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# Meet the new Tourism Secy

**Yogendra Tripathi**, Chairman, Food Corporation of India has been appointed as the new Secretary—Tourism, Govt of India, after the superannuation of Rashmi Verma from the post.



TT Bureau

**Yogendra Tripathi** will be taking charge as Secretary—Tourism from December 1, 2018, after

completing three years in Food Corporation of India as Chairman. A 1985 batch IAS officer of Karnataka cadre, Tripathi hails from Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. He has also

served as the Commissioner, Department of Tourism—Karnataka from 2005-06. Apart from that, he has served at various levels in Karnataka and in the Central

Government departments. Boasting a three-decade long career, Tripathi is being welcomed by the tourism industry with great aplomb. He will be replacing Rashmi

Verma, who has been instrumental in introducing many initiatives for boosting the inbound tourism in the country during her tenure as Tourism Secretary.



**Yogendra Tripathi**  
Chairman, Food Corporation of India (FCI)

# Adieu to passengers' woes

Get ready for chatbots to address your queries, real-time flight status, detailed flight schedules and more with AirSewa 2.0 web portal and application, recently launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.



TT Bureau

In yet another promising initiative, **Suresh Prabhu**, Union Minister of Civil Aviation and Commerce & Industry, along with **Jayant Sinha**, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, recently unveiled AirSewa 2.0 web portal and mobile app. The latest version of AirSewa can be operated through an interactive web portal as well as through a mobile app for both iOS and Android platforms.

Speaking at the launch, Prabhu said,

"A need was felt for the development of an upgraded version of AirSewa to provide a superior user experience with enhanced functionalities." Some of the improvements in AirSewa 2.0 include features like secure sign-up and log-in with social media, chatbot for travellers' support, improved grievance management including social media grievances, real-time flight status and detailed flight schedule.

Launched with an aim to offer passengers a convenient and hassle-free air travel experi-



**Suresh Prabhu**  
Union Minister of Civil Aviation and Commerce & Industry

ence, the web portal and application of AirSewa 2.0 will help capture air travellers' feedback for policy interventions. Adding further, Prabhu

said, "The focus is now on improving the quality of services so that passengers who are travelling have a safe and comfortable experience."

Sinha, on the other hand, said that in today's date, five crore passengers are travelling every year, which would grow exponentially in the future. He shared that there was an urgent need of upgradation of AirSewa and systemic intervention in improving customer services.

In fact, MoCA has plans to launch the next generation — AirSewa 3.0 digital platform in the next few months, which would include DigiYatra registration, BHIM payment

integration, airport maps as well as grievance escalation and transfer.

With air passengers facing issues like flight delays, problem in refunds, long queues, inadequate facilities at airports and complaints of lost baggage, MoCA launched AirSewa web portal and mobile app in November 2016 to address this need. The AirSewa 1.0 was received well, with around 30,000 app downloads and around 75,000 web portal hits since its launch.



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## Maya in the city of Taj Mahal

India Travel Awards 2018 will be held at Hotel Clarks Shiraz in Agra on December 6, 2018 to commemorate achievers from different segments.



TT Bureau

A coveted platform to acknowledge the efforts of tourism professionals, India Travel Awards has made a mark in the industry to recognise, honour and acknowledge the achievers of the travel fraternity. **Nikhil Jeet**, Convener, India Travel Awards (ITA), informs that these awards have proven to be instrumental in increasing the awareness about the winning company or individual. He says, "Growth of the tourism and hospitality industry in the country is a mark of progress and development of the country itself. Every



**Nikhil Jeet**  
Convener  
India Travel Awards

forecast of 20 million inbound tourists in 2020, the sector is growing exponentially and we will soon become a prominent name on the global tourism map. Constant recognition and acknowledgement of the effort put in by industry players is a catalyst for this growth."

"With these awards, we intend to boost their spirit, recognise their significant role in the overall development of tourism and hospitality, and inspire them to be future leaders. We hope the tourism sector gets its due share in the coming years, leading the way for an even better tomorrow," adds Jeet.



**Debasish Bhowmik**  
Senior Vice President  
Hotel Clarks Shiraz

As the host of the black-tie award ceremony, Hotel Clarks

“India Travel Awards intend to boost the spirit of tourism professionals and recognise their role in the overall development of tourism and hospitality”

Shiraz Agra is all prepped up to put up a great show. **Debasish Bhowmik**, Senior Vice President, Hotel Clarks Shiraz believes that it will be a good opportunity for Agra to come into limelight as the host city. "It's for the first time that India Travel Awards are coming to Agra. So, it will

be grand debut of Maya in the city. These awards are very popular among the travel and tourism fraternity and best in the best of the travel industry attend the awards. I think it will help showcase Clarks Shiraz, Agra in its absolutely new avatar," he says.

"As the hospitality partner, it's our privilege to host the show. This is a new beginning towards a greater bond with one of the renowned award shows in the industry. This

year's show will be beneficial for smaller cities like Agra to boost image while promoting tourism in the vicinity. We have renovated the entire hotel in the last three years. There couldn't have been a better time to host ITA at this iconic hotel," Bhowmik further adds.



entity contributes to the overall development of these sectors, but are we doing enough to acknowledge their hard work and contribution? India Travel Awards was instituted exactly to meet this objective. With a



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TRAVELTALK  
VIEWPOINT

The Indian travel dilemma

A recent research by a popular travel technology firm has come out with results claiming that India is the most vacation-deprived country in the world. However, according to many NTOs and both outbound as well as domestic agents, Indians are exploring new destinations like never before. Also, with the Indian middle class increasingly making more trips, things were actually looking up, as far as the trends of travel industry were concerned. This added with increased connectivity to India by various international airlines, along with MoCA's regional connectivity scheme, painted a pretty picture of Indian travellers. Coming back to the report, it seems that while Indians do want to take holidays, it's only when they don't feel the pressure of work commitment that they travel. Also, not all Indians utilise their sanctioned leaves from work unlike their western counterparts who make sure to exhaust their leaves and go for multiple vacations in a year. Since the holiday season is now round the corner, it's crucial for the travel trade to introduce deals that attract Indians to step out of workplaces and travel. On that note, we hope for good business for the industry in the upcoming holiday season.

Training on top

The Ministry of Tourism (MOT) announced the Tourism Facilitators Certification Programme at this year's World Tourism Day which coincided with the National Tourism Awards. The initiative came into action recently and would allow anyone with 10+2 qualification to register for this certification with a nominal charge of `2000 only. This online programme would allow anyone, residing anywhere in the country to enhance his/her skills and become a certified tourism facilitator. The certification would make them eligible to accompany and assist tourists anywhere in the country. This step by MOT would fill a huge gap for both individual tourists as well as those travelling with a group. Since many of these facilitators would be language guides and will be available on a specially-created smartphone app, tourists would be able to locate them near a monument or attraction just the way they book an online cab. How that is going to affect the inbound operators who work with traditional guides and guide associations, remains to be seen.

Sustainability in tourism

Kathleen Pessolano, Director — Strategic Partnerships, Global Sustainable Tourism Council, made her first trip to India recently to talk about how tourism stakeholders can help in making this industry more eco-friendly.

Essentially, sustainable tourism engages everyone in the process – businesses, governments, residents, visitors – to ensure that communities are thriving places for residents to live, and to organise tourism systems in ways that keep communities so.

This was my first visit to India where I participated in the US Consulate's programme aimed to bring the US and Indian

decision-making affecting the future of the community. Inclusive cooperation mechanisms are important to make sure wide-ranging community interests are considered in development decisions – from government agencies, businesses and community members – so that these decisions are well-informed.

The GSTC sets standards for sustainable tourism. These

We are seeing more and more tour operators adopting responsible practices, both by following the GSTC Criteria and even pursuing sustainability certification by a GSTC-accredited programme. Transat, for example, a Canadian tour operator, has recently achieved GSTC-accredited certification for sustainability of its operations globally, which is a significant accomplishment.

Hotels. If all tour operators would examine and align their own operations with the GSTC Criteria for Tour Operators, we will see results at scale.

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

“ More and more tour operators are increasingly adopting responsible practices by following the GSTC Criteria ”

specialists together to share ideas on areas of mutual interest. One of the most pressing challenges in any destination is creating mechanisms for robust and frequent collaboration on

are recommended policies to engage in tourism responsibly. The GSTC Criteria for tour operators is a resource to guide them in how they can operate more responsibly.

Additionally, tour operators are working with their suppliers to encourage them to also adopt good practices in keeping with GSTC standards. For example, TUI Group has set a corporate commitment for itself as a global tour operator that 100 per cent of all of the accommodations in its portfolio of operations will be certified to GSTC's Criteria for

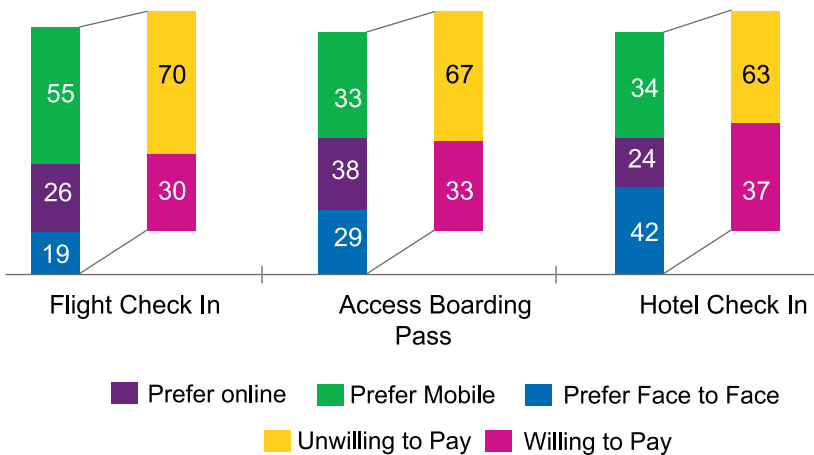


Kathleen Pessolano  
Director of Strategic Partnerships  
Global Sustainable Tourism Council

Business travellers go digital

FCM Travel Solutions and KPMG's recent whitepaper titled 'The Digi-Smart Indian Business Traveller' forecasts that amongst Asian business travellers, face-to-face interactions have become the least-popular option.

