement of the clients. We charge for these aircraft on per hour basis and the price can be as low as ₹60,000 to as high as ₹5 lakh per hour depending on the aircraft."

When it comes to selling packages that may require charter aircraft, understanding the needs of the travel agent is pertinent, says Sharma. "There are a lot of inbound tourists coming to India. We discuss with the travel agencies the kind of queries they get for charters and how can they answer the questions by the agencies outside India," he concludes.

For Santosh Kumar Sharma, Director, Foresee Aviation, the Indian charter industry is looking up and it could reach greater heights with better infrastructure and smooth procedures.
Mega Maldives’ swift flight

Mega Maldives Airlines has forayed into India with its thrice a week flight between Delhi and Male, and aims to boost its presence through its GSA, the Bird Group.

The Bird Group is the GSA for the airline in India. George Weinmann, CEO, Mega Maldives Airlines, said, “We are really excited that the ticket sales are going forward and is open through us as well as our partners in India for the non-stop flights from Delhi to Male.”

The Bird Group is the GSA for the airline in India, which is the non-packaged side. Weinmann is hoping for a good number of Indians flying to Maldives with the new connection. “We operate three flights a week and we have a decent number of passengers on these flights, which is around 150 or more. We will see the response in the next two months, as this is the peak time to go to the Maldives.”

He further said that the travel trade is an important part of their sales strategy in India. “One of the things that we know about Maldives is that it is a packaged destination. We design our fair structure and our distribution to partner with wholesalers, travel agencies and OTAs that do packaging in India. We really want to support all those who are preparing packages for the Maldives, where they combine both the flight and hotel, because that’s the strongest selling unit for the destination.”

He said that they have seen a great response for the flight, especially with the inaugural fares. “We have got some great prices for our flights. The travel trade has some special promotional price, which is very good. We have also launched a public price, where one can book the flight at 22,990 from Delhi to Male on Mega Maldives.”

When asked about their strategy for the India market, especially since many other airlines from the Maldives have shut shop in India, he said, “Firstly, the previous efforts to launch non-stop flights between Delhi and Male happened many years ago. The market has really grown over these years, and the number of people travelling between India and Maldives has dramatically changed. There is a lot more demand. The other thing is that our schedules are just right for the India market. Lastly, we have done a lot of work on distribution and have several partners, including the resort community and the travel trade.”

Tier II on Thai Smile’s radar

Thai Smile Airways is exclusively focusing on Tier-II cities in India, which according to them has huge potential.

THAI Smile Airways is under-taking an ambitious growth strategy to develop network and ensure international connectivity. Moreover, we are committed to ensure that our passengers have greater choice and opportunity to discover new destinations by flying with THAI Smile Airways.”

He, however, asserted that THAI Smile is only planning the operations to the Tier-II cities. “There are more than 1.25 million people from India travelling in a year. THAI Smile Airways understands the immense need for passengers travelling among these four cities. A journey which can be covered in less than four hours can take up to 8-10 hours. We wish to make it more comfortable and affordable to Indian passengers,” he added.

As part of their Indian strategy for promotion and sales, Thai Smile Airways has appointed The Bird Group as their GSA for the Indian market.

Season’s Greetings from Hahn Air

We thank you for your support throughout the past year.
Have a wonderful holiday season and a prosperous and peaceful new year 2017!
Celebrate Christmas in Ocean Park with a jaw-dropping spectacular, featuring world-class magicians and illusionists! For more Christmas colour, Waterfront Plaza will transform into a music-themed Santa Claus village. Our award-winning landscaping team have created lively topiaries of Santa and his elves, amidst vibrant Santa tree houses and oversized musical instruments. And of course, the iconic giant Christmas Tree will be lit every evening to the sound of heart-warming carols.

Unbelievable Package Pricing
Include Ocean Park Hong Kong Tour
Starting @ USD 522 per person

- 2 nights stay with breakfast at Venetian Macau
- 3 nights stay with breakfast at Harbour Plaza 8 Degrees
- Return transfers in Macau on hotel shuttle
- Return transfers in Hong Kong
- Ocean Park Hong Kong Tour
- Hong Kong Night Tour
- Macau City Tour
- Hong Kong – Macau – Hong Kong Ferry
- All tours and transfers on SIC

Contact us on:
E: online@travelbullz.com/groups@travelbullz.com
T: +91 11 49429900

W: www.travelbullz.com
Follow us on: /travelbullz /travelbullz

THAILAND | HONG KONG | MACAU
Portugal discovers India through tourism

His Excellency João da Camara, Ambassador of Portugal, feels tourism is a very important and valuable segment. It doesn’t just generate jobs and revenues, but can also build excellent bridges between countries.

**What has been the highlight of your India posting as the Portuguese Ambassador?**

I would say that there have been many different highlights of my posting in India: the beauty of the country, the kindness of the people and the realisation of the interest of the Indian authorities in strengthening bilateral relations with Portugal.

**How important is tourism for Portugal?**

Tourism is a prime industry and an extremely important work segment for Portugal and for the Portuguese economy. It accounts for 5.8 per cent of the country’s GDP and generates 7.2 per cent of direct employment.

**What are Portugal’s greatest attractions for foreign tourists?**

The fact is that Portugal had diverse attractions, and offers a bit of everything. There are white sand beaches; beautiful countryside; historical and modern cities; old monuments; mountains; a delicious gastronomy experience; lots of sunshine and, above all, very welcoming people. All these attributes become easier to enjoy because the country also has a good transport system and one of the best highway networks in Europe.

**Do you feel that tourism and local traditions can be blended in a positive way?**

Yes, I think they can be blended, and such a blend is possible and desirable. Portugal is basically a very traditional country, and even in the most touristic places you will have the presence of this traditional element. It is something that’s valuable and worth cherishing.

**Is Portugal keen on getting Indian tourists and conventions?**

Even though Portugal is now considered one of the best touristic destinations in the world, it has still to be discovered by the Indian public. There is a growing interest in India, noticeable by the increasing number of visas the Embassy is issuing, but the figures are still very modest. We intend to change that. We want more Indian tourists in Portugal and we want also to promote Portugal as one of the best places in the world to organise conventions, seminars and big events. Just to give you an example, Lisbon, our capital, will be hosting in November the Webb Summit with an attendance expected of around 70,000 people. In this event we hope to have the participation of around 700 Indian companies.

**Do you feel tourism would boost other businesses and lead to further bilateral ties between Portugal and India?**

I have no doubt about it. It is much easier to do business and to develop relations when you know the country and have been in contact with its people. Portugal and India will have to rediscover each other, and tourism can certainly play a big role and help in that.
THIS IS WHERE AMAZING MEETS AMAZING

3 THEME PARKS, 1 WATER PARK, STAY AND DINING EXPERIENCES ALL IN ONE LOCATION

Kindly contact your local DMCs for more information on our preferred rate

dubaiparksandresorts.com
New source markets for India tourism

The UK and the US have traditionally been the largest contributor for foreign tourist arrivals in India. But with newer destinations emerging as potential source markets, TRAVTALK finds out from tourism stakeholders if the trade should rely on conventional markets or explore fresh ground.

