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SOUTH ASIA'S LEADING TRAVEL TRADE FORTNIGHTLY

Published from: * India * Middle East





NDIA 2019 from Sep 23-25 OURISM MARTE

India Tourism Mart (ITM) will be held from September 23-25, 2019 at The Ashok, New Delhi, confirmed FAITH. The association expects to shortlist around 500 international buyers for the second edition of the show.



Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH) has finalised the dates for the second edition of India Tourism Mart (ITM). The 2019 edition of the trade show will be held from September 23-25, 2019 at The Ashok, New Delhi, informed Subhash Goyal, Honorary Secretary, FAITH.

Goyal mentioned that the association expects to shortlist around 500 international buy-

ers in this year's ITM. Around 250 buyers attended the show in 2018. "With every detail available online, the selection process is very transparent. Representatives of Ministry of Tourism will be a part of the process. This year, we are not allowing operators who attended the show last year. We are also in the process of appointing an advertising and marketing promotion agency," he mentioned.

Goyal also reiterated that the objective of ITM is to promote inbound tourism to India and help all the medium and small tour operators, who cannot attend large-scale trade shows like WTM London and ITB Berlin, interact with international buyers in their country.

Talking about the preparations for the show, he said, "We have written to all the embassies in Delhi to identify outbound tour operators of the respective countries. Through the Ministry of Tourism, we are also in the process of sending messages to all



Subhash Goyal Honorary Secretary

the overseas offices of the ministry and Indian embassies about the show. We have also

formed a steering committee which is meeting regularly to look after the preparations for the show."

Goyal shared updates from FAITH's board meeting on the association's activities. He informed, "We have finalised a vision for the entire year and are looking forward to hold meetings in all the major states on issues such as GST and others. We are also planning to hold 10 different meetings with 10 different associations

on their respective issues. Finally, we're going to have the mother of conferences around October 2019 where we are trying to get the President of India. The conference will be purely based on pressing issues of the industry."

Stressing on the distinction of ITM as India's only international non-commercial show, he further said that the trade fair is strictly by the industry, for the industry and for the country. 😓

Room supply the by 4% in '19

The supply of rooms is anticipated to grow by 4 per cent and demand by 7 per cent in 2019, according to a recent 'India Hospitality Industry Review 2018' report by HVS ANAROCK.



ver the last two years, hotel supply grew by 3.7 per cent in 2017 and 3.5 per cent in 2018, whilst demand grew by 7 per cent and 6.8 per cent in the respective years. While

both the past years have paved way for strong growth in demand for 2019 driven by strong economic growth in the country, some headwinds in 2019 are expected to dampen the performance turnout for the year.

The first major reason is the country's general election, during which the commercial market, the main stay for hotels in the country, puts on hold all decision making in anticipation of the election results that could potentially have a mate-

rial impact on several policy initiatives of the government. Thankfully though, elections will be held in the summer months when demand in the country is comparatively low. limiting its negative impact on hotel performances. The

second major reason is the impact of new hotel supply that is expected to commence operations in the current year. As per our estimates, 8,574 keys will enter the market in 2019, a nearly 19 per cent rise over the last two years.

With a stellar performance in the first two months of 2019. India recorded a staggering growth of nearly 11 per cent in RevPAR, backed by strong growth in both occupancy and ADR in almost all key demand

Contd on page 6

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To learn more about Aurora Expeditions, please join the Webinar to be held on 25th April, 23th May & 20th June at 3 PM (IST).

For more information and to register for webinar, contact: Exclusive General Sales Agent - India



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ADTOI starts Northeast chapter

The Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI) recently opened its Northeast Chapter in Guwahati. Arijit Purkayastha has been designated as the Chairman of this chapter.