Asian Business traveller Preferences



Business travellers value the transparency of choice and information that autonomous digital channels, such as AI, can provide. Similarly, Indian business travellers are shifting to digital, with only 17 per cent of them preferring face-to-face interactions for process like flight check-ins. When choosing flights, convenient schedules and direct flights were consistently amongst the top-three priorities across all business travellers.

Source: Asian Business Traveller's report



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Sanjiv Nangia  
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“For most Indian travellers, scenic beauty, shopping, some soft adventure and tours constitute the main ingredients of their itineraries. Food, for a few vegetarians, holds significant importance. Holland works very well on these parameters. Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Hague/Zwolle with a minimum of two or three nights per city are a must to do justice to the destination. Hague offers the typical market squares, coffee houses, night clubs and shopping.”



Ketaki Kapur Pantle  
Co-founder, Serendipity & Beyond Tours

My journey beyond Amsterdam was an eye-opener. After this trip, we will now have Holland itineraries spanning at least five to seven days. A must-do on the list would be a trip to the windmills of Zaanse Schans, the Henri Willig cheese factory, the Waanders in Zwolle. The theme park - Efteling World of Wonders, will also feature in our itinerary, with atleast two nights at Roode Koper and a day at the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet mall. The Intel hotel at Zaandam is idyllic in terms of location and design and offers great value to discerning travellers.”



Rupjeet Saggat  
Owner  
Saggat World Holidays

“I'm delighted to have had the opportunity to be able to experience Holland first-hand. Amsterdam and Rotterdam offer plenty of opportunities for sight-seeing. The lovely canals, bicycle-happy locals and cheery flower markets, are what make visitors flock to Amsterdam year after year. A visit to the Rijksmuseum, Anne Frank's House, Vondelpark and the cheese factory to sample local dairy products are what make the visit to the destination a unique one. Here, one can simply admire a classic line-up of authentic windmills.”

“When we asked anyone about visiting The Netherlands, they would only talk about visiting Amsterdam. After my visit to the country, I'd surely like to change people's perception and say that Holland is much more than only Amsterdam. A day trip to Zaanse Schans would be a perfect thing to do, to explore the Historic windmills and distinctive green wooden houses and to get a taste of the chocolates and cheese at the Henri Willig cheese factory. For shopaholics, the McArthurGlen outlet mall is the ideal place to visit.”



Karan Vakharia  
Director—Business Development, Pathfinders Holidays

“Holland has a lot to offer in terms of its deep-rooted culture and local flavours. The Zaanse Schans truly captures the culture of Holland in the countryside showcasing the windmills, the cheese factory, cheese farm, the local homes and handicraft. A family with kids must visit the Efteling theme park and enroute, shopaholics can even enjoy lovely deals at the McArthurGlen designer outlet. The city of Rotterdam also offers a bespoke experience since the travel is by foot.”



Anshu Tejuja  
Managing Director  
Ashoka Dream Holidays

“Holland is a beautiful place for peace lovers. The trip to the country is incomplete without experiencing the ancient architectural buildings and the lovely picturesque canals. Though the choice of a city depends upon client to client, I feel, Indians love to travel for adventure, luxury, shopping, sightseeing and to top the list is good food at the end of the day. Amsterdam, in Holland, has it all. Add to these Zaanse Schans, Rotterdam and The Hague for a sparkling trip with beautiful memories.”



Vidhi Sandal  
Director—Operations, 7 Wonders World Travel



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# On mission pilgrimage

After launching new products and destinations in 2018, BigBreaks expects 2019 to be a year of good growth with plans to stretch marketing efforts outside Delhi/NCR.



TT Bureau

The year 2018 has been a good year with many new products and destinations, says **Kapil Goswamy**, Founder & CEO, BigBreaks. "We are trying to gradually establish ourselves as a leisure travel-focused online travel company. During 2018, we have successfully launched several new products and destinations. We have included pilgrimage packages with a variety of pilgrimage destinations, ranging from Mansarovar in the North to the Meenakshi Temple in the South," he adds.

Sharing details of the package, Goswamy comments, "We've been promoting these pilgrimage packages not only to the Indian audience but also to NRIs. Everyone has appreciated the ease with which they can plan and book everything related to



**Kapil Goswamy**  
Founder & CEO  
BigBreaks

pilgrimage, right from the travel to the temples, as well as the tickets for darshans, etc."

BigBreaks also launched self drive holidays across India this year. "Aimed at an upwardly mobile young audience, these holidays are good sellers for us. While we are predominantly a B2C focused company, we recently launched an online

domestic hotel interface in the B2B space, and while it is still work in progress, the response has been encouraging, and we expect to have over 1000 hotels on our platform by the end of 2018," informs Goswamy.

He further adds, "Another new product range we have launched is 'Women only' escorted group touring. With the growing trend of women wanting to travel and explore, this is something we are very bullish about. We've launched our 'Women only' escorted touring with five unique destinations to begin with, which include Egypt, Jordan, Vietnam, Bhutan and Ladakh. We hope to increase our destination portfolio manifold in 2019."

BigBreaks has an active social media presence with its new product range promoted on Facebook, reveals Goswamy. 🐦

# Houston for India

VisitHouston recently held a roadshow at Le Meridien, New Delhi. **Jorge Franz**, Senior VP—Tourism, VisitHouston, talks about the myriad products Houston has on offer.



Simranjeet Singh Arora

As the fourth largest city in the United States, Houston has a variety of unique attractions to offer to the Indian market. **Jorge Franz**, Senior Vice President — Tourism, VisitHouston, elaborated "Houston is a strong business city. As the capital of energy and gas sector, it has 3,500 companies where the whole world deals in. It also has the largest medical centre in the world which attracts more than seven million patients in a year from around the globe. Home to America's space programme, space centre here is the biggest attraction of all."

Talking about initiating direct flights between India and Houston, Franz mentioned, "Although we have connecting flights from India via Dubai, Qatar, Istanbul, a direct flight



**Jorge Franz**  
Senior Vice President — Tourism,  
VisitHouston

between India and Houston is much desirable."

On VisitHouston's increasing interests to capture the Indian market, Franz said, "The Indian market has become the fifth largest international market for Houston. Last year, we received over 60,000 visitors with an economic impact of about \$122 million. We, there-

fore, are keenly interested in the Indian market, as we have everything they are looking for from the vacation."

About 150,000 Indo-Americans reside in Houston and the city exactly knows what to offer to Indians. An itinerary was well explained by Franz where he said, "I would recommend a stay of at least four nights, so that one can begin with space centre and then move on with Kemah Boardwalk — a sea-side community. Another major attraction is the graffiti park."

US visas have always been a barrier restricting Indians to travel to the country. Upon discussion, Franz supported by saying, "We are well-versed with the problems Indians face while getting visa for the United States. We are constantly working to ease out the visa process for Indians." 🐦



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## Knowledge sessions for ETAA's members



The Enterprising Travel Agents Association (ETAA) recently organised two knowledge sessions in Mumbai for travel agents on Farebreeze. It is a hassle-free platform which allows agents across the globe to interact with each other and have the best fares for their customers. A lucky draw was also held during the event.

# 25 years of flying high



SriLankan Airlines celebrates 25 years of direct operations from Colombo to Delhi, the airline's fifth destination in India.



TT Bureau

**Chinthaka Weerasinghe**, Manager—Northern India, SriLankan Airlines and **Subhash Goyal**, Chairman, Stic Travel Group, GSA of SriLankan Airlines, shared the story of the airline's 25 years on the route at a press conference in New Delhi. Weerasinghe said, "We started operations way back in 1979 to start with Chennai and Mumbai. Delhi was the fifth destination where we started operating in June 1993. We started with two flights a week and now have expanded to two flights a day. In fact, Delhi has become one of the highest revenue generating markets for SriLankan Airlines' network. We are expecting about 4.5 lakhs of arrivals this year with a growth of 15 per cent."



**Chinthaka Weerasinghe**  
Manager—Northern India  
SriLankan Airlines

Goyal added, "We are happy that we had a very successful inning as a GSA for the airline. We have been associated with SriLankan Airlines right from its inception. Earlier, we were the GSA for Air Ceylon, and we are perhaps the only GSA in the world that has been the GSA for Air Ceylon, SriLankan Airlines and Air Lanka. We have about a 38-year-old association with SriLankan Airlines."



**Subhash Goyal**  
Chairman, Stic Travel Group  
GSA of SriLankan Airlines

Currently, SriLankan Airlines flies from 13 destinations mainly Australia, Singapore, Japan, China, Middle East and the UK with 122 flights a week, which makes it the largest international airline operating to India in terms of the number of destinations.