Subhash Goyal
Past President
IATO

Bharat Bhushan
Managing Director
Caper Travel Company

Rajan Sehgal
Chairman-Northern Region, TAAI

Should India target new source markets or focus on aggressive marketing in a few countries that have proven to be the largest source markets to grow inbound tourism?

We have to do aggressive marketing in countries like the UK, USA, Germany and Sri Lanka from where we receive the largest number of foreign tourists. Under no circumstances should we allow to lose our grip on the existing source markets. However, since there is a recession in Europe, we also have to develop new markets like China, Japan, Korea, etc. so that a loss of Europe could be compensated by other countries.

We would have to diligently focus on both, target on new source markets and aggressively do promotions and marketing in our traditional markets. We should do some aggressive and effective promotions, events, print and electronic advertisement with the help of leading international PR firms and media agencies, digital marketing, inviting international writers, journalists and celebrities to write blogs in international travel magazines and media platforms. Travel programs on India on television is another good tool for visibility and to induce demand. Tourism Ministry has huge budgets to promote India as a destination but unfortunately have never been able to utilise the same to the fullest due to lack of a professional team.

We should definitely target new markets. We need to observe the tourists who are coming to neighbouring countries like Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore and Sri Lanka and analyse the potential of their source markets. If the tourists can come all the way to South East Asia then we need to see if they can come to India as well. However before targeting new markets we also need to position and market Indian tourism products better and move beyond the Golden Triangle which is already popular.

As told to Ankita Saxena
Industry reflects on demonetisation

If you are in India and haven’t questioned the after-effects of demonetisation on your business, you must be living under a rock. The Government’s move has been bookmarked as bold by many and is being looked at as being for the greater good of India in the long run. This is what the travel and hospitality industry thinks of it.

Long-term benefits

“Demonetisation will create short term problems for tourists who are already in India. We have taken some steps to ease their inconvenience. For instance, ASI monuments are accepting old currency. We are also in talks with the Finance Ministry to ease the pain points for tourists. Other than that, we will see more transactions happening online and through cards or banks which will be good for the travel industry. It might dampen the market marginally, initially, but will prove beneficial in the long term.”

Shashi Munshaw
Director-India, Atout France

Towards a cashless economy

“It will be very positive for the Indian economy. The government’s plan to encourage cashless society in India is a great move. I would like to congratulate the government for taking such a bold step. Although it will have some short-term effect on people, in the long run it will have a positive impact.”

Jim Darband
Head of Markets, Switzerland Tourism

Transparency in investment

“This is a very good step because FDI, or for that matter organised sector, has not stepped into funding for hospitality or hotels as much as they should. Currently, the hospitality and hotel industry is predominantly owned by high network individuals (HNIs). We believe that this transparency and regulations will allow more confidence to be built in investment in land and real estate and consequently into the hotel industry.”

Raj Kana
Chief Executive Officer, South Asia, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group

Better money management

“This will have a medium-term effect as people are more focused on how the situation will play out and how to deal with it. There will be a certain segment of the society preoccupied with money management and methods of payments. But this will be short-lived for two to three months.”

Samul Billa
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism

Favourable for hotels

“It will affect all those people who use cash to manage all their day to day expenses. In the long term, it will benefit the country. For an international hotel chain like us, it is much better when the business coming to us is in white money. It is always in our favour.”

Sandeep Heerder
General Manager, JW Marriott Hotel, Mumbai, Sahara

IndiGo’s gift to agents

“We don’t have any differential pricing and all the ancillary products are available. Thus, life is much easier for travel agents.”

Wilson adds, “People usually book packages with travel agencies, which involves hotels, fauns and comparison and consultation. Customers go to the travel agents for a variety of reasons. In fact, the international travel agencies can advise their customers about IndiGo and its connections in India, which is now available on the Travelport platform.”

Gordon, also said he is bullish on the Indian market. “We have been here for 20 years and that helps in building new opportunities. India is the third biggest GDS market by air bookings in the world today, much bigger than the UK and very close to Germany, which is Number two.”

We are only seeing an acceleration in this market because a huge number of Indian population is moving from trains to planes. There is an increasing investment from India, which is causing trade to come into India and is boosting outbound travel from India as well. IndiGo has been at the forefront of this growth and offering international connections as well. Thus, we are very positive on the Indian market overall.”

Small-scale sufferers

“There will a short-term effect of demonetisation because hotel bookings and payments are mostly done online through cards. It will be difficult when there is cash transactions involved in the initial two months. But after that we expect things to function normally. However, small scale hotels and restaurants will be affected by this for a longer period of time.”

S.P. Jain
MD, Pride Hotels

48-room Lords Eco Inn to open in Bharuch

Lords Hotels & Resorts has recently signed its 26th property in Bharuch, Gujarat. To be branded under the Lords Eco Inn banner, it is scheduled to commence operations from December 2016. This makes Lords Hotels & Resorts the largest hotel chain in the state.

Located between the two major cities of Surat and Vadodara, Lords Eco Inn – Bharuch serves as an ideal stopover destination. With 48 rooms, the eco inn offers luxurious accommodations and full-service at friendly prices for the discerning business and leisure traveller. P.R. Bansal, CMD, Lords Hotels & Resorts, says, “The addition of this hotel to our chain of hotels marks a significant milestone and one that is unique, for us. From the first hotel back in 2007 which was set in this very state to this one in 2016, we have gone on to become the largest chain of true value hotels in Gujarat.”
Win a FREE trip to Canada

Answer 5 questions and win a holiday to Canada®
Plus 25 more prizes to be won!

Q1 Established in 1885, which was the first national park in Canada?
Q2 Which is the greatest outdoor show in Canada?
Q3 In October 2016, Air Canada started flying non-stop to Vancouver from which Indian city?
Q4 How old will Canada turn in 2017?
Q5 Name the attraction recently opened at Niagara Falls which allows you to zip through to the falls?

To participate in the contest, provide your name, e-mail id, mobile number, designation and company name along with answers on: winatriptocanada@buzzindia.in

www.buzzindia.in
Indulging in black-tie bonhomie

On the occasion of its President and CEO, David Scowsill’s visit to the capital, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) held an evening of networking at The Lalit New Delhi on November 14. The who's who of the travel and hospitality industry and members of the WTTC India Initiative descended on the venue and welcomed the global personality over cocktails and canapés.

