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MOT ensures safe adventures

The Ministry of Tourism (MOT) along with the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI) recently launched a set of guidelines on 'Safety and Quality Norms for Adventure Tourism in India'.



Nisha Verma

KJ Alphons, Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism, recently released the guidelines by Government of India on adventure tourism, formulated along with the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI) in an effort to make adventure sports safer. Held at Samrat Hotel, New Delhi, the launch event saw in attendance the MOT delegation led by Alphons, including **Rashmi Verma**, Secretary, Tourism and **Suman Billa**, Joint Secretary, Tourism. **Swadesh Kumar**, Pres-

ident, ATOAI, was also present at the event along with **Ajeet Bajaj**, Senior Vice President, ATOAI.

Speaking at the launch, Alphons said, "We have brought these guidelines out for 29 activities on land, air and water. We believe that adventure tourism is going to be a one trillion dollar industry in the next 10 years. Currently, it's a 490 billion dollar industry worldwide, and we want to have a big pie of that in India because we have incredible natural resources for adventure tourism."

“We believe that adventure tourism is going to be a one trillion industry in the next 10 years. Currently, it's a 490 billion dollar industry worldwide”

Addressing the need for the implementation of guidelines, he said, "It's important to lay down protocol for these activities as we want people to be safe. ATOAI will work with the government and MOT would provide every assistance required to the state governments and associations to create basic facilities."

Kumar added, "It took us one year to frame these guidelines and the government has been very kind to officially launch it. It's like an operating system on how to operate your business. The document gives you qualifications for guides as well as for camping policy. Information is also

available on what guides need to do in case of an accident and other mishaps."

Would MOT be also licensing service providers in the adventure tourism category? Alphons explained, "After these guidelines, we will work with the states to ensure that these guidelines are followed. Those with accreditation will stand a chance of getting more clients, an incentive enough for individual operators."



KJ Alphons
Minister of State, (I/C) for Tourism

Global Travel Mart from Sep 16-18



Rashmi Verma
Secretary
Ministry of Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism (MOT) is set to organise Global Travel Mart in association with FAITH from September 16-18 and International Buddhist Conclave from August 26-28. **Rashmi Verma**, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, sheds more light on these exhibitions.



TT Bureau

Global Travel Mart

The Ministry of Tourism is undertaking several initiatives to boost tourism as well as business opportunities for the travel trade. Rashmi

Verma said, "For a long time, the industry demanded that we should have a Global Travel Mart in our country on the lines of WTM and ITB, and this year we have finalised the mart in partnership with the industry. MOT will be organising

this Global Travel Mart from September 16-18 in Delhi with participants from all over the world. About 200-250 foreign delegates as well as media will also participate in the event. The entire travel trade industry will be our partners and their

apex organisation, Federation of Associations in Indian Travel and Hospitality (FAITH) will be doing it with us in partnership."

She claimed that the mart will provide equal opportunities to small tour operators who

cannot travel around the world for different trade shows. "This new initiative is set to give a lot of fillip to the tourist traffic to the country. Unlike the big players who participate in fairs around the world and interact

Contd. on page 7 ▶

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Your must-have travel covers

Each travel insurance company offers a variety of plans at varying prices with varying benefits. While choosing the right plan can be tricky, some covers are absolutely essential.

❖ **Medical cover** – This should cover all the medical expenses that ensue, including hospitalisation, surgery, prescription drugs, outpatient visits, etc. Check for a policy that covers both primary medical and sudden incidental expenses. In addition, it should cover medical evacuation if necessary and in the event of death, repatriation of the insured's body to the country of origin.

❖ **Luggage & personal belongings cover** – This provides reimbursement for lost, stolen or damaged baggage and personal items. Travellers should ensure the policy covers high value items. Delay or loss of checked-in baggage should also be covered. The sum assured can always be increased by paying an

additional premium.

❖ **Cancellation/Curtailment cover** – This covers any travel and accommodation costs that travellers need to pay due to cancellation or curtailment of the trip for any reason including inclement weather or ill-health as well as any pre-paid expenses. It will also cover the costs of unexpected accommodation, meals and transport in the event of the flight getting delayed. Some policies even provide for alternate travel arrangements if the flight is delayed or cancelled.

❖ **Missed departure cover** – This cover provides insurance against missing one's flight, boat or train and covers the costs of additional transport or accommodation. This also helps in case a traveller misses a connecting flight or train.

❖ **Personal liability cover** – Having personal liability policy protects travellers from paying for causing accidental bodily injury or damage to property. This is important especially if a traveller intends to drive in a foreign country.

Choosing the right policy

It is of utmost importance that one researches about existing insurance policy being sold and ensure what the policies cover. Secondly, choose a policy that best suits one's travel. Several factors including the length of the trip, destination, general health and whether the traveller intends to participate in high-risk sport (mountaineering, deep sea diving, bungee jumping, paragliding) will determine which policy is right. Here are some points to factor in while choosing a travel insurance policy:

❖ **Choose single trip or annual multi-trip policies:** Frequent travellers should

opt for multi-trip policies. Multi-trip coverage is effective for one calendar year and covers multiple visits. Annual multi-trip policies have trip duration limits of 30-45 days.

❖ **Family insurance:** Family floater plans cover the entire family and are generally cheaper than individual policies for each member. It is advisable that travellers opt for these plans while travelling with family.

❖ **Medical expenses:** Medical treatments are prohibitively expensive abroad. Hence, it is vital for one to choose the right medical cover according to the country or region of travel:

1. While travelling to multiple destinations in different regions, the farthest region should be the criterion for coverage. Most of

the companies offer "world-wide cover", sometime including USA or without USA.

2. One needs to check if their travel insurance policy covers pre-existing medical conditions. Travel insurance usually covers only unforeseen medical conditions, not pre-existing ones.

❖ **Contactability:** Travellers must check if the insurers have a single contact number for assistance across the globe or offer continent wise contact numbers. Insurers who offer a single contact number manage the back-end process at their end which makes it easier for traveller to communicate in case they do not understand the language of the destination they travel to.

Word of caution

Before buying travel insurance, travellers should always read the list of exclusions. Every travel insurance policy has a list of exclusions for which coverage is not provided. For instance, quite a few sports, especially adventure activities, are excluded from standard policies.

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



Anurag Rastogi
Member of Executive Management,
HDFC ERGO General Insurance

Painting the town PINK to celebrate womanhood



In an effort to celebrate womanhood and to appreciate the efforts of women employees, TRAVTALK has started the PINK Friday initiative. We encourage people to wear something pink to work every Friday. Kudos to the team from Global Anchor Cruises for turning up in pink this Friday. We encourage more people from the industry to take this up and celebrate the efforts, dedication and unparalleled commitment of the women in the workforce.

Enjoy cricket at Leisure

Leisure Sports Travel, the sports travel hospitality brand of Leisure Corp, is the official travel agent for ICC Cricket World Cup England and Wales, 2019.



TT Bureau

Leisure Corp has been recognised and appointed as the official travel agent for the ICC Cricket World Cup scheduled to be held in England and Wales in 2019. This was announced at the launch of International Cricket Council's official Travel and Tour Program for the World Cup in 2019. "At Leisure Sports Travel, our endeavour is to offer world-class spectator experience to our travellers. When India plays a big game, an estimated 400 million watch on television. We are undertaking the venture to bring out the spectators from their homes to the stands. It is with this initiative, we took the decision of associating ourselves with global sporting events such as FIFA Football World Cup, 2018 and ICC Cricket World Cup England & Wales, 2019," says



Naveen Kundu
Managing Director
Leisure Corp

Naveen Kundu, Managing Director, Leisure Corp.

Leisure Sports Travel specialises in creating tailor-made packages for sports fanatics who believe in going the extra mile to show support. Through its offerings of experiential travel, the company believes that it has created value for its clientele and provided exceptional services.

For ICC Cricket World Cup England & Wales 2019, the company has designed packages which offer a complete match experience including travel, match tickets, accommodation, transfers and hospitality.

Kundu adds, "Fans can select packages which are specifically designed to bring them closer to the action with opportunities to have their photo taken with the ICC Cricket World Cup trophy, enjoy tours of the stadium with pitch access and Q&A session with cricketing legends."

Special Package

For ICC Cricket World Cup England & Wales 2019, Leisure Sports Travel has designed a complete match experience package including travel, match tickets, accommodation, transfers and hospitality

IATO declares Convention heads

Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has named its Vice President **Rajiv Mehra** as the Chairman and Hony Secretary **Rajesh Mudgill** as the Co-chairman for its upcoming Vizag convention.



TT Bureau

In its Executive Committee meeting held recently in New Delhi, the new team of IATO deliberated on the issues in hand and set the ball rolling for its annual convention, scheduled to be held from September 6-9, 2018 in Visakhapatnam. The team unanimously declared **Rajiv Mehra** as the Chairman and **Rajesh Mudgill** as the Co-chairman of the convention.



Rajiv Mehra
Vice President
IATO



Rajesh Mudgill
Hony Secretary
IATO

Mehra and Mudgill will start working on the convention soon and the registrations for the same will also begin. Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach will be the convention hotel. Mehra said, "This will be the first time we will hold our

convention in Andhra Pradesh on request of the Chief Minister. The most important deliberations at the convention would be on how to achieve the target of 20 million tourists. Currently, the industry is plagued with

problems like GST, tourist transport permit issues, need for roads, wayside amenities, new airports, etc. With all these obstacles, it is difficult to reach the 20 million tourist mark. Hence, we will be pondering on discus-

sions and solutions about the hurdles and requirements from the government."

He added, "At the same time, we will focus on giving the right kind of information to members to increase their business. We want to empower them with knowledge of different digital mediums for usage in their business. We will keep all this in mind while planning the sessions at the convention."

IATO members will also be participating in the Ministry of Tourism roadshows in USA. Mehra said, "A total of 23 IATO members are going to join the MOT delegation for its roadshows in the US."

For more, turn to page 14

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Make India credible again

On June 5, while the world was celebrating World Environment Day and World Ocean Day, The Guardian on June 8 brought out a parody of their Week in Wildlife gallery to show the Week in Plastic. Out of the 20 pictures from around the world, it is not really encouraging to know that three are from India – two from the national capital of Delhi and one from the business capital of Mumbai. The picture gallery was also supplemented with a nugget of information that read that “India has the world’s 14-most plastic polluted cities.”

The Shimla water crisis and the curfew in Shillong (also known as Scotland of East) have also not helped to further the cause of tourism in India this summer. With so much of negative publicity, both within the country and outside, the Ministry of Tourism along with the various inbound and domestic associations should work together to make sure that the country is looked upon as a favourable tourist destination and that India is indeed In’credible’!

An adventurous India

Another feather was added to the Ministry of Tourism’s cap when it launched the guidelines for adventure tourism in India recently. While they introduced this with the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI), the adventure tourism industry has many more stakeholders, including people who set up the camps, equipment, facilities as well as guides that make people experience extreme sports at various locations in the country. We hope that all of them benefit from this initiative. However, the question that arises is, ‘Would just the guidelines be enough?’ The need of the hour is to offer state-of-the-art facilities in the adventure segment, wherever it is being offered, and ensure that all activities pass through the same protocol. Else, they should not be operational. The number of Indians going for adventure activities is growing, but most of them are going out of the country for the same, owing to doubts on safety norms within India. We hope that the next step after launching the guidelines is providing licenses to service providers, so that people can confidently take up adventure sports in India.

TRAVTALK brings to you news and events that made headlines 25 years ago with relevance even today. From the archives, we present the June 1993 issue:

Then

GERMAN TRAVEL MART SUPERBLY ORGANISED

- In 1993, German Travel Mart was held from May 21-23 at the Munich Order Centre.
- It was attended by more than 700 German sellers and about 500 buyers from all over the world. The mart had nearly 300 booths.
- The Netherlands was the biggest originating market for Germany, revealed Blatterman, Director Marketing, German National Tourist Board.
- There was an Indian delegation also at the event, which appreciated the impeccable organisation of the mart.

Now

Dresden hosts 44th GTM



- The 44th Germany Travel Mart was held in Dresden, the capital of the Saxony region, from May 6-9 May, 2018.
- It saw in attendance around 520 representatives from 51 countries and 338 exhibitors from Germany.
- The Indian delegation had 11 tour operators and 5 journalists.
- In 2017, Germany recorded a total of 83.9 million overnight stays, with Netherlands being the most important source market for the country.

Oberoi's First Novotel Opens In September

- In June 1993, it was announced that Novotel Agra, the first of a series of quality budget hotels planned by Oberoi's for the midscale business and leisure traveller would open on September 15, 1993.
- This was to be followed by three more properties in Jaipur, Udaipur (in 1994) and Delhi in 1995.
- The Agra hotel was being built with the same red stone as the city's historic fort and was to be located within walking distance of the Taj Mahal.
- The 143- room property was planned to have distinctly Mughal architecture and modern facilities in each room.

Radisson adds to Jodhpur's tourism

As a three-month old property, Radisson Jodhpur has already made its mark on the hospitality spectrum of Rajasthan, believes **Subhashish Gupta**, General Manager of the hotel.



TT Bureau

With big plans to launch nearly 10 more properties in India in various cities this year, Radisson Hotel Group is moving up fast on the hospitality ladder in the country. Radisson Jodhpur, a three-month old property is already witnessing a good response from guests within the city as well as from nearby states, informs Gupta. He says, “Given that this is a new property, our performance

so far has been phenomenal. Our sales teams have worked very hard to attract customers from nearby cities in the state and outside Rajasthan. Another potential pool of guests are the outbound leisure travellers from the state who can be offered a good holiday. We have made a mark in the city of Jodhpur where we are now being positioned alongside the luxury properties that have been operating from the last 10-20 years.”

Neeraj Joshi, Director of Sales and Marketing, Radisson Jodhpur, further informs that so far, the average duration of stay has been for three-four nights. He says, “I see Jodhpur as an equivalent to Udaipur in terms of its attractiveness. Rajasthan is a big state with many destinations of tourist interest and each one is different from the other. With an increase in education and awareness among the travellers, soon the potential of Jodhpur will be seen.”



Subhashish Gupta
General Manager
Radisson Jodhpur

Initiatives to boost tourist traffic

► Contd. from page 3

with tour operators, the small agents are not able to travel abroad. Hence, this will give an opportunity for all of them and interact with their counterparts and do business," she added. There will also be Fam tours for the delegates before and after the mart.

Buddhist Tourism Conclave

Verma also revealed that a lot of focus is being given to Buddhist sites in India. "In our attempt to reinforce India as the largest land of Buddha, we are getting a thematic film made on Buddhist sites in India, inviting people to come to India and walk on the footsteps of Buddha. We also have a dedicated media campaign for the Buddhist circuit in India, which we will run in ASEAN countries as well as in other countries like the US and Germany, where there is a lot of interest in Buddhism," she said.

With greater awareness about these sites, we will be able to encourage traffic from these countries to our country. "We have 50 crore Buddhists around the world but the numbers to India are extremely low. We feel that with enhanced marketing initiatives, we can double the numbers soon. We are also focusing on infrastructure development at the Buddhist sites. We have sanctioned about six projects under Swadesh Darshan in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh for development of infrastructure and basic amenities. We will also develop wayside amenities in these places and improve road connectivity. In fact, we have written to the roads department for taking up certain roads which connect these sites on priority. We are also focusing on air connectivity to these destinations and undertaking initiatives to incentivise the airlines to have more flights to these sites."

In line with this agenda, MOT recently conducted roadshows in Buddhist countries, revealed Verma. "In line with promotion of Buddhist tourism in India, we just concluded roadshows in four countries – Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand. We are also organising a Buddhist Conclave from August 26-28 to conduct business meetings. A few prominent monks from these countries are expected to at-

tend the event. After the inauguration at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, all the delegates will be flown to Ajanta and Ellora caves by charter flights. This is the first time we will be showcasing other sites related to Buddhism. We will then take them to Bodh Gaya and Sarnath."

Vouching for UDAN

The Ministry is also in talks with the Ministry of Civil

Aviation (MoCA) for boosting air connectivity to major tourist sites. Verma revealed, "Last week, a meeting was held with MoCA in which our minister met the Civil Aviation minister and discussed how we can enhance air connectivity to Buddhist sites as well as to our iconic sites. Some areas are totally unserved, hence they will be covered under UDAN, but areas with connectivity are also un-

derserved, and there is a need for flights. Hence, we are hopeful that very soon, the Civil Aviation Ministry will come up with a scheme and strategy."

Use of funds under service sector

The services sector has recently got a grant of ₹5000 crore, and tourism is also part of it. Talking about how they will use this money,

Verma said, "Increased footfalls would mean greater foreign exchange earnings and more employment opportunities. Hence, we are working out a plan for putting up our demands from that fund. Apart from investing on marketing and connectivity, we are also focusing on skilling people under that fund for which we are drawing an action plan soon, to be sent to the Ministry of Commerce." ↴

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Nipah Alert

► MOT is trying to communicate with tourists and convey that the virus is localised in a particular part of Kerala and is not present in the rest of the state

► Advisories do get issued but MOT takes proactive steps to get those removed too

Engage and ideate at MCUBE

Marriott recently hosted MCUBE (Marriott Meetings Matter), its signature MiCE event, at the newly-opened JW Marriott Jaipur Resort & Spa. The event brought together the largest corporate and professional conference organisers under one roof to enhance synergies and strengthen partnerships.



TT Bureau

MCUBE, a two-day conclave, provided an opportunity for all the participating hotels to meet industry partners and potential customers who have substantial requirements for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events (MiCE). The key objective was to enhance synergies and strengthen partnerships.

Sanjay Sharma, Market Vice President—North India, Nepal and Bhutan, Marriott International, shared

some insights on the viability of MiCE in India and why bringing events to cities helps elevate the local economy too. “MCUBE is not only an opportunity for us to show the hotel but showcase Jaipur as a MiCE destination.

“When meetings and conventions start coming in, new business opportunities are available for not only the hotels but local vendors, transporters, etc”

Jaipur is booming at the moment with the availability of new infrastructure and development with a possibility to avail more MiCE business into the city.”

On the growth of Marriott, Sharma said, “Marriott witnessed a double digit growth of

RevPar during the period 2016-17 and 2017-18. For F&B, we faced a little bit of a crisis due to liquor ban, GST and demonetisation when a few of our hotels were hit. So overall, 2017 was a stellar year for us and we

performed far above our market share against our competitors.”

Talking about the strategy behind expansions, he states, “We are very detailed in terms of what the business needs are if we build hotels in new cities. Today’s hotels are not just about

business in the cities but also about bringing business into the cities. One of the key drivers for demand in hospitality business is MiCE. When meetings and conventions start coming in, new business opportunities are available for not only the hotels but local vendors, transporters, etc. Bringing big events is not only beneficial to hotels but also the local economy.”

Sharma believes that the success of convention business is not defined by competitions but collaborations. He says, “We will make more headway in bringing in more international events into the country by collaborating not only within our hotels but also with other brands and marketing that destination as ‘collaborative service providers’. India is

the optimal inbound destination with an excellent infrastructure now and myriad options of cuisine, value for money and building service levels.”

Referring to Marriott’s largest footprint in the country, Sharma further says, “We feel we are service providers to our partners and aim to deliver beyond their expectations. We have a total of 108 hotels in South Asia.”

CSR Initiatives
 Marriott painted the walls of a government school, adopted by JW Marriott Jaipur for their literacy programme. They also played games with school children

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India's potential for Germany

The German city of Dresden, capital of the Saxony region, successfully hosted the 44th Germany Travel Mart, held recently with around 520 representatives from 51 countries in attendance.



Nisha Verma from Dresden

While the inaugural address at Germany Travel Mart (GTM) was made at the renowned Church of Our Lady, the official inaugural ceremony was held at the Kulturpalast in Dresden. **Petra Hedorfer**, Chief Executive Officer, German National Tourist Board (GNTB) addressed the gathering at the ceremony which saw some memorable performances by local artists. The two-day B2B workshop held at Messe Dresden trade fair centre had around 338 exhibitors from

Germany recorded a total of 83.9 million overnight stays, with Netherlands being the most important source market for the country. In fact, it is the second most popular market destination in Europe after Spain. We are hoping for an 80 per cent increase in international

overnight stays into Germany by 2030 and will reach 121.5 million overnight stays."

She insisted that India is a high potential market for Germany. "India is among the top 20 inbound markets for Germany with a 13.8 per cent increase

in overnight visitors to Germany in 2017. Considering the country's potential for Germany, we had opened our office there in 2006," claimed Hedorfer.

