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The Outpost Hotel

The Outpost Hotel is a 5-star accommodation that exclusively caters to adults. Inspired by Sentosa's Heritage as a colonial military base, the 193 guest rooms are a stylish interpretation of black and white design, with crisp lines and a sharply contrasting palette. Offering personalised services and amenities, the hotel is built for adults and couples seeking exclusivity, privacy and appreciate the attention to detail. Room amenities include toiletry kits by Australian beauty brand APPELLES Apothecary & Lab, pillow mist kits for turn down service, and customised mini bars from a selection of wine, liquor, chocolates, and gluten-free snacks, with compliments from the hotel. A welcome drink mixed specially for them will also be served upon checking in.

Village Hotel at Sentosa

Energetic, fun, and vibrant – the family-friendly Village Hotel at Sentosa offers an experiential stay for families, as well as leisure and meeting groups. The hotel offers 606 cosy guest rooms themed with sun-washed hues of nature by the sea. The Family Rooms are ideal for guests travelling with children. These Family Rooms come with two rooms, two bathrooms and can comfortably cater to a family of four. The pool deck in the hotel has four themed pools as well as activities from beach games to face painting ensuring that everyone has a fun-filled day.

The Barracks Hotel

Housed in a conserved colonial building, The Barracks Hotel is an exclusive heritage hideaway and is a window to the rich history of Sentosa. Its 40 well appointed guest rooms and suites are simply striking. Exquisite service and the attention to detail for every pampering creature comfort are paramount.

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ATOAI elects new team

The new office bearers and Executive Committee team of Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI) were announced at its recently-concluded elections held at The Park Hotel, New Delhi.

 Kanchan Nath

The Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI) has recently elected its new team in Delhi. While **Capt Swadesh Kumar**, Managing Director, Shikhar Travels India, has been re-elected as President for 2019-21 term, **Sanjay Basu**, Managing Director, Far Horizon Tours and **Tejbir Singh Anand**, Managing Director, Holiday Moods Adventures have been elected as Senior Vice President and Vice President respectively.



Vaibhav Kala, Founder, Aquaterra Adventures, is the Treasurer and **Vinayak Koul**, Director, Snow Lion Expeditions is the new

Secretary. The elected Executive Committee members are **Akshay Kumar**, CEO, Mercury Himalayan Exploration; **Ajeet Bajaj**, Managing

Director, Snow Leopard Adventures; **Rajesh Ojha**, Co-founder, Banjara Camps and Retreats; **Ravi S Kalra**, Managing Director, Travel

Inn; **Vishwas Makhija**, Founder & CEO, India Insight Tours; **CDR Sam Samuel**, Managing Director, Kalypso Adventures and **Pradeep**

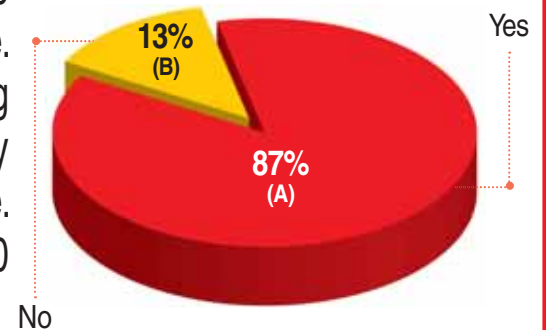
Murthy, Founder and Director, Muddy Boots Vacations.

Speaking on his re-election, Kumar says, "This is my fifth term as president and I reluctantly accepted this post because I wanted to give a new direction to this association. The focus this term is to include as many adventure tour operators as possible in the association. I want all the 15,000 adventure tour operators to be a part of ATOAI. The association has brought out a guidebook on safety guideline."

Contd on page 28 ►

Is travel insurance a necessity?

A latest poll conducted by **TRAVTALK** reveals that a large majority of the travel trade professionals feel that about 20-50 per cent of their clients opt for travel insurance. Almost 87 per cent of them say that such insurances are crucial in covering travellers against risks such as lost or stolen luggage, emergency medical costs abroad, among others for a hassle-free experience. Nearly 13 per cent of the poll participants said that less than 20 per cent of clients prefer to buy travel insurance.



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SpiceJet 1st Indian LCC in IATA

SpiceJet has become the first low-cost carrier (LCC) in India to join the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which represents over 290 airlines around the world. This takes IATA's tally in India to five.



Alexandre de Juniac, Director General and CEO, International Air Transport Association (IATA), had revealed in December 2018 that SpiceJet had applied for IATA membership. Now, the airline

has become the first Indian low-cost carrier to join the trade association. With the IATA membership, SpiceJet can seamlessly expand the network options for its passengers in the future. Currently, Indian carriers that are members of IATA include Air India, Jet Airways, Jet Lite and Vistara.

In a statement, SpiceJet said that the membership and the benefits that come with it will play a significant role in helping the ambitious airline expand inter-

nationally. "The membership allows the airline to explore and grow its collaborations with international member airlines of IATA through interlining and codeshares, enabling SpiceJet to seamlessly expand the network options for its passengers in future," the statement read.

Ajay Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, SpiceJet, said, "The membership will further enable us to inculcate global best practices and innovations. IATA also provides us a platform to closely work and collaborate with other airline members and

expand our network through codeshares and agreements with partner airlines."

Welcoming SpiceJet into the organisation, **Conrad Clifford**, Regional Vice President—Asia Pacific, IATA, said, "SpiceJet is the first Indian low-cost carrier to be an IATA member, and our fifth member in India. We are delighted to welcome SpiceJet as part of the 290 [-plus] airlines in the IATA family."

Recently, SpiceJet received IATA's Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) certificate. 

SpiceJet launches 8 daily flights to Gwalior under UDAN III

Expanding its reach to new destinations under UDAN III, SpiceJet has announced the commencement of eight new daily flights to Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. The city will be the airline's 11th destination under the regional connectivity scheme and overall 52nd domestic destination. The eight new flights will also make SpiceJet the first airline to offer daily direct flights on the Gwalior-Hyderabad-Gwalior, Gwalior-Jammu-Gwalior, Gwalior-Bengaluru-Gwalior and Gwalior-Kolkata Gwalior sectors. The budget carrier has also announced four new daily flights connecting Bhopal including daily non-stop flight between Udaipur and Bhopal from March 31. It also announced daily direct flights between Chennai and Bhopal.

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TRAVELTALK

VIEWPOINT

Indian carriers chart international skies

While expanding their networks across India under the UDAN scheme, Indian carriers are also growing base internationally and ensuring that Indians get the best of the entire world. Despite a delay in getting approval from Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Vistara finally got the green signal to fly international, thereby becoming the fifth Indian carrier to ply on international routes. While Vistara complied to the 20 aircraft rule under the National Civil Aviation Policy, it took time for the airline to get the go ahead to go international. This added with SpiceJet getting IATA membership created just the right impression internationally for Indian carriers, especially when clouds are getting dense over Jet Airways. Even IndiGo has announced flights to Istanbul after tying up with Turkish Airlines. In the future, it is also said to fly to destinations like China, Vietnam, England, Myanmar and Saudi Arabia. This would open up many new routes for Indians travelling out of the country at much lower rates. However, with increasing airport costs and ATF, how much of low-cost travel is feasible for airlines still remains to be seen.

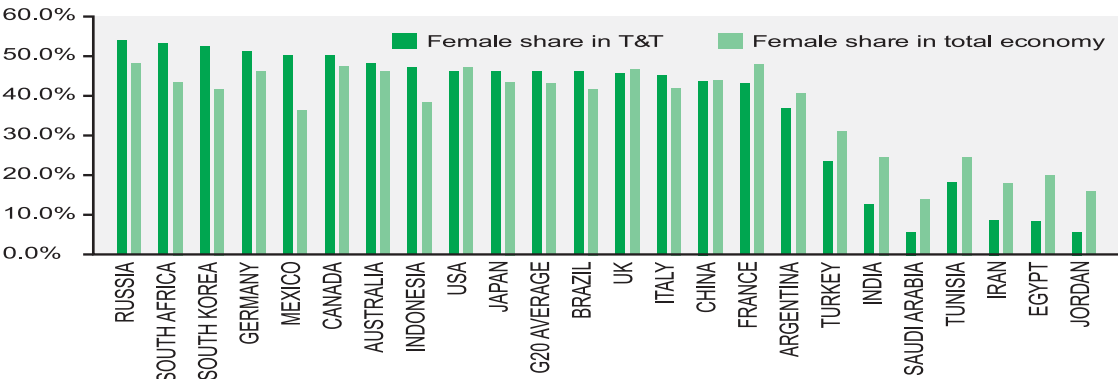
Outbound beyond usual

The US and the UK remain some of the most aspirational travel destinations across India according to a CAPA report. Australia is another destination that is seeing increased interest from Indians. France and New Zealand are also among the top four destinations. However, the report suggested that there are many emerging destinations. In the Asia Pacific, it's Bhutan, Cambodia, Vietnam and Philippines, while in Western/Northern Europe, Indians are trying to explore Iceland, Ireland and Scandinavian countries. On the other hand, in Eastern/Southern Europe, emerging destinations include Croatia, Czech Republic and Greece. In the Middle East and Northern Africa region, it's Israel, Jordan and Morocco. In South America, there are queries coming in for Argentina, Brazil and Peru. The NTOs are also leaving no stone unturned to get the arrival numbers from India. The upcoming holiday season is expected to reach new heights and new destinations.

12% women in tourism

The female share of employment in tourism in India accounts for 12.1 per cent, according to a latest report by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) titled 'Travel & Tourism: Driving Women's Success.'