---

Hokkaido - Japan
Travel Destination Seminar in India

**Delhi**

12 December 2016  
Time : Approx. 10:00 - 13:30  
@WelcomHotel Dwarka New Dehli

**Mumbai**

14 December 2016  
Time : Approx. 10:00 - 13:30  
@The Sahil Hotel Mumbai

**Highlight :**

☑️ Presentation Seminar & Study for Travel Agency by Hokkaido Tourism officer  
☑️ We look forward to your participation followed by Lunch

**For inquiry or reservation**

Please contact  
Hokkaido - Japan Tourism Seminar committee  
shambu.rawat@coxandkings.com  
Tel : 011 - 2676 - 7900 / 2676 - 8811  
Ext No - 7973  
Mobile : + 91 - 97 - 1199 - 2065
Dubai’s Bollywood connect

Dubai Parks and Resorts recently opened the Bollywood Parks Dubai, following the opening of LEGOLAND Dubai and Riverland Dubai. The inauguration ceremony witnessed performances by Bollywood artists and dancers and live entertainment shows. Raed Kajoor Al Nuaimi, Chief Executive Officer, DXB Entertainments PJSC, says, “Following the successful opening and commencement of operations at LEGOLAND Dubai and Riverland Dubai, we are very excited and eager to witness our guests’ reactions when they experience Bollywood Parks Dubai. Today we celebrate the opening of the first Bollywood inspired theme park in the world, and we’re confident that it will appeal to a large segment of fans due to its popularity in the region.”

Bollywood Parks Dubai will recreate the Bollywood experience through themed attractions and rides spread across five zones: Bollywood Boulevard, Mumbai Chowk, Rustic Ravine, Royal Plaza and Bollywood Film Studios. Visitors will experience bold action, colourful story-telling and captivating dance sequences inspired by nine popular films: Rock On!, Don, Lagaan, Sholay, Dabangg, Mughal-e-Azam, Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara, RA.One and Krrish.

The theme park offers an 850-seater Rajmahal Theatre that will be home to a separately ticketed Broadway-style, Bollywood-themed show. During the day, the park will have up to 20 live shows across five stages: Rock On!, Crossroads, Mumbai Express, Rangmanch and Stars on Steps. The park will also offer six themed restaurants that capture India’s culinary offerings and eight retail outlets stocking quintessential filmy fare.

Agents on a Sri Lankan sojourn

In an attempt to showcase some of the finest hotels from the pristine collection of Aitken Spence Hotels, the hotel company along with Aitken Spence Travels Sri Lanka, represented by Nijhawan Group in India, hosted Indian travel agents on a four-day tour to Sri Lanka in association with SriLankan Airlines.
Rare aims at 44% occupancy

From four properties to now 44, Rare Experiences & Destinations has grown by leaps and bounds, and with new partners coming on board, the group is hopeful to cap it at 50.

Shoba Mohan, Founder Partner, Rare Experiences and Destinations, said, “We need to nudge away from the regular which is easy to sell. This allows us to delve into the history of the place to find out various avenues of the place in order to promote the property located there.”

The four operator fraternity increasingly looks at Rare as somebody that they can approach for a new concept, she said, adding, “They try to get us involved so that they can promote things in a unique way.”

Beginning with four properties, Rare now boasts 44 properties under its umbrella and aims to cap it at 50 very soon. Mohan said, “We want our hotels to start making money. For most of our partners it’s a sustaining business. We are looking at 44 per cent occupancy and to break that barrier and reach 60-70 per cent is actually when they will start making money.”

Rare is also looking at foraying into South India in 2017. Sowmya Rao Vijaymohan, Founder Partner, Rare Destinations & Experiences, said, “Our portfolio in terms of wildlife in North India is doing quite well. Now we are looking at a stronger profile for South India and we are soon going to roll out new addition from the region. Some of them are destinations that are not yet explored by tourists market.”

The year 2017 will also be a year when Rare will look at consolidating all its partners and experiences. Vijaymohan also said that North East is another region that Rare is going to focus on more next year besides Glenburn tea estate in Darjeeling that is already on board.

A new address for Oman Air in God’s Own Country

Oman Air, the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, celebrated the country’s 40th National Day with the inauguration of its Kochi office at a new location — MG Road. The airline was the first international carrier to operate from the Kochi International Airport. Oman Air now operates twice daily from Kochi since it started in December 2015.
Museums are More fun in the Philippines

Visit Art in Island - the enchanting 3D world

Entry Fee: adults - 500 PHP, students and senior citizens - 400 PHP
Stars galore at ‘World Tourism Night’

Zee TV, in association with World Tourism Services and Digital Arabia, hosted a special dinner and award show — 'World Tourism Night' to recognise industry stalwarts, at The Montcalm, London Marble Arch.
Double taxation on the amusement industry has led to low footfalls, laments Ajay Sarin, President, Indian Association of Amusement Parks and Industries (IAAPI).

High taxation levels have been a burden to the whole industry and its consequences have not spared even the amusement sector. The implementation of service tax in the Union Budget 2015-16 that came into effect last year, has had a cascading effect on the Indian Amusement industry, Sarin reveals.

“Double taxation has hampered the growth of the Indian amusement new entrepreneurs as footfalls to the parks have reduced drastically because of increase in tickets rates. Amusement parks are visited mostly by families with about four to six members, and since they find the price very high, they look at other sources of entertainment. The high rate of taxation is dissuading new entrepreneurs from entering the industry with new formats and additionally preventing current industry players from adding both capex and new centres. Entrepreneurs, thus, are seeking to explore other investment avenues,” he comments.

The state government levies an entertainment tax which varies in states. In addition, the amusement sector was imposed a service tax of 15 per cent and unlike any other sector the high operation cost, manpower cost to render services available to set off the service tax paid is negligible, according to Sarin.

Keeping in mind these concerns, IAAPI is hoping for a sensible GST rate to neutralise these setbacks and retaliates the fact that global markets where GST has been introduced, the tourism rate is half of the GST rate and under 10 per cent. Sarin highlights, “Everyone recognises the GST rate as very crucial. It is important to stimulate tourism demand because it has an economic multiplier effect on GDP and on sectors like jobs. The CAGR generated in Asian countries is 5.1 per cent with a worldwide CAGR of 2.1 per cent (North America 2.7%, Europe 0.8% & Latin America 2.8%) which is higher as compared to other countries. There is huge potential here.”

Sarin emphasises that a rational tax structure for the industry will help in increasing footfalls to the amusement park whereby revenues will not be affected because increase in ticket sales will help in collection of more tax. “Amusement park operators can have dynamic pricing structure to attract more footfalls. This scenario will attract FDI in Amusement sector which is currently negligible and encourage international players to invest in India.”