Hedorfer further stressed on their emphasis on leisure. "We are trying to boost the

leisure travel segment. Our India office is already promoting various segments, including historical sites of Germany. With a long-term investment plan in the Indian market, we foresee that this will be a growing business for the next 10-20 years," she stressed.

India Numbers

Having worked in India for over 10 years, Germany has seen a double-digit increase from the country and is still trying to present more reasons and interests for people to visit Germany



Petra Hedorfer
Chief Executive Officer,
German National Tourist Board

“India is among the top 20 inbound markets for Germany with a 13.8% increase in overnight visitors”

different hotels, transport companies and attractions around Germany, showcasing their myriad offerings for the buyers.

Hedorfer said, "Germany is very well positioned in the international tourism market. In 2017, we were once again able to build on our status as the second most popular destination for European travellers. GTM is an ideal platform for satisfying the existing high demand for travel to Germany and harnessing untapped potential. For us, this means intensive communication with the traditional travel trade as well as with online tour operators."

At the press conference held on the sidelines of the exhibition, she added, "In 2017,



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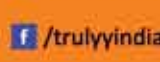
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Agents explore African horizons

Held in Durban, South Africa, Indaba 2018 was a great opportunity for trade to forge partnerships, study existing and emerging products as well as network with like-minded individuals.



Amrita Ghosh from Durban



Mehernosh Colombowalla
Director, Beyond Borders
Travel Management
Company

“Business matchmaking at Africa’s Travel Indaba was structured around the concept of ‘Matched Referrals’ rooted in identifying opportunities, interests and delegates that should connect based on self-supplied data given at the time of conference registration. This helped maximise our goals with the right type of delegates best suited for our business. Our clients will now be able to see Africa way beyond the conventional itineraries.”



Kunal Jain
Partner
Spectrum Holidays

We also met new suppliers as there is a need to know about the trends of the ever-evolving market.”

“In the continent of Africa, we only end up selling South Africa. Indaba was useful in making us aware of an entirely new portfolio of products and destinations like Kenya, Ethiopia, Zanzibar, to name a few. Until now, we were only connected with our suppliers like hotels and lodges through virtual media. The trade show was important in providing a common platform to develop a personal connect with all them, ensuring our rapport and engagement grows stronger.



Shailesh Sharma
Director
Headed Goose

warmth in hospitality of the entire country irrespective of which part you are in; you just feel like SA is your second home.”

“It was our first year at Indaba but we really feel that this is an amazing effort by South African Tourism. In the coming few years, South Africa has the potential to become one of the favourite choices among travellers in the world for hosting large groups because of its diversity of culture and offerings of activities which include vineyards, game drives, luxury hotels, adrenaline sports and activities which they already have been offering since a long time. One cannot ignore the

“Indaba 2018 was a great opportunity to meet old friends, forge new friendships, study existing and emerging products as well as network with like-minded individuals. The show was well planned, booths were well laid out and designed and a user-friendly electronic matchmaking system ensured meaningful meetings. I particularly liked the focus on encouraging sustainable tourism, a transformation I noticed since my last visit here.”



Smita Srivastava
Co-Founder & Director,
Chalo Africa Tours

“Indaba is growing on a great pace year on year and so are foreign tourist footfalls to South Africa. The Speed Marketing Sessions during the event covered various areas of tourism interest such as heritage, history and culture, township tourism, wildlife and adventure. The content was in-depth to get a clear idea of what SA has to offer to every traveller irrespective of any age group, budget and preference.”



Shivam Vijhania
Head—Client Management,
Air Organisers Travel

“Indaba 2018 is one-stop show for all your contracting requirements all over Africa. It was interesting to see a lot of travel technology companies providing hotel and sightseeing inventories connectivity through API. Durban has the highest concentration of Indians outside India with footprints of Mahatma Gandhi all over the city. This link will definitely help us in promoting Durban tourism in India.”



Tushar Jain
Group MD
BTC Travel Group



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MTDC focuses on remote sites

From building a planetarium near Lonar Crater to developing six resorts in the interiors, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation is creating experiences in remote spots. **Vijay Kumar Gautam**, Principal Secretary, Maharashtra, and the recently-appointed Managing Director, MTDC, shares more.



Hazel Jain

QWhat are the areas MTDC is focusing on in terms of products?

We are coming out with guidelines for medical tourism and looking for assistance from local administration to give easy access to patients travelling for medical purposes. Similarly, Buddhist tourism has immense potential in the state as it has rich Buddhist heritage related to the life of Lord Buddha. However, the seeds of our culture are rooted in the villages and agritourism will be a big attraction for tourists. It will also increase the standard of living and income of farmers and local communities. The Bollywood tourism undoubtedly is the USP of the state. MTDC has recently associated with ND's Film World under the 'Mahabramhan' scheme to showcase the process of filmmaking.



Vijay Kumar Gautam
(IAS), Principal Secretary
Govt of Maharashtra

QWhat are the key projects that MTDC is focusing on?

The Planetarium & Museum near Lonar Crater Lake in Buldhana district will showcase various aspects of space science and highlight a film on the formation of Lonar Crater and its importance. The other important project is the six resorts that were

constructed by MTDC in the last five years at Sakoli (District Bhandara), Ambhora (Nagpur), Mozari Point Chikaldara (Amravati), Bodhalkasa (Gondia), Gaganbawda (Kolhapur) and Kunakeshwar (Sindhudurga). These projects have huge potential to appeal to travellers and help them enjoy some untapped destinations.

“Recently, MTDC has introduced mine tourism at Wani in Yavatmal district to showcase mining operations”

Recently, MTDC has introduced mine tourism at Wani in Yavatmal district to showcase mining operations. Here, tourists get an opportunity to go inside the coal mines in Bhandewada and Ukani to understand the

intricacies involved in the mining process.

QWhat about the long-standing problem of trained tourists guide in the state?

MTDC has acknowledged that problem and is conducting guide training programmes in various cities like Mumbai, Aurangabad, Nagpur, Sindhudurg,

QAre MTDC officials planning to attend any international trade show this year?

MTDC is planning to attend various international trade shows like WTM London, ITB Berlin and PATA to market the state's tourism prospects. Recently, it signed multiple Letter of Intent (LOI) agreements with hotel chains, tourism companies and potential investors at Arabian Travel Market 2018.

QCan you share details of the roadshow that you will organise in India?

Recently, MTDC has participated in a roadshow in Aizawl, capital of Mizoram. MTDC has also signed an MoU with Mizoram to boost investment and growth of tourism in the state. Mizoram is known for its sustainable agritourism initiatives throughout the year.

QAre you working with any travel trade association?

MTDC's associated with Travel Agents Association of Nashik (TAAN) has heightened tourism prospects in Nashik. Our aim is to acquaint and educate the travel agents about various tourist locations of Nashik.

Figures don't lie

➔ Maharashtra shows a growth of 7.2 per cent in domestic and 18.9 per cent in international tourist arrivals in 2016

➔ Mumbai airport has registered a growth of 21.5 per cent in foreign tourist arrivals in 2016 in comparison to Delhi, Kochi, Chennai, Hyderabad and some other cities

(Source: Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India)

Travstarz conducts 3-city roadshow

Travstarz Global Group held a roadshow with Seychelles Tourism covering Ludhiana, Indore and Baroda to increase passenger numbers from these cities to Seychelles.



TT Bureau

Travstarz conducted a three-city roadshow with Seychelles Tourism Board in the Tier-II cities of Ludhiana, Indore and Baroda. "We are looking at creating more destination awareness among the Tier-II and Tier-III cities

with a focus on increasing the number of passengers from these cities to Seychelles. We want to showcase the best that Seychelles has to offer and Travstarz was a perfect partner for us for these shows specially because of its dynamic team and their increased presence after the acquisition by

RezB2B in January this year," Seychelles Tourism officials said. "We shall continue to partner with them for more shows in the future as we feel there is nothing better than personal interaction with select travel partners," they said.

Pankaj Nagpal, Manag-

ing Director, Travstarz Global Group said, "Seychelles remains one of our preferred destinations and we are increasingly signing new properties at Seychelles to offer the best experience across all category of hotels. All the three cities were very well attended, and it gave us an opportunity to reconnect with our agent

partners who have been supporting us for our various destinations and who have assured us support for Seychelles as well. We have been closely working with Seychelles Tourism in the past and will look forward to future collaborations as well to boost the numbers to Seychelles."



Pankaj Nagpal
Managing Director
Travstarz Global Group



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(Includes Hotel return transfers) Pick up Time : 5.00 PM

SE Asia on the radar

To cater to destinations like Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, Tourism Enterprises recently collaborated with Hello Asia Travel, a DMC.



TT Bureau

Keeping up with the pace of the growing outbound tourism industry from India, Tourism Enterprises has set its eyes on travellers seeking newer destinations and experiences. In line with the same, the company has joined hands with Hello Asia Travel, headquartered in Hanoi (Vietnam) with branch offices in Siem Reap (Cambodia), Luang Prabang (Laos) and Yangon (Myanmar), informs **Kumar Utkarsh**, General Manager—Sales, Tourism Enterprises. He says, “Hello Asia Travel is a purely B2B company which works exclusively with tour operators, travel and MiCE agencies. This DMC is dedicated to provide constant support to agents to make their client’s travel a memorable discovery of these destinations.”

Kelly Bui, President and Chief Executive Officer of the



Kumar Utkarsh
General Manager—Sales
Tourism Enterprises

company and **Tony Nguyen**, Vice President—Product Development, Hello Asia Travel, will be responsible to look over the India market for these destinations. “We offer personalised services and customised itineraries in accordance with the profile of the traveller. The local experience is offered by providing unique tour programmes and activities. As a tourism player, part of our role is also to preserve the culture, communi-



Kelly Bui
President and CEO
Tourism Enterprises

ties and the environment of the countries which we specialise in. We promise to bring the best values to our clients and work on win-win cooperation with all our partners,” says Bui.

The DMC caters to four primary travel segments - tailor-made individual tours (FIT), tailor-made group tours (GIT), encouraging journeys (incentive travel) and soft adventure travel. ↓

Practising Yoga at Stonehenge



India Tourism London in association with High Commission of India recently organised a Yoga session at Stonehenge as a precursor to the International Day of Yoga celebrated on June 21. Yoga practitioners performed Surya Namaskar and other asanas in front of Stonehenge, an iconic British cultural icon and world Heritage Site. Ambassador **Dinesh Patnaik**, India’s Deputy High Commissioner to the UK, said, “Yoga is one of the greatest cultural exports from India to the world. This ancient art enriches the quality of body, mind and soul. To be able to perform Yoga at such a historic place makes one feel proud.”

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Convention from Sep 20-22

Garish Oberoi, President, FHRAI, talks about the 53rd FHRAI Annual Convention to be held from Sep 20-22 at Ramada Lucknow Hotel & Convention Centre.

TT Bureau

One of the biggest achievements of Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) as an association for the month of May has been to finalise its annual convention. Scheduled to be held in Lucknow, the convention is set to be inaugurated by **Yogi Adityanath**, Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh. **KJ Alphons**, Minister of State (I/C), Tourism, Government of India and **Rita Bahuguna Joshi**, Tourism Minister, Uttar Pradesh, will also be present at the event. "The format of the convention this year is a little different from what we have been doing over the past years. The theme for this year's event is 'Spiritual and Wellness Tourism'," said **Garish Oberoi**, President, FHRAI.

Oberoi believes that the theme of the convention would help promote tourism in the



Garish Oberoi
President
FHRAI

region. He said, "UP Tourism already have the spiritual and wellness circuits in place. As part of FHRAI and also more closely as Uttar Pradesh Hotel & Restaurant Association (UPHRA), we have worked with the tourism department of the state in developing these circuits. With more and more people seeking for holidays which help them de-stress,

we want to have international speakers along with Indian experts talk during this convention who have been successful on this wellness model. Hoteliers can hence, be familiarised about how it can benefit our hotels."

Elaborating on other plans of the association in 2018, he said, "We are trying to develop a centre of excellence within FHRAI where we are trying to build a database to help the hoteliers and restaurateurs. I am hoping that before my term ends and the new President takes over, we will atleast have a start with the centre."

Focus Area

FHRAI is trying to develop a centre of excellence to build a database to help the hoteliers and restaurateurs

IATO Convention in Vizag

The new team of IATO, at its recent luncheon meet, discussed pertinent issues, including its annual convention, welfare of members & roadshow in the US.

Simranjeet Singh Arora

After electing its new team, the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) recently held a luncheon meeting at The Leela Ambience, Gurugram. According to **Rajiv Mehra**, Vice President, IATO, discussions on various topics were held and the association had informed the Department of Tourism about their concerns.

Mehra said, "The association has taken up the issue of Marketing Development Assistance Scheme (MDA Scheme) under which it is mandatory for all tour operators to show an increase of 5 per cent." Earlier it was only 1 per cent.

MDA scheme offers funding for participation in international fairs, study tours abroad, trade delegations, publicity



etc. However, the small and mid-sized tour operators are not able to meet these requirements under MDA. Hence, IATO has taken up the issue with the concerned Secretary (Tourism Secretary) and have even written to the Minister (Tourism Minister), requesting to waive-off these conditions which is in no favour of small tour operators," he said.

Mehra also informed that IATO is set to organise its an-

nual convention in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh from September 6-9. "The tourism sector of Andhra Pradesh has given us immense support for the convention. In fact, they also organised a Fam trip for our members to Vijayawada to explore the state," he said.

In another development, it was informed that, IATO is set to participate in a roadshow along with MOT in the US in June. "A total of 27 people will be part of this delegation, led by K J Alphons, Minister of State (I/C), Tourism," informed Mehra.

IATO Convention

IATO is set to organise its annual convention in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh from September 6-9, 2018



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How lucrative is Arabian market?

As India continues to be a significant market for the Middle East, we get some quick reactions from the travel trade on this year's Arabian Travel Market (ATM) held in Dubai.



Devika Jeet



Kunal Munshaw
Partner
Avant Garde Consulting

“ATM is a great platform to connect with the DMCs, tour operators and key players who focus on outbound travel from India to Dubai. The event allowed us an opportunity to showcase JA's properties located in JBR to key stakeholders.”



Vivek Jain
Managing Director, Griffon

“The impact of ATM was very good. As we are deploying one of our cruise ships in Dubai for the winter months December to February 2019, this show was very helpful to announce this to the local and regional travel partners. On the whole, we found this show as a huge success for our new itinerary.”



Poonam Chauhan
Business Development
Manager- Weddings and
Events, Tamarind Global

“We have recently started our operations in the Middle East and are focusing on events and weddings. We are looking at tapping the 'global' (global+local) audience in the UAE. ATM has been a great platform for us to explore bespoke hotels and luxury venues.”

“We have been consistently participating at Arabian Travel Market and this year particularly, we showcased the luxury available in Karnataka. The private participants have had a few good enquires at the show and I hope that this leads to an effective series of business generation.”



Dr N Manjula
Director, Karnataka Tourism

“ATM 2018 was slightly better than that of 2017 in terms of participation of buyers. However, there is immense scope to enhance the quality of buyers at the exhibition. The show dates are not very suitable for Indian exhibitors. Regarding our meetings, we are optimistic that we would be able to grow our business from the Middle East in the coming season as the last season was not much productive. I also believe that a few best brands mark their presence at ATM and meeting them under one roof makes it much easier.”



Deepak Bhatnagar
Managing Director,
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Reigning supreme in the Valley

For a date with serenity and peace, the Orchard Retreat & Spa, Srinagar, serves as the perfect getaway allowing guests to relax amidst lush apple trees and ancient groves overlooking the mountains.



TT Bureau

Orchard Retreat & Spa, Srinagar boasts of 20 luxury bedroom cottages, club lounge, best-in-class dining experience and exclusive recreational areas, allowing the guests to eat, drink, play and enjoy every moment. "The Orchard Retreat & Spa, Srinagar is celebrated as a very special destination for being the first-of-its-kind in the valley. This is a resort which makes sure guests eat, drink, play and enjoy every moment. The property is brimming with cultural landmarks and

The resort is situated in the middle of the orchard, allowing guests to relax amidst lush apple trees and ancient groves overlooking the mountains. The swimming pool is the perfect place to be in the summer sun and admire the natural beauty and hospitality

of Kashmir as you relax on reclining beds by the pool side. One can also sit on traditional armchairs placed in the private balconies and relish the evening cup of kahwa. "The resort also offers much-needed catharsis, with aromatic live cooking, world-class dining,

glorious landscaped lawns and vibrant calendar of events right within your reach. E-rickshaws are available to ride and explore around. Over and above, our unmatched hospitality is our USP," claims Qureshi.

With Kashmir picking

up again as a favoured tourist destination, competition is very high. However, Qureshi is completely unfazed by it. "With the concept of first-of-its-kind in the valley, the property is hailed as being the valley's most hospitable host which promises the authen-

ticity of flavours in the food and originality of oils at the spa and health retreats. Long-weekend packages and culinary experiences allow guests to have the most exciting escapes imaginable even when you only have time for the shortest breaks," he says.



Faheem Qureshi
General Manager
Orchard Retreat & Spa, Srinagar

“Long-weekend packages allow guests to have the most exciting escapes even when you only have time for the shortest breaks”

new things to explore,” says **Faheem Qureshi**, General Manager, Orchard Retreat & Spa, Srinagar.

Referring to the tremendous response of the property in terms of business, guest and colleague satisfaction, Qureshi says, “We exceeded our expectations in these areas. The combined efforts led The Orchard Retreat & Spa, Srinagar to create an image as one of the best resorts in the valley. Despite challenges, we remained positive and ensured that we exceed our guest expectations, while maintaining the highest service quality.”

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Fiji revises its specialist programme

In an exclusive interview, **Seema Kadam** newly-appointed Country Manager—India, Fiji Tourism, talks about the need to create more awareness about the destination among trade.



Hazel Jain

Fiji seems to have put India on its priority list. The recent appointment of Seema Kadam indicates a stronger focus on this market. Its plans for the rest of 2018 supplement this.

Working on B2C

Tourism Fiji is keen to work on B2C platforms such as radio, television and host bloggers and travel journalists on a media faml which will help them get coverage in both print and online media

Speaking about them, she says, "We will have a refreshed Matai specialist programme with enhanced tools for agents with a more dynamic interface. This will be launched soon."

This is an online training course for the travel trade through which anyone can become a Matai Specialist. This programme was created by Tourism Fiji to provide the international travel industry with the knowledge to sell Fiji.

In India, Fiji started the year with the announcement of its Brand Ambassador – actor **Ileana Dcruz** – and the appoint-

ment of Country Manager—India. Kadam adds, "The focus for 2018 is both on driving awareness of the destination through B2C as well as driving conversions with our trade partners. We have a comprehensive trade calendar planned to achieve this in 2018."

The focus areas for Fiji will be to create a strong brand visibility for the destination along with a renewed B2B engagement via different platforms of education tools such as webinars, trainings, the Matai specialist programme, and in-house training workshops. "We also want to work

“The focus for 2018 is both on driving awareness of the destination & driving conversions with our trade partners”

very closely with the key stakeholders in the market through joint co-operations which will help us leverage the destination to a much wider audience via them," Kadam says.