Nisha Verma

With a combined chapter of West Bengal and Northeast earlier, ADTOI now has a separate chapter for the latter, shared PP Khanna. President, ADTOI. The association currently has nine



A seven-member team from ADTOI attended the launch of the chapter, led by Khanna, that included Chetan Gupta, General Secretary; Dalip Gupta, Treasurer; Anil Rajput, Joint Secretary; and Executive Committee members Ashish

Sehgal, Ved Khanna and Vishal Bhatia. Debjit Dutta, West Bengal Chapter Chairman, ADTOI, was also present at the occasion, along with members from the Northeast



Arijit Purkayastha was announced as the Chairman of the Northeast Chapter, Other office bearers were also announced, which included Sazid Subhan, Secretary:

destinations, we expect a rise in the tourist arrivals in all states of the Northeast region. We will be promoting Rongali Festival of Guwahati as well as Hornbill festival of Nagaland through our members around the country. I believe that these festivals, usually organised by tribals from the region, can attract tourists who would like to experience the tribal lifestyle," he said.

We will be promoting Rongali Festival of Guwahati as well as Hornbill festival of Nagaland through our members ""

Sudarshan Khound, Treasurer and Shreya Barbara, Lady Entrepreneur Officer. Khanna assured that ADTOI would provide unstinted support by its members on pan-India basis to promote the northeast region among domestic tourists all the year round. "Powered by improved infrastructure facilities and accessibility to

Arijit Purkayastha, Managing Director, Koyeli Tours, and Chairman designate of the Chapter, assured to put in best efforts to promote the region extensively with the support of the state government. He claimed that his aim would be to connect the tour operators based in various parts of India to those in the Northeast.





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IEWPOIN

Hospitality boom in 2019

After the setback that the hospitality industry faced post demonetisation, GST and liquor ban in 2016-17, the recent HVS ANAROCK study came as a sign of relief for many when it revealed that the average rates grew by approximately 6.25 per cent in 2018. The study recorded that after a long hiatus, the industry-wide ADRs in 2018 grew at a rate faster than long-term inflation rate of 4.5 per cent which indicated that markets are now on a steady path to recovery. In 2018, the industry witnessed an Indiawide RevPAR growth of 9.6 per cent over 2017 to arrive at an absolute RevPAR of 3,927. It was also recorded that in the last two years, the hotel supply grew by 3.7 per cent in 2017 and 3.5 per cent in 2018, whilst demand grew by 7 per cent and 6.8 per cent respectively. This is the reason why international brands continue to invest in India. The most recent entrant will now be the Raffles brand by Accor, which would certainly prove to be a major player in the luxury segment. The study reported that in the past three years international operators are continuing to grow unabated, building larger format of hotels compared to majority of their domestic peers who sign much smaller inventory hotels. In 2018, international hotel operators also signed more hotel keys than their domestic peers.

Is India MiCE ready?

The answer to this question could be a yes as well as a no today. The excitement and the way people are doing business to help make India a thriving MiCE destination is better than ever before. In fact, hubs like Aerocity in Delhi makes one believe that with these many hotel rooms and facilities, handling big groups in India would be a cakewalk. However, this is not true for every city in India. In fact, Delhi itself, while boasting of one of the highest number of rooms in India, is still awaiting the construction of a state-of-the-art convention centre. Cities like Hyderabad with convention centres too are facing infrastructural challenges. We believe that with infrastructure development and ease of moving around, fuelled by increased connectivity within India, the country will establish itself as a MiCE destination.

How AI can help the industry

The travel and tourism industry is betting high on Artificial Intelligence (AI) for 2019. Narayan Mallapur, CEO & Co-Founder, Innowayt, discusses how the foray into deployment of AI is gaining momentum and reckons that the progression will only increase.

The ability of Al would significantly improve customer service and at the same time reduce human intervention, enabling companies to reduce cost in manpower. An example is Heathrow airport in the UK which plans to launch the first end-to-end biometrics bringing facial recognition at each point of the departing (and maybe arriving) passenger's journey. Some of the touch points would be facial recognition at checkin, immigration, baggage drops, security lines and boarding points to create a seamless experience for passengers travelling through Heathrow.