The Guide will allow businesses, organisations and official bodies to resolve in a speedy and direct manner any queries they may have regarding their participation in the trade show. The Guide also features an Exhibitor Zone, a Co-exhibitor Section and an Exhibitor Schedule. In the contracting section, exhibitors can learn about general regulations for IFEMA and specific ones for FITUR as well as terms and forms of payment. In Participation Modalities and Rates they can choose a “turnkey” stand or a free-design stand.
Premier Partner India shines at WTM

World Travel Market London 2016 witnessed a joint-record attendance of 51,500 and the highest number of exhibitor invitees and buyers in the event's 37-year history. The new-look three-day event with extended opening hours was well received by the global travel industry with 51,444 senior industry executives in attendance – a 4 per cent increase on last year, reveal unaudited figures.
Free travel days with Swiss Travel Pass

The Swiss Travel Pass includes extensive travel on trains, buses and boats, as well as travel on scenic trains such as the Bernina Express, Glacier Express, GoldenPass Line and Wilhelm Tell Express. The pass also covers public transportation in more than 75 Swiss cities, a 50% price reduction off most mountain railways, and free admission to more than 490 museums in Switzerland.

1 FREE day with the 4-day consecutive Swiss Travel Pass

2 FREE days with the 8-day consecutive Swiss Travel Pass

Act now! This exclusive offer is only available in India. Valid for sale until December 30, 2016. Valid for travel until June 30, 2017.

For information and bookings, visit agents.raileurope.co.in.
Or contact your Rail Europe GSA: Amigo Travels, Cox & Kings (I) Ltd, Kesari Tours, SOTC, Make My Trip, Ottilia International, Swisstours, Thomas Cook, Travel Tours, TUI.

© swiss-image.ch/Christof Senderegger, Jungfraubahnen AG, 2011. Fotografi: Rob Lewis, Swiss Travel System
**Thailand’s luxury offerings for India**

Soraya Homchuen, Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand, in Mumbai said, “We see great potential for the luxury market in Mumbai and Ahmedabad. The spending power of Indian tourists has increased tremendously and therefore we see a demand for luxury products. With this luxury roadshow we try to offer new luxury products to the market. We expect an increase between 5-6 per cent growth from the Indian luxury market.” TAT also plans to bring the luxury roadshow to Bengaluru and other potential cities next year. Until August this year Thailand has witnessed around 7.9 lakh Indian tourists and by the end of 2016 they expect to reach the target of 1.1 million tourists from India.”

Tourism Authority of Thailand hosted its fourth luxury roadshow in India in Mumbai and Ahmedabad. This was the third luxury roadshow for the Mumbai market. Its first edition was held in Mumbai and Delhi and since then, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Ahmedabad joined the fray. The roadshow witnessed 14 business partners from Thailand including hotels from Koh Samui, Phuket and some hotels having properties all over Thailand ranging from four to five star categories and two DMC companies. Commenting on this, Soraya Homchuen, Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand in Mumbai, said, “We see great potential for the luxury market in Mumbai and Ahmedabad. The spending power of Indian tourists has increased tremendously and therefore we see a demand for luxury products. With this luxury roadshow we try to offer new luxury products to the market. We expect an increase between 5-6 per cent growth from the Indian luxury market.” TAT also plans to bring the luxury roadshow to Bengaluru and other potential cities next year. Until August this year Thailand has witnessed around 7.9 lakh Indian tourists and by the end of 2016 they expect to reach the target of 1.1 million tourists from India.”

Tourism Authority of Thailand in Mumbai

---

**Digital marketing: The way forward**

Avijit Arya, Chief Mogul at Internet Moguls, believes it is imperative for traditional travel agents to invest in digital marketing to get some direct business and is essential for sustenance in the long run.

Until now, digital and ad agencies helped hotels market themselves, there was no niche or someone coming to help hotels with pricing coupled with digital expertise. I’m a hotelier and Internet Moguls is working for 120 hoteliers.

Tell us about your upcoming initiatives.

Internet Moguls has recently introduced the Digital PR division to manage online reputation for its existing and potential clients because it’s again a niche and the hospitality industry needs more focus in this domain.

In this ever-changing world of travel & hospitality, what is your growth strategy?

For any kind of growth you need to take that first step and the risk. We at Internet Moguls constantly challenge the status quo, the team is always reading, finding and experimenting with the latest technology. Growth strategy is very simple, we are nimble and go all out and create limitless possibilities for our employees so that they can think laterally as well as horizontally.

What is your opinion on the increasing focus of digitalisation in the travel & hospitality industry?

Things have moved very fast and our industry is still waiting and attending conferences, Fam tours, trips and dinners with travel agents. I’m not saying that it’s wrong but what I mean is that it’s not enough. It’s time to spend and invest into digital marketing to salvage some direct business lest one day we all will be OTA named hotel corporations and that day is not too far. And hats off to the OTAs for pulling this off under our noses.
EXPERIENCE THE BEST OF
SOUTH AFRICA

If it’s something different you’re looking for – a place with a rich serving of diverse cultures, intriguing traditional cuisine, the buzzing city life that will have your feet tapping to its rhythmic beats, as well as remarkable outdoor and wildlife experiences, then come see the best of South Africa’s tourism products. Four days featuring trade professionals from up to 60 exciting South African products, who will teach you more about successfully packaging and selling #wowSouthAfrica.

Join us and experience a country like no other at the 2017 South African Tourism Roadshow.

We look forward to seeing you there!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30-Jan</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Chennai</td>
<td>10:00hrs - 14:00hrs</td>
<td>Taj Coromandel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-Jan</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Bangalore</td>
<td>10:00hrs - 14:00hrs</td>
<td>ITC Gardenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-Feb</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>10:00hrs - 16:00hrs</td>
<td>Le Meridien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03-Feb</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Mumbai</td>
<td>10:00hrs - 16:00hrs</td>
<td>St. Regis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RSVP: Indiaroadshow@southafrica.net or call 022 40144070 for more information
Trade calls out — Namaste London
More value to travel!

Get the best deal with our Value Pack that comes with 20 Kg baggage, a veg snack*, and standard seat selection**.

Currently flying to:
- Bengaluru
- Chandigarh
- Goa
- Guwahati
- Hyderabad
- Imphal
- Jaipur
- Kochi
- New Delhi
- Pune
- Visakhapatnam

To join us as a Sky Agent, contact
Sales Support: 080-4667 6762
india_sales@airasia.com

For group enquiries, contact
Group Desk: 044-4221 8201
in_groupdesk@airasia.com

*Value Pack comes with a pre-selected sandwich for all, GF, RD, PG, ZZ and I flights. A pre-selected Hot Meal will be provided for DX, JL, and XK flights. **Standard seat selection is included in Value Pack. You may also upgrade to a Hot Seat. Additional charges apply. All India domestic flights are operated by AirAsia India Limited and all international flights are operated by either AirAsia Berhad, Thai AirAsia Co., Ltd, AirAsia X Berhad, or PT Indonesia Co. Ltd. Our seats are limited and may not be available on all flights during public holidays, school breaks, and weekends. All in fares include fares, fuel surcharges and airport taxes. Inclusive one-way only. A payment processing fee is applicable to all payments made via credit, debit or charge cards. Our other terms and conditions of carriage apply.