Tourism Fiji has invested significantly in the India market due to the alignment of the destination with the market. Kadam adds that Fiji will continue to invest in the long-term potential of the market

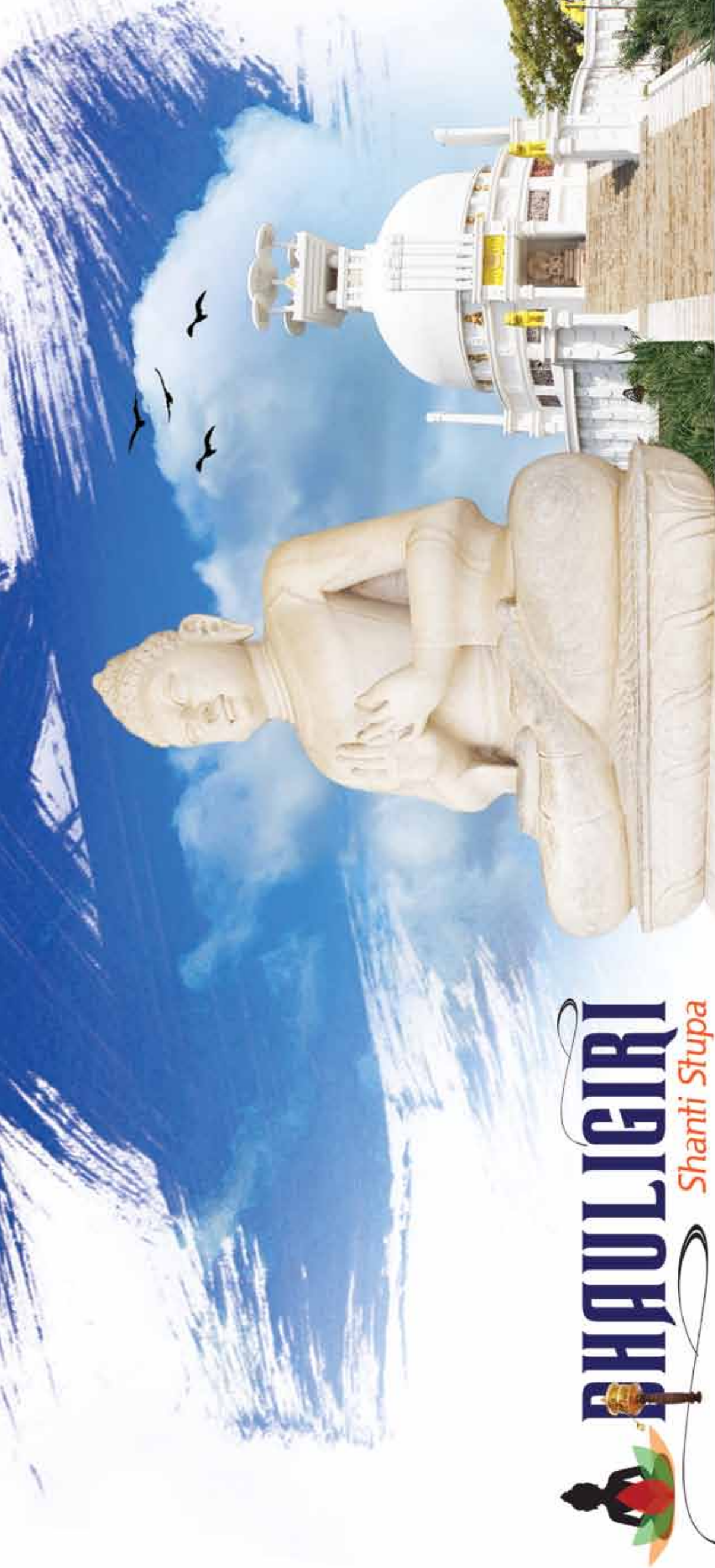
and will ensure resources are well balanced across all channels to achieve its goals. "We already are in the process of doing a lot of trade and consumer engagement via the key stakeholders like conducting trade trainings and trade famils. We are also keen to work on the B2C platforms."



Aeroflot treats travel trade

Russian carrier Aeroflot recently conducted a Fam trip for its trade partners to Budapest, giving them a taste of the airline and destination offerings. The tour was organised in co-operation with the Budapest Airport Zrt and The Hungarian Tourism Agency.





DHAULIGIRI

Shanti Stupa



Udayagiri



Ratnagiri



Lalitgiri

Dhauligiri, popularly termed as Dhauli, is known to be the epicentre for spread of Buddhism in Odisha. It stands where one of the bloodiest wars - Kalinga War, was fought between army of Emperor Ashoka and the Kalinga Kingdom. The bloodbath ultimately transformed him and he embraced Buddhism. The place has splendid rock edicts of Ashoka engraved on a mass of rock at the foothills of Dhauli.



Travel smart with Amadeus ACUS

Sarah Samuel, Head of Airport IT—Asia Pacific, Amadeus and **Rajesh Suri**, Executive Vice President—Business Development, Bird Group, talk extensively about the launch of Amadeus' Airport Common Use Service (ACUS) for India, in an exclusive interview with **TRAVELTALK**.



Q How can ACUS be a game changer for airport technology in India?

Sarah: Amadeus ACUS gives airports in India operational flexibility, previously unheard of in Common Use. Until now, check-in and bag-drop in India has been confined to the airport. With ACUS, this is no longer the case. Using ACUS' cloud-based platform, travellers can check-in and perform bag-drop off-site at a hotel, convention centre or train station. Agile and adaptable ACUS can be used on any device, including laptops and relocatable devices with a 3G, 4G or Wi-Fi connection. This means CUSS kiosks at the airport no longer need to be fixed. They can be mobile, located and relocated to match passenger flow.

Rajesh: ACUS brings a smart, futuristic, efficient and convenient cloud based check-in service for airports. This is increasingly important as the number of international and domestic travellers is set to grow. The architecture of Amadeus ACUS allows 'fixed' check-in desks to be rapidly deployed anywhere in the terminal, as well as to 'off site' locations. This enables the airport to work with increased passenger capacity and meet short notice and seasonal fluctuations where required.

Q After launching ACUS in India, what will you be focusing on now for the India market?

Sarah: We will focus on introducing airports and air-

lines in India to ACUS and on communicating the benefits for both.

Q Have you launched ACUS in any other country?

Sarah: ACUS is now live across the world. We have customers in Europe, North America and Asia, including Hong Kong International Airport, Copenhagen Airport (Denmark), Perth Airport (Australia) and 16 Avinor Group Airports (Norway).

Q What was the outcome of the Common Use Round Table event held recently in New Delhi?

Sarah: This was the first time a Round Table event dedicated to Common Use technology was held in India by Amadeus and Bird Group. With participation of representatives from airlines and airports across India, a dialogue was opened regarding Common Use technology. We look forward to continuing this dialogue, and working with airlines and airports to ensure all can benefit from ACUS.

Q What was the response from representatives of the aviation industry from India on ACUS?

Sarah: The Indian travel industry is going through a transformative period as it adapts to the dramatic growth in passenger numbers. Indian airlines and airports are looking for new and innovative solutions to manage that growth. ACUS is just such a solution, so the interest was high.



Sarah Samuel
Head of Airport IT—Asia Pacific,
Amadeus

“Using ACUS' cloud-based platform, travellers can check-in and perform bag-drop off-site at a hotel or convention centre”

Rajesh: We are pleased to say that the Round Table was a great success. We talked to the aviation experts from airports and the airline community and the feedback of bringing in this change has set an exciting and futurist road ahead.

Q Indian airports are already testing facial recognition technology at airports and undertaking other initiatives to offer a seamless experience for passengers. How do you think Amadeus and its technology could play a role there?

Sarah: Biometrics will play a key role in Indian air-



Rajesh Suri
Executive Vice President—Business
Development, Bird Group

“The adoption of ACUS will allow airports to eliminate costly on-site systems and lower their operational expenses”

ports of the future. Amadeus is already making advancements in biometric technology, for example, in a recent pilot programme with Lufthansa at LAX in the USA, we were able to board 350 guests onto an A380 in just 20 minutes, using biometric technology. I could definitely see this technology applied to airports in India. A limitation of biometric technology at airports, however, is that right now travellers are still required to be on-site at the airport. With ACUS, processes can take place off-airport, so passengers can complete tasks such as check-in and bag-drop before they even reach the airport.

Q How can airlines benefit from ACUS?

Sarah: As the ACUS platform is a 'single platform', we only need to implement or deploy Airline Applications once – we are not trying to maintain compatibility between multiple legacy technology platforms that are in service at multiple airports. Consequently, our speed of deployment for Airlines is much simpler, faster and cheaper than other platforms.

Rajesh: One of the key highlights of the Common Use Round Table was being able to showcase a 26% reduction in costs at Perth Airport, Australia - the first airport globally to adopt ACUS. The adoption of ACUS will allow airports to eliminate costly on-site systems, lowering their operational expenses and minimising their environmental impact. Given this, we believe that airports in India will be encouraged to evaluate and embrace this new technology.

Q What role could ACUS play in the Digi Yatra scheme of Government of India, where technology is used to offer a seamless experience to passengers in India?

Rajesh: With ACUS and an active internet connection, passenger processing services can be easily extended to include off-airport locations such as hotels, convention centres, train stations and even cruise liners. ACUS can be used on any device including laptops and relocatable

devices. ACUS brings new-generation, multiple choice and enhanced check-in services for passengers, further enhancing a seamless travel experience in airports.

Q What kind of response did you get from aviation experts at the Common Use Round Table?

Rajesh: Airports and airlines around the world are looking at how new technologies and solutions can improve passenger experience and operations in the airport whilst simultaneously reducing costs. It is no different in India, and with all eyes watching our market, we believe this Round Table showcased the myriad benefits of ACUS and why India should consider moving to this platform.

Q What kind of challenges is ACUS likely to face in India?

Rajesh: Let's take a look at the iPhone which also uses cloud based technology. When it first arrived in India, there was a lot of resistance. Now everyone uses the iPhone without a second thought! We could, therefore, look at ACUS in the same way. When we had first started talking to airports, there was a real resistance for change. However, we have since then been on a serious mission to create awareness and educate the community in this market. We had a packed room at our event, given this we believe that ACUS will be adopted in India and prove to be a great success. ↓



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On top of the world, literally!

Ajeet Bajaj, Managing Director, Snow Leopard Adventures and Senior Vice President, ATOAI, achieved the feat of climbing Mount Everest with his daughter **Diya Bajaj**. Referring to the adventure as a life-changing expedition, Bajaj shares his Everest journey in an exclusive interview with TRAVELTALK.



TT Bureau

It was a proud and emotional moment for Ajeet Bajaj and his daughter Diya to unfurl the Indian tricolour on Mount Everest, with whom he has been training since years for the significant climb.

Training and preparation

Before planning to climb the Everest, one needs to train hard and be fit, claims Bajaj. "We have prepared for the expedition for exactly a year. We did four preparatory expeditions before venturing for the world's highest summit. We did two expeditions to Ladakh, one to Nepal and one to the French Alps," he shared. He added, "It's very important to be physically fit and prepare with a determination. You need the right



equipment before you leave and it's very important to go with a good operator."

Everest expedition

It was a long journey to the summit, shared Bajaj. He revealed, "The expedition itself took us around 45 days. We

climbed from the northern side from Tibet. We flew to Nepal on April 10, and then on to Lhasa on April 13. We were blessed that the mountain goddess showered her blessings on us and we were able to face the hardships with a smile, coming back safe and happy."

Fighting obstacles

"The two biggest challenges are high altitude and extreme cold. We climbed through the night because that is when the conditions are more stable. It took us 20 hours to get to the summit and descend safely to the North Col at 23,000 ft,"

shared Bajaj. He continues, "About an hour and a half before the summit, my oxygen mask malfunctioned and froze completely. That was the moment of truth for me because my daughter was with me. We were climbing together as a buddy pair, but I had to take a decision. Diya was climbing at a fast pace, and one cannot wait when the temperatures are -40 or -45 degrees celsius. I had to take that hard decision to let her carry on with her Sherpa, on whom we had full confidence and faith."

Taste of victory

Bajaj proudly said that it was his daughter Diya who reached the summit first. "Diya got to the summit and I was lucky to have a spare mask, which we were able to change

and carry on. I got to the summit 15 minutes after my daughter. We were the first daughter-father team to have reached the summit. Getting there after the initial euphoria, you realise that you have to go down, which is always the more tricky bit of mountaineering. We were lucky that we were able to come back down safely, having had an experience of a lifetime," said Bajaj.

Words of Wisdom

✦ One needs to train oneself hard and be extremely fit before attempting the extreme expedition

✦ Ajeet Bajaj assured that he'd be happy to extend support to anybody in every way possible who is up for the challenge



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Industry on the cusp of evolution

The tourism industry is showing promising growth this year for both inbound and outbound segments. India Travel Award winners from across regions share their opinion on the hits and misses of the industry and its projected future.



Ankita Saxena

► Entrepreneur of the Year—**KD Singh (North 2017)**

AI to transform hospitality business

Businesses are going digital and mobile transactions are on an unprecedented rise. “Artificial Intelligence would play a major role in all developments in hospitality business making transactions seamless, cutting through value chains and making user experience unparalleled to anything we have seen before”, believes **KD Singh**, Founder and President, TravelBullz. He adds that of the regular long-haul destinations from India, USA has been a hot favourite followed by destinations in Western Europe. For short-haul holidays, Dubai, Bali and the Philippines have taken the largest share with Singapore following with steady growth.



“Artificial Intelligence would play a major role in hospitality business making transactions seamless and user experience unparalleled”



“As an attempt to constantly innovate, one of our activities includes regular cooking demonstrations by our chefs for the guests at the hotel”

► Best Mid-Market Leisure Hotel Brand—**Mansingh Hotels and Resorts (North 2017)**

No shift in trend for inbound

While inbound tourism may grow by 5-10 per cent in the upcoming years, no major shift in pattern can be foreseen in this segment of tourism, believes **Bharat Kumar Aggarwal**, Managing Director, Mansingh Hotels and Resorts. “We constantly try to upgrade our services and facilities for our guests. One of these innovative activities includes regular cooking demonstrations by our chefs for the guests at the hotel. We also showcase food presentation and festivals to highlight Indian and international cuisine.” Aggarwal points out that in the current year, the MiCE segment of travel will play an important role. “We are certain that the domestic leisure segment will show an increase of 20-30 per cent,” he adds.

► Best Tour Operator—**Napolitan Travel Agency Co. (West 2017)**

Travel agents need to value their expertise

Previously undiscovered regions of Central Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus are garnering interest covering countries such as Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Kazakhstan, feels **Behnaz Irani**, Director, Napolitan Travel Agency. “Both inbound and outbound markets are progressing rapidly; travellers are becoming more sophisticated in terms of awareness and affordability. New travellers are emerging while well-travelled clients are venturing to explore new destinations. Cruise tourism is also an emerging segment where cruise holidays are outweighing the land packages on a cost-benefit analysis,” says Irani.



“Both inbound & outbound markets are progressing rapidly; travellers are becoming more sophisticated in terms of awareness and affordability”

► Preferred MiCE Solutions Provider—**Trip Navigator (West 2017)**

Luxury destinations gaining traction for MiCE

The overall cost per attendee per day in events had globally increased in 2017 and the trend seems to continue, informs **Abhishek Gupta**, Director, Trip Navigator. He says, “According to the CWT Report, there is an increase of 3.7% on hotel spending and 3.5% increase on airfare spending. The global airline capacity is expected to grow by around 6% over 2017. According to Cvet data Mumbai, India ranked 9th in Asia-Pacific region in the top 10 destinations for meeting and events.” Gupta further adds that luxury destinations are becoming popular and the size of the groups is also increasing from an average of 100-150 to over 300-500.

“According to the CWT Report, there is an increase of 3.7 per cent on hotel spending and 3.5 per cent increase on airfare spending”

► Best Luxury Resort—**Polo Orchid Resort, Cherrapunji (East 2017)**

Direct flights required for the Northeast

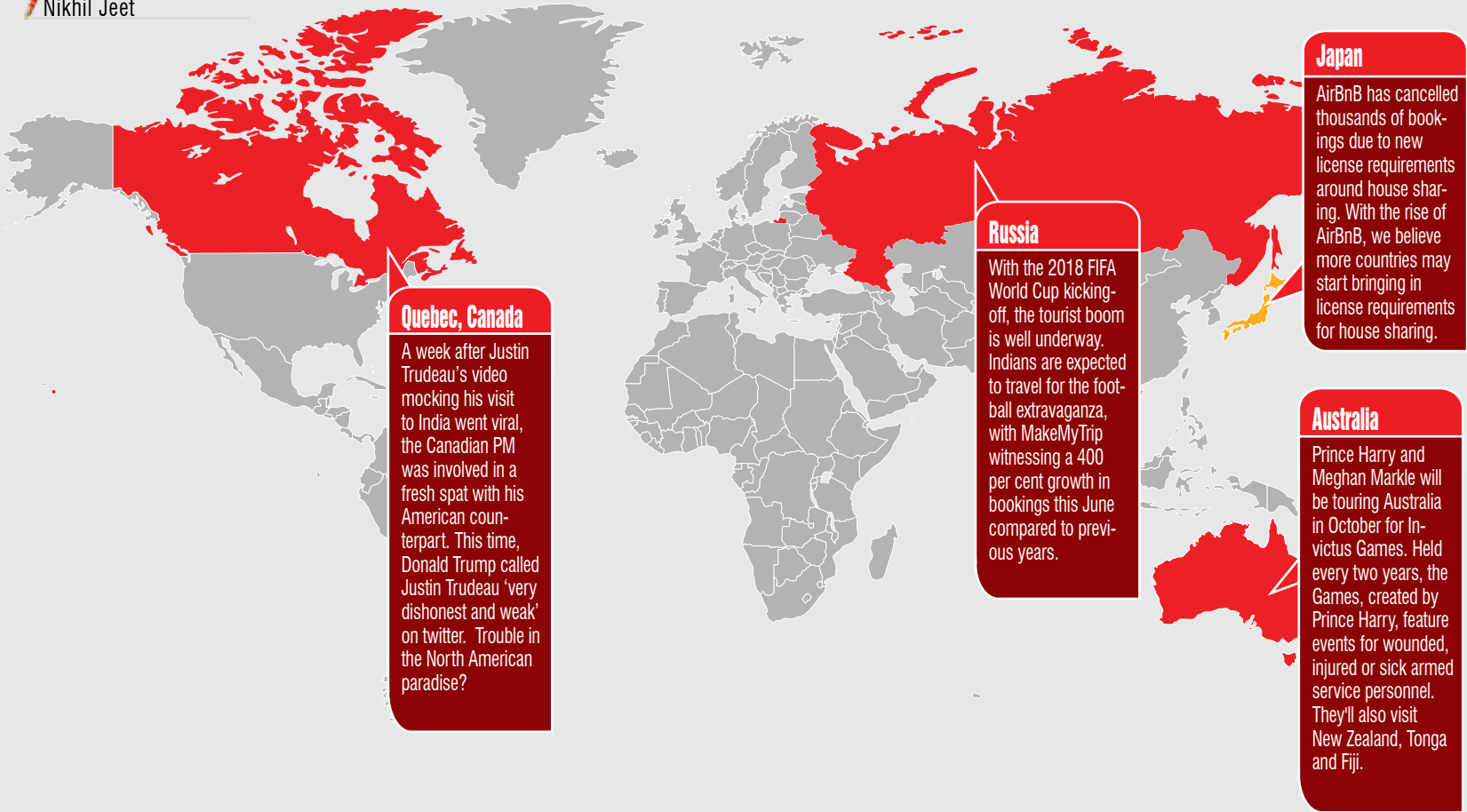
Lack of good transport systems and air connectivity are major drawbacks in the Northeast which are deterring the growth of tourism industry in the region, points out **Gunjan Kumar**, General Manager, Polo Orchid Resort, Cherrapunji. “We need more direct flights to the region and improve the road transport. This is where I feel the government has a major role to play. We have witnessed a continuous, rapid growth YOY in all travel segments and hope to see it at an even larger scale. We are extremely glad to record growth in the hotel industry in the eastern region. The support from the government is appreciated to provide better facilities, especially in states like Meghalaya and Assam,” says Kumar.



“We are glad to record growth in the hotel industry in the eastern region. Support from the government is appreciated to provide better facilities in states like Meghalaya and Assam”

World Talk The following regular column provides you a brief update on world events and how they impact the tourism sector.