With many Indian carriers starting operations to Sri

Lanka, competition has also increased. However, Weerasinghe is taking it in his stride. "We welcome competition because when the airlines come, the prices go down and the destination becomes affordable. We welcome that. In fact, no other airline can provide connectivity between the two countries like us. We fly to five Indian metro cities and the rest are Tier-II cities."

Goyal further said, "SriLankan Airlines has witnessed a double-digit growth with more than half a million tourists going to Sri Lanka. We really hope that in the years to come, we can compete with Thailand by crossing the one million tourist mark."

He insisted that growth has been quite encouraging from Tier-II cities as well with load factors of 90 per cent. ✈️



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# Lords debuts in Venice of the East

Promoted as true value properties offering luxurious accommodations and full services at affordable prices, Lords Hotels & Resorts has announced its next property in Udaipur. **Vikas Suri**, Senior Associate Vice President, Lords Hotels & Resorts, discusses his pan-India plan with **TRAVTALK**.



TT Bureau

Lords Hotels & Resorts has announced the launch of its new property at Govardhan Vilas in Udaipur. To be launched as Lords Inn, Udaipur, the 41-room property is designed for smart travellers seeking hassle-free and contemporary experience.

Commenting on the development, **Vikas Suri**, Senior Associate Vice President, Lords Hotels & Resorts, says that the property will be operational by mid-2019. "This property in Udaipur is situated in the heart of the city. Known for its history, culture and scenic locations, travellers can easily

recreational facilities like swimming pool, spa and gym. While the hotel will host all modern amenities and full-services to its guests, the room tariffs will be maintained at budget-friendly prices. Guests will also be able to enjoy exquisite dining

options at its multi-cuisine restaurant – Blue Coriander.

Expressing joy over venturing into the Udaipur market, Suri says that they are further looking to expand in Rajasthan. He tells, "We already have

“ Already having hotels in Jaipur and Jodhpur, a property in Udaipur will complement Lord's presence in Rajasthan ”

two hotels in Jaipur and one in Jodhpur, so this property in

Udaipur will complement Lord's presence in beautiful cities of

Rajasthan. We are looking to further expand in the state. As a MICE destination too, Udaipur has developed a lot. Also, with the city being a good winter destination, we can expect more inbound travellers with our new hotel in the city.”



**Vikas Suri**  
Senior Associate Vice President  
Lords Hotels & Resorts

commute from Govardhan Vilas to the nearest Maharana Pratap Airport. Besides, Udaipur Railway Station is also just three kms away from the hotel," adds Suri.

Talking about the USP of the property, he says, "The location is an advantage for us; it is a multi-faceted property so the hotel will cater to both leisure and business travellers. A lot of people travel from Gujarat to Udaipur, it's one of the sought-after destinations for them. So, having a strong presence in Gujarat will help us bring Lord's loyal clients to Udaipur's property as well. Also, to complement and promote authentic local cuisine among our guests, we incorporate popular regional dishes from the area wherever we open a hotel."

Other than offering luxurious rooms and suites, Lords Inn, Udaipur will also offer



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# Cygnett's significant expansions

Cygnett Hotels and Resorts is looking to enter territories like South & Southeast Asia as well as Africa. **Sarbendra Sarkar**, Founder & MD, Cygnett Hotels & Resorts, shares his plan of action for expansion.



Karishma Khanna

**Q**What are your plans for expansion, especially in the Northeastern region of the country?

A majority of Cygnett hotels are present in Tier II, III cities. We focus on this segment because these markets miss the presence of a branded chain. Our plan is to capture as many cities in this segment. At the same time, we are increasing our presence in Tier I and metro cities too. In the Northeast, we have a presence in two of the seven sister states. With operations in Bongaigaon and Guwahati, we will soon be launching services in Itanagar. Cygnett will also cover a milestone by launching a hotel in Gangtok, Sikkim before the end of this year. Properties in Tinsukia, Dibrugarh and Yangyang are also in the pipeline.

**Q**Are you also looking at global expansion? Please share your plans.

The world is experiencing an unprecedented era of globalisation. The hospitality industry is rushing to increase the global footprint like no other industry,

and Cygnett is no different. We are in motion to introduce new hospitality concepts to maximise value for customers and investors. Cygnett is already operating in two countries now (India and Nepal) and is eyeing to enter territories like South & Southeast Asia and Africa. We are planning to put remote

we are identifying the markets in Africa.

**Q**How is Cygnett using technology and Artificial Intelligence to enhance its services?

We have our own next-gen engine known as the 'Cygnett CX' which comprises several

sonalised hospitality experience to every single customer. We are set to deploy an AI-powered chatbot onto our new upgraded website to ease customer navigation.

**Q**What are your plans and targets for 2019?

The principle of 'Improve,

in more than three countries and consolidated key count of 2000 keys and 30 hotels.

**Q**Any news or information you would like to share?

We will be coming up with a getaway resort in the valley of Uttarakhand by January-end next year. Situated 5 kms before Nanital, the resort could be just seven hours away from the national capital region. Urbanites can visit this place to bring mind, body and soul to peace by getting away from their usual schedule. The resort is situated amidst the lap of the hills with tall trees and forests in surrounding area where enthusiastic bird watchers and nature lovers can visit the property. The resort will be featuring facilities like Himalayan spa to help you revive and rejuvenate. 🌿



“ We will be coming up with a getaway resort in the valley of Uttarakhand by January-end next year. Situated 5 kms before Nanital, the resort could be just seven hours away from NCR ”

offices in certain countries to initiate development namely, Cambodia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Myanmar and Indonesia. In accordance with the same line,

intermeshed components that include information-rich user-friendly website, the e-Central Reservations System (Cloud-CRS), Online Reputation Management, CRM and a service monitoring module. All of our modules are supported by AI and data analytics to understand and deliver a per-

Expand & Innovate' will drive our future plans. We are never self-satisfied as a brand; we are always going back to the drawing board to deliver maximum value to our guests and investors. For 2019, we are aiming high to develop and operate hotels in the international markets. We are targeting presence

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## Konnichiwa! greets Japan

Asahi Travel Service recently organised a Fam trip to Shimane Prefecture in Japan for the Indian trade and tour operators. Agents sum up their Japanese experiences...



Anupriya Bishnoi from Japan



Roshan George Jacob  
Senior Executive—Outbound  
Tours, Kerala Travels Interserve

“ Every day in Japan was filled with new discoveries and delights. Shimane Prefecture is full of beauty, and home to Izumo Taisha - ancient Shinto shrines, Matsue Castle and the Adachi Museum of Art.

Lake Shinji-ko was another beautiful spot to enjoy the sunset. Boating in Horikawa River through the narrow canals was another delight where the boatman shared the area's hidden history. Wagashi making lessons at Karakoro Art Studio was amazing and sweets were moulded into beautiful shapes that represented the changing seasons. Flying in a seaplane over the Shimane turned out to be an additional treat as we got a bird's eye view of the mountains, lakes and the old town. Shimane can be reached by road easily from Hiroshima as well. ”

“ The itinerary was excellent as we got to experience almost everything that was best in Shimane Prefecture. We visited historic temples, beautiful gardens, participated in an authentic tea ceremony and

enjoyed a seaplane ride. Shimane Prefecture has everything that an Indian traveller looks for. Unfortunately, this area has not been explored by Indian travellers yet. Tokyo remains the highlight in the itinerary of Indian travellers but since they are now looking for out-of-the-box locations to travel to, Shimane will see a surge in Indian arrivals. Right from Indian restaurants to the scenic beauty accompanied by the perfect weather, this prefecture is sure to enthrall Indian tourists. I want to thank the organisers for such a seamless trip where everyone enjoyed more than they intended to. Everything was well planned and executed perfectly. ”



Namrata Joshi  
Senior Manager—Outbound  
Travel, Cox and Kings





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# Globus never ceases to innovate

Celebrating 90+ years of its existence, Globus family of brands has pioneered a number of travel concepts besides offering over 480 vacations to six continents across 81 countries. **Varesh Chopra**, Regional Director—India, South Asia & Middle East, Globus family of brands, in an interaction with TRAVTALK, reveals more...



TT Bureau

## Q What sets apart Globus and Cosmos from its competitors?

Our heritage is Swiss, and that I believe is a differentiator in itself! Moreover, we pioneered escorted touring way back in 1928 and continue to be the leading escorted tour operator in the world even after 90 years. Our claim to fame is the original introducer of the round-trip tour. In the early 50s, Globus introduced the 'circular tour', offering a one-price, all-inclusive vacation package. Just a little later, we pioneered again and Grand European Touring was launched, offering first-class tours around Europe. We were practically also the first ones to custom fit a coach to serve this unique touring concept. On our journey of over 90 years, we not only innovated constantly, but also inspired other players with unique concepts like local favourites, Wi-Fi on our coaches and Trip Protection. As a brand, we have enjoyed trade relationships and have served clients from India for more than 4 decades now!

The sheer experience of our tours encompasses an authentic, in-depth insight into the destination, escorted by a highly experienced and indig-

are, thus, not a hop-on-hop off-service catering to tourists whose single motivation is to simply tick some places off their bucket list at whatever cost! Our travellers consciously choose a multinational group as they believe it offers a more rewarding experience.

## Q How has 2018 fared for your company in terms of growth?

Thankfully, 2018 has continued to show good growth despite changes in the macro environment. I have always believed, with the gradual maturing of the travel outbound market in India, there is bound to be growth for all genres of travel. We have stayed strong in terms of our patronage in India because we have a leader's advantage with a strong repeat customer base and brand loyalty. Our patrons never got swayed with replicas of our travelling style and finally there is a huge upcoming audience today which really wants to travel in a newer and a more international way.