Lowest fares @ airasia.com

AirAsiaIndia AirAsiaIN
Coming together for tourism's sake

Contd. on page 40
BE MOVED IN SHANTINIKETAN

Even today, the university town moves to the memory of Bengal’s favourite bard, Tagore. From the minstrels with their verses of love, human and divine, to the blushing palash trees – everything and everyone will serenade you.
When meetings translate into business
Think out of the box, tap new markets

Inbound in India has been relying on traditional source markets, but tour operators believe that tapping new markets like South America, South East Asia and China can boost inbound numbers further. TRAVTalk finds out from industry players about such upcoming markets.

NISHA VERMA

"The South American market needs to be tapped. Also, South East Asian markets, as well as Australian market is looking up. These are some of the untapped countries. Tour operators have always been focusing on the traditional markets like the UK, Europe, USA and Canada."

Jyoti Kapoor
Chairman
Vetrade Tours & Travels

"For us, China is a major market to look at for business, apart from some African destinations which largely remain untapped. However, the South American market is also a potential one if some of the Indian destinations conduct marketing initiatives in these places the potential of which is yet to be realised. This can further help improve inbound figures for India."

Prayag M. Shah
Chairman, Destination Tours & Travel Services

"I believe that China is going to be a great source market. It’s a huge untapped market, and tour operators should work on it to get more business from there."

N.S. Rathor
CEO
Garha Travels

"China, Taiwan, Singapore, Korea and the entire South East Asia are potential markets. Even eastern Europe and countries like Czech Republic and Estonia can be tapped. Tour operators should also look at BRICS nations, as it is a good platform to get good business. Canada and USA are also good markets to explore."

Martin Joseph
CMD, Freedom Holidays

"South America and Brazil are the upcoming markets for India as there are not many tourists coming from there. Not many tour operators have also ventured into these markets and hence the opportunities are abound."

M.S. Rathor
CEO
Garha Travels

"think the UK and USA have been good source markets and will keep on performing for India. There is a lot of potential in these markets and the numbers are going to increase."

Ajay Prakash
Chairman
Vietrade Tours & Travels

"The South American market needs to be tapped. Also, South East Asian markets, as well as Australian market is looking up. These are some of the untapped countries. Tour operators have always been focusing on the traditional markets like the UK, Europe, USA and Canada."

Himanshu Agasthees
Managing Director, Columbus Travels

"think the UK and USA have been good source markets and will keep on performing for India. There is a lot of potential in these markets and the numbers are going to increase."

For us, China is a major market to look at for business, apart from some African destinations which largely remain untapped. However, the South American market is also a potential one if some of the Indian destinations conduct marketing initiatives in these places the potential of which is yet to be realised. This can further help improve inbound figures for India."

"China, Taiwan, Singapore, Korea and the entire South East Asia are potential markets. Even eastern Europe and countries like Czech Republic and Estonia can be tapped. Tour operators should also look at BRICS nations, as it is a good platform to get good business. Canada and USA are also good markets to explore."

Martin Joseph
CMD, Freedom Holidays

"think the UK and USA have been good source markets and will keep on performing for India. There is a lot of potential in these markets and the numbers are going to increase."

M.S. Rathor
CEO
Garha Travels

"think the UK and USA have been good source markets and will keep on performing for India. There is a lot of potential in these markets and the numbers are going to increase."

Ajay Prakash
Chairman
Vietrade Tours & Travels

"think the UK and USA have been good source markets and will keep on performing for India. There is a lot of potential in these markets and the numbers are going to increase."

For us, China is a major market to look at for business, apart from some African destinations which largely remain untapped. However, the South American market is also a potential one if some of the Indian destinations conduct marketing initiatives in these places the potential of which is yet to be realised. This can further help improve inbound figures for India."

Martin Joseph
CMD, Freedom Holidays

"China, Taiwan, Singapore, Korea and the entire South East Asia are potential markets. Even eastern Europe and countries like Czech Republic and Estonia can be tapped. Tour operators should also look at BRICS nations, as it is a good platform to get good business. Canada and USA are also good markets to explore."

Martin Joseph
CMD, Freedom Holidays
UNLIMITED BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
FOR THE GLOBAL TOURISM FRATERNITY!!

THE GREAT INDIAN travel bazaar’17

April 23 - 25, 2017 (Sunday - Tuesday)
Inaugural Venue: The Lalit, Jaipur &
Exhibition and B2B Venue: JECC, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

B2B meetings with the Foreign Tour Operators!
Log on to www.greatindiantravelbazaar.com to fix your meetings online.
B2B meetings will be organized at the booth(s) of the registered Indian sellers only.

Around 294 Booths to showcase your products...BOOK NOW!

Around 275 Foreign Tour Operators participating from 50 Countries!

Argentina | Australia | Austria | Belgium | Brazil | Bulgaria | Canada | Chile | China | Colombia | Czech Republic | Denmark | Finland | France | Germany | Hong Kong | Hungary | Indonesia | Iran | Israel | Italy | Japan | Kazakhstan | Korea | Latvia | Lithuania | Malaysia | Mexico | Netherlands | New Zealand | Norway | Peru | Philippines | Poland | Portugal | Romania | Russian Fed | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | South Africa | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | Thailand | Turkey | U.K. | U.S.A. | Ukraine | Uruguay | Vietnam

FORBooth REGISTRATION and PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

PLEASE CONTACT:
TRAVEL BAZAAR SECRETARIAT
Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
Phone : 011-23487490, 23311720, 23322539 (New Delhi)
Email : rahul.chakravarty@ficci.com, samanda.sayem@ficci.com, arshad.danish@ficci.com | Web : www.greatindiantravelbazaar.com

Kindly Note: Entry is strictly for buyers and sellers. There is no visitor entry.

Thank you Partners

Host State

RAJASTHAN
TOURISM

Theme State

Partner State

Platinum Partner

Inaugural Cocktail and Dinner Partner

THE LalIT

Inaugural Cocktail and Dinner Partner

THE LalIT

Diamond Partners

Gold Partners
Thailand’s grandeur comes a-calling

The Amazing Thailand Luxury roadshow in New Delhi organised by the Tourism Authority of Thailand witnessed the presence of around 60 buyers and 10 sellers who participated in B2B sessions followed by an authentic Thai dinner. Held on November 18 at The Imperial New Delhi, the décor of the exhibition reflected the culture and heritage of the kingdom and focused on its most exclusive offerings for the affluent Indian traveller.
**FAITH lobbies for 5% GST for tourism**

For FAITH, the single point agenda is to get the rate of Goods and Services Tax (GST) for tourism under the lowest slab possible, reveals Sarab Jit Singh, Vice Chairman, FAITH.