 Nikhil Jeet

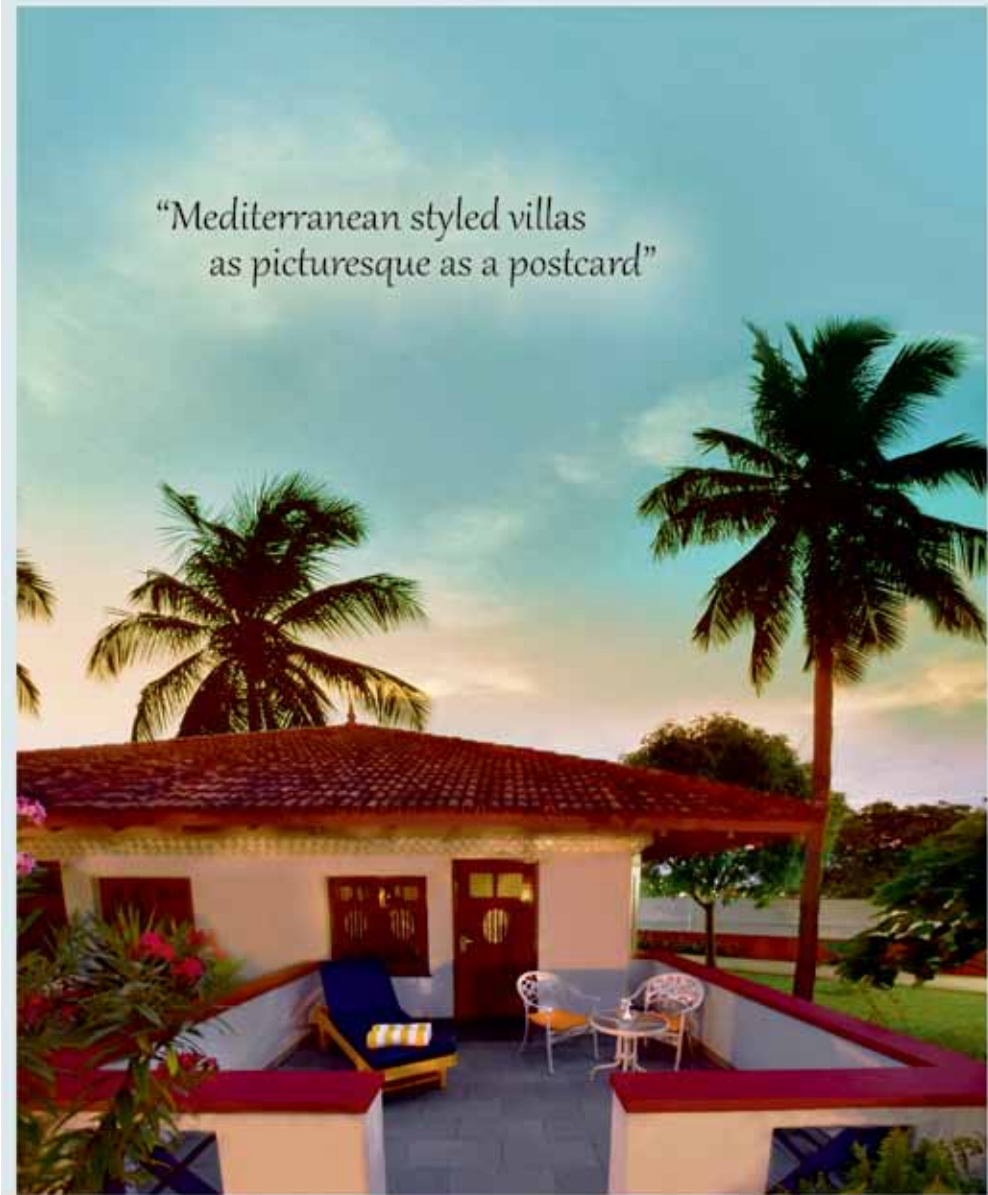


Quebec, Canada
A week after Justin Trudeau's video mocking his visit to India went viral, the Canadian PM was involved in a fresh spat with his American counterpart. This time, Donald Trump called Justin Trudeau 'very dishonest and weak' on twitter. Trouble in the North American paradise?

Russia
With the 2018 FIFA World Cup kicking-off, the tourist boom is well underway. Indians are expected to travel for the football extravaganza, with MakeMyTrip witnessing a 400 per cent growth in bookings this June compared to previous years.

Japan
AirBnB has cancelled thousands of bookings due to new license requirements around house sharing. With the rise of AirBnB, we believe more countries may start bringing in license requirements for house sharing.

Australia
Prince Harry and Meghan Markle will be touring Australia in October for Invictus Games. Held every two years, the Games, created by Prince Harry, feature events for wounded, injured or sick armed service personnel. They'll also visit New Zealand, Tonga and Fiji.



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EVENT TALK

JUNE 2018

Israel Tourism Roadshow	Nashik	21
Skål Asian Region Congress	Macau	21-24
Philippines Tourism & Singapore Airlines Roadshow	Chennai	22
ADTOI General House Meeting	Gurugram	22
TCEB MiCE Roadshow	Indore	25
PATA India Chapter Update & Outlook Meeting	Delhi	27
TCEB MiCE Roadshow	Chennai	27
HRAWI Convention	Sri Lanka	27-30
Telangana Tourism Conclave-2018	Hyderabad	28-30

JULY 2018

Philippines Tourism & Singapore Airlines Roadshow	Hyderabad	2
Hotel Operations Summit India 2018	Delhi	2
TCEB MiCE Roadshow	Bengaluru	3
Philippines Tourism & Singapore Airlines Roadshow	Chandigarh	4
TCEB MiCE Roadshow	Mumbai	5
GPS	Chandigarh	5-7
TTF	Kolkata	6-8
Travel Wedding Show	Jaipur	7-8
Kiwi Link India	Mumbai	9-10
Sri Lanka Tourism Roadshow	Chandigarh	10
Philippines Tourism & Singapore Airlines Roadshow	Ahmedabad	11
Sri Lanka Tourism Roadshow	Jaipur	11
Tourism New Zealand Frontline Training	Bengaluru	12
GPS	Ahmedabad	12-14
Tourism New Zealand Frontline Training	Delhi	13
TTF	Hyderabad	13-14
Singapore Tourism Roadshow	Trichy	16
Singapore Tourism Roadshow	Ludhiana	16
ACTE Global Summit	Singapore	17-18
GPS	Lucknow	19-21
Singapore Tourism Roadshow	Coimbatore	18
GPS	Lucknow	19-21
Singapore Tourism Roadshow	Kochi	20
Singapore Tourism Roadshow	Kolkata	20
Rajasthan Domestic Travel Mart	Jaipur	20-22
Singapore Tourism Roadshow	Surat	24
Focus Philippines	Goa	25-29
Singapore Tourism Roadshow	Visakhapatnam	26
IITM	Bengaluru	27-29

AUGUST 2018

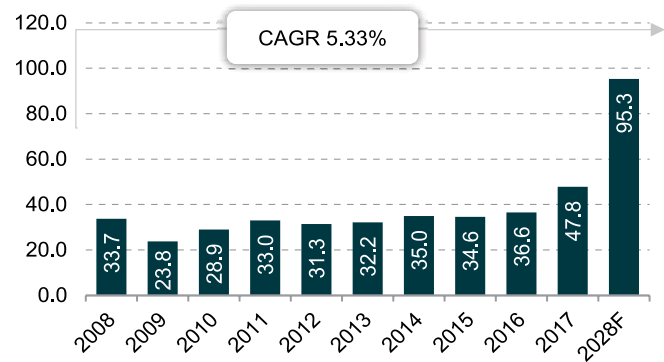
Philippines Tourism & Singapore Airlines Roadshow	Kolkata	1
Sri Lanka Tourism Roadshow	Visakhapatnam	1
Dubai Tourism Leisure Roadshow	Ahmedabad	2
GPS	Kolkata	2-4
Sri Lanka Tourism Roadshow	Coimbatore	3
Dubai Tourism Leisure Roadshow	Mumbai	3
IITM	Chennai	3-5
Tourism Fiji Roadshow	Mumbai	6-7
Tourism Fiji Roadshow	Delhi	8
India International Hospitality Expo	Noida	8-11
Tourism Fiji Roadshow	Kolkata	9
Israel Tourism Roadshow	Pune	9
GPS	Kochi	9-11

For more information, contact us at: talk@ddppl.com

Tourism big on investments

India's tourism sector attracted capital investments of US\$ 47.8 billion in 2017 and is expected to reach US\$ 95.3 billion by 2028, according to World Travel & Tourism Council's (WTTC's) Economic Impact 2018 report.

Capital investments in the tourism sector (US\$ billion)



International hotel chains are increasing their presence in the country, as it will account for around 47 per cent share in the tourism and hospitality sector of India by 2020 and 50 per cent by 2022, increasing from 44 per cent in 2016.

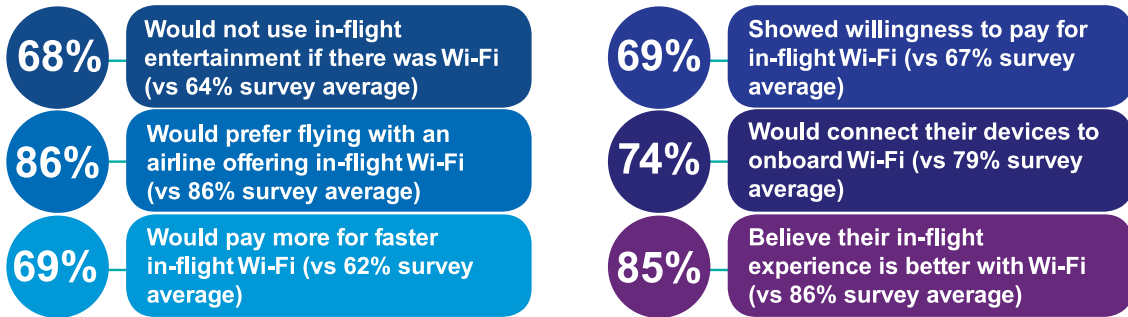
Berggruen Hotels is planning to add around 20 properties under its mid-market segment 'Keys Hotels' brand across India by this year. Hilton plans to add 18 hotels pan India by 2021, along with 15 operational hotels under its brands namely, Hampton, Hilton Garden Inn, Conrad, Hilton Hotels & Resorts and DoubleTree by Hilton. Marriott International also plans to add 20 more properties to its existing portfolio of 98 hotels in India.

Source: World Travel & Tourism Council's (WTTC's) Economic Impact 2018 report

In-flight Wi-Fi: A game changer?

FCM Travel Solutions and KPMG's recent whitepaper, 'The Digi-Smart Indian Business Traveller' forecasts that Indian travellers have higher inclination towards in-flight Wi-Fi as compared to travellers from other countries.

Indian flyers' Wi-Fi preferences



With current nil penetration and high demand amongst Indian travellers, in-flight Wi-Fi can be a potential game changer in enhancing business traveller experience considering that fliers are potentially willing to shift travel experiences for onboard Wi-Fi. For business travellers, the need for seamless connectivity

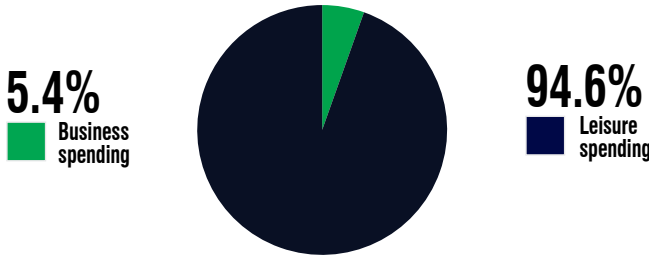
makes them natural users of these services. While the use of in-flight Wi-Fi should be encouraged, it is necessary to consider various factors including aircraft upgrade requirements, connectivity speed and quality, cybersecurity concerns, etc.

Source: FICCI - KPMG Whitepaper

Leisure to grow by 7.6%

According to a latest report by World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) on the economic impact of travel and tourism industry in India, leisure travel spending generated 94.6 per cent of direct travel and tourism GDP in 2017.

INDIA: Travel & Tourism's Contribution to GDP: Business vs Leisure, 2017



Leisure travel spending is expected to grow by 7.6 per cent in 2018 to ₹14,127.1 bn, and rise by 7.1 per cent pa to ₹28,154.5 bn in 2028. Business travel spending is expected to grow by 6.7 per cent in 2018 to ₹806.4 bn, and rise by 7.0 per cent pa to ₹1,589.7 bn in 2028.

Source: WTTC



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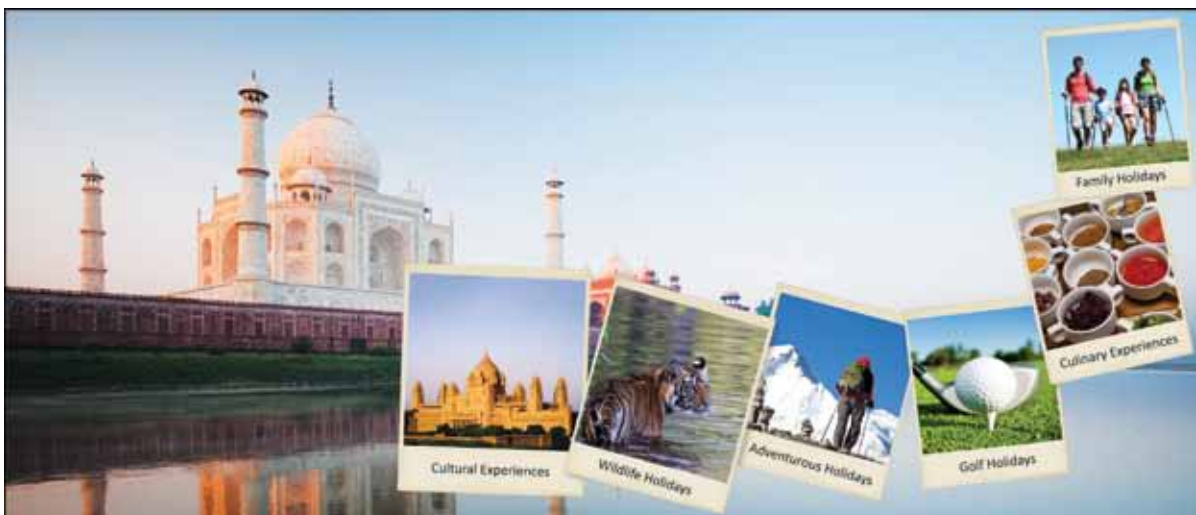
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Radisson Hotel Group

Singapore

Radisson Hotel Group has designated **Ramzy Fenianos** as Chief Development Officer—Asia Pacific. Fenianos will be based at the company's Asia Pacific headquarters in Singapore. He will also be a member of the Asia Pacific Executive Committee. In this role, he will oversee all aspects of the group's regional development activities, including leading the Asia Pacific development team in identifying new opportunities to drive growth and strategic expansion of the hotel portfolio. With more than 15 years of the experience in the real estate and hospitality sectors, Fenianos held key positions with several major companies.



The Travel Corporation

Singapore

The Travel Corporation (TTC) has announced **Nicholas Lim** as Managing Director of The Travel Corporation Asia. Prior to his promotion as Managing Director—Asia, Lim was President—Asia of Trafalgar and President, TTC India. As MD, Lim will focus on business development of The Travel Corporation's other brands such as Luxury Gold, Insight Vacations, Contiki Holidays and Uniworld Boutique River Cruises, Red Carnation, Inspiring Journeys and AAT Kings in Asia. Lim will also execute the brand strategies and direction to fuel further growth for Asia, in particular the luxury travel market for international outbound leisure travel.



Thomas Cook India

Mumbai

Thomas Cook (India) approved the elevation of **Mahesh Iyer** as Executive Director to its Board of Directors. Iyer's appointment is effective for a period of five years, subject to the approval of shareholders at the ensuing AGM. In addition to his role, Iyer will continue as Chief Executive Officer of Thomas Cook (India) with direct responsibility for the company's P&L, day to day operations of the company, strategic planning, management of key relationships as well as building a sustainable growth-oriented organisation that maximises value for all its stakeholders.



Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield

Bengaluru

Ranju Alex has been appointed as the Multi-Property Vice President—Bengaluru & Kochi and General Manager for Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield. Prior to this role, Alex served as the General Manager of JW Marriott Kolkata and Multi-Property Vice President for East India, Bhutan and Bangladesh. After a 17-year tenure with The Oberoi Group, she moved to Marriott International. Over the years she has received various accolades to her name, a few being 'General Manager of the Year 2014', Marriott International's 'General Manager of the Year—Asia Pacific' in 2012 and 'Service Excellence General Manager of the Year 2012'.



Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach Hotel & Varun Bheemli Resort

Visakhapatnam

Rajesh Gopalakrishnan has been appointed as the General Manager for Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach and Varun Bheemli Resort. In this role, he will be responsible for spearheading the overall operations of both the properties. Gopalakrishnan has been associated with AccorHotels since 2005. He started his hospitality journey as a trainee chef with Taj Coramandel, Chennai and eventually worked his way up as a Sous Chef at The Leela Mumbai and Grand Hyatt Mumbai.



Courtyard Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad

Courtyard by Marriott Ahmedabad has named **Rahul Raj** as its new General Manager. Raj has over 15 years of experience in driving hotel business operations with in-depth sensitisation to the challenges of growth in revenue and customer satisfaction. An incisive experience in the field and his ability to reorganise business direction keeping market trends and the millennial outlook in mind, he excels in formulating strategies to facilitate attainment of business targets. Before moving to Courtyard by Marriott Ahmedabad, Raj was the Director of Operations at Kochi Marriott Hotel from April 2016. He has also been associated with Taj and Oberoi group in the past.



The Westin Resort Nusa Dua, Bali

Bali

The Westin Resort Nusa Dua, Bali has announced the appointment of **Oriol Montal** as General Manager. A seasoned hotelier with over 20 years of experience, he has arrived on the island direct from a four-year tenure as General Manager for JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa. Having assumed responsibility for The Westin Resort Nusa Dua, Bali and the adjacent Bali International Convention Centre, he now faces the challenge of maintaining award-winning status on a global level. Montal endeavours to understand and respect local customs. He likes to maintain a visible presence within the hotel at all times by connecting with associates and guests.



Novotel New Delhi Aerocity & Pullman New Delhi Aerocity

Delhi

Ajay Sampige has been appointed as the General Manager of Novotel New Delhi Aerocity and Deputy General Manager of Pullman New Delhi Aerocity. He is responsible for the operations of Novotel New Delhi Aerocity and will work along with Tristan Beau De Lomenie for the dual properties. Sampige is an accomplished hotelier with over 21 years of hospitality experience and has been associated with AccorHotels for 12 years combined while working in Australian and Indian markets. He has played an influential role in AccorHotels' operations.



Lords Hotels & Resorts

Mumbai

Lords Hotels & Resorts has appointed **Siva Kumar** as its Manager—Human Resources, Corporate. Kumar has over 22 years of industry experience and carries a generalist profile in Human Resources—Operations and employee engagement. A Post Graduate in Human Resources Management, he has previously served at The Trident Hotel, Chennai; Holiday Inn Group of Hotels, Inox Leisure, Oakwood Premier & Residence and Accor. His immediate last profile was that of Deputy Head—Human Resources with Della Adventure and Resorts.



TALKing People

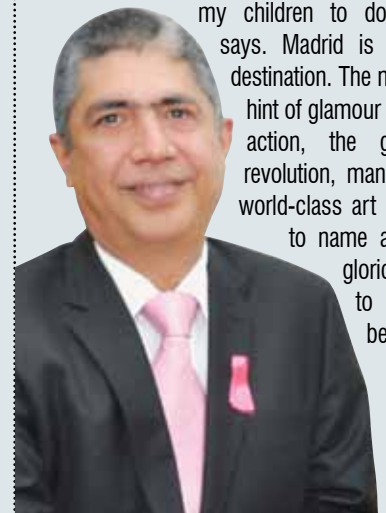
Jaswinder Narang, Complex General Manager, Sheraton Grand Pune & LMM, believes in keeping life simple and acting on things which requires attention rather than stressing over it. Narang is a social person and is passionate about human beings. He says, "Interacting with people, sharing my side of the story and listening to others' stories is what keeps me going." For Narang, it's difficult to choose his favourite holiday destinations. "The one which tops my mind right now is my last visit to Morocco. The trip from Casablanca to Marrakech was overwhelming," he says.



All that **Rishi Chopra**, General Manager, Le Meridien Mahabaleshwar, needs to do to de-stress is take a walk outside the hotel property nestled amidst beautiful forest area. Chopra is passionate about his life as a hotelier and everything that surrounds it. "My profile is what keeps me going, the never-ending learning process," Chopra says. On travel, he is an absolute beach person who needs his regular dose of the magical mix of sun, sand and sea.



Rohit Arora, Area General Manager, The Park Hotels, loves reading. "As a rule, I read a few pages every day and squeeze in reading whenever I can. I share my enjoyment for exercising the mind and also inspire my children to do so," Arora says. Madrid is his favourite destination. The nightlife with a hint of glamour and unlimited action, the gastronomical revolution, manicured parks, world-class art galleries, just to name a few lend a glorious backdrop to its city life, believes Arora.