Female share of Travel & Tourism and overall economy employment - G20 and additional countries, 2017



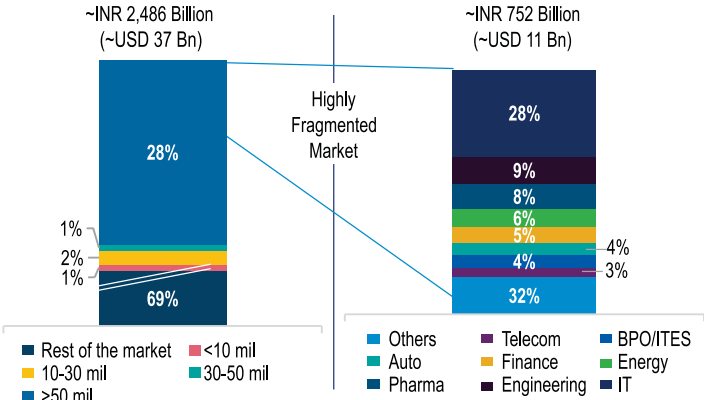
- There could be an 11 per cent increase in global GDP if every country achieved the fastest rate of progress in its region on closing the three key gender gaps of workforce participation, the report states. Travel and tourism can provide women with more opportunities for workforce participation, leadership, entrepreneurship and empowerment than many other sectors, particularly in developing countries and as such it can have a tremendous effect on poverty reduction in rural communities.
- At the macro level, a stronger representation of women in travel and tourism relative to other areas of the economy is due to the sector's unique characteristics: often less emphasis on formal education and training, greater emphasis on personal and hospitality skills, flexible working opportunities, and increased options for entrepreneurship that do not require heavy start-up financing.

Source: WTTC

Highest spend from IT firms

FCM Travel Solutions and KPMG's whitepaper titled 'Redefining Corporate Travel Management' forecasts that the Indian business travel market is highly fragmented, with 70% of corporates spending less than ` 10 million.

Corporate Travel Market – Travel Spend >INR 10 million



Source: FCM Travel Solutions and KPMG

- IT companies have the highest share amongst those spending more than Rs 10 million followed by engineering and pharmaceutical companies. IT, BPO/TeS and pharmaceutical industries have higher travel spends as a percentage of their revenue.
- Business travel is central to both maintaining business as well as expanding it and due to rising cost of travel, it is becoming imperative for corporates to drive higher levels of efficiency in their managed travel programme.

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THAILAND

enriches the niche

Having recorded 1.6 mn Indian arrivals in 2018, Tourism Authority of Thailand now expects to achieve 2 mn arrivals in 2019 whilst emphasising on niche segments from the market.



TT Bureau

Women travellers, families and weddings are the niche segments that TAT is set to focus on in 2019. **Tanes Petsuwan**, Deputy Governor—Marketing Communication, TAT, claimed that the board witnessed significant growth from India in 2018. “Last year we welcomed 1.6 million Indians to Thailand, a growth of around 12 per cent. The market growth was about 63 per cent in December 2018 after the visa fee waiver, which has now been extended till April 2019. This was done after the increase in numbers of arrivals, not only from India but from 20 more countries. The first quarter of 2019 is expected to record good numbers. We have

Indians love travelling with their families. Thirdly, we will concentrate on weddings and honeymoons.”

With these segments, TAT will not only be focusing on customary spots like Bangkok, Phuket and Pattaya but also

introduce new destinations. Petsuwan said, “We will not stop promoting these three destinations as they are extremely strong for Indians. Besides, we will offer new destinations such as Chiang Rai, Rayong, Trat, Hua Hin and Samut Songkhram.”

Petsuwan insisted that Thailand has the perfect infrastructure and hospitality to cater to Indian weddings and conferences. He shared that the increased air connectivity between India and Thailand will also aid in the growth of all these segments. “We work

closely with at least 13 airlines flying between India and Thailand with around 307 weekly flights,” said Petsuwan.

TAT will organise the Amazing Thailand roadshow for Tier-II cities like Ahmedabad, Pune, Amritsar and Bhubaneswar.



Isra Stapanaseth
Director—New Delhi Office
Tourism Authority of Thailand



Tanes Petsuwan
Deputy Governor—
Marketing Communication, TAT

targeted around 20 per cent increase from India this year and are hopeful of achieving two million arrivals by the end of this year,” he said.

Setting eyes on first-time travellers from India, **Isra Stapanaseth**, Director—New Delhi Office, TAT, shared, “We have big numbers coming from families and niche markets like weddings, leisure and even corporates. Going forward, we will be focusing on weddings too. We even have a microsite www.thailandfirstvisit.com for the consumer. Its app also offers information and activities, and is linked to our social media platforms used for publicity.”

Petsuwan added, “As we will be going niche, we will opt for potential segmentation including women travellers. As great explorers, Indian women are educated and have a strong purchasing power. The second group is family travellers as



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Leela sells assets to Brookfield

Canada-based Brookfield Asset Management (Brookfield) is set to acquire four hotels under Hotel Leela Venture (HLV) for ₹3,950 crore, in what would be the largest-ever hotel deal by value in India.



TT Bureau

The board of Hotel Leela Venture approved the sale (by way of slump sale) and transfer of four of its hotel

properties in Delhi, Bengaluru, Udaipur and Chennai to an affiliate of BSREP III, Brookfield's latest real estate fund. Commenting on the transaction, **Vivek Nair**,

Chairman and Managing Director, HLVL said, "The Leela is rated amongst the top hospitality brands in the world and I am confident that the brand will receive a



boost and continue to be known for its world-class services."

Ankur Gupta, Managing Director and Head—India Real Estate, Brookfield Asset Management remarked, "The Leela is one of the finest hospitality groups in India and over the years it has gained extraordinary recognition from some of the most prestigious authorities on travel and luxury in the world. We are excited with this opportunity and look forward to completing this transaction at the earliest, while ensuring that all operations remain unaffected. We expect the Leela hotels to continue to be market leaders."

The deal brings an end to almost a year of talks between Brookfield and various stakeholders of HLVL, which has been in the middle of financial restructuring. Currently, the luxury hotel chain owns five hotels, comprising more than 1,400 rooms in Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Mumbai and Udaipur. While the Mumbai hotel will not be part of this deal but the land parcel in Agra will be included. The Brookfield-Leela deal will also entail buying the Leela brand, existing and all upcoming management contracts of (HLV) whilst absorbing the employees of the four hotels, the two companies said in a joint statement.

The deal is subject to approvals from shareholders, lenders and other regulatory and statutory approvals, according to the statement. Leela will continue to run its hotel in Mumbai and own certain pieces of land in Hyderabad as well as a joint development project of residential apartments with Bengaluru-based Prestige Developers. 📌



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Kempinski reaches out to trade

Kempinski Hotels recently conducted its three-city roadshow across Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai. Key spokespersons from the brand across the globe spoke about the importance of the Indian market.



Anupriya Bishnoi

“About 13-14 of our hotels along with their respective ambassadors participated at our three-city roadshows in Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai. India is a very important market for us that feeds in a lot of destinations where we have our landmark properties. The very famous Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi, operated and managed by Kempinski Hotels, is well established in the Indian market.”



Imad Sawaya
Regional Director of Business Development—Middle East and Africa, Kempinski Hotels

“Singapore is a multi-cultural country and Indian population is a part of that. Our hotel is a historical building and we have a lot of Indian crowd coming in. They love the small-boutique hotel. Our property has 157 rooms. They love the hotel as its very personal. Promising to be an oasis of tranquillity in the heart of the city, our hotel offers signature bespoke hospitality. These roadshows are important in building new relationships. There are a lot of things that I will be able to explain to people better than anybody else as a representative of the hotel.”



Christian Gurtner
Managing Director
The Capital Kempinski Hotel, Singapore

“India is one of the top markets in Bali. The number of tourists coming from India in Bali has been growing steadily. India automatically becomes an important market to look out for. We have an Indian in-house chef who caters to the customised needs of the Indian clientele. This way, we can have more confidence and grow our numbers hereon. With eyes set on the leisure market, we are also open for corporates. We have a huge ballroom that accommodates 550 people at once. For weddings, we have a huge lawn that accommodates 500 people.”



Wayan Widhiarsa
Director of Sales
The Apurva Kempinski, Bali



Belinda Donhuber
Assistant Director of Sales
Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten Kempinski Munchen and Kempinski Hotel Berchtesgaden-Bavarian Alps

“We have a lot of Indian stop-over travellers going to the Bavarian Alps for spa, relaxing and skiing. Among the two hotels I’m looking after, one is located at the city centre and I know Indians love to shop. The other hotel is two hours’ drive away from Munich located in Berchtesgaden and is on the top of the mountains with a panoramic view. Also, direct flights from Mumbai and Delhi make it even more desirable for the Indian market.”



Tereza Liskova
Sales Manager, Palais Hansen Kempinski, Vienna

“Vienna is an important market for Indians. We have a lot of leisure guests coming for city tours or city break in Europe who combine the three capital cities — Budapest, Vienna and Bratislava. It’s a unique triangle as these three cities are on one river, Danube. In an era of social media and internet, its very important to keep personal contact. We are a part of India roadshow because we want to show our interest in this market personally.”



Edit Szalczer
Groups & Events Director
Kempinski Hotel Corvinus, Budapest

“In the past five years, the interest of Budapest among Indians has been doubled. We want to be here to understand the kind of challenges Indians face when they travel to Budapest. We want to take care of it personally. Hence, such roadshows are important. Though we have an Indian chef working with our hotel, we want to do more for this market. One of the things I would like to mention is that our hotel offers very good value for money.”