## Q How are you reaching out to Tier II, III cities?

Tier II, III cities will take a little more time to understand and demand this authentic and international style of travelling. But there are rapidly emerging clientele segments in those cities and towns as

cities each year and they are never an afterthought on our agenda.

## Q Please share your marketing and promotional plans for the year 2019.

Very recently, we pre-launched our 2019 programmes in five cities across India with exclusive super early bird offers. Continuing the momentum, these offers will continue till the end of this year. We released these privileged offers with a demand from our customers and to reward their loyalty and the early bookers. So, these concessions aren't long term as we believe discounting to be the worst form of denigrating the value

and a local tour director who is a master story teller.

## Q What steps are you taking to engage with the travel trade fraternity?

The Globus Family Club (GFC) is Indian travel industry's first loyalty club exclusive for its trade supporters. Pioneering the concept of an agent loyalty programmes, GFC has added value to the agents' professional lives with incentives, Fams, celebrations and activities which are fun and intellectually stimulating. In continuation of 90 years celebration of the Globus family of brands, we started off with exclusive events across the country through GFC. Our

expedition to discover landmarks across their own city on a clue trail while travel trade partners in Kolkata experienced a sunset cruise on the Ganges, taking them to a little-known heritage island. Of course, very soon, we will be back with another of our legendary conferences.

## Q Would you like to share any other announcements?

We are raising the bar yet again and creating new innovative experiences for our existing and new customers

a pre-determined regimen. We have also launched the 'GoAPPS' for the ease and convenience of our travellers on Cosmos, Avalon and Monogram Vacations to avoid carrying bulky guidebooks and papers – all information will be available at your fingertips!

“ We have stayed strong in terms of our patronage in India because we have a leader's advantage with a strong repeat customer base and brand loyalty. Our patrons never got swayed with replicas of our travelling style and finally there is a huge upcoming audience today which wants to travel in a newer way ”

of one's own product and simply because the experiences we offer aren't discounted.

The underlying marketing message will remain as -

first-ever event of this kind was held in Delhi where GFC members joined our team for a tee off at Delhi Golf Club. In Bengaluru, agent partners got a different taste of a vineyard, unique

in the very year we have completed 90 years of operations. Going by the oft-requested demand by our customers to have Globus quality private tour available where one can have their own exclusive group on a Globus itinerary to Europe – well, that is possible now with 'Globus Private Touring'! Another unique addition to our product offering is 'Escapes by Globus' comprising more than 30 itineraries for vacationing in winter to 20 countries starting from \$599. Finally, to satisfy the ever-dynamic market trends, we are also introducing 'Cosmos Lite' – the world's first a-la-carte touring catering to those who look at the economy and ease of a Cosmos tour but without

## New products, new experiences

Having completed 90 years since Globus was started, the company has been continuing the streak of innovation through 2018 as well. To just name a few, it has introduced new travel styles such as Globus Escapes, Globus Private Touring,

Cosmos Lite and the incredible GoApps which are digital travel guides and journal — all rolled into one!

Globus has also launched 'GoAPPS' for the ease and convenience of travellers on Cosmos, Avalon and

Monogram Vacations to avoid carrying bulky guidebooks and papers – all information to be available at the fingertips!

'Escapes by Globus' comprises more than 30 itineraries for vacationing in winter to 20 countries starting from \$599.

'Cosmos Lite' is the world's first a-la-carte touring catering to those who look at the ease of a Cosmos tour but without a pre-determined regimen. 'Globus Private Touring' allows one to have their own exclusive group on a Globus itinerary to Europe.

enous tour director catering to evolved international travellers. The tour director travels along with the group through the length of this itinerary and weaves a complete story of the destination and creates bonhomie amongst all. We

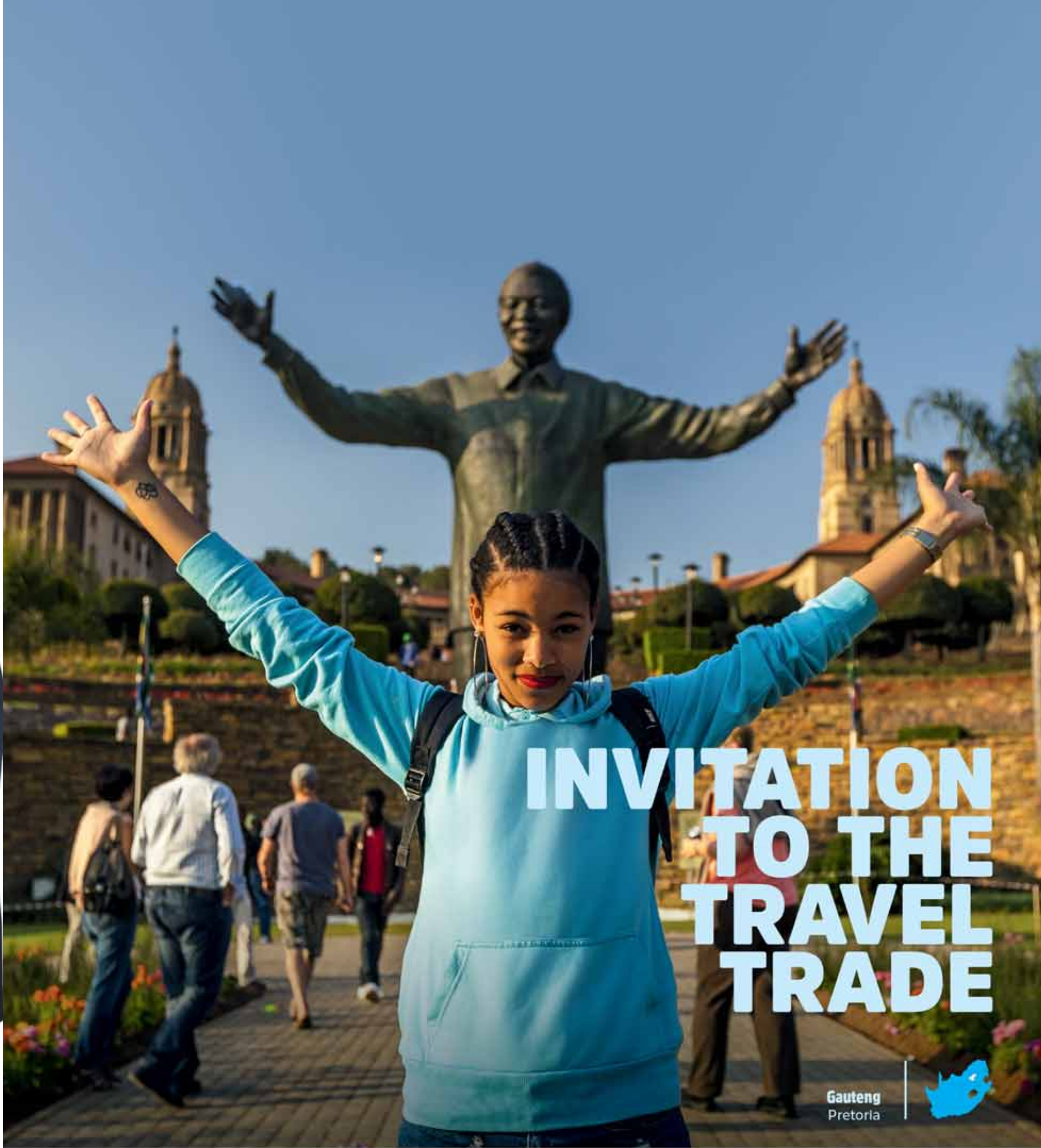
well. As a company, again we were quite early in responding to this potential. Our agency sales and training teams have been covering these markets consistently for more than a decade. Our agents' training programmes include these

There is nothing like leaving your travel hassles to an expert who does it better than doing it on your own, saving a lot on logistics, time and money. Adding to this, one gets to explore the world along with savvy international travel-

in many respects. They had a wine-tasting experience with a breathtaking view of the hills, a lake and a hidden vineyard overlooking rows of vibrant grapevines and coconut trees. Agents in Mumbai were taken on an







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8 February	Friday	Delhi	14:00 - 17:00	Le Meridien

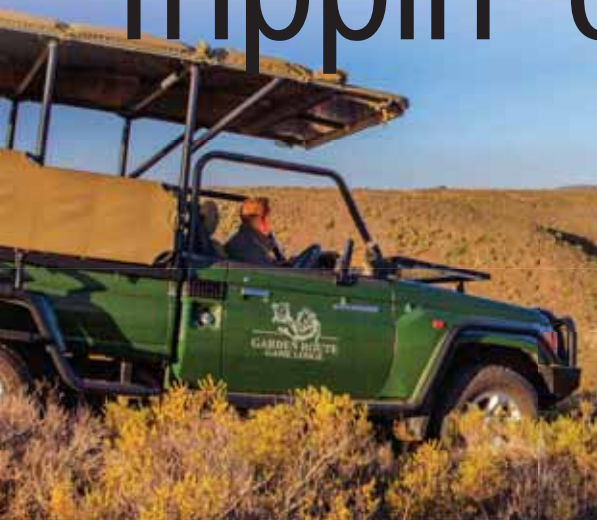
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This scenic coastline route stretches from Heidelberg in the Southern Cape to Storms River Village on the Eastern Cape Border down N2. You are flanked with massive mountain ranges on one side and the ever-changing Ocean on the other. You travel visiting quaint towns, pristine views, seaward, it offers glimpses of southern right whales, dolphins and even killer whales as they romp close to the shore, especially near Plettenberg Bay. The route offers a mix of modern golf courses and ancient forests, retirement estates and modern malls, mountain hideaways and beach holidays.