Another exciting and emerging technology in the travel industry is IoT (Internet of Things), involving internet-based interconnectivity between every day devices allowing them to both send and receive data. For instance, hotel rooms can have a single device that connects everything from lights, to ACs to heaters, allowing all to be controlled from one device/place.

Another emerging technology is big data where large companies employ their data collection techniques. One of the most important usage of big data is to improve personalisation, where travel companies can tailor services or products offerings as per individual preferences. Another important user case is analysing business performance in macro as well as to the smallest granular level. An example would be where a hotelier would use big data for their revenue management — using historic room rates and other past trends to better anticipate levels of demand and adjust prices accordingly. When demand is predictable, pricing and strategies for promotions can be optimised to a great extent.

For small, medium and large travel enterprises, customer relationship management (CRM) has become critical and a large number are going in for CRM which enable their team to be highly productive and efficient while servicing the customers'

needs. This brings all the customer data in one place which is critical in customised offering to clients, send personalised greetings on their birthdays and anniversaries, send reminder of passport expiring three months ahead, remind to plan for their annual summer vacation, etc.

We believe we have built something unique in the travel industry — giving a single software for a travel agency to operate their entire business including a strong CRM, and also helping the management in monitoring and controlling by way of MIS and reports to the granular level. Similarly, for travel suppliers like DMCs where they get a system for entering contracts, content, market-wise rates, vendor and inventory management along with a marketplace. Our vision is to provide the best technology and platform for a travel agency and suppliers of any size at an affordable cost, which was earlier available only to large companies.

Innowayt is harnessing the technology to enable the travel ecosystem and ensuring the end customers get a seamless experience. Currently, we are working on Machine Learning which would bring in a better customer servicing by way of chatbots, etc in the near future. It's too early for us for Al and IoT but we are watching this space closely.

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



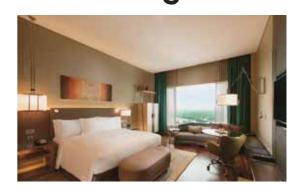
Narayan Mallapur CEO & Co-Founder

ANAROCK: Room for growth

Contd from page 3

segments in the country, the report states. While 2019 performance may be dampened by the election, HVS ANAROCK predicts the tide to change in 2020 as market sentiments recover on the assumption that the country will enter the vear with a stable government and strong economic growth.

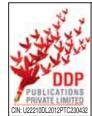
Should the above two parameters squarely line up combined with little new supply expected to open in 2020, experts anticipate the hotel industry to record its highest occupancy ever since the beginning of the century, outpacing 2006, which was recorded as a superlative year for the industry in this metric. 🐓



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APRIL 2^{m0} FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019 TRAVTALK 7

Who're the new globetrotters?

Dubai aims to boost the numbers from India by conducting roadshows and events in Tier II, III cities across the country, as well as through its Dubai Experts programme for agents.





Dubai recorded more than 1.5 million Indian visitors from January to October in 2018. Khalid Al Awar, Manager—India & Pakistan, International Operations, Dubai Tourism, elaborated, "We continue to see growth from this market and have thus travelled to many Tier-II cities in India. We conducted roadshows and events in 11 cities along with almost 20 stakeholders and companies from Dubai ranging from hotels, attractions, DMCs and other companies. We explored markets that have direct connectivity to Dubai

number of women travellers as Dubai is one of the safest destinations in the world. Apart from that, adventure is another growing segment, and travellers from India now look for destinations where they want to indulge in the most challenging activities." On the ease of getting visas for Indians, he mentioned that the new regulations which came into effect last year will be implemented this year. "Visas will be free for two children under the age of 18 travelling with parents. Their visa fee will be waived off for the months

July to September. Also, the new VAT refund policy allows people to claim VAT refund on any purchases they made at the airport as well as at certain points in the city."