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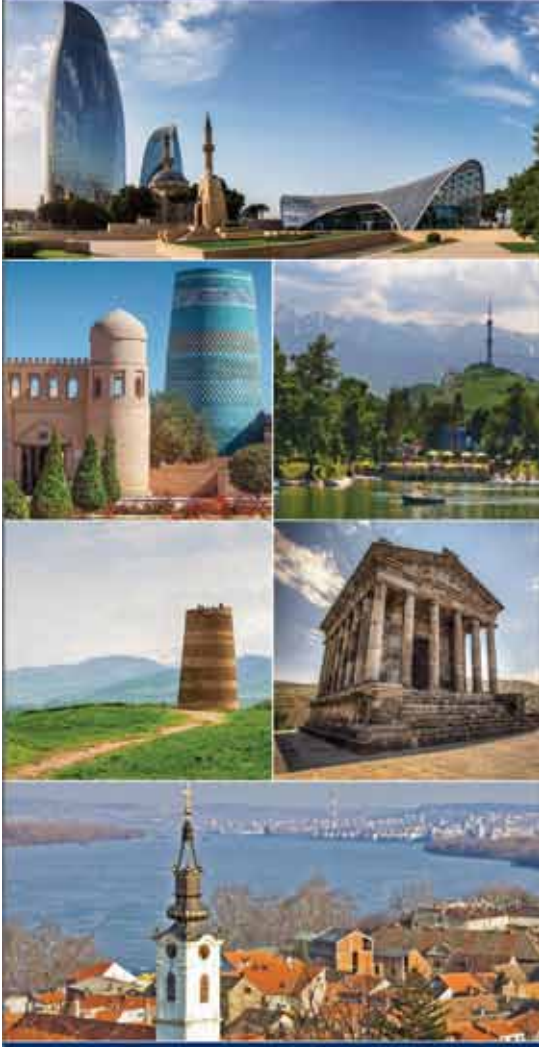
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Peace in the time of tourism

Ban Ki-moon, Former Secretary General, United Nations, stresses on the significance of the tourism industry as not only a leading economic sector but also a vehicle in fostering multicultural understanding.



Devika Jeet from Korea

During the PATA Annual Summit 2018 held in Gangneung, Republic of Korea, the former Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon delivered a special keynote address on the importance of cooperation and collaboration in tackling the world's most pressing issues and the significance of the tourism. Here are some excerpts-

Champion of tourism

During my time as Secretary General of United Nations, I took pride in myself for being a committed champion of

travel and tourism, and recognised the critical role it plays for global unity, cultural exchanges and opportunity. The tourism sector serves as an important vehicle for cultural and mutual understanding, peace, reconciliation and tolerance and mutual respect. These are all extremely relevant today as we see the alarming rise in racism worldwide. But importantly, more than 1 billion people are travelling abroad each year and tourism has become a powerful economic sector with yielding great potential to contribute to international development and

disruptions brought by diseases and disasters. Even today, many of you might see our uncertain future brought about by extreme nationalism, isolated governments, social unrest and rising inequality.

Most importantly, technology has helped bring us closer together. It has offered unparalleled access to the world's information, enabled us to share information and knowledge easily and provided free or inexpensive communication, thereby allowing for greater collaborations across vast distances.

around encounters between different people, the sector can also foster multicultural understanding and raise awareness on preserving cultural and natural heritage. Tourism must be recognised for its unparalleled ability to promote local cultures, products and conservation.

I am hopeful for the future as I see a diverse group of people come together to maximise the immense potential of tourism, drive inclusive economic growth, protect the environment and promote sustainable development.

“More than 1 billion people are travelling abroad each year and tourism has become a powerful economic sector to contribute to international development”

sustainable advancement of economies, societies, cultures and the environment.

Challenging yet changing times

Over the past decade, the world has faced many serious challenges including the worst financial collapse since the great depression of 1929, eruption of conflict and apprising for freedom and

Peace and prosperity

Travel and tourism can play a great role in providing an opportunity for prosperity and peace around the world. As one of the world's leading employment sectors, tourism provides important livelihood opportunities helping to eliminate poverty and drive inclusive development. As tourism revolves

Genuine Power

Tourism is not just for sightseeing but also about the people and appreciating different cultures, history and issues beyond politics. I saw the great benefits of being open to new ideas, people and cultures and the power of extending open arms and building bridges. When we are together in unison, the opportunities in front of us are simply endless. Tourism has a dynamic power that can help people change for the better and bring about a positive impact. It is important that we make a tangible difference and spread positive change through tourism.

Guiding principles for sustainable development of travel & tourism

- ✦ Set priorities and stay focused on advancing sustainable development
- ✦ Never give up, keep dreaming, keep living and keep working hard until you achieve progress
- ✦ Keep the focus on people and their rights; think about those who cannot defend themselves
- ✦ Stand up for those who are left behind. Please raise your voices for the dignity of those who cannot




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Leisure market in focus

With a line-up of new launches across the country, AccorHotels is strengthening its presence in the Indian market with existing brands. **Randhir Gupta**, Director of Sales—Leisure, India, AccorHotels India, explains that the focus of the international chain is to not only cover business hubs, but also target key leisure-centric cities.



Ankita Saxena

AccorHotels is increasing its footprint in leisure and corporate cities at a fast pace with new launches one after the other. Gupta informs that the latest addition to the leisure segment portfolio are the new hotels in Goa. "Earlier, we were present only in north Goa but have recently added Novotel Goa Dona Sylvia Resort Hotel. This 181-room hotel has Mediterranean-styled villas and is located right

on Cavelossim Beach in South Goa. It is a beautiful property with beach and cottages within its premises," he says.

The hotel chain had earlier added Novotel Guwahati GS Road Hotel and also announced the launch of Novotel Kochi Infopark with 128 rooms and suites. The recent announcement of the launch of Novotel Chennai Chamiers Road has made AccorHotels the largest international hospitality player in Chennai with a total inventory of more than 1,000 rooms. Some of the other properties already existing in Tamil Nadu include the 153-room Novotel Chennai OMR Hotel, 189-room ibis Chennai OMR, 180-room Novotel Chennai SIPCOT, Mercure Chennai Sriperumbudur with 100-rooms and suites, 176-room ibis Chennai SIPCOT, 155-room ibis Chennai

City Centre and 129-room ibis Coimbatore City Centre. "When we talk about the increasing number of properties and expansion of brands to various cities, our focus has been not only to cover the business cities but also increase footprint in leisure cities," adds Gupta.

According to him, the hospitality industry is growing and there is an increase in demand for good accommodation options in the country. He points out, "Though demand has always been high from metros like Mumbai and Delhi, we now observe an equal demand from micro-markets like Tier-II cities and more so for cities which are leisure-centric. Thus, destinations like Goa and the likes are likely to offer better returns in comparison to the metros. Many domestic

travellers' spending capacity exceeds that of international travellers' today." Gupta further adds that Rajasthan is also high on demand for hotels and to cater to this market, the hotel chain shall soon add its Fairmont brand in Udaipur which is expected to be ready in the next two years.

on the spot to avoid delays in the booking process. We offer a group online booking tool, Leisure Online (LOL) for our partners in the industry. This digital solution provides travel professionals with real time availability and best rates guaranteed for leisure group bookings of 15 to 60

"Though there has always been a demand from metros like Mumbai and Delhi, we now observe an equal demand from micro-markets like Tier-II cities and more so for cities which are leisure-centric"

AccorHotels in India has been investing in driving its operations through technology. "We are offering instant tools to travel agents to make bookings

people (from 8 to 30 rooms) at the company's hotels and resorts worldwide, including India," informs Gupta.



Tech Operations

AccorHotels offers instant tools to travel agents to make bookings on the spot to avoid delays in the booking process

It offers a group online booking tool, Leisure Online (LOL) for its partners in the Indian tourism industry

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Hoteliers talk business

Marriott Hotels hosted its South Asia Market Place at The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi. Representatives from a total of 53 hotels across the region were present at the event with 120 customers for one-on-one meetings. TRAVTALK sought responses from them about the event.



Nisha Verma



Hema Hariramani
Area Director, National
Sales—India, Marriott
International

“With each year, the event seems to get bigger and better. Last year, we started with the trade in the morning and then went on to have one-on-one meetings. However, after doing a survey and customer feedback as well as discussion with internal partners, we were told to allot more time for one-on-one meetings. Hence, we have extended the time to three and a half hours. We intend to make more changes in the following year.”

“The event offers a better one-to-one rapport and understanding of the nuances of new hotels. Especially with the way Marriott is increasing its portfolio, it is very important for them to have such events. It's an interesting concept which helps to understand the direct coordination between customers and hotels. This is helpful if there are any specific requirements from the client, as it is better to talk to the hotel directly.”



R Parthiban
Director
Swagatam Tours



Rahul Puri
General Manager
The Westin Gurgaon
New Delhi

“The event has in presence most of the Marriott hotels from South Asia, with a majority from India, coming together to meet the partners. It is good to be on a platform together, just to talk about common businesses and promote the Marriott brand before our partners. The response at the marketplace was fabulous. We have seen that the response has only gone up year on year. We've seen more partners coming and being a part of this event. In fact, most of the hotels from the above 100-hotel portfolio of Marriott in India were present here.”



Nicholas Dumbell
General Manager
Renaissance Mumbai
Convention Centre Hotel

“It's a wonderful event for us to connect with a lot of our partners, be they from MiCE, travel trade, group or corporate segments. I am here to get all the business that they are sending to Mumbai and make sure that they recognise the Renaissance Mumbai for its huge catering and conference space, both inside and outside. We've got a lot of meeting space and have done some of the biggest events in India earlier, which clients need to know and remember that we are a venue that can pull off a large-scale event.”



Sharad Puri
General Manager
JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu

“A forum like this is a great use of time for all our clients, partners and hotels. The event comprised an appropriate mix of clients from MiCE, corporates and leisure travel. We have the right kind of people we wanted to meet here. It's fantastically organised and we had very constructive discussions. The event also gave an opportunity to get to know people better as business today is more about collaboration.”

“We got an opportunity to meet with many representatives from Marriott Hotels. The best part is that it is an expanding brand, and they have properties in all segments, right from a Courtyard by Marriott to JW Marriott. We also have various segments in our business and hence, we can collaborate with the brand on various levels. The event is a great opportunity to connect with friends too.”



Harpreet Bhatia
Vice President—Procurement
& Online Business—SITA,
Distant Frontiers and TCI

RCI forges new affiliation

RCI India is celebrating 25 years of its operations in India. The company has partnered with Clarks Holidays and will have new properties added to its vacation exchange. **Sabina Chopra**, Managing Director, RCI India, shares insights from the Indian market and the company's future plans.



TT Bureau

Q What is the operating model of RCI India?

RCI India has more than 200 affiliated resorts in over 60 destinations across the country. In India, timeshare has grown from a single resort hotel to a chain of hotels and resorts, providing consumers with the opportunity to buy vacation time in any

of our properties worldwide. The travellers don't have to deal with the stress of planning a vacation and booking accommodations. There is no ambiguity while planning a timeshare vacation as there is a guaranteed destination. Members can choose from spacious accommodations at quality resorts that offer fully-equipped kitchens, living rooms and access to on-site amenities.

ing our destinations from 60 in India to a triple digit by 2020. The emphasis will be on growth in terms of resorts and adding more value to our members. Our members are vacation ownership members of our affiliate partners. Affiliations help in making our offerings wider. Partners are a key differentiator in developing, communicating and delivering value to our customers.

Q What segment of travellers does the company cater to?

Most of our members are of 35-50 years and belong to the affluent middle-class families. We see a lot of potential in the senior citizen segment as there is a growing population which,

“We plan on increasing our destinations from 60 in India to a triple digit by 2020. The emphasis will be on growth in terms of resorts and adding more value to our members.”

after retirement, wants to travel and enjoy varied experiences. To attract the millennial segment, we are working on developing shorter products which are less than three days.

Q Please share the profile of Indian guests.

Our recently-conducted research study along with Kantar IMRB comprised a sample size of 2008 in-depth interviews of travellers from across major Indian cities. According to the

study, the top-rated motivation behind a vacation was to rejuvenate, followed closely by spending quality time with family. When deciding on a destination, scenic beauty, convenience in travel and affordability scored the highest. As a result, Goa, Delhi and Kerala were the most popular domestic destinations among travellers.



The Tech Way

On the occasion of RCI India's 25th anniversary, the company rolled out Facebook campaigns, special offer e-mailers and even gave away complimentary vacation to its members

Q Please elaborate on the affiliation with Clarks Holidays.

Having added Club Mahindra, Kamat Group and Sterling Resorts to our exchange network in the past year, our latest affiliation is with Clarks Holidays. We plan on increas-

Celebrating with travel trade

Oman Air recently organised a networking dinner for the travel fraternity in Mumbai to showcase its business class seats. The airline also announced the launch of its new international routes.



jüSTa goes the digital way

jüSTa Hotels & Resorts recently added another property to its portfolio—jüSTa Sajjangarh Resort and Spa in Udaipur. The company plans to digitally strengthen its MiCE business and undertake marketing campaigns.

we used to close business a year in advance but today, we get bookings and groups even 15 days prior to the actual day of travel.” Vohra believes that the year 2018 will be all about mergers and



TT Bureau

jüSTa Hotels and Resorts has big plans for this year to up its digital marketing strategies. **Ashish Vohra**, Founder and CEO, jüSTa Hotels & Resorts, points out that the dynamics of



Ashish Vohra
Founder and CEO
jüSTa Hotels & Resorts

“LinkedIn is an unexplored platform when it comes to the MiCE segment as it is focused on B2B market”

the way business is transacted today is changing. He says, “The speed of doing business and cycle of closing business has reduced sharply. Today, the lead time of doing business is shrinking. Buying behaviour itself is changing. Earlier,

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acquisitions. “A fair amount of activity can be expected in private equity space,” he adds.

The company has initiated aggressive digital marketing plans for the year ahead by way of setting up an in-house team to handle the promotions. Vohra explains, “We are using SEO, SMO, ad-words, social media, content marketing, etc. Facebook and Instagram continue to lead the social media platforms but I believe that LinkedIn is an unexplored platform when it comes to the MiCE segment as it is more focused on the B2B market.”

jüSTa Celebrates

✦ In 2013, jüSTa had launched ‘The Jehan,’ meaning the world which was a modern take on the traditional wedding business primarily in terms of catering and everything that goes with it

✦ With Delhi as its flagship location, the concept of The Jehan goes beyond a specific location. In execution, The Jehan exists in Hyderabad, Udaipur, Chittorgarh, Nathdwara, Bengaluru and Kundapur. The halls and lawns at The Jehan, Delhi, have been named after the five elements that make up the ‘Jehan’, that is, Ether – Ambara, Air – Vayu, Fire – Vahini, Water – Niira, Earth – Prithvi, Energy – Urja

IHG expands presence in Kolkata

■ InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) has announced a partnership with SDB Developers to bring a second Holiday Inn hotel to Kolkata. As part of the agreement, the 110-room Holiday Inn Resort Kolkata NH6 will have 90 rooms operational by the end of 2018, with 20 additional rooms expected to be operational by 2020. Sprawling across 12 acres of land in Uluberia, a city that comes under the Kolkata Metropolitan Area, Holiday Inn Resort Kolkata

NH6 is strategically located to offer excellent connectivity to central Kolkata. Well suited to cater to leisure, business and MiCE guests, the resort will be an hour’s drive from the City Centre and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport. The resort will also be well connected to the National Highway and the Orissa Trunk Road.

Commenting on the announcement, **Sudeep Jain**, Vice

President – Development, South West Asia, IHG said, “The signing of Holiday Inn Resort Kolkata NH6 is in line with our strategy to grow our portfolio of midscale hotels in the country, comprising the Holiday Inn brand family. Given the location, facilities and best in class amenities that will be available at the resort, we expect strong demand from various guests’ segments including, leisure, MiCE, social events and weddings.”



Education is priority

Recognised by IATA as its regional top performing training centre in 2018, Bird Academy is striving hard to train human capital for tomorrow's air transport industry. **Radha Bhatia**, Chairperson, Bird Group, shares details on the courses and its future plans.



TT Bureau

Q Please tell us about Bird Academy.

Education has been unfortunately quite neglected when it comes to the tourism industry. We, at Bird Group, have been involved in the education segment of this industry since the Amadeus Reservation System was introduced and have

strived to offer quality education over the years. The Bird Group established the Bird Academy, its educational arm, in 1998 to meet the growing demand for internationally competent hu-

ceptualised with a view to provide an in-depth understanding and technical skills in aviation, travel and tourism, Information Technology and Hospitality Management involving soft skill

“The Academy aims at furthering potential entrepreneurs through extensive training covering skills in marketing, administration and operational management”

man resource. Bird Academy, run under the aegis of Bird Education Society for Travel & Tourism (BESTT), is designed on a pattern to help young entrants in not only specialising in their chosen areas of the industry but also acquiring a comprehensive knowledge of all segments of civil aviation, hospitality, travel and tourism.

Q What are the courses on offer?

The courses have been con-

training, IATA Consultant and Foundation Course, airport handling and IATA Cargo Courses, Computerised Reservation System, Automated Ticketing, GDS Fares and Ticketing, Aviation Law and Dangerous Goods Regulation courses. It is also closely associated with Women in Aviation (India Chapter), a non-profit organisation that

Achievements

Bird Academy was awarded the IATA Regional Top Performer Award at the Global Training Partners Conference in Istanbul. It is also the first academy recognised by the Ministry of Civil Aviation to create the first National Skill Development Centre (NSDC) in Chandigarh

The institute also plans to come up with something similar for the North East

empowers women in the aviation industry. The Academy is associated with Rajiv Gandhi National Aviation University (RGNAU), Delhi University and US-India Aviation Cooperation Program (ACP) as its knowledge and training partners.



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Eyes on MiCE travel

Sherene Allaman, Vice President—International Sales & Marketing, Sun International Hotels, claims that apart from leisure, they will be focusing on MiCE and wedding from India market to achieve a growth of 12-15 per cent in 2018.



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Luxury hotel chain The SunLux Collection by Sun International located in South Africa, offers great leisure and MiCE options for Indians travelling to the country. The properties under The SunLux Collection include The Table Bay in Cape town, Boardwalk in Eastern Cape, The Palace of the Lost City in North West Province and The Maslow in Sandton.

Talking of the brand's plans in India, **Sherene Allaman** shared, "As India is an important market for us, we want to promote that The SunLux Collection is ready to take care of its Indian guests by focusing on the food requirements. We have executive chefs at the property including authentic Indian food in our menu. You can sell a property, but when your food cannot satiate the taste of the market, it ruins the entire stay. We are also looking at promoting South Africa as a wedding destination. Since wedding is one of the most important life events for anyone, we want



“Right from greeting the clients to showing them our service, it is important to encompass the entire experience so that guests leave in awe and want to come back”

nation of rates for the agents, which means that when a guest is staying at more than one Sun International properties, we offer a combination of packages.

This is more lucrative in selling for the India market,” she added.

She insisted that their biggest aim for the future is to tell the guests, at every step of being at

the clients when they arrive at the hotel to showing them our quality of service and catering to the comforts of guests, it is important to encompass the entire experience so that guests want to come back. We are looking at about 12-15 per cent growth for 2018, especially with the changes that are coming into play,” she added.

Sharing the number of room nights they received from India in 2017, Allaman said, “We’ve received a total of 11,000 room nights from India for 2017, just from the four hotels in SunLux Collection along with an overall total of 28,000 room nights. We’d like to thank the Indian trade for their support over the years and are sure to get in the coming years.”

Allaman also mentioned about the offers for agents in India. “We look at a combination of

the property, that they care.

“Right from greeting

Agent Offers

Sun International looks at a combination of rates for the agents, which means that when a guest is staying at more than one property of the hotel, a combination of packages is offered

Indians to consider South Africa for the same. We also want to look at promoting immersion travel, which includes safaris, both land and ocean. It also includes activities that properties can incorporate in the guests’ travel. Whether we are promoting individual travel, MiCE, leisure groups or series groups, we have the facilities to accommodate all of that and collaborate it for them via our local DMCs.”

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Bonding over cricket tales

VisitBritain hosted an event in Mumbai for 80 agents. The Secretary of State of UK was present at the event. It showcased the ICC Cricket World Cup trophy along with the promo video for the tournament to be held next year in England and Wales.



Flying high with flyremit.com

Abdul Hadi Shaikh, CEO and Co-founder, FxKart.com believes that the company is on a growth path and flyremit.com will only add to its portfolio.



TT Bureau

For **Abdul Hadi Shaikh**, the launch of flyremit.com has created a one-of-a-kind platform for its clients. flyremit.com is India's first platform of remittances which help travel agents and travel consultants finish a part of their work seamlessly like remittances abroad.