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ATM '19 goes tech savvy

Disruptive technology is set to create multi-billion dollar savings in tourism, says a research, ahead of ATM to be held in Dubai from April 28 - May 1.

TT Bureau

The latest research from Colliers International, in partnership with ATM 2019, reveals that in addition to vast cost savings, the customer experience is set to be more streamlined with travel set to become better, smoother and more personalised with travel bookings on VR platforms, AI chatbots guiding customers



through the booking process and IOT providing internet based inter-connectivity between everyday devices. Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market, said, "The tourism industry is at the very forefront of tech innovation with



Danielle Curtis
Exhibition Director ME
Arabian Travel Market

companies investing huge sums of money to improve the customer experience. Airports and airlines accounted for US\$30 billion of investment in IT in 2018, however this will be offset by the implementation of technology that will see fuel savings alone top US\$30 billion in the next 15 years. SITA, the multinational tech company to the air transport industry is using robots to check travellers onto flights and transport their luggage."

ATM 2019 has adopted cutting-edge technology and innovation as its main theme and this will be integrated across all show verticals and activities, including focused seminar sessions.

Discussing the defining evolutions of hospitality technology, the Travel Tech Show will return to ATM 2019 with 45 international exhibitors and an influential agenda of debate in the Travel Tech Theatre – sponsored by Sabre Corporation. Launching this year will be the inaugural Arabian Travel Week, an umbrella brand which comprises four co-located shows — ATM 2019; CONNECT Middle East, India and Africa – a new route development forum, ILTM Arabia and new consumer-led event – ATM Holiday Shopper. Another debutant this year is the Arabia China Tourism Forum.

100% definite departures

With 100% definite departures for its Europe and Britain trips for 2019 summer, Trafalgar is offering US\$200 savings per couple for bookings before March 31, 2019.

TT Bureau

Trafalgar has announced 100 per cent definite departures on its Europe and Britain trips for the 2019 summer season. To celebrate this, as well as completing a decade of connecting guests with the locals with 'Be My Guest', Trafalgar is offering US\$200 savings per couple for bookings made before March 31, 2019. Gavin Tollman, CEO,



Gavin Tollman
Chief Executive Officer
Trafalgar

“With our range of 100+ European trips, combined with our 100% definite departure status, partners can sell us with confidence”

Trafalgar, said, "We know it's been a challenging sales year for our agent partners with high consumer interest yet a later booking window, so we are going 100 per cent definite to help our valued partners

close the sale and reassure their clients that now is the best time to book."

He added that travellers globally are craving reassurance, which they will always get with

Trafalgar. "With our existing deposit guarantees, our range of over 100 European trips, now combined with our 100 per cent definite departure status, agent partners can sell us with 100 per cent confidence," Tollman said.

The company also celebrates 10 years of its 'Be My Guest' travel experience. Exclusive to Trafalgar, it allows guests to immerse themselves in a destination through visiting the homes of hosts, learn and discover the culture of a place over conversation and local flavours. "We are always AgentsFirst and by making our trips 100 per cent definite departure status, alongside our great offers right now with up to 15 per cent off on all May departures for our Europe and Britain departures, we make Trafalgar a compelling option for them," Tollman concluded.

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JustClickKaro gets cash boost

After acquiring Arzoo.com, **Parag Thakker**, Managing Director, Shree Mahalaxmi Vacations, has invested in JustClickKaro.com, helmed by **Navjot Bhasin**.



Nisha Verma

Having grown his company considerably, **Navjot Bhasin**, Founder, JustClickKaro.com is proud to welcome its first investment partner on board. He said, "It gives me great pleasure to announce that Parag Thakker will be investing an undisclosed amount into the company. We will also be taking him as a full-time director on the board. Both of us will scale the company to new heights and bring in many surprises in the first year of operations."

Echoing the same sentiments, **Parag Thakker**, Managing Director, Shree Mahalaxmi Vacations said, "The plan is to grow JustClickKaro.com to the

to work together. Navjot and I shared that instant connection to take this deal forward. While both Arzoo.com and JustClickKaro.com are similar, it gives us a major advantage if we go together to buy something as a unit for a bulk purchase. Secondly, we will

have deep penetration as the latter has extensive reach in Tier-III, IV cities while Arzoo.com has good reach in metros. My idea is to cover the whole of India," he shared.

In 2018, JustclickKaro.com recorded a revenue of

`1,400 crores and this year it will close around `2,200 crores. "Last year, we had roughly 15,000-20,000 agents and this year we have more than 32,000 agents. More than 60 per cent agents are live on our website. This gives more reasons for

agents to come and transact on our platform. Our target in 2019 is to grow the agent base from 32,000 to around 75,000. We will be looking at our turnover to get doubled in the coming years," said Bhasin.



Parag Thakker
Managing Director
Shree Mahalaxmi Vacations



Navjot Bhasin
Founder
JustClickKaro.com

next level. The investments are being made to grow the business. We are coming up with B2C portals and there is huge scope in packages that we are going to offer. We would also like to enter Tier-III, IV cities."

The only thing missing with JustClickKaro.com was an investor to take it to new heights, exclaimed Bhasin. "All our competitors have an investor today. Getting to a bigger level includes IPOs and small acquisitions as well as a potential investor. This investment has given us a level-playing field with our competitors. It is time to take these products to the next level and work towards being industry leaders," he added.

Having taken over Arzoo.com recently, this will be Thakker's second investment this year. "JustClickKaro.com is already a brand in the market and to do business you need to have the right frame of mind of two persons who are going



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One Above its competitors

One Above offers all kinds of travel services for clients from every segment and ensures that its products make them stand out. The group constantly innovates to ensure that they meet their clients' expectations.



TT Bureau

One Above is a DMC that caters to all types of travellers and groups. **Vishal Chawla**, Director, Russia DMC, One Above shared, "Our company provides full services for all

type of travellers, including FIT, MICE and leisure groups. We offer everything from visa support letters (electronic and original), accommodation services starting from budget hotels to luxury hotels, meals services for vegetarians and

non-vegetarians, internal travel services by air, bullet trains, night trains or by coach and all types of sightseeing like city tours as well as arranging guided excursions in museums, galleries, exhibitions for groups and individuals."

He added that the company arranges all type of entertainment for guests including cruises, hot air balloon ride, tank ride, helicopter ride, horse carriage rides, etc. "We provide different types of transport and licensed guides services and even

organise conferences for the groups whilst catering during the conferences and events," said Chawla.

Claiming that owing to travel trends and preferences of end customers which keep

changing, they come up with new strategies to meet targets. "Due to rapidly growing demand for travel to Russia (especially after FIFA 2018), the company keeps increasing internal structure starting from sales and ending up with ops team. As for external measures, the main targets are to keep studying the market in terms of newly opened hotels, restaurants (suitable for Indian clients) and new places of entertainment to keep the travel product diverse and updated," added Chawla.



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Vishal Chawla
Director, Russia DMC
One Above

In terms of product development, he insisted that Russia keeps growing with more cities becoming places of attraction with infrastructure, comfortable connections, known chains of hotels with international standards. "We keep our inspection visits schedule full during the off-season in order to keep offering new places of interest which provide the best experience to our clients," he claimed.

In order to reach out to more travel partners in India, One Above is adopting a number of marketing strategies. "As of now, we keep using the tools that work best for us like attending exhibitions, arranging workshops and roadshows for agents, organising Fam tours to Russia and meeting the travel agents personally during our sales visits to India," he concluded.

China will lead with 200 million foreign tourist arrivals by 2023, followed by USA with 95 million international visitors

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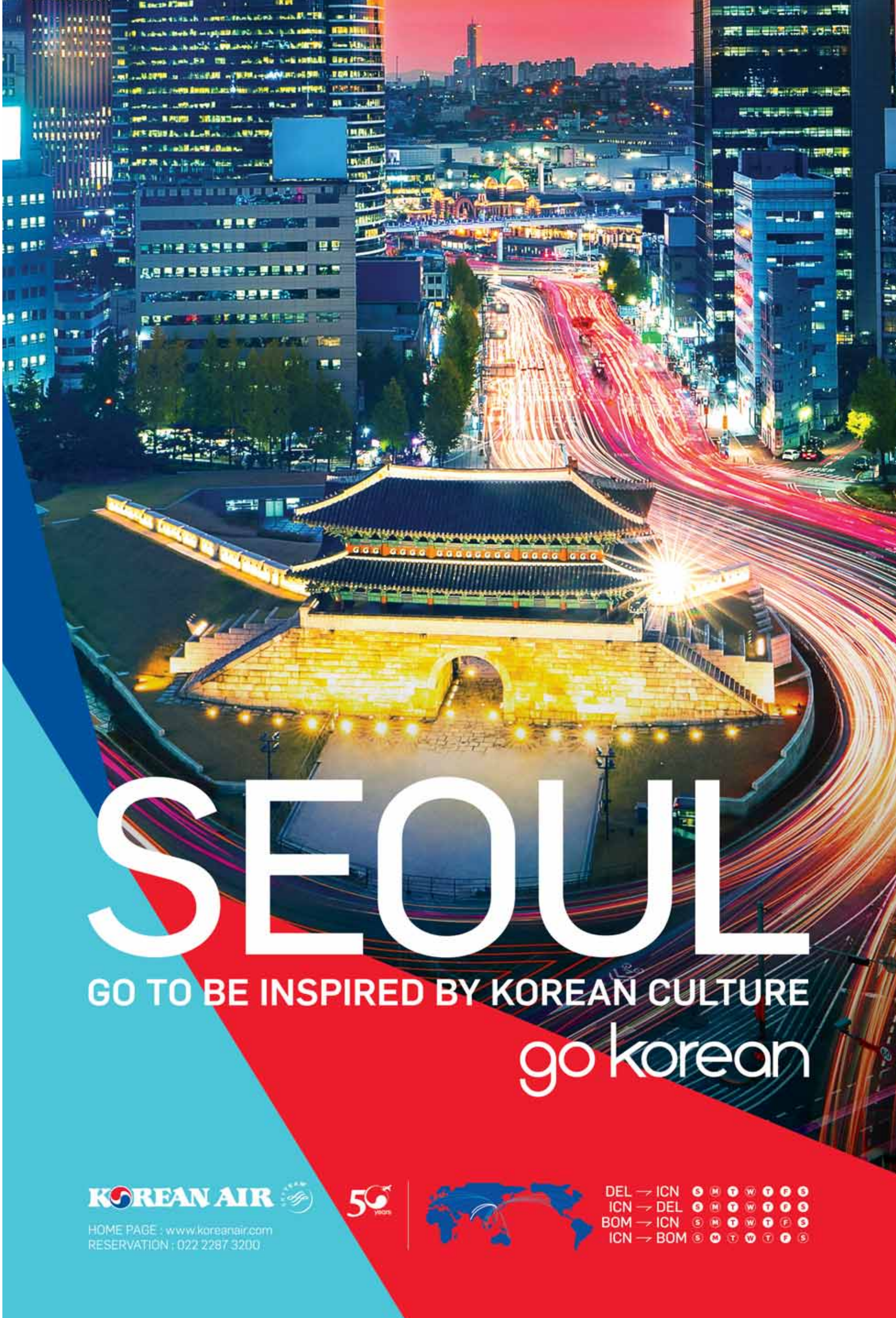
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How technology impacts aviation