**TT BUREAU**

The Federation of Associations of Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH) has held multiple discussion meetings with all its member associations regarding GST. “Finally, we have come to the conclusion that we are seeking the lowest slab possible for tourism sector. Earlier, we were asking for six per cent, but now we are requesting for five per cent. We have given requisite examples of other countries, where the GST is low. We have given a list of 20 countries, which have kept tourism in the lowest slab for GST, and are recording huge number of tourist arrivals,” Singh says.

FAITH has also urged the government to keep the foreign exchange transactions under tourism tax free. “Our second demand is that any transaction in foreign exchange by the tourism sector should be on zero rating. In fact, it should be the same for all tourism organisations, be it hotels, tour operators, transport operators or convention providers. That will give us incentive to make Indian tourism products more competitive worldwide and win business, which is going to other countries. The third thing which we have asked is that the definition of these services under GST should be amended so that the services provided to foreign tourists in India should be treated on a par with the services provided outside India and given all benefits,” he adds.

FAITH has reached out to all states and central government officials and ministers and Singh hopes that things will pan out in favour of tourism.

The association is also involved in the upcoming Incredible India Global Tourism Mart (IIGTM), scheduled from February 1-4, 2017, in Delhi. “IIGTM would most probably be inaugurated by the Prime Minister at Vigyan Bhawan. Other things are being worked upon including the hotel bookings and the invitations for foreign tour operators. MOT is considering bringing all states and union territories to participate, to not only showcase their tourism potential, but also work upon culture and handicraft. The event will focus on both inbound, outbound and domestic tourism, and we are looking forward to around 400 hosted companies as well as international media. Foreign tour operators will be taken on Fam tours around the country, which is also being worked out,” Singh says.

FAITH has also urged the government to keep the foreign exchange transactions under tourism tax free. “Our second demand is that any transaction in foreign exchange by the tourism sector should be on zero rating. In fact, it should be the same for all tourism organisations, be it hotels, tour operators, transport operators or convention providers. That will give us incentive to make Indian tourism products more competitive worldwide and win business, which is going to other countries. The third thing which we have asked is that the definition of these services under GST should be amended so that the services provided to foreign tourists in India should be treated on a par with the services provided outside India and given all benefits,” he adds.

FAITH has reached out to all states and central government officials and ministers and Singh hopes that things will pan out in favour of tourism.

The association is also involved in the upcoming Incredible India Global Tourism Mart (IIGTM), scheduled from February 1-4, 2017, in Delhi. “IIGTM would most probably be inaugurated by the Prime Minister at Vigyan Bhawan. Other things are being worked upon including the hotel bookings and the invitations for foreign tour operators. MOT is considering bringing all states and union territories to participate, to not only showcase their tourism potential, but also work upon culture and handicraft. The event will focus on both inbound, outbound and domestic tourism, and we are looking forward to around 400 hosted companies as well as international media. Foreign tour operators will be taken on Fam tours around the country, which is also being worked out,” Singh says.

**SKÅL Mumbai extends invitation to govt bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.**

The association will now be offering its membership to government bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.

The association will now be offering its membership to government bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.

**TT BUREAU**

One of the main aims of Partha Chatterjee on taking over as President of SKÅL Club of Bombay this October is to offer memberships and actively engage with all government bodies that are involved with travel and tourism and invite them to be members of the club. This includes the Maharashtra Trade Development Corporation (MTDC), IRCTC, as well as India Tourism.

Chatterjee adds, “We will actively engage with MTDC for all our events and offer our membership to their senior executives. We will be meeting the MTDC Chairman and some of their senior executives this month to finalise our partnership. It is important to involve the government. IRCTC is also an important constituent as is India Tourism and we will be approaching them as well. The Principal Secretary of Maharashtra Tourism is already our member.”

Another entity that SKÅL Mumbai will be tapping is the airport, which is relevant to its entire member base. “We want to get them more involved with the trade. We are also talking to premium restaurant owners who have never been part of SKÅL. We will be introducing medical tourism to the first time this year and we are approaching some of the top hospitals and their doctors to join us as well. In fact, we have invited some of them to be part of our event for them to see how we function,” the president adds.

This year, SKÅL Mumbai introduced something new in the form of SKÅL Bazaar, where destination companies can set up stalls and talk about and expose their destinations to the travel agents at special prices. SKÅL Mumbai has 170 members right now. Chatterjee says, “For 2017, one of the events we want to organise is the SKÅL Ball around the March-April period. We are also planning a unique event for which we are partnering with Chambers of Commerce as co-hosts. One of the first will be with the British Business Group, the Cigar Club, Indo-German Chamber of Commerce and the European Business Group to give members an opportunity to interact with them.”

**SKÅL Mumbai extends invitation to govt bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.**

The association will now be offering its membership to government bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.

The association will now be offering its membership to government bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.

**TT BUREAU**

One of the main aims of Partha Chatterjee on taking over as President of SKÅL Club of Bombay this October is to offer memberships and actively engage with all government bodies that are involved with travel and tourism and invite them to be members of the club. This includes the Maharashtra Trade Development Corporation (MTDC), IRCTC, as well as India Tourism.

Chatterjee adds, “We will actively engage with MTDC for all our events and offer our membership to their senior executives. We will be meeting the MTDC Chairman and some of their senior executives this month to finalise our partnership. It is important to involve the government. IRCTC is also an important constituent as is India Tourism and we will be approaching them as well. The Principal Secretary of Maharashtra Tourism is already our member.”

Another entity that SKÅL Mumbai will be tapping is the airport, which is relevant to its entire member base. “We want to get them more involved with the trade. We are also talking to premium restaurant owners who have never been part of SKÅL. We will be introducing medical tourism to the first time this year and we are approaching some of the top hospitals and their doctors to join us as well. In fact, we have invited some of them to be part of our event for them to see how we function,” the president adds.

This year, SKÅL Mumbai introduced something new in the form of SKÅL Bazaar, where destination companies can set up stalls and talk about and expose their destinations to the travel agents at special prices. SKÅL Mumbai has 170 members right now. Chatterjee says, “For 2017, one of the events we want to organise is the SKÅL Ball around the March-April period. We are also planning a unique event for which we are partnering with Chambers of Commerce as co-hosts. One of the first will be with the British Business Group, the Cigar Club, Indo-German Chamber of Commerce and the European Business Group to give members an opportunity to interact with them.”

**SKÅL Mumbai extends invitation to govt bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.**

The association will now be offering its membership to government bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.