"This year has been phenomenal for us. flyremit.com

“Our strategy is to give technology solutions to travel consultants in the industry. We will be providing them the support they require as well as the efficiency they want”



Abdul Hadi Shaikh
CEO and Co-founder
FxKart.com

completely eliminates the paper-based remittance process that people used to be involved in while investing time in facing opaque rates. We were the first to come up with a digital platform through which people can seamlessly pay money online, track it online and give assurance to suppliers online. We've launched our DMC product as well, through which DMCs get

the comfort of working with Indian agents because we are solving the payment problem," he explained.

Shaikh believes that giving technology solutions to agents would be the way forward for them. "Our strategy is to give technology solutions to travel consultants in the industry. We will be providing them the support they require as well as the efficiency they want. Above all, it is our ethos of trust, technology and transparency which agents can imbibe in their dealings with their customers," he added.

In terms of growth, he said, "As a start-up, we will not be happy if we do not grow by at least 200 per cent year-on-year and that's what we have been doing in the past three years. Hence, we expect this year to be phenomenal too."

The Suryaa goes green



The Suryaa New Delhi celebrated World Environment Day on the theme 'reduce, recycle and reuse', following this year's global theme 'Beating plastic pollution'. The hotel conducted activities such as poster making and sapling plantation to show its commitment to the cause of environment protection and saving the Earth. The objective was to educate team members and guests about environmental issues through fun-filled activities.

Ileana D'Cruz explores Fiji



Bollywood actress **Ileana D'Cruz** indulged in surfing and diving in Fiji to promote the country to the Indian market. She visited different regions including Savusavu, Nadi, Pacific Harbour, Coral Coast and the Mamanuca Islands. D'Cruz said, "I'm looking forward to new adventures and yet another memorable stay in Fiji!" Her social media posts drummed up great publicity for Fiji and contributed to an excellent performance out of the Indian market in 2017.



Vasco travels outbound

With a long-established presence in the inbound segment, Vasco Travel is now strengthening its outbound division by introducing new offbeat destinations.



TT Bureau

Vasco Travel recorded a healthy growth year in 2017 and clocked a growth of 10-12 per cent over the previous year. **Vikas Abbott**, Man-



Vikas Abbott
Managing Director
Vasco Travel

aging Director, Vasco Travel explains that the company's outbound division is performing very well despite being

relatively new. "If we combine the revenue from both inbound and outbound divisions, we recorded a growth of about 25 per cent last year. Today, the products and the dynamics of doing business in tourism industry have changed. We are always on a lookout for new experiences and ways to add value to the product to cater to travellers' demands."

Vasco Travel is currently busy in conducting market research to identify potential destinations that the company would specialise in and then promote in India, informs Abbott. "We do not engage ourselves in doing large passenger numbers and thus, are not in the mass tourism segment. With our preference to work with niche clientele, we are looking at offbeat destinations for the outbound division that can offer valuable and experiential travel to our clients," he adds.

Abbott further points out that in today's competitive market, increasing revenues is tough and every company has to find its own way to increase the larger share. To market the company's products, Vasco Travel is formalising strategies which include participation in travel trade exhibitions and aggressive digital marketing.

Lesser the Better

With Vasco Travel's preference to work with niche clientele, the company is looking at offbeat destinations for the outbound division that can offer valuable and experiential travel to clients

The company doesn't engage itself in large passenger numbers and thus, is not into mass tourism

Perfect SITE for MiCE crowd

The Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE), recently held its networking meeting in Delhi. **Shoba Mohan**, Founder-Partner, RARE India has been appointed as the Director Communication for SITE India chapter.



New experiences on forefront

Indians are increasingly exploring new outbound destinations and experiences, while visiting popular domestic destinations like Kashmir, reveals **Romil Pant**, Senior Vice President—Leisure Travel, Thomas Cook India.



TT Bureau

The North India market is extremely crucial for Thomas Cook, comprising 15 per cent of the company's leisure business currently, revealed **Romil Pant**. The company is recording a growth of over 23 per cent year on year.

Talking about the trends in the northern region, Pant said that they have observed travelling trends in two ways - firstly,

in terms of the destinations growing at a fast pace and secondly, the kind of activities or experiences a customer is looking for. "We are seeing good growth in destinations like Europe and the US, which are traditionally popular during this season. We also witness growth in new destinations like Croatia, Serbia and Scandinavia in Europe, while in Asia, great demand is seen for Japan and Korea apart from the regular Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. Egypt and Kenya are gaining popularity in Africa," said Pant.



Romil Pant
Senior Vice President—Leisure Travel, Thomas Cook India

Rajasthan and Gujarat to perform well. Today, we are able to service all these markets with our presence and excellent service. Domestic

business is set to be another growth engine for us."

Claiming that Indian travellers are increasingly getting experiential by nature, Pant mentioned, "Indian customers want to include the maximum number of activities and services in a single trip as they want

curated a menu for our international holidays this year. We have also got actor Boman Irani to talk to our customers and meet them in Europe. Like we have Dilkash Europe for the North India market, we also have similar specific products for West and South India focused on specific food and lan-

"Currently, we are seeing a growth of around 30 per cent for outbound market and 45 per cent for the domestic market. Our endeavour is to take it to above 35 per cent and 50 per cent in outbound and domestic markets respectively. Thomas Cook India is dedicated to ensure that the customer gets the same experience, which he is used to getting wherever he goes in the world with us. We also do monetary and non-monetary incentives for our past customers."

“Indian customers want to include the maximum number of activities and services in a single trip as they want value for money”

He insisted that the Tier-II and Tier-III markets are very crucial for them. "It is in these markets that a lot of aspirational travel is happening. We want to cater to markets like Agra, Jaipur, Jodhpur as well as Varanasi. Our senior leadership, including some team members and I, regularly visit these markets to understand customers' needs and requirements," concluded Pant.

value for money. Taking these aspects into consideration, we have tied up with Chef Ranbir Brar who's

Talking of growth in both the sectors, he said,

Curated Menu

Thomas Cook India has tied up with Chef Ranbir Brar who's curated a menu for its international holidays this year

The company has also got actor Boman Irani to talk to its customers and meet them in Europe. Like Dilkash Europe for the North India market, similar specific products are also available for West and South India



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On a gastronomic journey

The Park, New Delhi, recently hosted an Iftar food walk on the occasion of Ramadan for its in-house guests and some food enthusiasts at various traditional eateries in the lanes of Old Delhi. The specially curated two-hour long walk by the hotel's Executive Chef **Abhishek Basu** ranged from mouth-watering delicacies to a tempting range of *kulfis*.



Evolution in corporate travel

A recent Travelport study has revealed that millennial business travellers are bringing about a change in corporate travel, as they want state-of-the-art tech support during their trip along with advice from human consultants.



TT Bureau

The latest report by Travelport surveyed 11,000 travellers in 19 countries, who took at least one return flight in the last year. The findings of the survey revealed that half (47 per cent) of India's millennial business

two fifths (43 per cent) say that not being able to get expert advice from human consultants during the booking process is a major pain point.

When on business trips, India's millennial business trav-

ellers use 20 categories of applications. Amongst them, map and banking apps are the most popular, apart from instant messaging and video tools. However, business trip is not all about work for them, which is evident from high results for social me-

dia, destination guide and travel review apps.

Sandeep Dwivedi, Chief Operating Officer, InterGlobe Technology Quotient, added that there is a digital shift in the way business travellers

are handling official trips, "The findings demonstrate the digital shift among Indian business travellers before and during their journeys. In an age where Gen X and millennials are increasingly becoming tech savvy, they want relevant

and timely content at their fingertips from the time they search to their return from the trip. As a world leader in digital capabilities, we aim to make the experience of selling, buying and managing travel continually better," he revealed. ↴



Sandeep Dwivedi
Chief Operating Officer,
InterGlobe Technology Quotient

“In an age where Gen X is becoming tech savvy, millennials want relevant content at their fingertips from the time they search to their return”

travellers now count being unable to access booking information across their devices 24*7 is one of their biggest gripes, as compared to two fifths (40 per cent) of Gen X2 travellers and one third (35 per cent) baby boomers. It also revealed that three fifths (56 per cent) of the millennials get frustrated when companies don't use data analytics to provide personalised travel recommendations based on their history of travel, as against two-fifths of both Gen X (43 per cent) and baby boomer (41 per cent) travellers. In fact

Digital Shift

↴ In an age where Gen-X and millennials are increasingly becoming tech savvy, they want relevant and timely content at their fingertips from the time they search to their return from the trip

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The image is a promotional graphic for the 'GPS Global Panorama Showcase 2018'. At the top, a large golden winged emblem contains the text 'Travel & Tourism Interaction' and 'GPS GLOBAL PANORAMA SHOWCASE'. Below this is a map of India with several states highlighted in different colors: Jammu & Kashmir (pink), Himachal Pradesh (blue), Gujarat (orange), Madhya Pradesh (green), Andhra Pradesh (orange), and Kerala (purple). Dotted lines connect these highlighted states to event details in colored boxes around the map. The boxes provide the following information:

- June 25, 2018:** Marriott Hotel
- Kochi 09-11, 2018:** Meridien
- June 28-30, 2018:** Telangana Tourism Convention 2018, Marriott Hotel & Convention Centre

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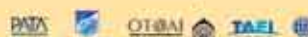


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Your feel-good guide

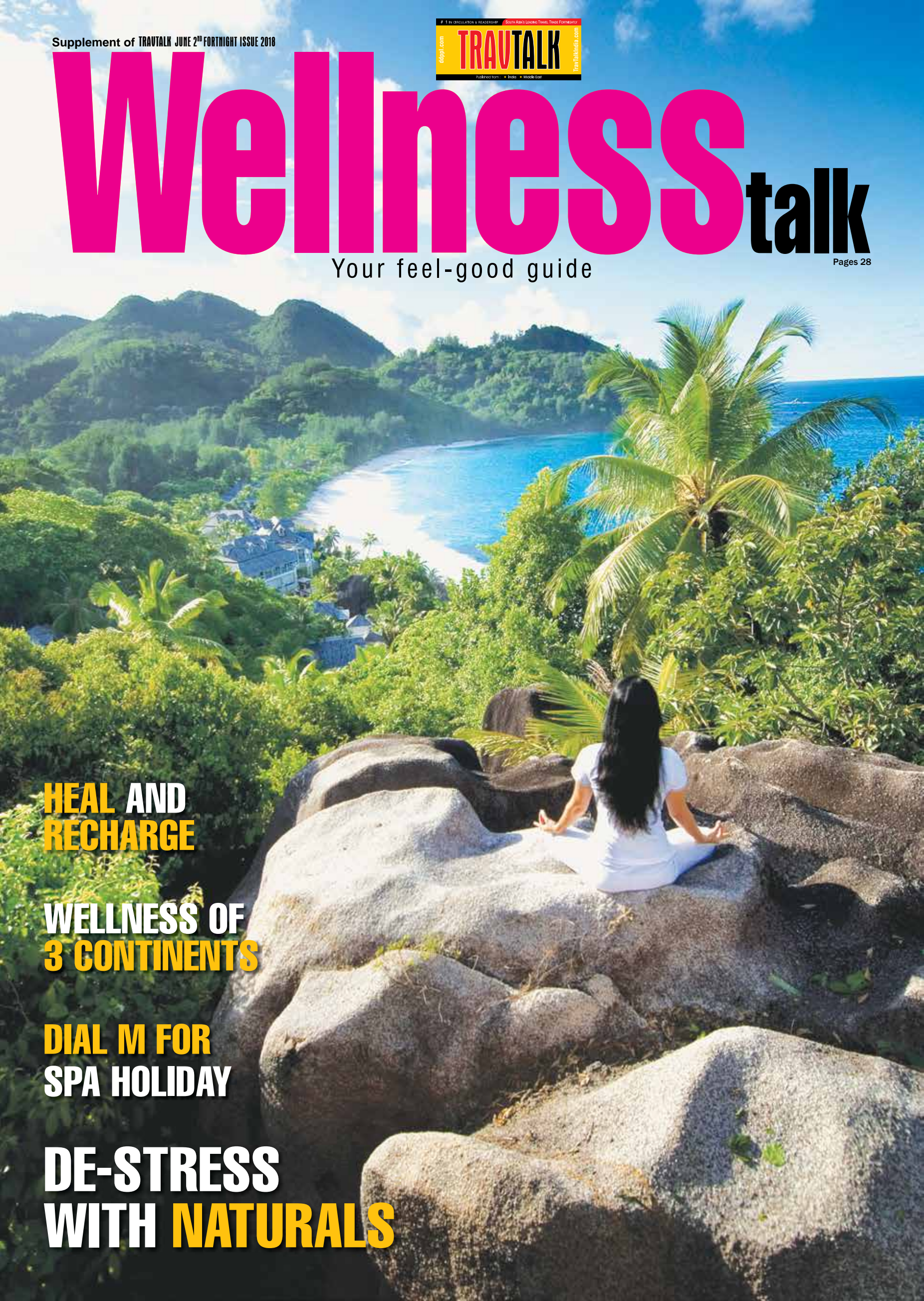
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Wellness^{talk}

FAB & FIT VACAY

With a remarkable shift in travellers' behaviour, travel today is perceived as a getaway - the road to unwind and relax. Holidays are more immersive and healthy travelling is gradually becoming a lifestyle. According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), wellness travel is nearly a \$500 billion industry worldwide within the \$3.2 trillion global tourism industry, representing 16 per cent of all tourism spending.

India's popularity as the homeland of ancient treatments has drawn alternative wellness seekers to the country like moths to a flame. As a growing tourism hotspot, India not only pioneers in traditional remedies but is also well-equipped with modern therapies and advanced medical facilities. From big cities, hill stations to the most remote and secluded places, India stands tall when it comes to competitiveness in the wellness and medical tourism industry. The Medical Tourism Index 2016 had placed India among the top five medical tourism destinations and the value of this industry in India is expected to hit \$9 billion by 2020.

Bridging the gap between local and global, in this edition, we bring to you an amalgamation of both Indian and international tastes of wellness. From traditional Ayurveda and Yoga treatments in remote locations of India, we take you on a journey through indigenous therapies of three countries across different continents. Read about natural elements and their healing capacity in Israel, Turkey and Tunisia or discover how modern lifestyle diseases are treated at Prakriti Shakti using age-old ingredients.

EDITORIAL

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NEWS IN BRIEF



GWS 2018 IN ITALY FROM OCTOBER 6-8

The 2018 Global Wellness Summit (GWS) will be held from October 6-8 at Technogym Village in Cesena, Italy. The Summit brings together leaders to shape the future of the global wellness industries. The Summit will be preceded by excursions to Milan and Parma. The post-Summit tour will offer two options between the Puglia region and Lefay Resort and Spa Lago di Garda.



Novotel Imagica Khopoli introduces O2 Spa

Novotel Imagica Khopoli's premium spa, O2, offers a perfect blend of wellness and innovatively designed massages. The spa is well equipped with multiple treatment rooms, a private couple's room, a designated space for foot reflexology and a salon. The menu features aromatherapy massage, Thai massage, Swedish massage and more to complete the holistic experience. **Srinivas Srirangam**, General Manager, Novotel Imagica Khopoli, says, "Guests will now be able to partake of a quintessential brand renowned in the niche of beauty."



Chiva-Som undertakes renovation

The renowned Chiva-Som International Health Resort has closed its doors for a six-month period to embark on its next phase of renovations. The resort will reopen on November 1, 2018. The latest developments will comprise a complete overhaul to the Thai Pavilions, Emerald Room, Orchid Lounge, Library, Fitness Centre and Niranalada Medi-Spa.



Fun way to yoga in St Moritz

Guests can partake in their fitness practice in the meadows, among a herd of goats, and on or along the glistening lakes—Stand Up Paddle Yoga. Visitors can also participate in various yoga sessions.

Revive & rejuvenate



the Ayurveda way

A trip to Kerala showcases options to experience wellness through resorts and Ayurvedic hospitals like Kairali, shares **Abhilash K Ramesh**, Executive Director, Kairali Ayurvedic Group.

Initiated in Kerala, Ayurveda is an ancient science that projected healing through numerous treatments and necessitated a disciplined lifestyle to the patient. Though many treatments are available, Pancha Karma is one such Ayurveda solution that has revealed benefits far beyond expectations. The process

exudes cleansing, balancing and rejuvenating treatment with the ability to prevent and cure a range of illnesses and diseases.

BIRTH OF AYURVEDA

Ayurveda and its study originated from Kerala but overall South India took the medicinal benefits through

procurement of an environment ideal to grow the plants and herbs required to produce Ayurvedic medicine.

People in the south tend to give more than they take, show compassion and empathy for each other, through diverse religious backgrounds. I find the West with its modern, more capitalist society, fraught with comparison and self-orientation, breeds dissatisfaction and unhappiness. An individual mental constitution is detrimentally affected, which in turn creates imbalance in the physical constitution, thereby weakening the immunity system. Due to this, the link between physical and mental harmony is not well documented which in turn restrains the body's rejuvenation and accelerates the ageing process.

It is easy to overlook our thought process in connection with our body as we are not conscious of our actions. We can often gain our conscious thoughts after eating that extra piece of cake, but the activation through guilt is too late.

MAGIC OF PANCHA KARMA

Apart from the miraculous effects of Pancha Karma, this treatment facilitates a wave of positivity towards the body and mind. The increased awareness on this allows one to make changes in their lifestyle that earlier seemed impossible.



ABHILASH K RAMESH
Executive Director
Kairali Ayurvedic Group

“
Pancha Karma
purifies the
human body
of toxins and
accumulated
wastes
”

Pancha Karma has far greater powers than healing migraines. Western pharmaceutical medicines could treat the effect of migraines but not the cause. Pancha Karma on the other hand, treats the cause and most importantly, the individual.

Pancha Karma is a method developed by the ancient sages of Ayurveda for completely and scientifically purifying the human body of morbid substances, toxins and accumulated wastes to attain rejuvenation through the administration of revitalising substances and practices. This process helps people become more fit to accomplish their life tasks with strength, enthusiasm and happy minds. Apart from studying Ayurveda as a whole, our main focus at Kairali is not only hospitality but also providing organically grown fresh food to guests.

In Ayurveda, the preparation of food, knowing what to eat based on one's constitution, what to combine and when to do it are fundamental to the balance and vitality in one's life. The digestive process can require huge amounts of energy if used in the wrong way so therefore, Ayurveda pays close attention to the harnessing of energy.

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



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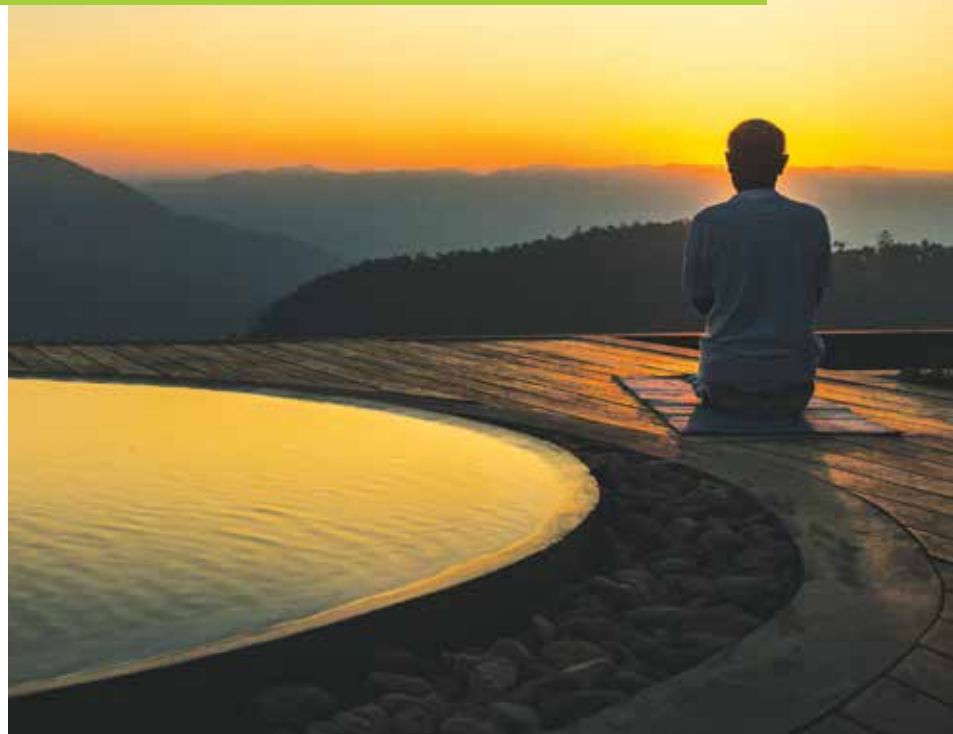









The physicians at Prakriti Shakti help you understand your body, mind and spirit and introduces you to the healing force by harnessing natural elements



A natural way of Healing

While modern medicine has made huge advancements, people are also exploring the proven methods of healthier lifestyle and natural healing.