## Cape Town

Known to the locals as Mother City, this seaside metropolis offers fine restaurants and fabulous views. If you want to explore Cape Town and visit all the iconic attractions, the hop-on-hop off-city sightseeing Cape Town bus is the ideal option. South Africa produces a lot of wine. A tour of the wine regions of the Cape takes you through scenic vineyards. Relive the history of old colonial towns like Stellenbosch, Franschhoek and Paarl and their neighbouring winelands. If you're a shopaholic, don't miss the chance to visit V&A waterfront, a shopping mecca.

## Robben Island and Table Mountain

Experience the apartheid era at Robben island, an island prison, now a world heritage site which is infamous for holding back Nelson Mandela, several political and human rights reformists. A must make trip is the cableway that takes you to the top of Table Mountain. The cable-car rotates as you move up enabling a 360-degree view of the city. The main feature of the Table Mountain is the level plateau approximately 3 Kms from side to side, edged by cliffs. This plateau is flanked by Devil's Peak and Lion's Head and together with Signal Hill forms a natural amphitheatre that makes up City Bowl and Table Bay.

## Boulders Beach

For those of you who have not seen penguins up, close and personal, this is the place to go to. Boulders Beach in



False Bay is a colony of African Penguins. Penguin viewing is made easier by boardwalks that lead visitors across the beaches as well as to an information centre. The story of this penguin colony in Cape Town started in 1983 when a pair was spotted on Foxy Beach at Boulders. The birds came to False Bay from Dyer Island. At the time, False Bay was closed to commercial fishing.

## Stellenbosch

Stellenbosch is the wine capital of South Africa. Vines are the region's most prominent agricultural feature. From fine wine to gourmet food to breathtaking scenery, the Stellenbosch Wine Routes offer a taste of the good life. Connoisseurs of wine can experience wine tasting at the myriad wine farms and estates. Some vineyards offer cellar tours and cheese,

olive tasting as well. Stellenbosch has also been upping its culinary talent and trying to innovate itself as the gourmet capital of South Africa.

## Ostrich farm at Oudtshoorn

Oudtshoorn is popularly referred to as the 'Ostrich Capital of the World'. My 'wow' moment for the entire trip was when I got the chance to feed the ostrich. It pecked a bit as it ate the corn grains from my outstretched palm. Some of the light-weight co-travellers also rode the Ostrich, a practice that is slowly being called off. Some of the jockeys are also known to race these birds. It was a treat to watch these Giant African Birds at such close quarters. For those of you who want to savour new varieties of meat, these ostrich farms also offer ostrich kababs, ostrich liver pates, fillets and other delicatessen made from ostrich meat.

## Garden Route Game Lodge

Set against the backdrop of the majestic Langeberg Mountain Range, this malaria-free, family-owned and operated private game reserve is home to an abundance of animals and birdlife including the big five. The safari is arranged in open land rover vehicles with qualified field guides. Luxury accommodation is also available in spacious lodge rooms or private thatched chalets. They also offer sumptuous dining in their African style restaurants. The Garden Route is nature's Eden with exquisite beaches, mountains and forests for nature lovers, adventure seekers and day excursionists.





# Lumi Safaris: Finland specialists

Passionate about Finland as a destination, Lumi Safaris is a B2B DMC looking at the offline model as it goes a long way in making the travel agent feel more comfortable while doing business.



TT Bureau

Mumbai-based Lumi Safaris is purely a B2B Destination Management Company catering to travel agents and tour operators selling Finland and other Baltic countries. Speaking about the company's ideology, **Nitesh Sampat**, Director, Lumi Safaris, says, "Our company's name is Finnish and so are we. 'Lumi' means 'snow' in Finnish and we are passionate about Finland as a destination. That's why we say 'Ainoa DMC suomen markkinoille intiassa' which means 'the only DMC for Finland in India'."

At present, while dealing with travel agents, it is looking at the offline model as Sampat believes that having a face



**Nitesh Sampat**  
Director  
Lumi Safaris

to the product makes a lot of difference and the agent feels more comfortable. He says, "Agents are assured that if they need anything even in the middle of the night, they can just call and speak to us. This is not something that we started overnight. The current market trend is much above a regular Europe tour and this is due to a lot of social media promotions being done by various destinations. Consumers have now started developing their own product and going to travel agents."

Lumi Safaris offers various products such as backpacking trips, MICE, leisure, luxury, group series departures and much more. "You name it and we have it! We also work hand-in-hand with VisitFinland India and the Helsinki office, and that is how we get a chance to keep upgrading our products on regular basis. The market for special interest travellers is growing rapidly and that is what

keeps us on our toes as travel agents come up every other day with a request we haven't ever heard of! Many of them want to have a candle-light dinner with Santa Claus or sign up for a certification course in skiing in Ylläs. I won't be surprised if soon people might come up with

**"We work hand-in-hand with VisitFinland India and the Helsinki office, and that is how we keep upgrading our products"**

an idea of getting married inside the Ice Hotel or even at the Ice Breaker Cruise!" he quips.

According to Sampat, the product has been around for a long time but not many agents

in India have been selling it aggressively. Hence, he feels that even the basic three-city product (Helsinki, Rovaniemi, Saariselkä) is, in itself, a new offering for this market. He shares, "Perhaps, we come up with an out-of-the-box idea to ensure we have something absolutely new

on the plate during winter 2019. We are currently developing ready-to-sell weekly packages for the Indian travel agents. We are coming up with this idea of ready packages because this helps the agents to sell the product faster rather than waiting for a revert on the quotation."

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# One Riya Global Managers' Meet 2018



Like every year, this year too, the One Riya Global Managers' Meet was a successful show. From the brilliant speeches to insightful panellists, everyone together put up a great event.

Riya Travel and Tours has been hosting the destination meet since the last five years. A different location is chosen every year to host the managers from across the world. The event this year was held at JW Marriott Hotel, Pune. The programme is a great

mix of activities, sharing of ideas and influential speakers talking about their life stories. This year too, the speakers came from different industries and spoke on a variety of topics. RJ Naved charmed the audience as he spoke about his customer service

experience, while Dr Pawan Agrawal enthralled everyone with his motivational talks about customer retention, leadership, work ethics and more. Other speakers like Tapan Singhel from Bajaj Allianz enlightened everyone about the importance of aggressive

sales, Pradeep Lokhande made everyone reconsider their perception of rural India and opened doors for development. D Sivanandhan spoke about leadership, courage stress management and how the Mumbai Police overcome their on-the-job struggle.

Panel discussions were also held with in-house as well as guest panellists. Manoj Samuel, Director, Riya Travel and Tours, added, "We take back intel and insights from various panellists who discussed their point of view and put forth new ideas on One Riya,

cross-selling and the use of technology." Apart from the guest speakers and panellists, there were recreational sessions/activities including Drum Circle, Illuminati, a stand-up comedy session and more.



Mr. D. Sivanandhan, former General of Police, Maharashtra



Mr. Tapan Singhel, CEO of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance



RJ Naved, a popular Radio Jockey from Radio Mirchi



Mr. Pradeep Lokhande, Social Entrepreneur & Founder of Rural Relations

"It was a fascinating and engaging event. We got a chance to learn a great deal from all the sessions and we're indebted to all the guest speakers for this knowledgeable experience. A big thanks to them all"



Mr. GMJ Thampy  
CMD, Riya Travel and Tours



Our Team with Dr. Pawan Agrawal, a motivational speaker & CEO of the Mumbai Dabbawala Association



The panellists discussing how technology will shape the travel industry



The audience beating boredom with the African Beat



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# Popularising rural tourism

Industry stalwarts and veterans working to promote rural tourism came together to launch the Association for Rural Tourism in India (ARTI) during the three-day international conference on rural tourism in Delhi.

 Manas Dwivedi

In an attempt to bring all organisations and individuals engaged in the field of rural tourism under one umbrella, the Association for Rural Tourism in India (ARTI) was unveiled during the International Conference on Rural Tourism Development held at Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi. **Satyajeet Rajan**, Founding Member and Director General (Tourism), Government of India, launched the association amidst the presence of stalwarts and pioneers of rural tourism world over.

On the occasion, **Steve Borgia**, Founding member and CMD, INDeco Hotels said that ARTI will unite all hoteliers, NGOs and individuals working in the space of rural tourism. “As a task long



due, this association is not only meant to hand-hold the tourism initiative, but also share and sustain the efforts. It is also now important that we influence our governments at both the centre and the state, along with NGOs to use rural tourism as a tool to mend the ailing backbone of

our villages,” he said. Other founding members of the association include **SK Misra**, Chairman, Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development and Former Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister of India; **Sujit Banarjee**, Secretary General,

World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC); **MP Bezbaruah**, Former Secretary, Ministry for Tourism and Honorary Permanent Representative, UNWTO; **Jose Dominic**, CEO, CGH Earth Group; **Supratim Raj Basu**, Founder & Director, Help Tourism; **Pandurang Taware**, Founder/

Director Marketing & Sales — Agri Tourism Development Corporation and **Dr Nimit Chowdhary**, Professor and Head, Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Jamia Millia Islamia.