Senior executives in Indian aviation discuss the role of technology in maximising airport capacity to enhance passenger experience at CAPA India Aviation & Airport Summit in Delhi.



Kalpana Lohumi

Having reported more than 50 consecutive months of double-digit traffic growth, India is expected to emerge as the world's third largest aviation market within the next five years. Talking about the changing landscape of airline distribution in India, **Chris Ramm**, Vice President—Asia Pacific, Travelport, says, "Mobile continues to be a top priority for travel brands in 2019. 68 per cent of travel brands including travel agents and travel operators are planning to invest in business intelligence or predictive analytics in 2019 while 92 per cent said that having a mobile strategy is critical to the success of their organisation. 84 per cent of travel brands intend to

increase their investment in mobile in 2019."

Ramm further stated that India has the most digitally-advanced travellers in the world according to a Travelport research. He mentioned, "New Distribution Capability (NDC) programme is open to any third party, intermediary, IT provider or non-IATA member and it allows an improved capability for airlines to retail and improved ability to distribute new products and services to the indirect channel."

On how IATA NDC is impacting the airline distribution landscape in India, **Meenakshi Malik**, Executive Director—Commercial, Air India, is also hopeful for the airline being NDC-certified by IATA. Malik, adds, "Today distribution channels are



Chris Ramm



Meenakshi Malik



William Boulter



Samyukth Sridharan

shifting their focus towards passengers. Earlier, airlines used to decide and we had a GPS selection and now the whole process evolves around what the passenger needs. Under the Udaan scheme, we have started aircrafts flying from remote areas. With the lot of technology coming in, things have become more user-friendly and approachable. The end-user has become

the king now and pushing an airline to make the changes and move forward."

Agreeing on how new technologies are impacting airline distribution, **William Boulter**, Chief Commercial Officer, IndiGo, said, "The distribution has changed a lot in 10 years. It is difficult for LCCs to make a success of operating wide bodies

because they are not good at selling premium seats or cargo," he adds.

According to **Samyukth Sridharan**, President & COO, Cleartrip, the change in India is predominantly driven by customer adoption of technology. "With a need to deliver the best to customers, we specifically focus on how customers are increasingly heading towards

more technology. The next thing should be when consumers start searching flights through voice. We need to think about how we can leverage technology to deliver simple solutions end-to-end," he said.

Agreeing on voice-activated booking technology, Malik adds, "It could be great for stimulating travel from the hinterland of India, where people may not be literate, but they are mobile-savvy."

Raj Sivakumar, SVP Network & Revenue Management, Jet Airways, shares, "With airlines as the supplier and GDS as aggregator and other platforms such as travel management companies and OTAs, it's a complex ecosystem. We need to find some way of increasing the productivity." 🐦

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CAD 390 Per Person*

Luxury Rockies Self-Drive 5 Nights / 6 Days

01 May to 14 May : CAD 1240 Per Person*

15 May to 14 Oct : CAD 1870 Per Person*

2N Fairmont Banff Springs • 1N Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise • 2N Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge

Add:

05 Breakfast

CAD 230 Per Person*

06 Days Self-Drive (Pick-up Calgary Airport/Drop-off Edmonton Airport)

CAD 480 Per Sedan*

Attractions (Banff Gondola, Ice Explorer Ride, Glacier SkyWalk)

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Expedia® lures B2B segment

This year, Expedia will look to achieve a stronger foothold in the B2B segment by launching new programmes and cash-based commission structures for agents.



TT Bureau

For Expedia, 2018 was a good year! The online travel portal was able to meet all goals it had set for the year. Shiraz Khan, Sales Manager—India, Expedia, says, “We have achieved everything we

decided to. The hierarchy structure and market performance went as planned. Going forward, we are targeting agents from all Tier-I, II, and III cities, who are seeking expansion. Agents can explore their options with Expedia’s direct inventories and enjoy the best

commissions in the world.”

Khan says that Expedia has teams sitting in all markets to assist agents. “Our management also involves itself and we have direct customer support from Expedia for the agents. However, our best

offering is the commission. Agents don’t need to remind us, they get them automatically with discounted prices. Hence, where they earn four to five per cent from other B2B systems, we are giving them at least 12 per cent altogether,” he says. What ben-

efits the agents, Khan adds, is that all commissions come directly from Singapore. “The agents are quite happy about that because nothing gets delayed. We give our commitment that we will provide the commission within 25 days from the check-in date, and it

comes as scheduled,” he claims.

Expedia also offers an affiliate programme to the travel trade. “We have this affiliate programme for the B2B segment. Earlier, Expedia was only delivering to end users. With this programme, we are catering to the B2B segment as well.”

For promotion and marketing, they are participating in travel shows and reaching out to agents in several ways. “We are distributing collaterals,



Shiraz Khan
Sales Manager—India
Expedia

movie tickets, raising commissions, and have also put special conditions in place, within the system, where we increase the commissions for those who achieve or go beyond a certain level. We are running close to seven promotional themes,” shares Khan.

Khan says that when it comes to the North, Expedia is doing well in Delhi, Haryana, and Punjab. In the West, it’s performing well in Mumbai and in the East, it has good presence in Bengal. In the South, Expedia is present in Chennai and Bengaluru. The portal is now expanding its roots with a view to capturing smaller cities in the next two to three months. 📍

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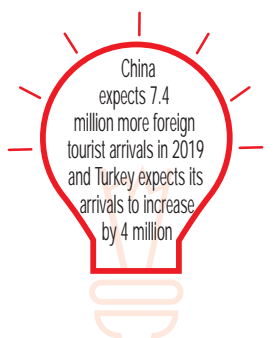
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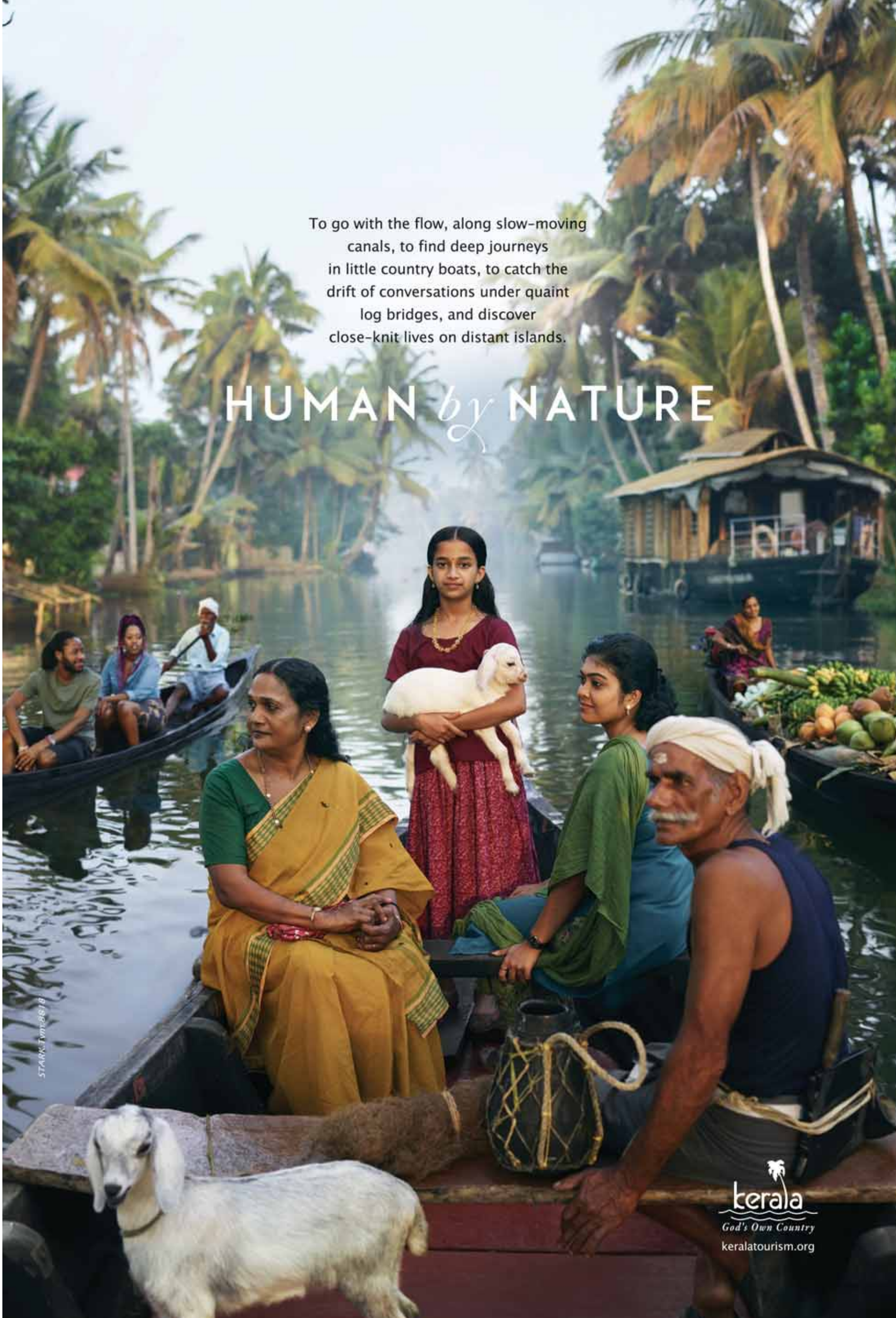
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New resort in Maldives