The association will now be offering its membership to government bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.

**TT BUREAU**

One of the main aims of Partha Chatterjee on taking over as President of SKÅL Club of Bombay this October is to offer memberships and actively engage with all government bodies that are involved with travel and tourism and invite them to be members of the club. This includes the Maharashtra Trade Development Corporation (MTDC), IRCTC, as well as India Tourism.

Chatterjee adds, “We will actively engage with MTDC for all our events and offer our membership to their senior executives. We will be meeting the MTDC Chairman and some of their senior executives this month to finalise our partnership. It is important to involve the government. IRCTC is also an important constituent as is India Tourism and we will be approaching them as well. The Principal Secretary of Maharashtra Tourism is already our member.”

Another entity that SKÅL Mumbai will be tapping is the airport, which is relevant to its entire member base. “We want to get them more involved with the trade. We are also talking to premium restaurant owners who have never been part of SKÅL. We will be introducing medical tourism to the first time this year and we are approaching some of the top hospitals and their doctors to join us as well. In fact, we have invited some of them to be part of our event for them to see how we function,” the president adds.

This year, SKÅL Mumbai introduced something new in the form of SKÅL Bazaar, where destination companies can set up stalls and talk about and expose their destinations to the travel agents at special prices. SKÅL Mumbai has 170 members right now. Chatterjee says, “For 2017, one of the events we want to organise is the SKÅL Ball around the March-April period. We are also planning a unique event for which we are partnering with Chambers of Commerce as co-hosts. One of the first will be with the British Business Group, the Cigar Club, Indo-German Chamber of Commerce and the European Business Group to give members an opportunity to interact with them.”

**SKÅL Mumbai extends invitation to govt bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.**

The association will now be offering its membership to government bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.

The association will now be offering its membership to government bodies like MTDC and India Tourism as well as hospitals to encourage growth of medical tourism.
Travelite (India) requires
Assistant Manager
Inbound Tours
for China market
in Delhi office
to support
Travelite India office
in China

The applicant should have
3-5 years experience of handling Chinese market.

Job Description includes:
- Itinerary making
- Tour planning
- Costing
- Product knowledge
- Communication skills - both verbal and written
- Knowledge of Chinese language will be an added qualification

You may contact:
Ms Iffat Ara, Manager - HR,
Travelite (India)
Email: hr@traveliteindia.com
Mobile: +91-8860 629 985
Tel No.: +91-11-47195123

Opportunity

December 1st Fortnight Issue 2016 TravelTalk 45

Operations - 2
2 Candidates with 2 years experience skilled in Vendor Negotiations and market knowledge.

Sales - 2
2 Candidates
2 years experience Skilled in retail sales to various language market segments

Accounts - 1
1 Accountant Candidate should possess a good knowledge of Tally and experience of working in a travel company

We are a travel house since 1993, Designing Holidays for Individuals & Groups. We are looking for Smart young go getters.

Salary as per industry standards
Walk in for an interview with an updated CV and Photo

Between 15 - 17 December 2016
16:00 - 19:00 Hrs
Please mail your CV before coming in for the interview on info@auroratravels.com

Aurora Travel Tours Pvt Ltd.,
22, Paradise Compound,
B. Desai Road, Breach Candy
Mumbai 400026

Park Ocean

Hotel Park Ocean
A-4, Opposite Bhavani Niketan School,
Sikar Road, Jaipur Rajasthan (India)
T: 0141-2337787
E: reservation@hotelparkocean.com,
sales@hotelparkocean.com
W: www.hotelparkocean.com

Big Breaks

Partner with us for Flights, Hotels, Car Rentals, Domestic and International Holiday Packages
Register yourself @ Agents.Bigbreaks.com or call: +91 8010 800 600 or email: info@bigbreaks.com
www.Bigbreaks.com
Novotel Kolkata Hotel and Residences
Kolkata
Novotel Kolkata Hotel and Residences has appointed Sandeep J ohri as the General Manager. In his last assignment, J ohri led the team of the very first hotel of AccorHotels in Ahmedabad – Novotel Ahmedabad. He has 23 years of experience in hospitality and brings with him a varied experience of being in the position of General Manager for 12 years. Previously, he has worked with the Sarovar Hotels, the Chancery Group, Holiday Inn Hotel & Convention Centre, The Ambassador Group and Ramada in Mumbai. J ohri is a Hotel Management Graduate from IHM, Kolkata.

J W Marriott
Kolkata
Ranjul Alex has been appointed as the General Manager of JW Marriott Kolkata, and the Multi-Property Vice-President, East. She joined Marriott International in the year 2010 after being the officiating GM at the Oberoi Grand Hotel, Kolkata. She moved to Goa as GM Marriott Resort & Spa after completing a successful tenure with the first Marriott property in Pune as the GM of Courtyard by Marriott. Alex brings with her close to two decades of experience in hotel management and operations. A diploma holder in Hotel Management, Alex is an alumnus of IHM, Kolkata.

Marriott Hotels
Mumbai
Megha Agaonkar has been promoted as Market Director of Sales & Marketing for all the Marriott properties in Mumbai. She will be responsible for the overall sales & marketing activities of the property including devising appropriate sales strategies in all market segments towards maximizing the hotel revenue. Prior to her promotion, she was the Director of Sales & Marketing at Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel & Lakeside Chalet Marriott Executive Apartments. She began her career 15 years ago with the Taj Group of Hotels.

WWW Travel
Mumbai
Anshita Avati joins WWW Travel as Chief Executive Officer. WWW operates their own network of International DMC offices to benefit the travel partners pan India. Avati comes with 25 years of experience in travel trade. She has been associated with TravelOption, Holidays, Kuoni, Cox and Kings and Obit in her previous assignments. In the first month of operations, WWW has successfully launched offices in Canada and USA.

Carlson Wagonlit Travel
Singapore
Matt O’Keeffe joins CWT as Chief Technology Officer of Hotel Distribution. O’Keeffe’s 20 years of technology and software experience provides rich expertise and deep knowledge of the travel industry. He was most recently Chief Technology Officer for Hyatt Hotels & Resorts. Before joining Hyatt, O’Keeffe served as Senior Technology Architect at Morningstar, Inc., where he was responsible for technical architecture, standards and platform services. O’Keeffe graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago with a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science.

Matt Brennan joins CWT as Vice President of Hotel Operations. Brennan has been in the facilities space since 2009 and has supported other third-party service industries since 1996. He most recently served as Vice President of Field Partner Management of OSI facilities. Previous roles included Vice President of Operations for Oakleaf Waste Management. Earlier, Brennan was Vice President Vendor Network & Wholesale Product Marketing for GE Finance. He graduated from Concordia University-River Forest with a Bachelor’s Degree in Organisational Management.