Speaking about the objective of the association, Borgia said, “We looked at rural tourism not only as an economic tool to improve the per capita income of the rural communities, but also to protect and preserve their lifestyle, art, culture and cuisine. Looking at rural tourism as an ideal product for inbound tourists, we have made serious inroads, and have now converted the initiative into not only a successful businesses model, but also a lucrative opportunity for local communities, emerging entrepreneurs and hoteliers.”

An initiative to find economic development and growth for the population living in the rural parts of India, ARTI will work in the area of policy making, pollinating good practices, skill development and training. The association will also work for disseminating information and assisting the government and NGOs to look at rural tourism as a tool for rural development in the country.

The three-day international conference on ‘Rurality, Ruralism, and Rural Tourism: Challenges and Coping Strategies’, organised by Jamia Millia Islamia, discussed the contemporary issues in the field of rural tourism as well as future tourism trends, ideas, implications and methodologies and theoretical and practical approaches for rural tourism development. 



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# Women revel amidst festive cheer



Celebrating Diwali, 84 women from the travel trade in Ahmedabad got together and rejoiced in the festive season. The gathering included women from different airlines, hotels and travel agencies, across the city. The women invited guest speakers to talk about an emotional spa and soul cleansing. Talking about respect, love and care, the gathering definitely had a moment to reflect and travel within.

# TrawellTag ensures a safe journey

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Parents always look forward to visit their children, especially when they live abroad. And, smart

parents like Ashok Soni take a suitable travel assistance and insurance cover when making such trips, as they understand the costs and risks involved with any emergency in a foreign land.

Soni was visiting his son in Bangkok when he experienced sudden uneasiness and complained of chest pain. His son Ankush Soni immediately contacted the emergency assistance team of TrawellTag Cover-More who arranged for the hospitalisation of Soni. Post examination, the medical team advised Soni to undergo angiography and immediate surgery to place an artificial pacemaker.

“The emergency assistance team at TrawellTag Cover-More swung into action immediately and their unwavering support brought my father back to the path of recovery”

Ankush Soni

The TrawellTag Cover-More global assistance team supported Soni's family by liaising with the hospital to provide regular updates about his father's health. They also interacted with the underwriter and facilitated end-to-end financial assistance and coordination with the hospital.

On being discharged from the hospital, Soni decided to stay back with his son in Bangkok, with a sense of gratitude for travelling with TrawellTag Cover-More's global assistance and insurance.

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# Teaming up with technology

With the advent of rising digital trends, technology has already changed every aspect of travel. Read more to know how India Travel Awards winners are going the tech way to enhance their services.

 TT Bureau

★ Entrepreneur of the year —



**Manoj Saraf (East 2017)**

“Maanav Saraf, Business Development Manager—Leisure & MiCE, Gainwell Enterprises, has diverged most of his company’s marketing budgets to digital media by investing heavily in search engines and social media marketing. He says, “One of the other major areas for digital growth for us is search engine optimisation, with a number of inquiries today being originally traced back to Google searches. These achievements have led us to further invest in technology like CRM and cyber security software helping to build a strong digital base for the future. Instead of using traditional paid digital promotions, we have been making good use of blogs and testimonials on digital media platforms.”

★ Best B2B Travel Company —

**dnata India (North 2017)**



“Sagar Raman, National Head—MICE and Leisure Business, dnata India, tells that his company uses state-of-the-art technologies to ensure the best possible service and a seamless travel experience for corporate travellers. “Offering tailor-made services, we flexibly customise external and internal tech solutions to meet each customer’s requirements. For MICE, technology has become an integral part of our service offerings. Hence, we ensure best implementation practices for developing efficacy and efficiency into service line,” Raman adds.”



★ Best MiCE Operator —

**iCON Planners (East 2017)**



“As one of the niche incentive and conference management companies, iCON Planners believes that technological enhancement is the key to success in the service industry. On this, Sunaina Chatterjee, CEO, iCON Planners says that technology can create success ladders for a company, if implemented well. “Apart from using the email blasts and social media interactions/promotions, we use technology in enhancing our operations as well. To name a few, we create hotel and services RFPS on Cvent and similar portals. For all major incentive groups and conferences, we create individual mobile application. We also create online feedback forms to be filled in by customers,” Chatterjee adds.”

★ Best City Hotel —

**Sayaji Hotels, Kolhapur (West 2017)**



“For Sayaji Hotels, Kolhapur, the most apparent manifestation of technology is room booking, and the hotel has its hands over a few worldwide platforms for marking its global presence. Manish Singh Kushwaha, General Manager, Sayaji Hotels, Kolhapur says, “Technology and digital marketing techniques are our key weapon to offer enhanced customer satisfaction and boost internal efficiency. We use reservation diary software for database management and F&B booking information, which has made the workflow prompt and seamless.”



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# Team India shines at WTM 2018

The India pavilion at World Travel Market 2018 in London was abuzz with activities for buyers and sellers alike. **Rashmi Verma**, Secretary—Tourism, led the India contingent and enlisted the achievements of the MOT. Accompanying her were **Pramod Kumar Singh**, Tourism Minister, Bihar; **Vellamandi N Natarajan**, Tourism Minister, Tamil Nadu; **Aashima Mehrotra**, Director, Ministry of Tourism and **Charanjeet Singh**, Deputy High Commissioner of India to the UK.





# In awe of North Cyprus

The 1450 pax incentive movement of Lupin Pharma to The Republic of North Cyprus (TRNC), organised by iCon Planners, was a first of its kind for the destination.

 Nisha Verma from TRNC

For iCon Planners' owners—Sunaina Chatterjee, Ritesh Joshi and Vikrant Gulani, the recent incentive trip they organised for the executives of Lupin Pharma to The Republic of North Cyprus (TRNC), was a first of its kind. Not only the best Star Club Members of the company got a chance to explore various attractions of the exotic island, but also attended

travelling in big numbers. Another add-on is a property like Elexus Hotel & Resort & Spa, which not only offers great stay but also an option of ultra-board including mini bars, unlimited liquor, all meals, evening and midnight snacks," he said.

Adding further about the challenges in getting charter done for such a group, Gulani informed, "It is advisable to get 220 people travel together in

comments, and interact with colleagues," she said.

Even for our DMC Cyprus Global, it was a different experience to have Indian guests. Gulani said, "People in Cyprus are unaware of the Indian culture and its clientele. Most tourists usually come from Russia, Czech Republic, Eastern European, Turkey, England and even Arabia because it is a secluded destination."



an awards ceremony with families, which was presided over by the Minister of Tourism of TRNC.

Talking about the destination, Chatterjee said, "For Indians, TRNC is a virgin destination, and this is the first time an Indian movement has happened to this place to the tune of around 1450 people, who travelled in three separate groups. As there is no direct connectivity from India to TRNC, six charter flights of Atlas Global, a Turkish carrier were flown to the destination while the rest flew Turkish Airlines."

Since iCon Planners is the first company to bring TRNC on the map for Indian corporates, it might pave the way for MiCE agents and the travel industry to look at the destination with a renewed interest.

According to Gulani, the biggest advantage of the destination is the no-visa policy. "All you need is book your tickets, get an entry stamp on your passport, and visit a European, Mediterranean location without going through the hassle of any paperwork. This works perfectly for first-time travellers as well as for all those who are

one go instead of putting them on a commercial airline and then giving separate transfers for everyone, which would further incur cost. On the other hand, a seasoned traveller would prefer a commercial flight for comfort and the benefits vis-a-vis a first-time traveller who would feel better going in a group."

Joshi agreed and added that the process of arranging a charter flight can be cumbersome and there is a need for the Indian aviation authorities to take steps in easing out these processes. However, he insisted, "Charter is the future of corporate travelling now. In fact, this incentive movement to TRNC will definitely be a case study because of the destination and location and the humongous efforts involved in organising it as far as logistics were concerned."


Unlike other incentive trips, Chatterjee claimed that they had created a mobile application for this trip. "With this app, people could check their itineraries group-wise as we had multiple groups. Not only does the app keeps travellers updated but also informs them of every change, allows them to post pictures and

Joshi revealed that they will be pushing this destination in the Indian market and are planning to be the representative for Cyprus Global in India.

When asked about the time taken to plan this incentive trip, Gulani shared, "While most of the corporate clients start planning much in advance, freezing the deal is quite different. In fact, multiple agencies bid for the same corporate business. However, the decisions should happen fast, else the costs escalate as the date of travel approaches. Therefore, it is important for the client and agency to work hand-in-hand to save both time and money."