The target for tourist arrivals to Dubai was projected at 20

million by 2020 in line with the upcoming Expo 2020. "We will also have a new strategy that looks at 25 million visitors by 2025. Today, the share of the Indian market is in line with the 2017 numbers, where India contributed to 13 per cent of total visitors," claimed Al Awar.

In an effort to keep the numbers growing, Dubai will continue to work very closely with the travel trade. "The Dubai Experts programme that enables agents to be certified as a Dubai Expert, is being pitched in the Indian market too," he said.

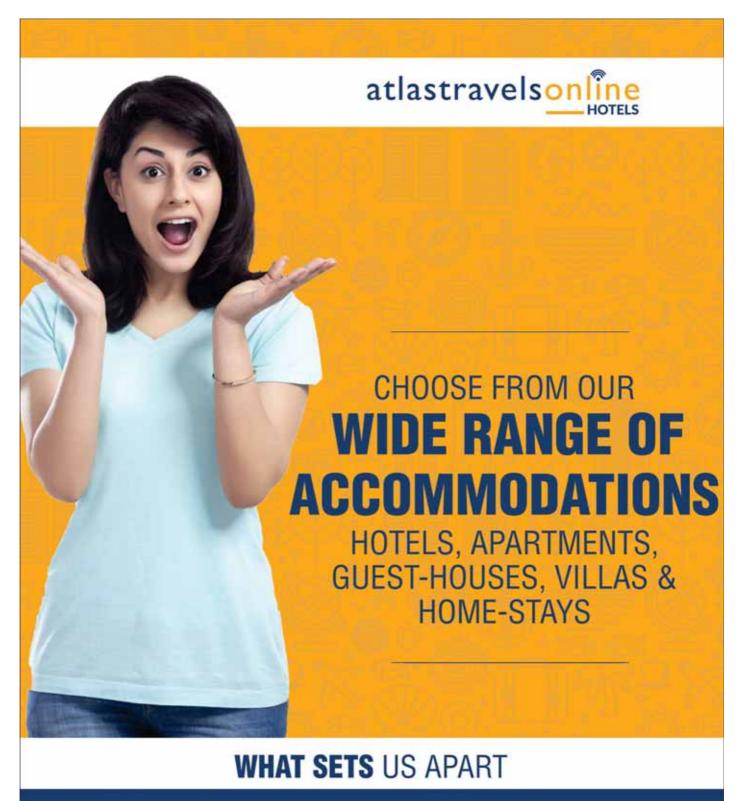


Khalid Al Awar Manager—India & Pakistan International Operations, Dubai Tourism

and have huge potential for growth that have not been explored otherwise. We have gone to cities like Ahmedabad, Pune, Jaipur, Lucknow and we plan to continue doing that for 2019 too."

Sharing more plans for the year, Al Awar is committed on focusing on myriad offerings that Dubai has for every travel segment. "Families are a priority because Dubai offers variety to this segment including theme parks and attractions. Other offerings like gastronomy is also big in Dubai with more than 200 nationalities living in the city, all of which bring their own flavour and cuisine to the emirate. Besides, we have witnessed a significant growth in the





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8 TRAVTALK APRIL 2^M FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019 QUICKBYTES

Splendid isolation vs joint selling

Has the time come for India to move away from the 'stand-alone' tag and align itself with neighbouring countries to attract more tourists or should it continue selling itself the way it is currently doing? Hear it out from agents...

, Inder Raj Ahluwalia



Subhash Goyal Chairman STIC Travel Group

Thanks to its vast size and diversity, India is in the unique position of being successful in selling itself both as a 'stand-alone' destination as well as in alignment with neighbouring countries. Formerly, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka were being sold by most of the tour operators, but the introduction of e-tourist visas that necessitated single entries, hampered this joint country selling.



Capt Swadesh Kuma Managing Director

Joint selling of a destination or activities is always more beneficial because it enables joint marketing efforts and enhances the overall selling power. In earlier days, India and Nepal were sold together for mountain-related visits, but this stopped. Today, while India is marketing and selling itself well as an individual destination, business would get a boost with joint marketing and publicity campaigns.