The Residence by Cenizaro Hotels & Resorts conducted a three-city sales mission to announce its 173 only-villa resort – The Residence Maldives at Dhigurah – scheduled to open by June 1, 2019.



Hazel Jain

Singapore-based The Residence by Cenizaro Hotels & Resorts recently conducted a three-city sales mission, starting with Mumbai, Delhi and concluding in Chennai to promote its resorts as well as new offerings to the India market. Leading the two-member delegation was **Wendy Mok**, Director, Marketing for Asia Pacific, The Residence Maldives & The Residence Bintan, who was in India to announce the new resort – The Residence Maldives at Dhigurah – scheduled to open by June 1, 2019. The 173 only-villa resort is connected to its other property – The Residence Maldives at Fahlumaafushi – via a bridge and is at a walking distance.

Mok is also promoting its resort in Bintan which is now a year old and well-known in the India market. She said, "This is a new market for us and we have started receiving a lot of inquiries for families mainly due to affordability of the airfare for the entire family and accessibility from India. So we are happy to expand our client base. To cater to this segment, we have activities for children as well." She adds that the resort in Maldives also allows guests to use drones since the property is slightly away from the airport with no neighbours close by.

Meanwhile, the new property The Residence Maldives at Dhigurah has 173 villas with a private pool in every villa. "We always tell our agent partners to suggest their clients for three or four or five nights. And we even see the market going beyond five nights sometimes from India. We are looking at attracting honeymooners, families, and corporates of small groups like 10-20 people. We aren't equipped for big weddings but it will be a perfect destination for family events like anniversaries, birthdays, etc," Mok adds.

Anjum Lokhandwala, Founder & Director, Outbound Konnections, that promotes The Residence in India, adds, "We have Indian chefs at all our

properties. In fact, we recently had guests from Gujarat who were extremely happy with the food served to them. We are promoting a four-night package for Maldives right now

which includes two nights in one property and two nights in another property. This package with split-stay will allow guests to have an option of staying at both properties."







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It's business as usual at ITB Berlin

The announcement of the inaugural ITB India in 2020 in Mumbai got the better of travel trade at ITB Berlin 2019. India's strong presence of around 355 exhibitors this year reinstates the importance of international fairs and the growing importance of the European market for India.



Karishma Khanna & Harshal Ashar from Berlin



Deepak Bhatnagar
Managing Director
Aamantran Travels

“I think we really need to reconsider as there are no new buyers at all. There are not too many people this year in ITB. The show looks relatively slow this time. About 80 per cent of my meetings are with partners working with us while the rest are the new ones. My main objective is to try and meet atleast 5 to 10 per cent of new clientele every year—whether we are able to convince them to sell India is secondary. There has to be more participation of the Indian travel trade at these exhibitions to receive better footfalls at the India stand.”



Debasish Bhowmick
Senior Vice President
Hotel Clarks Shiraz

“We attend ITB Berlin with a lot of expectations and everyone wants to have new accounts added. It looks like the representation everywhere is quite good. But I sincerely hope to see the participation of more state tourism boards at these platforms. That is exactly how destinations get marketed — through presence at international exhibitions and conducting roadshows. These shows are always more about relationship management where you meet a lot of people under one roof. Since these marts are attended by people coming from every nook and corner of the world, platforms such as these keep one updated on trends that are prevalent at a particular time.”



Ankush Nijhawan
Managing Director
Nijhawan Group

“ITB was at least 3x for us this year versus 2017 & 2018 for a simple reason of our expansion in Europe. Today we are covering countries starting right from Russia to the CIS and right up to the UK. This demonstrates our commitment to this market and our preoccupation with both our supply as well as our demand in this market. The footfall was far higher this year because I think we are gaining popularity here now. The brand is being known to people so they are looking for us now rather than us standing and waiting for people to come. ITB Berlin is a fabulous show. The weather has been kind and I hope the exhibition becomes bigger next year too.”

“I have been attending ITB every year since the past five years and it definitely is one of the best trade shows. Being in the PR, Marketing & Representation business, ITB is a show where you meet with current partners and make new international trade friends. The show gives one a lot of insights into new destinations through different educative forums. I need to point out that that events such as these are increasingly becoming an opportunity for networking. We do have certain objectives when we come here and we work towards it. Exciting times for ITB ahead with its inaugural show in India in 2020!”



Pranav Kapadia
Founder & Director
Global Destinations

“Proper planning and right appointments are necessary to meet potential FTOs. The speed networking sessions are extremely useful. It totally depends on us on how to leverage the strength of ITB. It is like an elephant, so you have to train them how to lift the timber otherwise you will just stand. ITB has grown significantly over the years with technological advancements and several workshops. You can really listen to what is happening around the world. A lot of focus is laid on experience-based travel. We should have new stories to tell and differentiate our products from others. As a country, we have everything for every type of traveller.”



Dileep Kumar P I
General Manager
The Leela Raviz Kovalam

“ITB Berlin is a golden opportunity for us to meet our customers in the European market. Apart from that, several innovative companies mark their presence here to represent their solutions, thereby giving us an opportunity to explore the trends in travel technology. The meetings have been more productive this year. A lot of new exhibitors showcased their products at the exhibition. We are constantly adding new partners, new suppliers, new hotels as well as new customers, especially because Europe is a new market for us. It is a good opportunity to meet all of them at one place.”



Gaurav Bhatnagar
Co-Founder
TBO Group



Satyajit Desai
Head—Inbound &
Domestic, Kesari Tours

“This year ITB Berlin took place just after the tragic Pulwama attack. Indian tourism bears the brunt of such attacks or unfortunate incidents in the country. Foreign tour operators who visited us on the first day enquired about safety and security concerns in India. All Indian exhibitors and supporting teams joined hands in showing solidarity in these challenging times and immediately spread a word of assurance whilst also addressing the local media. We recorded almost 37 per cent more visitors at our Kesari inbound stall as we launched new products and offbeat destinations for discerning travellers.”



Gaurav Chiripal
Chief Executive Officer
Quadlabs

“The show started off at a slow pace but we were successful in concluding our meetings during the show. New players in the market attract us towards this ITB Berlin but it's more about meeting our existing partners who we get to meet here every year. Getting the right audience at such shows is extremely important. That is what is missing currently as a result of which it has become monotonous. A travel agent would find this platform a perfect opportunity but somebody who specialises in technology is looking for larger customers or customers who are real in the market to explore the field.”



Karthik Venkatraman
Senior Vice President
Ezeego1

“The experience this year at ITB has been phenomenal. We received an excellent response for our content solutions and platform. We got customers and prospects from across the globe that was not just restricted to Europe. A lot of existing as well as new leads have been generated at this edition of ITB Berlin. We now aim to convert all the new prospects into good business from existing as well as new clients. Not only our current clients but also new prospects visiting us especially from APAC markets has been very encouraging.”

“The exhibition helps us to open doors to build new relationships and helps us to work on relationships that are already established. We had a good number of meetings at this year's edition of ITB Berlin as well as interacted with a few new agents. In fact, they are coming through principal agents from Delhi only. We are here for creating awareness about our properties. One has to know the fair well to make the most of it. Next year I am planning to come up with my own stall. It's good to work under the Rajasthan banner but you don't really get an extensive exposure. ITB is one of the most important travel trade shows that we look forward to participating in every year.”



Naresh Arora
Founder & CEO, Truly India
Hotels & Resorts

“As a first-time attendee to ITB Berlin, I found the travel trade show well organised. Everything was thought of and prepared for which makes attendees at the event be at ease and be able to explore and experience the different showcases the event had to offer. As an exhibitor, I was glad to present JA Manafaru Maldives to not just the people of Berlin but to people from across the world. The exhibition also gave me an opportunity to meet with our existing partners with whom we have longstanding and fruitful relationships. I also had the chance to meet with new partners with whom I hope I can establish mutually beneficial partnerships in the future.”



Alexander Kharabadze
Director of Sales &
Marketing, JA Manafaru

“ITB is without doubt the largest and most relevant international travel trade event. The main objective for me is always to meet with my existing partners and network with potential new ones not only from Germany and Western Europe but also for establishing relationships from eastern, Central European and other emerging markets. To that end, ITB this year delivered splendidly. I also believe there was wider participation from international companies this year, giving access to a larger audience and therefore justifying our attendance.”