ANKITA SAXENA

The power of healing through nature is one of the new yet old ways of cure to some of the most common health disorders today. Prakriti Shakti—Clinic of Natural Medicine is offering a path to holistic healing and an awakening of the healer within you.

Prakriti Shakti practises healing through nature and brings about cure in its true sense where the body and the mind are both repaired. The root cause of the ailment is treated and not merely the symptoms that manifest as diseases. As much as Prakriti Shakti is about finding the root cause of the symptom, it is also about preventive cure. By harnessing the elements of

nature, the physicians at this clinic help you understand your body, mind and spirit, introduces you to the healing force and handholds you through the healing process.

Dr Cijith Sreedhar, Chief Medical Officer, Prakriti Shakti-Clinic of Natural Medicine, CGH Earth, explains that naturopathy is a holistic system of medicine which recognises the inherent self-healing capacity of the body and provides a conducive environment to nurture the healer within. Being drugless and non-invasive, curing is aided solely through natural elements; and healing is holistic – touching the mental, physical, social and spiritual planes of well-being. As an art of healing rooted in the indigenous wisdom of many cultures, Naturopathy has immense health promotive, disease preventive and curative as well as restorative potential. Besides its clinical and therapeutic applications, naturopathy is a way of life in tune with the internal vital forces and elements of nature.

Sreedhar further points out that diseases are results of disorder in nutrition, blood circulation, the nervous and hormonal system and the microbes inside and outside our body. Factors influencing the restoration of these imbalances are nutrition, proper exercise, adequate rest, a pleasant environment and a positive mental attitude. “This is what we provide at Prakriti Shakti. Our bodies have remarkable recuperative powers when ‘left alone’. Left alone really means to give the body complete rest – physical, mental, physiological, sensory and emotional rest – so that the body can completely concentrate on healing,” he explains.

He adds that the health and healing capacity of the body depends upon the overall vitality of the body. “Vitality is determined by the amount of accumulated toxins in the body, level of acidity of the body cells and the degree of degeneration of the body. By using the concepts of anna (nutrition), panchamahabhootas (five great elements), and lankhanam (fasting); with a clear understanding of natural rhythms such as circadian, infradian and ultradian, naturopathy assists the healing process by enhancing the elimination of toxins, maintaining the pH of cells and preventing degeneration,” says Sreedhar.



“Naturopathy has immense health promotive and disease preventive potential. Besides its clinical and therapeutic applications, naturopathy is a way of life in tune with the internal vital forces and elements of nature.”

DR CIJITH SREEDHAR
Chief Medical Officer
Prakriti Shakti - Clinic of Natural
Medicine, CGH Earth



TREATMENT DURATION

- **Treatment for Diabetes:** 21 days onwards
- **Treatment for Hypertension:** 14 days onwards
- **Treatment for High Cholesterol:** 14 days onwards
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- **Treatment for Obesity:** 28 days onwards
- **Cardiac Health:** 35 days onwards
- **Punarjani: Rebirth from Ailments:** 42 days
- **Naturopathy Detox Stage 1:** 7-13 days



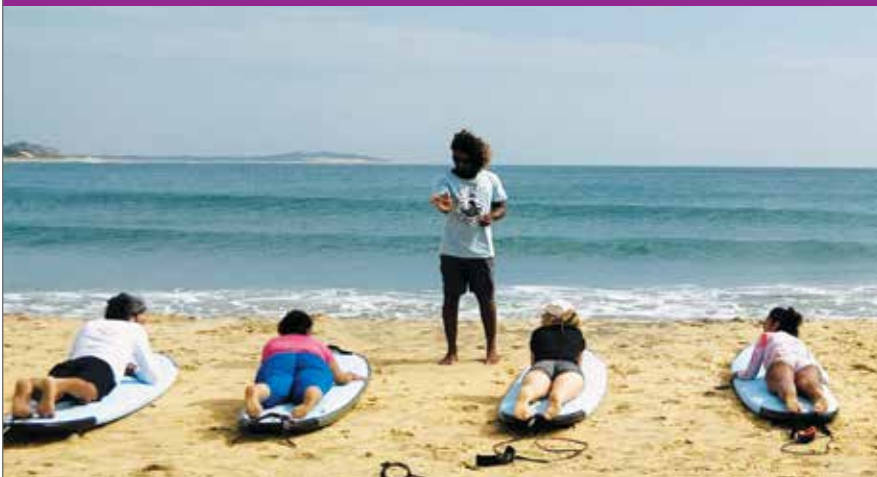
Heal & recharge

At the Earth Magic Retreat in Coorg, three facilitators came together to help participants realign their physical, emotional & spiritual selves.

Chetna Chakravarthy talks about how wellness retreats are gaining popularity.



In India, Anamcara Yoga Retreats, conducts a retreat almost every alternate month



I feel free of at least half the pain, anger and guilt that I was carrying. I feel I have really shed my old layer and am ready to take on life with a rejuvenated zest," says participant Rachana Reddy right after she returns home from the Earth Magic Retreat organised by Anam Cara Yoga Retreats in Coorg. Like-minded strangers spend five days on the lush coffee estate that houses the Kolamotte Homestay to undergo a healing journey together. As retreats of different kinds gain popularity, it is definitely becoming the way to travel and experience the world including one's inner self. As another participant Shernaz Dastur puts it, "A happy travel holiday does broaden horizons and induce a feeling of happiness but a retreat heals from within. Horizons are not only till the open eyes can perceive but beyond what the closed eyes can touch."

The magic of retreats is usually created by the participants. Like-minded people between the ages of 25 to 45 come together to remind each other that it is a united step - we are all experiencing similar challenges and we all must inspire and learn from each other. In fact, at our recent retreat in Coorg, we even had a 65-year-old couple and a woman in her 60s.

A couple of single girls looking to discover themselves, a mother of two teenage kids, a mother of a one-year-old figuring the challenges of life and then the boys in their 40s who needed to regain a sense of work-life balance - everyone is looking for an adventure, coming together to face realities, gain perspectives and as we rediscovered ourselves what journey each one of us experienced together. As one of our participants, Rajiv Menon puts it, "A retreat again is a great opportunity to meet like-minded people and gain valuable insights to cope with



the needs of our stressful modern lives. I would recommend a retreat over a holiday because the right retreat can be so much more than rest and recreation. It can be a positive transformative experience." And isn't that what a break should actually be about?

The next time you are thinking of a holiday and want to see a new city, country, island, figure out if there's an interesting yoga and healing retreat that you could join. Internationally, yoga retreats are extremely popular and these usually include some form of healing sessions too. In India, Anamcara Yoga Retreats, founded by restorative yoga therapist Natasha Mahindra conducts a retreat almost every alternate month across the country and even in select destinations abroad. Yoga, healing and one adventure sport is how she combines her retreats together. Be it yoga, healing and scuba diving in the Andamans to yoga and trekking through Annapurna or surfing in Sri Lanka, the experiences are always a life altering combination. These retreats will pull you out of your comfort zone and showcase you your true potential. Why go on a holiday when you can go on an adventure?

Chetna is a healing practitioner and life coach practising bio-touch, chakra healing, positive action coaching and oracle card reading. Her sense of reality and practical approach towards healing enables her clients to make changes and sustain healthy habits as they move through customised programmes.

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“Guests appreciate the quietness on the island and the opportunity to completely disconnect from their hectic lives.”

EDWARD LINSLEY
Senior General Manager
Four Seasons Resorts, Seychelles



“Seychelles provides an escape for luxurious wellness getaways with its uncrowded beaches and hiking options.”

SHERIN FRANCIS
CEO, Seychelles Tourism Board



Denis Private Island has daily island tours to a stop at the farm to see the animals, to cycling around the island, snorkelling and diving followed by a massage



Continents Therapies

Three different countries on three different continents draw from their natural environment to create indigenous therapies but with a single aim – to achieve complete and holistic wellness.

HAZEL JAIN

Digital detox in Seychelles

Isn't this just what we need today? But how to get around getting a digital detoxification and where to go for this? Well, Seychelles has two resorts with digital detox on offer for its guests—Denis Private Island and Four Seasons Resort Seychelles at Desroches Island.

DENIS PRIVATE ISLAND

This retreat, with only 25 cottages, offers an authentic experience of a private island with a distinctive character. Guests can be sure to leave the outside world behind on this tranquil island where simplicity, comfort and pleasure coexist equally – no keys, no phones – no worries!

The resort keeps its guests busy. Immersing yourself in nature can be quite exhaustive as the body is active, the mind is stress-free, therefore one instinctively rejuvenates. The resort has daily island tours to a stop at the farm to see the animals, to cycling around the island, snorkelling, fishing and diving followed by a massage under a casuarina tree by the beach. The food complements this. The estate operates its own farm, rearing poultry for meat and eggs and cattle for milk. These along with fruits and vegetables and aromatic herb gardens are destined for the hotel's kitchen.

FOUR SEASONS RESORT SEYCHELLES AT DESROCHES ISLAND

On Desroches Island, there is no cell phone signal at all. Whilst this resort does have wi-fi, the island itself is 6 km long and all other areas outside of the resort are completely free from Wi-Fi, cellular network and any other digital disturbances.

The resort has a dive centre with fishing excursions. The hotel's Discovery Centre is home to a marine educator who takes guests on guided snorkels to great spots around the island.

The island is also home to a giant tortoise sanctuary and breeding programme. Guests can visit them to learn all about the ancient species or simply find them free roaming around the island! Guests are also provided with bicycles to go exploring the island by themselves, plus they can borrow snorkelling equipment, kayaks and stand up paddle boards to discover the island by themselves. There is also a yoga pavilion, spa and two unique restaurants to keep guests well occupied during their trip to Desroches Island.





Tai Chi in Singapore

The ceaseless challenges of life in an international city like Singapore can cause relentless stress and take its toll on the mind, body and spirit. To help combat that, Singaporeans resort to practising Tai chi. Also called taiji, Tai Chi is a centuries-old Chinese martial art rooted in Chinese medicine. Originally created for self-defence, it involves a series of slow, meditative body movements to induce calm and reduce stress.

Visitors can join in on one of the many Tai Chi groups practising at parks across Singapore, including Singapore Botanic Gardens, Bishan Ang Mo-Kio Park and Telok Blangah Hill Park. One will find plenty of certified 'Tai Chi for health' trainers in Singapore and classes that teach this technique.

The study of Tai Chi primarily involves three aspects - health, meditation and martial art. It's health benefits are key because an unhealthy or



Visitors can join in on one of the many Tai chi groups practising at parks across Singapore, including Singapore Botanic Gardens and Bishan Ang Mo-Kio Park

otherwise uncomfortable person may find it difficult to meditate to a state of calmness or use Tai Chi as a martial art. Tai Chi's health training, therefore, concentrates on relieving the physical effects of stress on the body and mind. For those focused on the martial application, good physical fitness is an important step towards effective self-defense.

WHAT T'AI CHI CH'UAN ENTAILS

Tai Chi (or t'ai chi ch'uan) is taught in more than 25 countries across the world. In all forms of Tai Chi, there are movements that involve briefly standing on one leg. It also involves circular movements of the shoulders and wrists which improve suppleness and circulation. Learning the sequence of the set

movements may improve cognitive function such as concentration and the social atmosphere can sometimes forge friendships and alleviate loneliness.

10 REASONS WHY TAI CHI IS GOOD FOR HEALTH

- Strengthens body balance
- Improves relaxation
- Boosts blood circulation
- Enhances mental strength
- Aids limb coordination
- Improves joint flexibility
- Relieves arthritis pain
- Reduces falls
- Gives clarity of mind
- Increases stamina





Vinothérapie in France

If there's one thing that France really stands out for, it is its wine. With beautiful vineyards scattered across the country, it was only a matter of time before someone realised the health properties of these grape-bearing vines. Alice and Jérôme Tourbier did and in 1999 established Les Sources de Caudalie, located in the south-western region of France in Martillac. Located among the vineyards of Château Smith Haut Lafitte, Les Sources de Caudalie includes a multitude of hospitality offerings - a five-star hotel, two-Michelin star restaurants, a country-inn restaurant, a wine bar and fine grocery, and a bar. Amidst all this is an unusual spa called the Vinothérapie Spa offering unique treatments that combine the virtues of natural hot spring water drawn from 540 metres beneath the earth with the most recent scientific discoveries of the benefits of grape and grapevine!

THE GRAPE ON BEAUTY'S SERVICE

The family has also created the Caudalie cosmetics brand from the discovery of a new way of using active polyphenol components found in grape pips. Pioneer of a concept invented in France a decade ago, the Vinothérapie Spa continues to combine the virtues of naturally warm spring water combined with vine and grape extracts. This 1,500 m² spa offers exclusive wellbeing treatments based on vine and grape-based products.

SOME OF ITS RITUALS

- Sources Ritual (half day) is a bath or a wrap, a massage and a 50-minute facial treatment
- Vine Ritual is a bath, a cabernet scrub, a massage, and a 50-minute facial treatment
- Vinothérapie Ritual (half day) is a Caudalie grand facial treatment, a red vine barrel bath or a grape marc barrel bath, a honey and wine wrap or a merlot wrap
- Caudalie exceptional ritual (half day) includes a Caudalie grand facial treatment, Caudalie massage, a red vine barrel bath or a grape marc barrel bath
- Body of your dreams ritual (half day) is a honey and wine wrap, crushed Cabernet scrub, slimming concentrate treatment



"What distinguishes France as a spa destination are its range of exclusive treatments such as Balneotherapy in Provence, the Riviera, Thalassotherapy in Biarritz, Vinothérapie and Hydrotherapy in Brittany, Normandy."

SHEETAL MUNSHAW
Director—India,
Atout France



Did you know?

A caudalie is a unit measuring the duration of the wine's flavour on the palate. For each second, the flavour remains this is a caudalie. A quality wine will contain many caudalies.

Vinothérapie Spa offers treatments that combine the virtues of hot spring water drawn from 540m beneath the earth with the benefits of grape and grapevine

What's your HEALING story?

The vast expanse of India is sprawling with many choices to those seeking rejuvenation and relaxation.

ANKITA SAXENA

From north to south, India has various wellness centres in remote locales and non-metros which offer multitude ways of healing and a wellness abode to the travellers for whom healthy travelling is a lifestyle choice.

Goa in a new light - Devaaya

If you are looking at deepening your current knowledge and practice of Yoga, Ayurveda or integrative treatments, your journey starts at Devaaya (divine healing). A unit of the Alcon Victor Group in Goa, Devaaya Ayurveda and Nature Cure Centre is situated at Divar Island, just 10 kms from Panaji. Set on a lush five-acre property amidst swaying palms, this Ayurveda and Yoga retreat consists of 60 luxurious rooms built in true Goan style cottages. Devaaya offers comforts of a star Ayurveda and Yoga resort coupled with rigorous treatments and therapies of an authentic therapy centre. "We offer pure Ayurveda and Naturopathy treatments and therapies to help rejuvenate the body, mind and spirit along with advanced Yoga courses. All diagnosis are based upon the classic Ayurveda-based pulse diagnosis (nadipariksha), personality typing (prakrithi analysis) and other traditional methods to have comprehensive understanding of individual's state of health and accordingly provide issue centric treatments," says **Sanjay Pagi**, General Manager, Devaaya. The resort also allows walk-in guests for treatments, but only on prior appointments from the OPD. Some of the treatments at Devaaya include Pancha Karma Chikitsa, Manashanty Chikitsa, Sthoulyaghna Chikitsa, Rasayana Chikitsa, Acupuncture, Cyclic Meditation and VY Active which is based upon classical Patanjali Yoga combined with Hatha Yoga techniques.

Pagi further elaborates, "About a decade ago, people in India did not give so much importance to Ayurveda. Only a handful who knew the importance of Ayurveda would visit Kerala to get treatments as there were not many options available in the country elsewhere. However, now with the growing awareness among masses, age-old concepts of Ayurveda, Naturopathy and Yoga are playing a significant role in the growth of wellness tourism industry. Now we can see wellness resorts and hotels all across the country and not only in the metros or Tier-II and III cities."

The centre has recently collaborated with the renowned Vivekananda Health Global—Vyasa, accorded with 'Centre of Excellence in Yoga' by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.



"With growing awareness, age-old concepts of Ayurveda, Naturopathy and Yoga are playing a significant role in the growth of wellness tourism industry."

SANJAY PAGI
General Manager,
Devaaya



Devaaya offers the comforts of a star Ayurveda and Yoga resort coupled with rigorous treatments and therapies of an authentic therapy centre

🌸 Unwind in the western hills - Atmantan

Nestled on a unique crystal hill which lends the land healing frequencies, Atmantan Wellness Resort is a luxury wellness destination at Mulshi in Pune. Spanning over 42 acres of lush green valley in the backdrop of the majestic Sahyadris and overlooking the pristine Mulshi Lake, Atmantan is the holistic amalgamation of atma (soul), mana (mind) and tann (body). Promoted by Terra Tales Hotel Marketing in India, with customised wellness programmes, Atmantan offers its guests result-oriented wellness experiences. “Our wellness philosophy is very different from any other property in South Asia. We provide integrated wellness by working with traditional sciences like Naturopathy, Ayurveda, Chinese Medicine, etc. and marry it with a modern approach to nutrition, fitness and diagnostics. We take pride in offering result-oriented luxury wellness experiences,” says **Nikhil Kapur**, Founder-Director, Atmantan Wellness Centre. The broad categories of programmes offered at Atmantan include Master Cleanse, Spa Life, Weight Balance, Fitness Challenge, Ayurvedic Panch Karma, Journey through Yoga, Restorative Physiotherapy, etc.

Over a century of treatments are offered including specialised ones like Chi Nei Tsang (Tao Medicine), Pranic Healing and Colon Irrigation. Kapur adds, “Our doctors are trained to customise the programmes based on guest profile. We have successfully helped guests lower or get off medications in a variety of cases.” The wellness pavilion is spread over 50,000 sq ft. The highlights include diagnostic areas for fitness and food intolerance testing, expansive fitness facilities including spinning and TRX Studio, physiotherapy and rehabilitation centre, meditation pavilions temperature-controlled salt water pool and 23 spa treatment rooms. The property’s wellness facilities are only available for in-house residential guests.

Identifying trends, Kapur explains that as one of the initiatives under wellness programmes, progressive organisations are changing the way of doing conferences wherein they are choosing destinations and programmes which offer their employees tools to help them de-stress and manage work-life balance better. Atmantan has successfully hosted many corporate wellness programmes.



“We integrate traditional sciences like Naturopathy, Ayurveda, Chinese Medicine, etc and marry it with a modern approach to nutrition and fitness.”

NIKHIL KAPUR
Founder-Director,
Atmantan Wellness Centre



Atmantan has successfully hosted many corporate wellness programmes for its middle and senior management to help employees de-stress and rejuvenate



“Travel agents need to package wellness services in their itineraries to add another dimension to travel and attract a large number of inbound guests.”

DEBASISH BHOWMIK
Senior Vice President
Hotel Clarks Shiraz, Agra

With 237 rooms and various wellness facilities like the spa offering traditional and Swedish massages, Hotel Clarks Shiraz, Agra offers exceptional hospitality

Royal relaxation at Hotel Clarks Shiraz, Agra

The magnetism of the Taj Mahal has been drawing tourists from far and wide to Agra for years. The city is dotted with monuments of the bygone days and is sprinkled with history and culture of the Mughal empire. Once the eyes have feasted on the magnificence of the city, travellers can find royal relaxation choices to unwind and indulge. Located at a stone's throw away from the Taj in the heart of Agra, Clarks Shiraz, Agra, combines business with pleasure and style with substance.