Rajiv Mehra Vice President, Indian Association of Tour Operators

A country for all seasons and all reasons, India enables visitors to see the world, making it an ideal 'standalone' destination. However, keeping long-term gains in mind, India needs to promote regional tourism. Global trends show that tourists visiting the Indian subcontinent desire to visit neighbouring countries. For this, India has introduced e-tourist visas with multiple

entries, 60-days' stay and 28 entry airports. This enables tourists to return to India after visiting some regional countries.

We should stick to our 'standalone' marketing as we have lots to offer in comparison with our neighbouring countries. There was a time when India used to be the major inbound operating area in the region and the Indian agents used to also sell Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. However, today all these countries are getting direct business and it is no longer routed through India. This is because all FTOs today prefer to



Rajesh Mudgill
Secretary, Indian Association of Tour Operators

This is because all FTOs today prefer to deal with local agents directly rather than through a consolidator One can see this trend even within India.

While India has been an independent tourist destination up until now, the time has come for adapting to current scenarios. Most of the long-haul travellers would like to combine and include two or three countries in a visit. So, it would be more beneficial and rewarding for India as a destination if we take along our neighbours also when doing destination promotions. A few examples that can be considered

are India/Nepal/Bhutan, India/Bangladesh/Myanmar and India/Sri Lanka/Maldives.



Lajpat Rai Chairman cum Managing Director Lotus Trans Travel

As a diversified country, India has enough attractions by itself to visit, and does not need to align itself with its neighbouring countries. The average global tourist is now looking for experiences and a 'story' rather than just a 'point and shoot' tour; each of India's cities and states have so much to offer in terms of heritage, architecture, culture, cuisine and experiences. As of now, the average length of stay of a tourist in India is around 12-15 days and



Sanjeev K Nayar MIH, General Manager WelcomHeritage

tourist in India is around 12-15 days and the secret to increase this is hidden in India's 600,000 villages.



Vijay Thakur President, India Vision Tours & Travels

Considering India's size and enormous tourist products and potential, the country should be selling itself as a 'stand-alone' destination. We don't need to align with any neighbouring country because tourists have now started to move

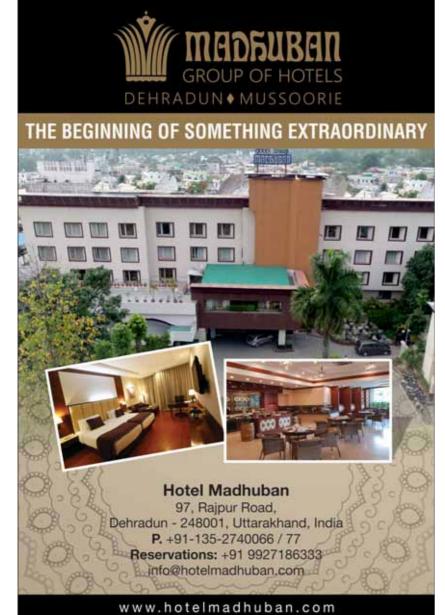
away from the trend of taking three or four-week holidays and are instead taking shorter holiday trips. India offers enough to keep them fully engaged and interested. However, efforts should be made to attract more tourists during the lean months, thereby making India a year-round destination.

India is a great civilisation and tourist product but it lacks global tourism promotion and marketing. India should definitely do joint marketing with neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan,



Chief Executive Office
Trail Blazer Tours

Maldives and Dubai because of their proximity and flight connections to India. Besides India, tour operators are selling all these countries, and this makes sense because it also makes it easier for FTOs to deal with one agent for multiple destinations. The response of joint roadshows is also much better.



Ark Travels makes a big bang!