Savio Pereira
Director, Benchmark Travel
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Pitching for policy changes

Voicing opinions on executing and implementing policy changes to bring about changes in the industry, winners of India Travel Awards and India MiCE Awards put forward their suggestions to the government.



Best Debut Hotel
Aloft New Delhi Aerocity

“According to Suman Gahlot, General Manager, Aloft New Delhi Aerocity, the government should provide tax relief to hoteliers. “GST should be reduced to 10-12 per cent of special rates charged currently. They should also be a two-price level based taxation structure. (₹ 7499 and above ₹ 7500).” She also voiced for improved infrastructure for better connectivity within Delhi and to the Golden Triangle region connecting Agra and Jaipur at a faster pace. She said that the industry needs to explore the unexplored and offer new destinations to travellers.



Best Sports Tourism Company
Greynomad

“Raunak Jana, CEO, Greynomad, feels that the government should welcome start-ups with tax holidays. “Promoting start-ups in the industry will be a welcome step. They should provide tax benefits to the new companies so that they can sustain and grow in a healthy environment. Tax incentives for the existing and upcoming ventures will be highly appreciated by the tourism fraternity. Also, special incentives for Lower Income Groups (LIG) and specially-abled people should be provided by the government in the industry,” he said.



Best Debut Business Hotel
Fern Goregaon, Mumbai

“Sujith Gopinath, General Manager, The Fern Goregaon, Mumbai addresses the need to make travel more affordable, improve infrastructure and ensure availability of resources for all segments of the society. “Augmenting tourism infrastructure, easing of visa regime, assurance of quality standards in services of tourism service providers, projecting the country as a year-round destination, promoting sustainable tourism, etc. are some of the policy areas which need to be constantly worked upon to facilitate tourism in India,” he said.



Best Tour Operator — Outbound
SK Tours & Travels

“For Salil Karulkar, Founder, SK Tours & Travels, reforms in the current tax structure is the primary need of the industry. “GST has been harsh to travel agents. The government needs to reduce the GST rates and tax must be charged on the total package excluding the flight ticket. Since flight ticket comes inclusive of GST, it does not make any point to pay tax again on the total package. This is the policy that requires change. The government should also control, regulate and cap the flight ticket fare in case of increased demand and low supply-like situation,” he said.



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Business flyers on United, rejoice!

United Airlines will add more than 1,600 United Polaris Business Class and United First seats to nearly 250 international and domestic aircraft. **Harvinder Singh**, Country Manager— India, United Airlines, shares more.



Kalpna Lohumi

Q Which United planes have the new Polaris seats?

United Polaris is a reinvention of our international premium cabin travel experience, offering enhanced comfort

and service from the lounge to landing. Our customers here in India can enjoy the new Polaris seat on board United's Mumbai-New York/Newark service, operated by our newest aircraft Boeing 777-300ER. With an aim to provide international travellers better sleep in the sky, United Polaris features exclusive United Polaris lounges with new rest spaces and high-end pre-flight dining options; a custom-designed personal onboard suite with added privacy, comfort and convenience; sleep-focused amenities and reimagined dining options.

Q How many more United Polaris Business Class and United First seats are added to aircraft?

Currently, we have 50 aircraft with Polaris seating and on an average, United plans to add one aircraft with the new

will revolutionise the regional flying experience by introducing the two-cabin, 50-seat Bombardier CRJ 550 aircraft to its fleet, offering customers on key regional routes more leg-room, storage and amenities than any other 50-seat regional aircraft operating today.

to the existing daily year-round services from Mumbai and Delhi to New York/Newark. The new flight will further strengthen our international route network and provide our customers from India with even greater travel choice, with connections from San Francisco to other destinations across the US and Canada. Connecting the Indian capital to the US west coast opens new opportunities for both business and leisure travellers.

to destinations throughout the Americas.

Q What makes United popular among Indian flyers?

We offer over 90 non-stop connections from New York/Newark to other destinations across the US, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean for our Indian customers. The airlines' newest premium seating, United Premium Plus is now on sale for travel on select international flights including our Mumbai-New York/Newark service, starting March 30, 2019. Customers travelling in United Premium Plus will enjoy an elevated travel experience before their flight even leaves the ground. United's flights to and from India feature special products and services specifically for Indian customers, including Hindi-language, subtitled movies and Indian audio entertainment." 

Q How profitable is the India market for the airline?

We have carried over three million customers on more than 14,000 flights between India and the US over the past decade. Our services not only offer direct access to New York but also an unparalleled network of onward connections via Newark Liberty International Airport

Q Are you planning to expand the network in India?

We will introduce a new daily non-stop seasonal service between Delhi and San Francisco starting December 7, 2019 – subject to government approval. The new route will be United's third daily non-stop service from India in addition

“We will introduce a daily non-stop seasonal service between Delhi and San Francisco starting December 7, 2019 to provide customers with greater travel choice”

United Polaris Business Class seat every 10 days from now through to 2020. The airline recently announced the next step in its commitment to making customers more comfortable by adding more than 1,600 United Polaris Business Class and United First seats to nearly 250 international and domestic aircraft. Additionally, United



Work and play come together

The 'Radisson Hotel Group – Champions Trophy' cricket tournament was recently organised in Mumbai for third party MiCE and leisure accounts. The inaugural ceremony was conducted in the presence of **Zubin Saxena**, CEO, Radisson Hotel Group India. The hotel partnered with some of the leading global airlines and DMCs for the event.



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Agents crack deals at



Around 355 exhibitors from India set the ball rolling at ITB Berlin 2019. The exhibition witnessed some serious B2B meetings and interactions that helped in generating leads and business for both the buyers and exhibitors.



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EVENT TALK

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APRIL 2019

Dubai Tourism Roadshow	Bengaluru	1
TAT Luxury Roadshow	Bengaluru	2
WTM Latin America	São Paulo	2-4
Dubai Tourism Roadshow	Kochi	3
Hotel Investment Conference South-Asia (HICSA)	Mumbai	3-4
WTTC Global Summit	Seville, Spain	3-4
TAT Luxury Roadshow	Mumbai	4
AITF	Baku, Azerbaijan	4-6
Dubai Tourism Roadshow	Chennai	5
The Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE)	Perth	6-9
ACTE Global Summit	Chicago	7-9
ILTM Africa	Cape Town	7-9
International Travel Roadshow (ITR)	Delhi	8
Digital Travel Summit	California	8-10
Karnataka Tourism Roadshow	Delhi	9
International Travel Roadshow (ITR)	Pune	9
Karnataka Tourism Roadshow	Lucknow	10
IBTM Africa	Cape Town	10
WTM Africa	Cape Town	10-12
Harbour Plaza Hotels & Resorts Roadshow	Delhi	11
Korea Tourism Travel Mart	Mumbai	12
Travel Luxury Show	Mumbai	13-14
Asian Destinations Expo 2019	Cambodia	13-15
Incredible India roadshow	Sydney	15
COTTM	Beijing	15-17
Incredible India roadshow	Melbourne	16
KITF	Almaty	17-19
Asian Destinations Expo 2019	Laos	17-19
Incredible India roadshow	Auckland	18
Asian Destinations Expo 2019	Vietnam	21-24
Asian Destinations Expo 2019	Thailand	26-29
Indian Golf and Turf Expo	Delhi	26-27
Great Indian Travel Bazaar (GITB)	Jaipur	28-30
ILTM Arabia	Dubai	28-29
Arabian Travel Market	Dubai	28-May 1

MAY 2019

Azerbaijan Tourism Roadshow	Bengaluru	6
Africa's Travel Indaba	Durban	6-9
Azerbaijan Tourism Roadshow	Mumbai	8
PATA Annual Summit 2019	Cebu, Philippines	9-12
Azerbaijan Tourism Roadshow	Delhi	10
Germany Travel Mart	Wiesbaden	12-14
ILTM Latin America	Sao Paulo	14-17
ITB China	Shanghai	15-17
IMEX	Frankfurt	21-23
ILTM Asia Pacific	Singapore	27-30
India Travel Awards- South	Chennai	27
Oman Tourism Roadshow	Bengaluru	27
Oman Tourism Roadshow	Pune	29
IBTM Americas	Mexico City	29-30
Oman Tourism Roadshow	Mumbai	31

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

New team with renewed vision

► Contd from page 3

He adds, "We work in very fragile areas of the country including the borders and green areas and we want to educate the new joiners on the same."

This is the first time two EC members have been elected from South India. The ATOAI team aims to take the association to new heights and get international recognition. The office bearers will endeavour to resolve issues that have been plaguing adventure tourism in the country. The objective is to have more like-minded people to come



Capt Swadesh Kumar
Managing Director
Shikhar Travels India

together and place India on the world map for various adventure tourism activities.

For the next two years, the focus will be on major industry issues such as client safety,

clean environment, quality control, trained adventure guides, educational seminars for training of outdoor staff in first aid and promoting sustainable adventure tourism.

Kumar wants the government to accept adventure tourism as an independent product. "We need to be segregated from niche tourism label to an independent segment under the Ministry of Tourism."

Addressing the challenges in the industry, he said, "Satellite phones are a necessary instrument required for any

adventure activity in the country. Unfortunately, the use of sat phones is not permitted in India. We have been struggling for the same for the last eight to nine years. Sat phones must be easily available to us."