With 237 rooms and various wellness facilities like the spa offering traditional, Swedish and Thai massages, the hotel offers exceptional hospitality. **Debasish Bhowmik**, Senior Vice President of the property, says, “In order to upgrade our facilities at the hotel, we have partnered with Gold Leaf Spa, managed by La Vita Services, a franchise spa of Thailand in India and outsourced our spa services to them. The same will be operational in July

this year. Travellers have traditionally been visiting Agra for its monuments, history and culture. However, after the day's end, the evenings are usually free and travellers seek relaxation. This is where a spa or rejuvenation activities can be packaged for both inbound and domestic tourists. Domestic tourism plays a major role in Agra. Most of the repeat visitors who have seen the monuments look for something different in the city. We encourage our hotel residents to use the facilities and services for this purpose.” The hotel has been offering spa-based packages to both inbound and domestic guests and to up the wellness quotient at the hotel, it is considering offering a welcome-foot massage for 10-15 minutes for guests. He adds, “India offers wellness facilities at a very minimal cost when compared globally. However, travel agents need to package these wellness services in their itineraries to add another dimension to travel and attract a larger number of inbound guests.”





Remote from usual monotony - Essence of Nature

The Essence of Nature (EoN) is a one-of-the-kind property that heals the soul and sheds away anxiety with its phenomenal locale amid the Himalayas. An eco-friendly resort at a height of 6000 feet, this secluded and tranquil abode is nestled between Corbett and Ranikhet and rewards all its guests with a panoramic outlook of colossal mountains, rich foliage and captivating sunrise and sunset. Away from the hassle of frenzied metropolitan scheduling, this place works as a natural therapy to release stress and unwind. **Vikas Tyagi**, Director—Sales and Operations, Tybros Group, explains that EoN is an initiative to promote

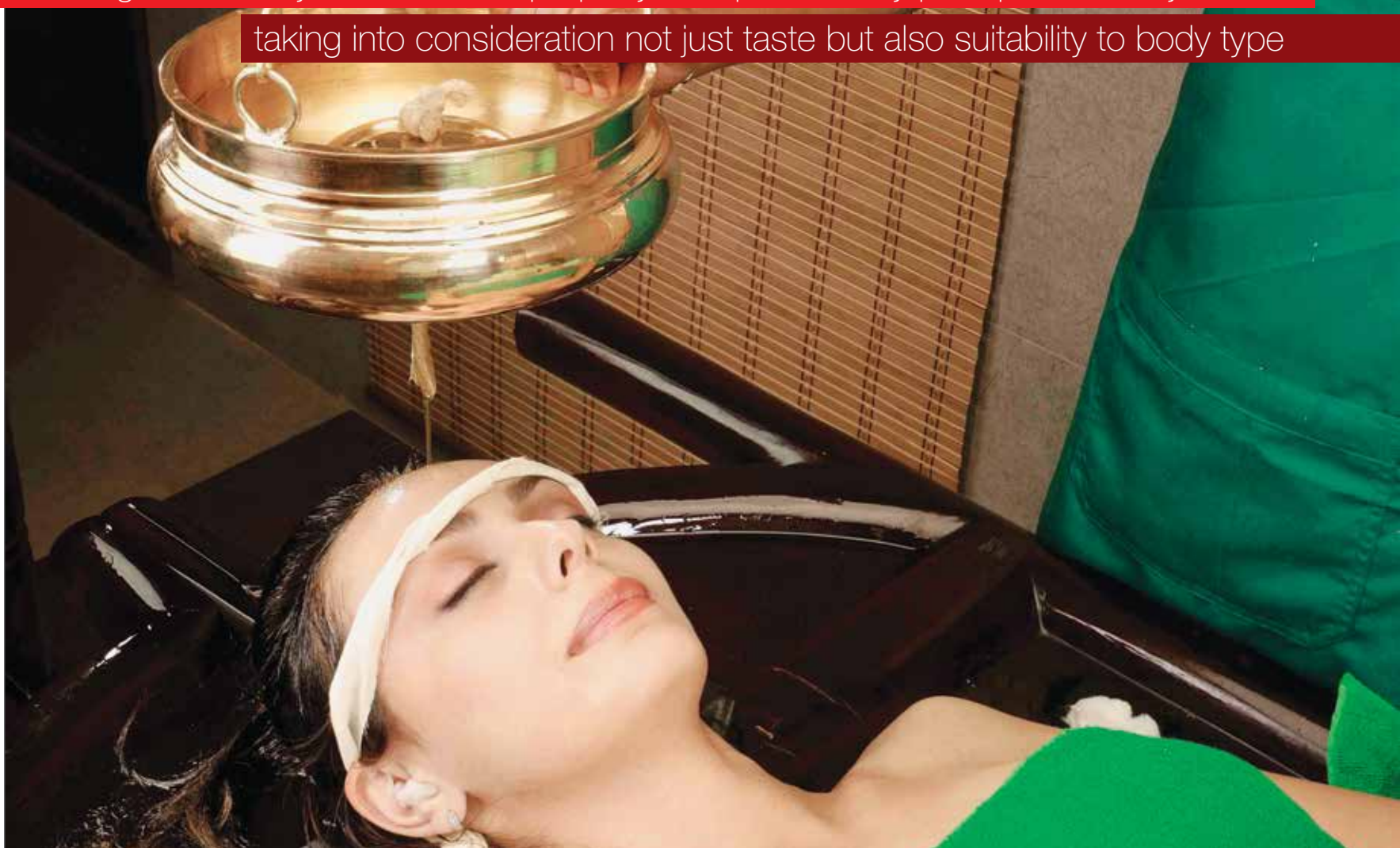
a healthier way of living using the healing guidance of Ayurveda and naturopathy. Organic healthy cuisine at the property incorporates key principles from Ayurveda taking into consideration not just taste but also suitability to body type. The Wellness by Nature Centre has extensive facilities for various Ayurvedic treatments including Pancha Karma and Naturopathy treatment provided by a team of trained doctors and masseurs. Tyagi says, “Our experienced Spa Master Therapists undergo hundreds of hours of specialised education to create customised therapies that best suit your unique needs. Through careful consideration of your individual constitution, your Master Therapist will design a treatment that offers transformation, rejuvenation and a stillness of mind.” With adventurous activities on offer, EoN has perfect settings for indoor and outdoor games serving as ideal stress-busters. The resort also organises a range of outdoor activities.



“Through careful consideration of your individual constitution, your Master Therapist will design a treatment that offers transformation, rejuvenation and a stillness of mind, customising therapies that best suit your unique needs.”

VIKAS TYAGI
Director—Sales and Operations
Tybros Group

Organic healthy cuisine at the property incorporates key principles from Ayurveda taking into consideration not just taste but also suitability to body type



Dial **M** for that **PERFECT SPA** holiday

M Spa & Fitness at Genting Grand, Resorts World Genting, is rightly billed as the ultimate spa experience, believes its Spa Director **Suzie Ahmad**.

ANUPRIYA BISHNOI FROM MALAYSIA

TELL US ABOUT THE USP OF M SPA & FITNESS.

Our signature treatment and technique is our USP. With therapists from Indonesia, our treatments are a mixture of the traditional and modern. With a total built-up area of about 18,200 sqft, the spa provides extensive facilities such as a unisex treatment area, a fully-equipped gymnasium, a nail and foot studio, as well as a hair studio. A private jacuzzi can be enjoyed for as low as RM200 for 60 minutes, and spa facility between RM47 for in-house guests and RM95 for walk-in guests. Gym facilities are available at RM32 for in-house guests and RM66 for walk-in guests.

TELL US ABOUT THE TRAINING OF THE THERAPISTS.

M Spa & Fitness is run by certified therapists who have gone through training conducted by Valmont Professional Trainer. Valmont is an internationally renowned brand, having earned the recognition as cellular cosmetic experts since 1985. From the spa's signature Balinese massage to hot stone therapy

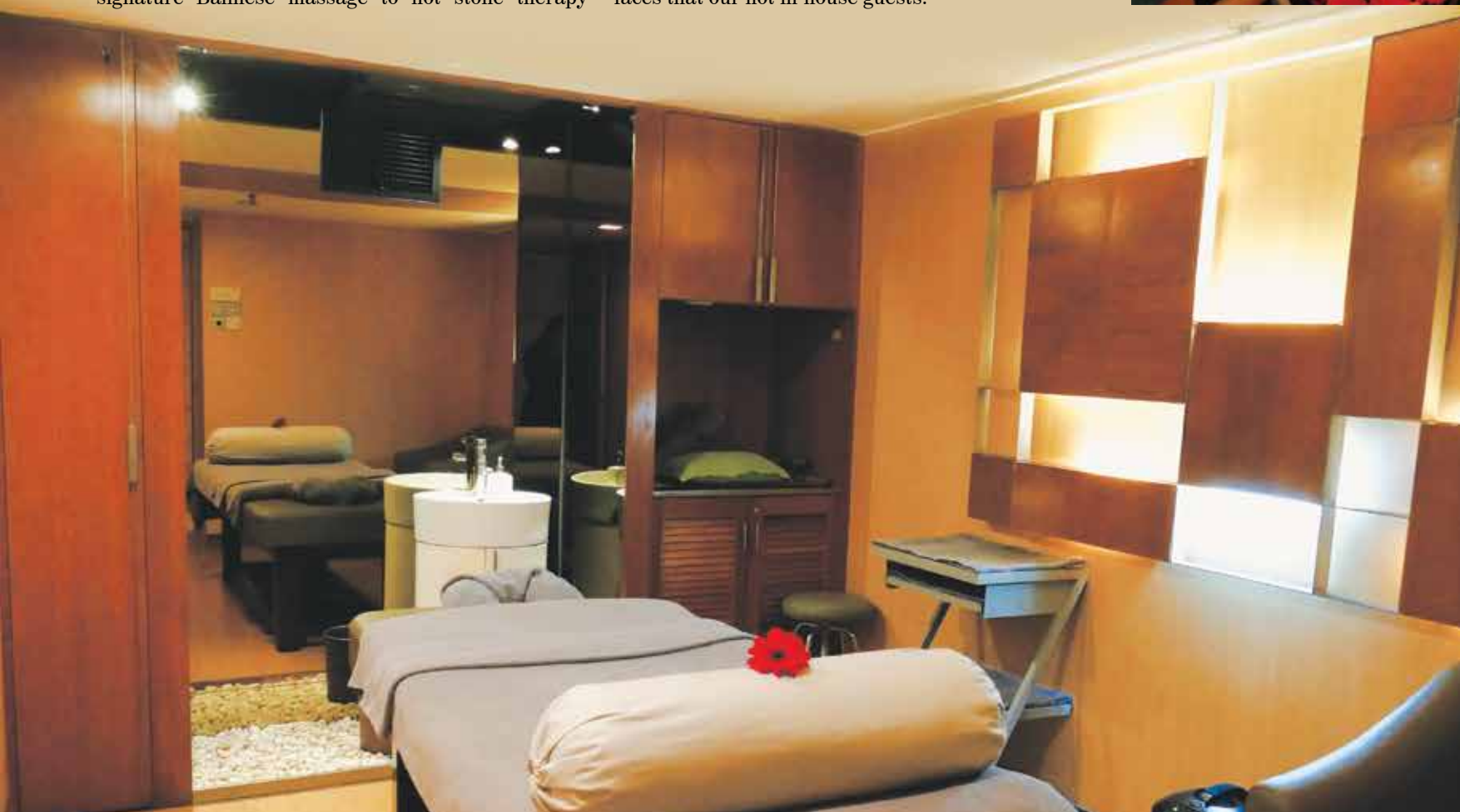
packages and full spa packages involving facial, skin and body treatments, guests can expect quality service the minute they cross the threshold to indulge in various offerings of the spa.

HOW HAS THE SPA INDUSTRY EVOLVED OVER THE YEARS?

Today, spa has become an important factor to people's lifestyle, given their rising concern about health and wellness. Also, spa is a necessity for some people. While some don't mind going to a normal day spa to just get a foot massage for \$50, for some others it is about the entire package of programmes, where they go for a higher one, luxury included. That is where the concept of luxury comes in where it is not-so-necessary for other people.

WHAT IS YOUR CLIENT MIX?

We do get walk-in guests and in-house guests, both. Mostly, the regulars are our visitors from the casino, but during weekends, we get to see a lot of unfamiliar faces that our not in-house guests.



M Spa & Fitness offers signature Balinese massage, hot stone therapy

packages and full spa packages involving facial, skin and body treatments



pamper **AWAY** in **Maldives**

Reminiscent of a dhow, a traditional Maldivian boat sporting elegant forms and vibrant sails, the AWAY Spa at W Maldives, embarks you on a journey of transformation. Choose from an array of exotic treatments to rejuvenate as the world is your oyster while you indulge overlooking the Indian Ocean.

ANKITA SAXENA

AWAY Spa replaces the traditional constraint of spa culture with freedom and fun to anticipate the wellness needs of modern travellers. **Shalin Jose**, Director—Spa and Wellness, W Maldives, explains, “Our over-water treatment villas are equipped with couple’s treatment bed, private steam room, open-air relaxation deck with day lounge, bath tub and outdoor shower area—a perfect choice for couples to indulge in spa treatments overlooking the Indian Ocean in a private atmosphere.” He further adds that unlike the other spas, one would not find a reception desk at the spa. Instead, it is treated as a living room to create a warm welcome and is a perfect socialising platform for guests. On the other hand, all treatment rooms have a private deck, projecting

Ku Nye Energy Balancing Massage is one of the most popular treatments which helps balance the energy. This treatment uses ancient Tibetan massage techniques which work on awakening meridians and removing negative energy through Himalayan salts poultices.”

Maria Cristina Cesario, EAM Sales and Marketing at W Maldives, elaborates that since most visitors to W Maldives are honeymooners, couple treatments are in high demand. “A spa is an integral part of the holiday for guests from the Middle East, India, Europe and USA who make sure to visit the spa at least once during their stay at W Maldives. Guests from Russia prefer detox and Ayurveda treatments and spend a good amount of time for spa and wellness activities. Usually



Sandeep Raghav



The spa menu highlights the brand positioning of ‘Get Your Glow On’ which classifies treatments into three unique categories — Inner Glow, Outer Glow and After Glow

over the Indian Ocean making it the perfect place to practise mindfulness or enjoy the silence of one’s soul and mind.

The spa menu highlights the brand positioning of ‘Get Your Glow On’ which classifies treatments into three unique categories—Inner Glow (massages and body treatments), Outer Glow (facials and quick fixes) and After Glow (surprise perks and pre/post care treatment). Jose points out, “The treatments are based on detox, Ayurveda, ancient Tibetan healing techniques and local Maldivian beauty rituals. The beyond-organic nature and healing power of ILA spa products best complements our treatments.

their average stay is longer than honeymoon guests, allowing for customisation of detox and wellness programmes.”

Sandeep Raghav, Business Development Director—South Asia, W Maldives, further explains that the property has witnessed a positive year-on-year growth in Indian guests. “We get many celebrities from India. Guests can enjoy various water sports activities, parasailing, sunset escape on luxury cruise, pool parties, private destination dining, scuba diving, fitness activities and much more. We have a private island which is available for groups or couples to host parties or dinners.”



Maria Cristina Cesario



NATURAL BOUNTIES OF Wellness

Nature is the biggest source of wellness. Here's a glimpse into some of the places which are famed for their unique natural therapies that help heal, rejuvenate and de-stress with local ingredients.

NISHA VERMA



As the perfect wellness getaway, a visit to the Dead Sea can ease the suffering of rheumatic diseases, psoriasis as well as other serious skin ailments



Dead Sea Mud Therapy in Israel

Situated amidst rusty mountains from all sides, the Dead Sea is one of the most amazing natural phenomena on Earth. The diamond-shaped lake has Israel on one side and Jordan on the other. Trapped from all sides, this water gets evaporated by the blazing rays of the sun to a point where its mineral content is highly concentrated. It is one of the saltiest water bodies on the planet. What makes this place therapeutic is the high mineral content of the

water, as well as the mud at the Dead Sea bed. This is what makes it the biggest free spa in the world. At the lowest point on Earth, it makes the sun travel an additional 1,200 feet to reach its shore, hence the ultra-violet rays of the sun here gets filtered and the oxygen content in the air is high. This, combined with the atmospheric pressure, offers the perfect setting of a healing village. Thus, a visit to the Dead Sea can ease the suffering of rheumatic diseases, psoriasis as well as other serious skin ailments. The visitors bathe in the Dead Sea, apply the therapeutic mud on their body and lie under the sun. Lined with spas, the Dead Sea is the perfect wellness getaway. In fact, in Germany, doctors prescribe a visit to the Dead Sea to treat patients with skin ailments. This visit also comes under health insurance. Hence, the region receives visitors in thousands at its shore.



Get healed naturally

One of the most popular wellness centres along the Dead Sea is the Ein Gedi Sea of Spa Resort with thermal sulfur pools and mineral baths with many physical benefits. The state-of-the-art spa offers 20 varieties of therapeutic massages and treatments like mud wraps and salt peeling. Guests here enjoy uninterrupted access to the private beach.

Thalassotherapy in Tunisia

With origins in France, thalassotherapy is widely popular in Tunisia. The country is also the second largest market for this therapy in the world. Thousands of wellness seekers flock to Tunisia to find rejuvenation through this therapy. A number of thalassotherapy centres have sprung up along the Mediterranean coast throughout the country. Boasting state-of-the-art facilities, a lot of these centres are attached to hotels and have

offerings ranging from beauty rituals using the best natural products, energetic massages for harmony of the body and spirit, benefits of plants, latest generation of aesthetic medicine to techniques of relaxation or muscle building. While there is a vast choice of local treatments, options are also available from around the world including Chinese massage and even Ayurveda. Get ready to experience the benefits of prickly pear oil, Singaporean massage,



seen a lot of investment in making them tourist-friendly. Translated as therapy from sea water, thalassotherapy in Tunisia is government regulated unlike other countries which offer this treatment. Hence, tourists can be assured that the standard of service is maintained throughout the country.

Compliance with protocols, water quality, medical supervision—everything is done at contemporary thalassotherapy centres. In fact, the exchange rate here allows you to get this treatment much more economically than any other European country. This stands true even at luxury hotels, where you can get world-class facilities.

These thalassotherapy centres keep reinventing themselves in terms of their menu. One can find



Popular Thalassotherapy centres

- Hôtel El Mouradi Gammarth, Gammarth:
- Hôtel The Residence Tunis, Gammarth
- Hôtel Hasdrubal Thalassa & Spa, Yasmine Hammamet
- Hôtel Alhambra Thalasso, Yasmine Hammamet
- Athénée Thalasso & Spa Djerba
- Hasdrubal Thalassa & Spa Djerba

aqua-bike or Watsu relaxation in a seawater pool. Add to this the sun, smile and natural kindness of Tunisians, and you are in for the perfect wellness treat. Tunisian cities with thalassotherapy centres include Tabarka, Carthage, Hammamet, Sousse and Port El Kantaoui, Monastir and Mahdia, as well as Djerba and Zarzis.



A UNESCO World Heritage site, Pamukkale is home to the much-preserved ruins of the Greco-Roman city of Hierapolis and has 17 hot water springs

Thermal pools of Pamukkale, Turkey

Pamukkale is translated as Cotton Castle in Turkish. The thermal pools are a natural formation of mineral springs on huge travertine terraces built by limestone deposits left by running water. A UNESCO World Heritage site, Pamukkale is also home to the much-preserved ruins of the Greco-Roman city of Hierapolis and has 17 hot water springs. Dripping down the vast mountain, the mineral-rich

water collects in terraces and falls via cascades of stalactites into milky pools below. These hot springs have been visited by people from around the world for thousands of years, and the temperature here can vary from 35 degrees Celsius to 100 degrees Celsius.

Not only is the place popular for its healing properties, but is also a scenic wonder. The cascading view of the turquoise pools is a sight to behold. However, not all the pools are open to public. Only one pool constructed away from the cliffs is open for swimming for visitors. A natural wonder nonetheless, this place is a must in a Turkey-itinerary, especially for wellness enthusiasts.



Did you know?

The hot springs are caused by underground volcanic activity, forcing carbon dioxide into a cave. This cave came to be known as Plutonium, which literally means 'place of the god Pluto' and was a religious site for priests of Cybele, who found ways to appear immune to the suffocating gas.



Unwind in the Dutch Land



Alila

DIWA GOA . INDIA



SPA ALILA'S WEIGHT MANAGEMENT & VITALITY RETREAT

At Spa Alila, we inspire you to not just lose weight but also inches. After the retreat you would have improved digestion, less water retention, and increased immunity and body stamina. In addition, you will experience heightened mental clarity, focus, concentration and memory and improved self image and acceptance. It will also help in healing chronic elements manifesting due to obesity, like cholesterol, diabetes, heart diseases, lethargy, low energy levels and lifestyle related health issues. Weight Management & Vitality Programs are available as 5, 7, 10 and 14 night packages.

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