### Cyprus Profile


- Most tourists usually come from Russia, Czech Republic, Eastern European, Turkey, England and even Arabia
- The biggest advantage of the destination is the no-visa policy. So book your tickets, get an entry stamp on your passport, and visit a European, Mediterranean location without going through the hassle of any paperwork




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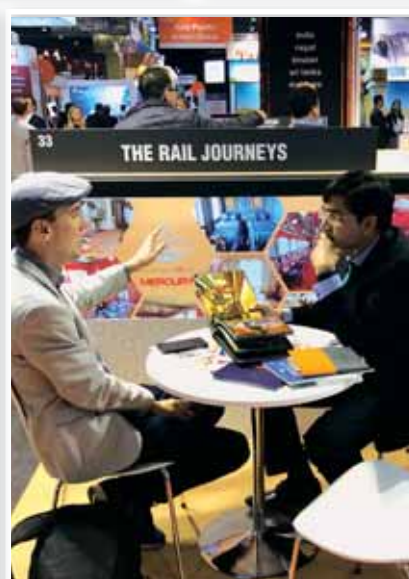


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Chengdu International Tourism Expo (CITE)	Chengdu, China	1
Travel East	Bidhannagar	1-2
India International Travel Mart (IITM)	Pune	1-2
Travel Business Show	Hyderabad	1-2
World Conference on Tourism and Culture	Istanbul	3-5
AVIADEV (Aviation Development Conference)	Valencia, Spain	3-5
AdventureNext India	Bhopal	3-5
International Luxury Travel Market (ILTM)	Cannes	3-6
Tourism Queensland Roadshow	Bengaluru	4
Tourism Queensland Roadshow	Hyderabad	5
India Cargo Awards 2018	Agra	5
India Travel Awards 2018	Agra	6
CII 14th Annual Tourism Summit 2018	Delhi	7
Greek Tourism Expo	Athens	7-9
India Travel Mart	Jaipur	7-9
India International Travel Exhibition	Madurai	7-9
Brussels Travel Expo	Brussels	10-11
Bahrain Tourism Roadshow	Chennai	11
Bahrain Tourism Roadshow	Bengaluru	13
ADTOI Christmas Carnival	Delhi	22

JANUARY 2019

India International Travel Mart (IITM)	Kochi	3-5
TTH Expo	Ahmedabad	3-5
India International Travel Exhibition	Vijaywada	4-6
Adventure & Travel Show India (ATSI)	Delhi	5-6
Travel Turkey Izmir	Izmir, Turkey	6-8
India International Travel & Tourism Exhibition	Mumbai	10-12
SATTE	Delhi	16-18
14th ATOAI Convention	Araku Valley, Andhra Pradesh	17-20
Indonesia Travel Mart	Kuta, Indonesia	18
Business and Luxury Travel Mart	Delhi	18-19
Outbound Travel Mart	Mumbai	23-25
National Tourism Bussan Fair	Tokyo	23-24
Fitur	Madrid	23-27
TTH Expo	Surat	26-28

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Dubai: 2<sup>nd</sup> home for Indians

Issam Kazim, CEO, Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing, believes that with Indians' growing interest for Dubai, the destination is like a second home for Indian travellers.



Nisha Verma

For Dubai, India remains the number one tourism market, claimed Issam Kazim, CEO, Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing. "Since 2016, India has become our number one key source market. Last year, it became the first market to break the 2 million visitor mark

every segment ranging from newly-weds, honeymooners, young couples, young couples with young kids, grandparents as well as old parents who now want to travel. Then we started with business travels, followed by groups, friends travelling together, women travellers, as these segments are fit for what Dubai has on

“ This year, until July we've reached about 1.2 million Indian visitors and year on year, we've witnessed 2.2% growth ”

for any one market, which was a huge achievement. This year, until July we've reached about 1.2 million visitors from India and year on year, we have witnessed 2.2 per cent growth," he claimed.

In terms of segments, Kazim insisted that they don't want to stick to a one-size-fits-all approach. "We are now focusing a lot more across different geographies, but then we are also looking at the typographies as opposed to the demographic make-up. We cover

offer. Apart from that, global trends include millennials and the kind of travel they look for," he said.

He further said that they are also plugging in the 'bleisure' approach for those who come for business to Dubai. With the wedding segment gaining popularity, Kazim claimed that they still have more to do in this area. "Several properties here blend themselves beautifully for memorable wedding settings. We need to be more aggressive about that



Issam Kazim  
CEO, Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing

since this is a growing trend in India," he claimed.

Another segment that works perfectly for Dubai is staycation from the Indian market. "A huge population residing in Dubai are Indians. We are looking at leveraging that and hence VFR becoming a huge factor for us. This shows the power of those who live in Dubai to become ambassadors of the destination. In terms of staycation, not only do we focus on hotels, but we also have many holiday homes, and we already have a lot of Indians who have invested in properties in Dubai who use that as almost like their

second homes and getaway," claimed Kazim.

Talking of the Dubai Tourism, featuring Shahrukh Khan, he said, "With this campaign, the bonus is not only that he is a hugely popular name, but the fact that he genuinely loves Dubai and considers it as his second home. Hence, his influence on what he wants to show as a backdrop, where he wants to be, and what he wants to highlight is personal to him as well. This is the reason we believe that the campaign has been successful and has resonated so well."

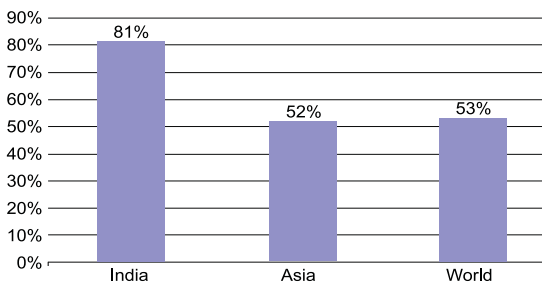
New Initiative

- Dubai College of Tourism not only focuses on the big brand hotels with training facilities, but also develops the skills of people by imparting the basic training of engaging with agents and guests
- New tools are also created to update guests with the relevant information

Leased aircraft account for 81%

About 81 per cent of commercial aircraft in India are leased, compared with 53 per cent globally, according to a recent report by Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA).

Leased share of commercial aircraft numbers\*: India, Asia and world



Leased aircraft take a high share of all operators' fleets in India. There are 652 commercial aircraft with operators in India (including 34 in storage), according to the CAPA Fleet Database.

Source: CAPA Fleet Database

OBITUARY

Ignacio Ducasse Gutierrez



(August 16, 1961 – November 16, 2018)

Ignacio Ducasse Gutierrez, Director, Tourism Office of Spain in Mumbai and Counsellor of the Spanish Embassy in India, passed away on November 16, 2018. The professional life of Ignacio Ducasse was always linked to the international promotion of Spain, achieving respect and recognition of both the tourism industry of Spain and the various countries where he carried out his work. In Madrid, he held, among others, the positions of Deputy Director General for Economic and Administrative affairs and Director of the Spanish Institute of Tourism Studies; he was Tourism Counsellor in Toronto, Los Angeles, Tokyo and Mumbai. He is survived by his two sisters and his little pet dog Yaco, a five-year old Jack Russell Terrier.





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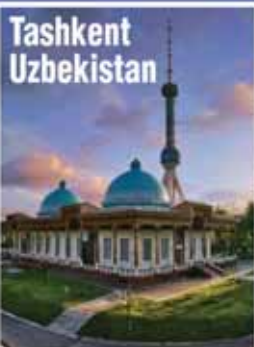
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## HVS Anarock

### Delhi/NCR

**Mandeep Lamba** has joined HVS Anarock as President for South Asia market. Prior to this, he was Managing Director for Hotels & Hospitality Business at JLL India. A hospitality professional with an established leadership track record of 35 years, Lamba held varied roles with leading organisations of which the last 17 years have been in CEO positions. His current role involves advising investors on their hospitality related growth and acquisition strategies besides working with hotel owners and operators on Asset Management, Raising Debt & Equity, Feasibility & Market Studies and Executive Search for Hospitality and Real Estate senior management.



## OYO

### Delhi/NCR

OYO Hotels has appointed **Aditya Ghosh** as the Chief Executive Officer—India and South Asia. With an experience of over 21 years, he has been entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing and growing the hotel business in South Asia, including India, Nepal and other upcoming markets in the region. Ghosh joins OYO Hotels & Homes following an outstanding stint at IndiGo as its President & Wholtime Director, where he was instrumental in turning IndiGo into the largest and most profitable airline in India. He was also a member of the apex Executive Committee of InterGlobe Enterprises at the Group Level and sat on the Board of the hotels and technology businesses.



## Kamat Group of Hotels

### Mumbai

Kamat Group of Hotels has designated **Varun Sahani** as Vice President—Operations for the group. A seasoned professional, Sahani has over two decades of pivotal experience in the realm of hospitality operations and sales. In his new role, Sahani will spearhead the operations, marketing and sales, revenue management and strategic growth initiatives of the 372-room The Orchid Mumbai property. He joined The Orchid Mumbai in 2015 as General Manager. Prior to that, he held senior level management and operations position with The Lalit, Clarks Inn and Jaypee Greens Golf & Spa Resort.



## Novotel Goa Shrem Hotel and Novotel Goa Resort & Spa Hotel

### Goa

AccorHotels has announced the appointment of **Ranju Singh** as the Complex General Manager of Novotel Goa Shrem Hotel and Novotel Goa Resort & Spa Hotel. A seasoned hotelier, Singh brings with him over 25 years of rich hospitality experience with several brands including Taj and Hyatt Hotels. Prior to joining AccorHotels, he was the General Manager at Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa. Singh will be responsible for the overall management, strategic direction and leading the two established properties whilst developing fantastic offers for guests.



## Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa, Goa and Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa

### Goa

**Anmol Ahluwalia** has been promoted as General Manager—North Goa in charge of two of the most coveted hotels – Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa, Goa and Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa. Awarded the Best General Manager of Western Region – Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) for 2017-18, Ahluwalia is known for his passion and commitment to see his vision through. Starting his professional tenure as a Housekeeping Management Trainee with The Oberoi Hotels, Ahluwalia has come a long way to achieve his goals. With the IHCL since 2005, he has almost two decades of experience in luxury hospitality.



## Radha Group of Hotels

### Chennai

**Jaya Shankar Gupta** has joined Radha Group of Hotels in Chennai as General Manager. He has 28 years of experience in the hospitality industry. His prior assignments include stints with Choice Hotels, Traders by Shangrila, Ramada and Radisson Hotel Group. His key areas include pre-opening project of hotels, Hotel Administration & Operations, Revenue Management and Training. Gupta is skilled in Catering, Negotiation, Budgeting, Food & Beverage and Operations Management. He holds a degree from Institute of Hotel Management.