Another drawback, he mentioned, was to obtain 'X' mountaineering visa for mountain climbing. "There are restrictions for tourists visiting certain mountain peaks. The rule stating that you can trek anywhere but cannot climb a peak, needs to change," Kumar shared. 📌

OBITUARY

Trade pays tribute to Praveen Chugh



Travel industry veteran **Praveen Chugh** passed away in Delhi on March 26, 2019 after suffering a massive heart attack. He was serving as the President of Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) and was also the Chairman of World Travel Agents Association Alliance (WTAAA). Chugh recently became the COO of Agency Sales for Via.com by EbixCash. He is survived by two daughters. Known for his guidance and expertise in ticketing, service tax and GST, he has represented Indian travel industry at various international forums time and again.

Subhash Goyal, Secretary General, FAITH, said, "My relationship with Praveen Chugh started ever since he joined TAFI, and he took it to great heights. He started his company Travel Services International (TSI) from scratch and made it one of the most successful companies in India. He was immensely helpful during the first-ever India Tourism Mart (ITM) 2018. He contributed a lot to the industry, especially with service tax and GST matters. He educated and guided the industry and worked on agent commissions along with TAAI and other industry organisations. It is a very sad moment for the industry and a personal loss for me as he was a dear friend."

Grieving the loss, **Pradip Lulla**, Vice President, TAFI, commented, "TAFI mourns the sudden loss of our dynamic and visionary leader. He led us to great heights. Our prayers for his soul to rest in eternal peace."

Commenting on the tragic news, **Zakir Ahmed**, Immediate Past President, TAFI, said, "I was very fortunate to serve TAFI for three terms as President, but more fortunate to have Praveen beside me for as Vice President. I always looked up to him for any advice. We worked closely on a lot of issues for more than 20 years. He played a significant role in building the association with his clear vision and ideas. Little did I know that dropping him at Mumbai airport would be the last time I'd see him."

OBITUARY

Travel & tourism legend passes away



Sherif Salman, Chairman, Sherif Travel & Cargo Services, breathed his last on March 18. Having taken over the reins of the company from his father, Salman started his job in the company as a cashier before venturing into sales and marketing. He then went on to lead the company to new heights on which the company continues to grow till date. Sherif Travel and Cargo Services has been awarded the highest revenue contributors by British Airways, Lufthansa, Air India, Singapore Airlines and Cathay Pacific. From Chennai, he expanded the company, developing a strong PAN India network and has been instrumental in growing the tourism industry over the years. He was conferred the Gallery of Legends trophy at the India Travel Awards South. Salman is survived by his wife and son.

OBITUARY

Mohammad Kaleem

(August 24, 1988-February 27, 2019)

Om Tourism regrets to announce the passing away of its colleague, **Mohammad Kaleem** on February 27, 2019 at a very young age of 30 years. He worked as Trade Sales Manager, Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority—India. He is survived by his wife and son. Om Tourism deeply mourns his sudden demise. Kaleem will be fondly remembered forever as an integral part of the organisation's team.



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IATA Agents Association of India

Kochi

The IATA Agents Association of India (IAAI) has appointed **Manu T G Nair**, Managing Director, Forv Holidays & Travel, Thiruvananthapuram, as the National Director at its National Management Committee Meeting held in Vijayawada. He has been serving the association in various positions since its early days. He was the President of the Kerala State Unit for the last two years. His appointment as the National Director is in recognition of his exemplary services to the association in specific and to the trade at large.



Holiday Inn Mumbai International Airport

Mumbai

Holiday Inn Mumbai International Airport announced the appointment of **Sharad K Upadhyay** as its new General Manager. With over 20 years of experience across a broad spectrum of hospitality functions, Upadhyay holds specialisation in hotel operations with an avid interest in food and beverage as well as in sales and marketing. In his new role, he will spearhead the business operations, overall implementation and business development at Holiday Inn Mumbai, ensuring its growth and expansion through innovative strategies.



Crowne Plaza New Delhi Rohini

Delhi

Amit Rana has been designated as General Manager of Crowne Plaza New Delhi Rohini. With an experience of more than two decades in the hospitality industry, Rana brings with him an expertise of managing luxury and business properties in India, Middle East and Australia. He has an experience in revenue management, new hotel openings and hotel operations along with implementation of strong sales and marketing strategies. During the course of his career, he has been associated with brands like InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), Marriott and Hilton.



Courtyard by Marriott, Siliguri

Siliguri

Rohit Bajpai has been appointed as the Hotel Manager of Courtyard by Marriott, Siliguri. In his current role, Bajpai will be overseeing all aspects of operational and strategic management of the 17th 'Courtyard by Marriott' branded property to open in South Asia. He has been a General Manager with international and domestic brands like Hilton, Radisson and Royal Orchid. Over the years, he has gained invaluable F&B expertise through a variety of luxury brands like ITC Hotels & Shangri-la, operating renowned outlets like Dum Pukht, Bukhara and Peshawri.



Fairfield by Marriott Pune Kharadi

Pune

Fairfield by Marriott Pune Kharadi has appointed **Vrushali V Kummar** as its new Director of Sales. A vivid communicator, she will be crucial for the development and implementation of business strategies for the hotel. With 18 years of international brand experience, Kummar holds strong knowledge of global practices in hospitality and has a long history of successes in the generation of new accounts, sales structure improvement, market share growth in existing accounts and enhanced catering revenues clubbed with ROI in marketing communications, revenue management and e-commerce.



Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield

Bengaluru

Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield announced the appointment of **Deepreet Bindra** as the Director of Operations. Bindra brings with him over 14 years of expertise in the service industry which will aid in boosting the hotel's proficient operations to even greater heights. In his new role, he will oversee hotel operations and aims to focus on creating experiences for both resident and non-resident guests. He served Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield as the Director of Sales and Marketing for more than two years and through his diverse management styles and guest service, he has showcased an ability to build strong relationships.



The Fern Kesarval Hotel & Spa, Verna Plateau-Goa

Goa

Amit Mathuri has joined as Operations Manager at The Fern Kesarval Hotel & Spa, Verna Plateau-Goa. His expertise lies in maintaining service standards along with achieving customer satisfaction through his team. His strength lies in planning and organising hotel operations and ensuring standard operating procedures. Prior to this, he was working with The Fern, Goregaon-Mumbai. Mathuri is known for his high energy level, overall management skills and leadership.



Viola Beacon Resort, Lonavala

Mumbai

Vidyasagar Pandey has joined as Operations Manager at Viola Beacon Hotel Resort, Lonavala. Prior to this, he was associated with The Fern Hillside Resort, Bhimtal (Nainital). Pandey carries over 20 years of experience having worked with many hospitality groups in India. His earlier associations have been with Lords Hotels & Resorts and Sarovar Group of Hotels. He has also worked with Best Western Ranbanka - A Heritage Hotel - Jodhpur, Ambrosia - A Unique Food and Beverage Gallery, and Hotel Kailash Parbat - Lonavala. A hotel management graduate, Pandey carries a rich and diverse experience and has worked under different capacities.



Taiwan Tourism Bureau

Mumbai

Taiwan Tourism Bureau has appointed **Ruden Dias** as its Senior Sales Manager. He will be responsible in handling trade relations and MICE for West and South India. Dias has 20 years of professional experience in travel and tourism. He has worked with airlines such as Jet Airways and Kingfisher Airlines, tourism boards including Tourism Ireland and Canada Tourism Commission, as well as various destination management companies. He is a specialist in sales, travel trade engagements and relationship and destination training.



TALKing People

Dhananjay Kumar, General Manager, The Surya New Delhi, loves to feed birds and look after them. "I love to spend time with my son and take him out for movies. I like to spend time with my leadership team too," he shared. Kumar likes singing and going for Karaoke evenings or sing on online Apps. "My favourite domestic destination is Goa and international destination is Scotland," he said.



Srijan Vadhera, General Manager, Conrad Bengaluru is an avid traveller and enjoys visiting sites of historical and scenic significance. He believes that 'Dreams are woven and ridden in style' and endorses this by being a proud owner of a Harley Davidson Road King. Vadhera also takes great interest in fashion and is a shoe aficionado. He is a devout family man who loves to spend quality time with his 10-year-old daughter constantly guiding her to nurture her athletic and academic poise.