Ark Travels recently concluded its fourth edition of Big Bang Nautical Fiesta – its biggest cruising event held for the first time on-board Genting Dream ex-Singapore. Organised in alliance with Genting Cruise Lines' Dream Cruises, Ark Travels promoted the three-night sailing from Singapore to destinations line Penang and Langkawi and hosted 400 travel agents from across India. It aims to reach the golden mark of 100,000 passengers by 2020 end.

HOTELS APRIL 2¹⁰⁰ FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019 TRAVTALK 9

The burgeoning events market



The significance of the India market for InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) is reinforced by its annual showcase in the country. Ryan Morris, Director Regional Sales—Middle East, Africa and India, IHG explained, "India is a growing market for all the hotel companies. We bring the world together in India at IHG Showcase so that they can meet local buyers and understand the market requirements. We want to add value to Indian buyers in the market for which it's important for us to get familiarised with their buying habits and thereby get closer

Around 40 hotels from across the world were present at the event held at The Holiday Inn

to the buyers," he said.

With India becoming a chosen destination for MiCE and with increasing globalisation, InterContinental Hotels Group is now set to focus on the MiCE and world! from this market for their properties in the country and outside.

> Aerocity, New Delhi. "Hotels from Europe, Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia as well as some representatives from America participated at the event. People have extensively invested in the market and we always try and get new blood into the market who want to invest in the market. The response has been overwhelming in all the cities, right from Bengaluru, Delhi and Mumbai. Those who want to discover India while wanting the safety associated with the brand, can experience it at multiple properties across the country," said Morris

> Morris emphasised that weddings is a big sector in India. "A lot of outbound travel takes place for Indian weddings because travellers are looking for experiential ways to celebrate

their nuptials that quite often includes new locations. Our banqueting space allows for the typical Indian wedding. However, for outbound weddings, we want to make family travel easy and secure when people are travelling far away. A lot of emphasis is laid on people who support wedding activities," he shared.

being away from home on business and looking for a home away from home. Today, it's not just about comfort but also ease of use, good Wi-Fi, easy check-in, and seamless check-out."

He claimed that IHG has invested in India with a semiownership model. "We have

With a strong growth in MiCE business in 2018, we are looking to achieve the same this year with a double-digit growth ""

Corporate business is one of the mainstays for IHG's business. Morris said, "Corporate isn't just about business travellers but also for a gamut of reasons including product launches, among many others. Corporate is all about people

taken on 10 Holiday Inn Express properties in the market. Our main brand Holiday Inn is also present in India with the Delhi property as our flagship hotel. Crowne Plaza is a growing brand in the market. We have started to work closely

with the owners and give them a great return. We also want to be closer to travellers and develop our product that is fit for the local travellers," he shared.

Setting a robust target in 2019, he said, "We enjoyed strong growth in the corporate and MiCE business in 2018. We are looking to witness the same this year with a double-

digit growth. In fact, here we find ourselves to be always breaking new grounds because as the Indian economy matures, so does the Indian traveller. We have to constantly find new ways to ensure that people enjoy

their stay

us whilst wanting to come back to IHG."



10 TRAVTALK APRIL 2¹¹⁰ FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019

Consider revising your Indonesia itinerary as the country is currently in the process of developing 10 new destinations which can be as popular as Bali.



India ranks second for Indonesia in terms of priority markets after China, according to Dr R Sigit Witjaksono, Director of Tourism Marketing—South & Central Asia, Middle East and Africa, Ministry of Tourism, Republic of Indonesia. "The Indian tourist numbers to Indonesia were close to 500,000 in 2017 and approximately 600,000 in 2018. This year, we are targeting around 800,000 arrivals with the help and cooperation from all related stakeholders like tour operators, travel agents and airlines. We expect to achieve the target by participating in exhibitions and organising roadshows in different Indian cities." he shared.