## Lords Eco Inn Dahej

### Dahej (Gujarat)

**Swarnendu Nandy** has been designated as Operations Manager of Lords Eco Inn Dahej. Prior to this, he was General Manager at The Divine Resort Somnath. He is responsible for all managing aspects of all the departments whilst working closely with all Head of Departments in successful operation of the hotel. Having completed his Diploma in Hotel Management from Durgapur, Nandy started his career with The Quality Inn Ahmedabad, The Fort Radisson Kolkata, and moved to Bengaluru in The Eagleton Golf Resort. He then worked with Ramada Plaza Varanasi and The Square Hyderabad.



## Pride Plaza Hotel, Aerocity, New Delhi

### Delhi

**Rohit Srivastava** has joined Pride Plaza Hotel, Aerocity, New Delhi as Sales Manager—Leisure & MICE segment. In his current role, he will be responsible for sales for all the hotels. Prior to this, he was associated with The Leela Palace Hotels & Resorts for where he was taking care of The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi as Sales Manager. Srivastava has been associated with Lords Hotels & Resorts, Country Inn Hotels & Resorts, Bright Vision Events in his work experience of nine years.



## Novotel Pune Nagar Road Hotel

### Pune

**Trupti Mishra** has been appointed as Director of Rooms of Novotel Pune Nagar Road Hotel. In her 11 years long stint in the hospitality industry, Mishra has been associated with renowned brands like Hyatt Regency, Le Meridien, Novotel Imagica and Oakwood Premier across different cities of India. At Novotel, her responsibility is to ensure smooth operation of guest services and deliver the best hospitality services efficiently. She has completed her diploma in hotel management from Bharti Vidyapeeth, Pune and has an experience of more than a decade in the hospitality sector.



## TALKing People

**Shibil Malik**, General Manager, Sheraton Grand Chennai Resort & Spa, has a mantra to deal with stress. He says, "On a stressful day, I prefer to go out for a pleasant meal, followed by a relaxing long drive on the East Coast Road and unwind. I am inclined towards golf since it is a versatile game and teaches patience. Besides, my hobbies include flying. I can fly Cessna – a small, piston-powered aircraft. He adds, "My most memorable holiday moment was driving around Europe. We covered over five countries across the continent."



**Piiyush Kapoor**, General Manager, JW Marriott Mussoorie Walnut Grove Resort & Spa, is passionate about technology and loves exploring the digital space to get rid of stress. He shares, "Watching tech videos at the end of a long day is my guilty pleasure. I like to keep myself informed about new gadgets and the latest developments in technology. Kapoor enjoys holidaying in naturist places."



**Subhankar Bose**, General Manager, Renaissance Bengaluru Race Course Hotel, is fond of travelling, with Zurich being his favourite destination. He mentions, "A few favourites are Marrakech, Istanbul, London, Paris and New York. Zurich, however, tops the list. It's a city that has the best standard of living in the world. You could walk down the Bahnhofstrasse, which is probably one of the best shopping streets in the world."







# GOOD HEALTH ADDS LIFE TO YEARS

## Adding life to years with Ayurveda

"Healthy Aging" is a theme well propagated by the WHO. In 2016, 8.5 percentage of world population, which is about 617 million people, was aged 65 and above. By 2050 the population would rise to 17 percent of world population which is about 1.6 billion. the current health care systems need to be prepared to handle this scenario from middle age onwards, otherwise long life without health will certainly be an agony during old age. It is especially challenging for the Ayurveda community because geriatrics is one of its core strengths.

It is well understood that the needs of the older people are different than those of youngsters, especially in respect of their healthcare needs. There is also a subtle shift in size and composition of the family leading to a large number of older people living all alone without support. The policy on older people recognizes that "old persons have to cope with health and associated problems, some of which may be chronic, of a multiple nature, requiring constant attention and carrying the risk of disability and consequent loss of autonomy."

**Geriatric Care** has two distinct dimensions:

1. Promotion of health and longevity
2. Management of diseases of old age

The conventional modern medicine is apparently strong in terms of the second dimension, although the final outcome may not be significant because most of the diseases of old age are incurable. Ayurveda is notably strong in terms of the first dimension of the problem as it has rich potential to promote health of the elderly, besides the scope of rejuvenation and promotion of longevity. As stated earlier Ayurveda is essentially the Science of life and longevity.

The concept of *Vayasthapana/Geriatrics* in Ayurveda deals with preserving the youthfulness of a body irrespective of its age and restricting progression towards senescence, along with enhancement of longevity, intellect, physical and mental strengths, and prevention from diseases. Rasayana Tantra, one of the eight branches of Ayurveda is dedicated to rejuvenation,

regeneration, immunomodulation, and healthy aging. The process of degeneration and wear out increases with age and maintenance of normal function obviously requires special efforts. The scope of Rasayana therapy is not necessarily restricted to herbal formulation, but includes a combination of meditation, yoga, daily and seasonal diet, lifestyle interventions, and personal and social behavioral conduct too. All these measures that assist in the maintenance of healthy body tissues and mind are grouped together as Rasayana or Anti-aging therapy.

The environment also plays a vital role in achieving the desired results during the course of therapy. Here at Favourite Kerala Ayurveda and Spa, the anti-aging therapy is complimented by serenity, that is being achieved by being close with the nature. One gets to know one's inner self and a blissful sensory awakening happens amidst of the nature with fragrance of the flora, sound of the waves that is music to ears, visual treat of peacock dancing, sumptuous wellness platter to entice your tastebuds, yoga to bring in sense of mind-body balance.

The Rasayana drugs are likely to be nutrient tonics, antioxidants, anti-stress, adaptogens and immunomodulators. The net effect of all these attributes is the anti-aging effect. Studies on popular Rasayana remedies like Amalaki, Aswagandha, Guduchi, Brahmi and classical compound Rasayana like Chyavanaprasha have shown evidence to suggest their efficacy as anti-aging remedies.

Ayurveda classics also mention that we naturally deplete with each decade of life. Ayurveda observes natural dominance of vata dosha in old individuals and vata dominant diseases are expected more in this age group. Thus degenerative and debilitating diseases like osteoarthritis, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, stroke are commonly seen in older populations. Contemporary medicine has not yet been able to either prevent or retard the progress of these age-related disorders, and that is the reason why people look toward Ayurveda with hope from the middle age itself to age gracefully. The non-pharmacological interventions related to lifestyle, diet, and panchakarma therapies that Ayurveda advocates have been overlooked in this case. As WHO advocates, it is not important to add just years to your life but add life to your years. With help of wisdom of Ayurveda and advancements in Science, we can make life livable and more pleasant while it exists.

Favourite Kerala Ayurveda and Wellness Centre is a Greenleaf certified Ayurveda service provider currently operating from 4 locations – Ashtamudi, Kovalam and other two centres in the region of Calicut. Soon it will open two of its international centres too. The strengths of Favourite Kerala Ayurveda and Wellness Centre are its quality Ayurveda physicians, therapists and authentic practice of Ayurveda. With consistent level of luxury standards, strong market reach and steady management training programs, Favourite Kerala is now exploring more opportunities and is in talks with probable partners in India and overseas for associations through direct ownership and franchise options.

This article has been authored by Dr. Roshni Praveen  
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# Find your retreat at The Den

**Ronen Nissenbaum, President & CEO, Dan Hotels, talks about the group's journey so far, its first international property – The Den, Bengaluru and the hospitality scenario in India.**



Manas Dwivedi from Bengaluru

## Q What made you choose Bengaluru for your first international property?

About 10 years back, when Dan Hotels was looking for a location to invest in outside of Israel, they made visits to China and other Asian countries, including India. While in India, we also scouted for possible locations in Mumbai and Delhi. After much deliberation, we zeroed in on Bengaluru. It matched the conditions we were used to in Israel. We believe that Bengaluru has tremendous capability to grow manifold in the coming years, and that the success of this property will drive us to venture into other Indian cities as well.

## Q What has been the growth story for The Dan group?

About 71 years ago, two brothers co-founded Dan Hotels, now one of the biggest luxury hotel chains with 14 hotels and 3669 rooms in Israel. We have developed very well over the decade, while expanding and growing exponentially with time. Our growth trajectory has been steady and I think we are now at a place where we are ready for a spurt in growth. We have the capacity to add a number of new hotels to our portfolio in the next few years.

## Q Bengaluru is a competitive market. How do you plan to deal with the competition here?

The Den, Bengaluru, is unique both in design and architecture. The other good thing about the property is the kind



of service and hospitality it offers. True to its name, The Den is a wholesome stay option. Its proximity to IT parks and business districts of the city make it the smartest choice for luxury business travellers. For groups and conventions, we have a huge meeting space and a 70-seater auditorium, which most hotels do not have.

The way we compete is what makes us different. Our F&B services are exclusive and our rooftop restaurant, Layla, is one of the tallest structures in Bengaluru, giving spectacular views of the city. We are also bringing in unique elements to serve our customers.

## Q What is your take on the hospitality business in India?

India is an emerging market in the hospitality arena. The country has a huge potential

## Q Tell us about the group's expansion plans.

We have invested significant amounts of money, effort, and resources into building this hotel because we have a plan to expand further in India. The decision about when and where will be determined by the success of The Den, Bengaluru. We had a soft opening of the property in December 2017 and with the grand launch of Layla, The Den is now fully functional. We are now looking at a significant growth in occupancy.



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