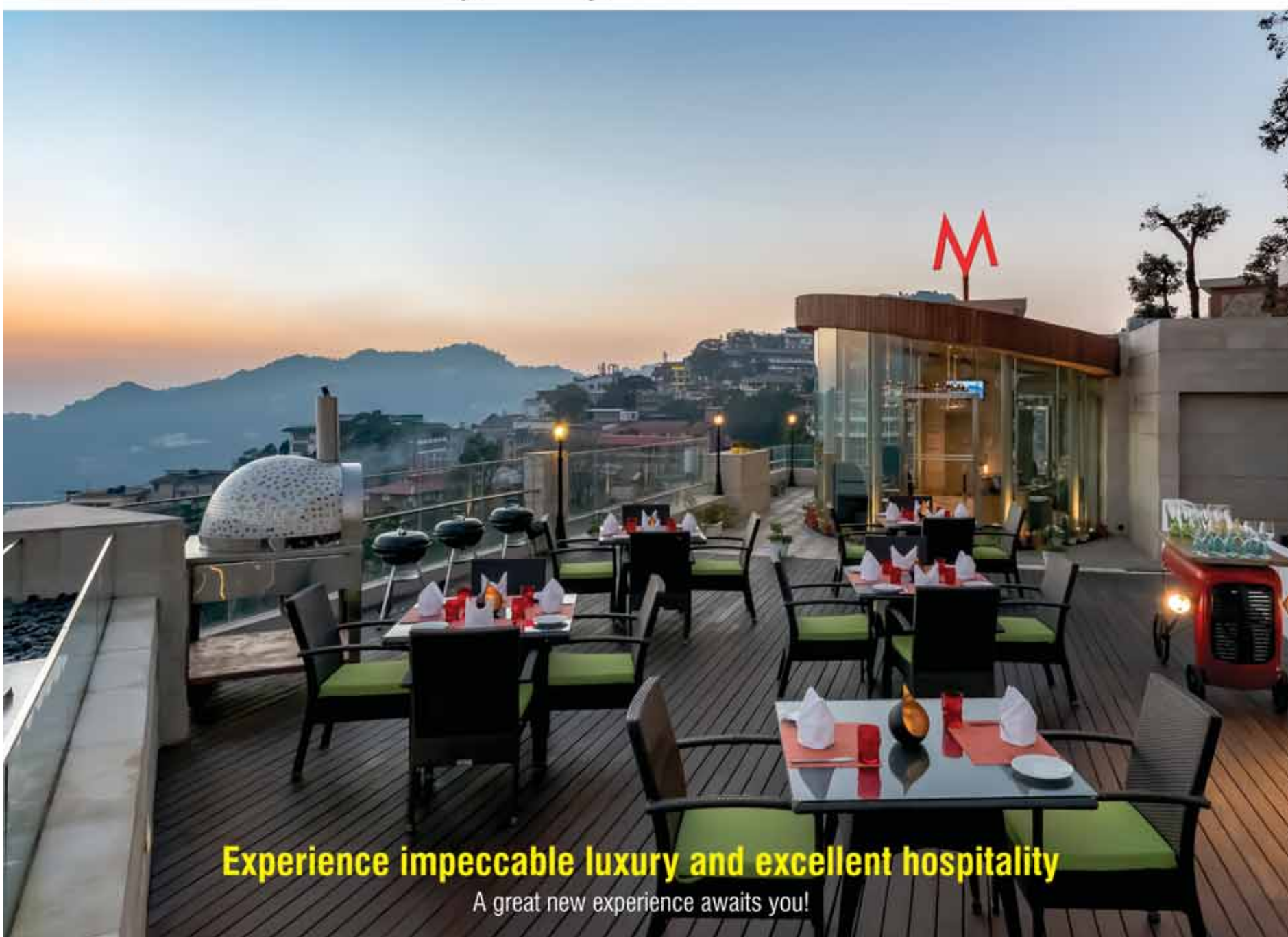


Sweta Mohanty, Wine and Spirits Trainer, Aspri Spirits unwinds by going out with her girlfriends. "We are known as #thetravelingtrio! I am extremely passionate about my work. I also cook a lot when I get the time and I am a home chef promoting Odiya cuisine - something not many know about me," she shared. Mohanty's most memorable holiday moment was when she was on top of the Khardungla Pass at 18,380 feet.





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Travelport buoyant on India

Travelport is completely redefining the way of doing travel business by acting as a bridge between the travel agencies, travel providers, corporations and developers. **Chris Ramm**, Vice President—Asia Pacific, Travelport, shares how NDC is set to be a game changer for aviation.



Nisha Verma

Travelport closed 2018 on a good note as a result of publicly enhanced growth in terms of revenue and management. Chris Ramm, Vice President—Asia Pacific, Travelport, said, "2019 will be a year of change for the industry and not just for Travelport. We are publicly listed on the NYSE, but currently we are in the process of acquisition. However, everything else still remains the same. We have the same relationships with

customers and are working hard to deliver their requirements."

NDC hasn't received much traction in the India market, claimed Ramm. "At Travelport, we have been at the forefront of all the technical developments with regards to NDC. We were the first GDS to have all booking capability, first to have a Level 3-certified agent and the first GDS to make booking with agents in our system," he shared.

Travelport already has connections with airlines that are set to multiply this year. He explained, "2020 is the year when NDC would hit its scale. Then, we have the IATA leader board where 21 carriers are expected to put 20 per cent of their indirect volume via IATA NDC enabled APIs by the end of 2020. With that, one can imagine how much work would happen. One thing that's worth stating is that although those 21 airlines have made

that commitment, there is yet to be an airline from India including some big customers that are potentially missing; we expect them to join suit in the years to come."

Why Indian carriers and agents are still apprehensive about NDC still remains to be figured out. Ramm clarified, stating, "It's not necessarily apprehension. To a certain extent, there is a sanity in waiting, which allows them to see what works instead of being the first in taking a risk. What we have seen till date


He insisted that NDC would bring about changes that would give travel agents access to much more content than before. "If the airlines make available most of the technologies, there is improved sales capabilities. They would still be able to connect through Travelport using one of our systems and

“ We were the first GDS to have an all booking capability, first to have Level 3 certified agent and the first GDS to make booking with agents in our system ”

is that the 20 or 30 airlines that have invested in NDC will probably have some sort of connection in 2019. They all have a slightly different flavour and a slightly different way. We don't yet know which one of those ways is going to be more successful. Hence, the Indian carriers' apprehensions might work very positively for them to see what works and what doesn't, and hopefully they can focus on that when they are ready."

Ancillary products have been at the forefront for the last five to seven years. "Agents clearly have a desire to access the full content offering of an airline and it's really important that they have the ability to book that in a system. It's always been important that we offer the full content available from an airline to an agency, and we've also been working before NDC was at the level it is today," informed Ramm.

have access to the airline content. If the airlines want to provide something that was not available earlier, we can provide it to agents," claimed Ramm.

Ramm listed three trends that guide the travel industry currently. "The penetration of mobiles and use of mobile phones are very high in India as far as the travel booking process is concerned. Around 80 per cent of people surveyed in India said that they use a mobile device to draw inspiration. That's an opportunity for us to tap into to make sure that we make most of that technology. Secondly, voice is leading the way in many other industries. Next, NDC is set to usher in new sales capabilities, potential for personalisation and play a significant role for the future of Travelport," shared Ramm. 



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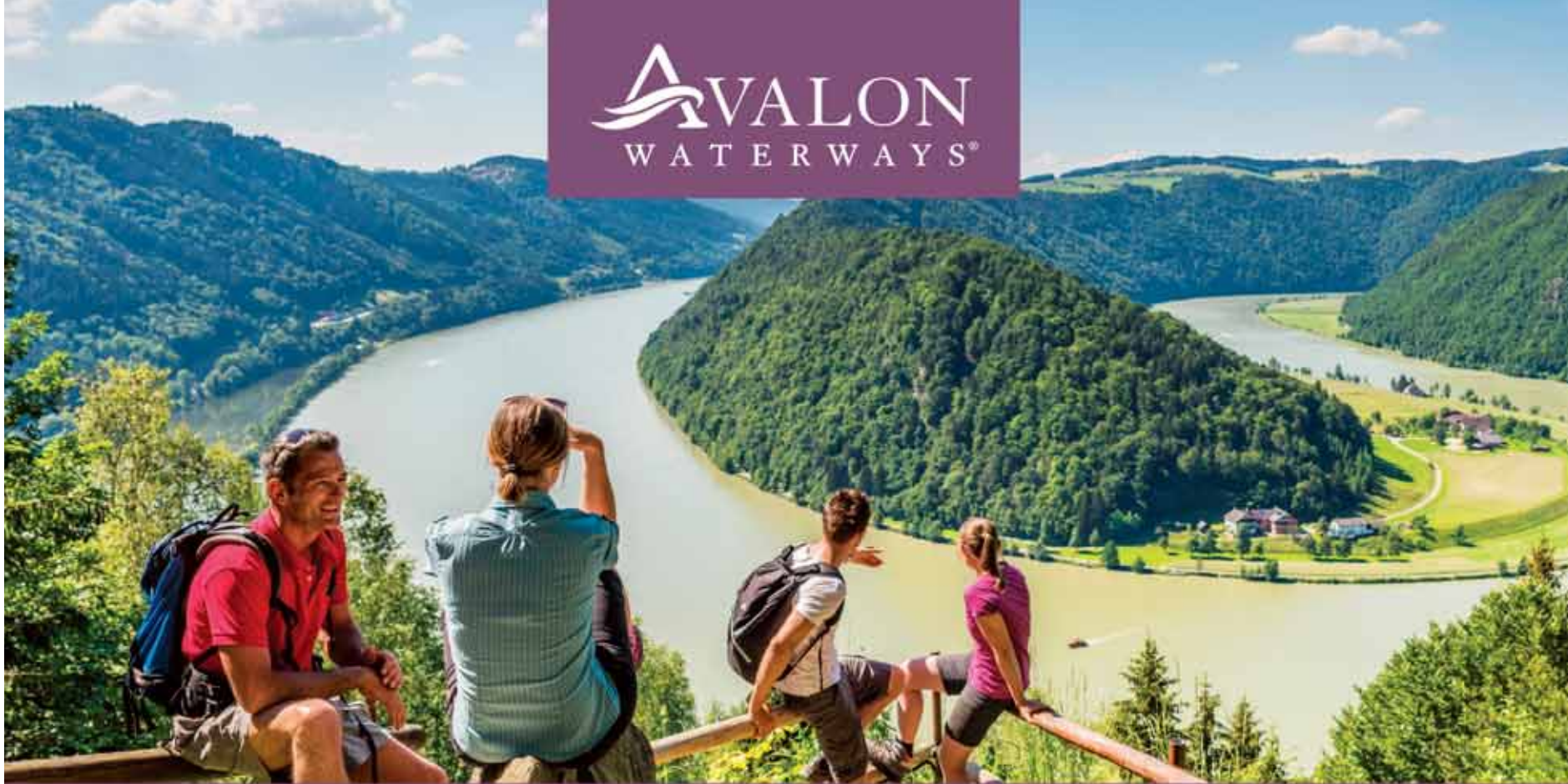
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