With many Indians already visiting Bali, Indonesia now wants to promote other destinations too. "We are in



Dr R Sigit Witjaksono Director of Tourism Marketing—South & Central Asia, Middle East and Africa, Minis try of Tourism, Republic of Indonesia

the process of developing 10 new destinations which can be as popular as Bali; for example, Lake Toba in North Sumatra—the only lake with a volcano inside. We also have the biggest Borobudur Buddhist temple in Jakarta and the Hindu Parmanand temple close to that area. Besides, there are Lombok, Komodo and other natural wonders," he added.

indonesia

The connectivity between

India and Indonesia has also been enhanced. According to Witjaksono, "Starting last year from April, we have Garuda Indonesia flying from Mumbai to Denbasar three times a week. We have even started a new programme called Tourism Hub, where we try to utilise our hub, which is our neighbouring country. For example, Scoot flies 70 times a week from more than 10 origin cities in India to Singapore. We try to attract Indian travellers from there with dual or twin destinations to visit Indonesia. For Indonesia, there are three main entries—40 per cent travellers come via Bali, 30 per cent from Jakarta and 20 per cent via Bintan. To promote all these destinations, we conduct Fam trips and sales missions."

India is priority market | Inner Mongolia beckons

Enhancing exchanges on India-China relations, the Inner Mongolia Culture & Tourism Festival in Delhi aimed to attract tourists to the region of northern China.

TT Bureau

he Department of Culture and Tourism of Inner Mongolia, autonomous region of the People's Republic of China, organised the Inner Mongolia Culture and Tourism Festival as part of the ongoing Chinese New Year festivities. Briefing about the attractions in Inner Mongolia, Shi Mo, Deputy General Secretary, People's Government of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, introduced the guests while Ai Lihua, Vice Chairman, People's Government of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Zhu Xiaohong, Cultural Counsellor, Chinese Embassy in India presented the welcome remarks.

On the occasion, He Zhiliang, Director of Department of Culture and Tourism, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, said, "This is the first

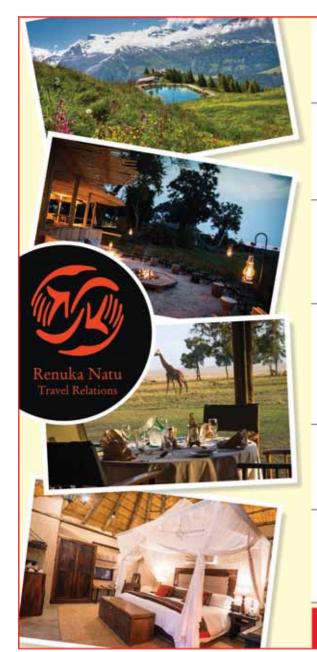


He Zhiliang Director of Department of Culture and Tourism, Inner Mongolia Autonomous

time we have come to India to promote Inner Mongolia province. We are trying to promote the culture of Inner Mongolia by showcasing it through an art performance by 'Anda Union'. I hope the Indian audience will like this event and visit Inner Mongolia."

Representing the travel trade, Chitra Bhatia. General Secretary, OTOAI and Rajeev Sabharwal, EC Member, OTOAI were also present at the event. A cooperation agreement was also signed between Zhong Xin International Travel Company and Delhi-based Pettitts India Tours.

Zhiliang stated the objective behind the event was to familiarise the Indian market about Inner Mongolia. He mentioned, "Very few Indians know about the province and its culture. Both India and China share a very cordial relationship for tourism and both of them are old civilisations. After last year's meeting between India Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his counterpart, Xi Jinping, both the governments have agreed to enhance the people to people contact and we believe that provincially, we will play a major role in this sector."

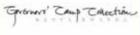




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AGENTS

APRIL 2¹⁰⁰ FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019 TRAVIALK 1

Explore the polar regions

The Australian-owned expedition cruise specialist, Aurora Expeditions, has named Mazda Travel as its exclusive General Sales Agent in India.