Poetree Sarovar Portico Thekkady
Kerala
Sarovar Hotels has appointed R. Ravi Varma as the General Manager of Poetree Sarovar Portico, Thekkady. Varma brings with him a wealth of experience spanning almost three decades in the industry. Prior to joining Sarovar Hotels, Varma had worked as Executive Vice President- Leisure Group of Hotels, UK, and Group General Manager at Baranacha Beach Resort and Pearl Hotel, UAE. His other assignments include roles as General Manager at Oribi Park Inn International, Janamagar, Gokulam Park Inn, Kochi, Madurai Park Inn, Madurai, The Raviz Hotel, Kollam.

Jaipur Marriott Hotel
Jaipur
With over a decade’s experience as a hospitality professional in luxury and business hotels, Rajneesh Kumar has recently been appointed as the Director of Operations at Jaipur Marriott Hotel. He has expertise in revenue management, cost management control and operation management. Kumar joined the Marriott fraternity in 2004. Ever since joining the Marriott fraternity, he has been associated with various hotels of Marriott India and successfully progressed into different roles in diverse surroundings. His last assignment was with the Courtyard by Marriott, Agra.

Jaipur Marriott Hotel has appointed Abhishek Roy as the new Food and Beverage Manager at Jaipur Marriott Hotel. With a career spanning over 12 years in the hospitality industry, he brings in a lot of knowledge and experience with him which fits right for the role. Roy will be responsible for the day to day operations of the F&B unit, achieving revenue targets and driving strategic food and beverage promotions in the hotel.

One of the most memorable memories Raekhit Desai, Managing Director, FCM Travel Solutions, has of his travels is while on holiday in Nepal. “After a miraculous landing on a treacherous runway straight out of a Bond flick, I found myself at a mountain lodge in Nepal, just metres away from the Everest,” he narrates. The travel professional dubs London as his all-time favourite city and escapes to the city as often as he can.

Olivier Boulland, Commercial Director, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka & The Maldives, Air France-KLM, spends most of his free time with his daughter as he rarely gets the essential bonding time. He enjoys hanging out with his friends every now and then as well. His trip to Madagascar struck a chord with him and is on his top three destinations that he would love to go back to. “I’ve never been to Japan so I’d love to see what that country is like too,” he says. New York and Paris are cities that he says he never gets tired of visiting.

As much as Wolfgang Will, Director-South Asia, Lufthansa, likes his gadgets on while travelling, he always remembers to carry a good book with him too. What’s more, the airline specialist loves Indian food as a vegetarian and enjoys the variety of dishes. “This country is truly perfect for vegetarians!”
I visited Gujarat during Uttarayan. I saw adults draped in childhood, decorating the canvas of the sky with colourful kites that soared, drifted and dipped at the flick of one's wrist. In all the pulling and cutting of the kite strings, I didn't realize when the excitement and affection started tugging at my heartstrings. Nowhere else had I witnessed such amazing bonding among competitors but here. Next time too, the kites will fly high, painting the sky. Will you be there?

International Kite Festival 2017
8th to 14th January 2017
What India tourism needs...

In a tête-à-tête with TRAVEL WORLD, David Scowsill, President & CEO, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), explains why Incredible India needs a larger marketing fund, a cohesive strategy and a sensible taxation rate to effectively harness the country’s tourism potential.

AHANA GURUNG

What is your opinion on the growth of tourism in India?

Domestic travel has been growing at a huge pace with domestic airlines booming and the increase in airline frequencies, the amount of movement in cities like Delhi and Mumbai has particularly escalated. There’s so much competition between the airlines that despite high taxes, the fares are relatively moderate to stimulate the market, so that’s going well.

However, the inbound to India has been very static for such a long time and there’s so much room for growth here. The way I see it, it’s been quite slow for India since the past 10-15 years. There have been some good decisions in some key parts of infrastructure, like the e-Tourist Visa (eTV), but the government needs to invest a lot more and increase their marketing funds to give tourism a push for both business and leisure.

What do you think is lacking?

India’s eTV has been a very important decision but many factors need to be looked into, like an extension of the duration of stay. The Incredible India campaign has a lot of resonance but needs more funding because it is a very competitive world after all. When a government’s acknowledged that travel and tourism is one of the key pillars to the economic growth, which the Indian government has, the focus then goes into the development of infrastructure. And I don’t mean just the investment in rails and roads, it’s also telecom, banking and extended services that go hand in hand. Inbound can be boosted if more money is pumped into marketing and if visa is more like a two-year waiver program, it would be far more efficient for everybody.

What with a variety of destinations, India still faces the issue of seasonality. How can this be addressed?

Inda needs a coordinated marketing approach especially because the market is huge and extremely competitive. A cohesive marketing plan would be most effective where the state and central level share good communications with each other. These days with the Internet and its capabilities, you can have a very small business operating in a niche area, but it still has to be under the umbrella of what India is trying to sell. It needs to be relatable with the brand image and then build awareness around it. The marketing and the products offered need to be in sync with each other.

How can one ensure that a tourism policy is both effective and beneficial?

A coordinated approach to a policy is absolutely necessary to help the industry grow. It needs to be linked to a national and a state-level plan on what the country needs to do for the next 10 years. The policy should cite capital investment for infrastructure and most importantly, it needs a sensible level of taxation, whether it is the aviation tax or whether it is the goods and services tax that should be kept at a moderate level.

What are some of the key areas of focus in tourism?

An important aspect that needs more emphasis is managing destinations better. We have to make sure the volumes of people coming to a certain destination is not going to harm the place because the next decade will see a lot of travel taking place. WTTC has forecasted a total of 1,931,830,000 foreign tourists to travel by 2026, so managing destinations is going to be crucial in this.

Climate change is another challenge that has to be brought to attention. We know it’s happening and the industry needs to contribute by consistently following sustainable practices to keep the situation from going out of hand.

When it comes to terrorism, at this point, we know we’re going to contend with more attacks. It’s not going to stop at any point of time, but the travellers are more resilient than ever and will not, in any way, stop travelling. Despite the terror strikes, travel will continue to grow.

What does next year’s Global Summit aim to discuss?

The next WTTC Global Summit will be held in Bangkok from April 26-27, 2017. This year has been declared as the Year of Sustainable Tourism so we’ll be really focused on how the industry is going to tackle things differently. How it’s going to handle climate change, destination management, disruptions be it political or terrorism. The agenda is to bring all the world leaders together to discuss and brainstorm on all these issues and challenges and collectively mull over the solutions.

David Scowsill
President & CEO
World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

“The Incredible India campaign has a lot of resonance but needs more funding because it is a very competitive world after all. When a government’s acknowledged that travel and tourism is one of the key pillars to the economic growth, which the Indian government has, the focus then goes into the development of infrastructure.”


Lufthansa