Mazda Travel has been appointed by expedition cruise specialist, Aurora Expeditions to be its exclusive General Sales Agent (GSA) in India. It is an Australian-owned polar voyaging company founded by renowned mountaineer and explorer, Greg Mortimer, and his wife Margaret. Over the past 27 years, it has become an expert in smallgroup, expedition-style travel to the polar regions and other equally wild and remote locations in both hemispheres.

Mernoz Shastri, Director, Mazda Travel, said, "Mazda Travel's partnership with



Mernoz Shastri Director Mazda Travel

Aurora Expeditions will provide travellers in the region with a chance to experience something truly special - an expedition voyage to the polar regions. Our research shows travellers from India are looking for unique travel experiences to exceptional destinations, which each of Aurora's voyages fulfills."

Aurora Expeditions offers a range of flexible and original itineraries. Some voyages offer sea kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, camping on ice, polar diving and snorkelling. Others offer skiing and

The top
five destinations
for international
visitor arrivals by 2023
will be China, followed
by USA, Hong Kong,
Turkey and
Thailand

THINK

snow-shoeing, mountaineering and trekking and even expert photography tuition. Alongside these diverse experiences, Aurora Expeditions' experts including naturalists, geologists, historians and polar specialists, help travellers unlock the wonders of these environ-

ments. Air services from India operating via Middle East and European cities will make both the Antarctica and the Arctic regions more accessible to the India consumer.

Craig Upshall, Sales Director
– Europe, Middle East and

Africa, Aurora Expeditions, said, "As a result of our new partnership with Mazda Travel, travellers from India will be able to book Aurora Expedition voyages through their local travel agent. Mazda Travel's extensive

experience, along with its superior customer service, makes it the perfect partner for Aurora Expeditions in this region. We look forward to bringing Aurora Expeditions' expertise and travel experience to guests from India."



Craig Upshall Sales Director – Europe, Middle East and Africa, Aurora Expeditions



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TBO expands global footprint

TBO Group has announced the acquisition of Island Hopper and Clickitbookit, which are leading companies in terms of passengers visiting the island nations of Mauritius, Maldives and Seychelles.



he acquisition of Island Hopper and Clickitbookit, which have been a market leader in the Mauritius, Maldives, Seychelles and some Greek islands, is set to boost TBO Group's leisure travel product footprint and scope in these island nations. believes Ankush Nijhawan, Co-Founder, TBO Group. "With this acquisition, we will become an overnight leader in the island world. This would allow Island Hopper to use the extensive distribution which TBO enjoys today as one of the largest agent networks in India. Going forward, we will further penetrate the Southern India market, which I think, is completely virgin for Island Hopper. The other thing we believe is the right team and mix, and hence 24 of the previous employees of Island Hopper have now moved into TBO Group that will be headed by Sandeep Bhasin,



Ankush Nijhawan Co-Founder TBO Group

who was one of the founders of the business."

Nijhawan shared that Bhasin will continue to serve the company as Vice President of Island Hopper under the TBO umbrella. "With the way flights are being added into these islands, especially Maldives, I'm sure the numbers will just double in 2019 and 2020. At TBO, we are sure that we will continue to be the winner for these islands."

Sandeep Bhasin, Vice President, Island Hopper,



Sandeep Bhasir Vice President Island Hopper

said that they took up TBO's offer of acquisition for a wider distribution. "What better way to continue the legacy of Island Hopper as a brand! What we bring to the table is the Indian Ocean—Mauritius, Maldives, Seychelles and Greece, of which Island Hopper has been a specialist. This would not only mean a high revenue for TBO but also better margins."

International exposure TBO, on the other hand, will get excellent contracts and the ground handling in these islands, which they never had earlier, claimed Nijhawan. "On the technology front, we will enjoy seamless integration. Due to the strength of our technology, the system will become more robust and efficient for travel agents with the amazing contracts and deals we have with all our

also walk into other markets with the brand. In fact, the highest number of stays in Mauritius and Maldives come from the UK, Germany and France. Hence, it's going to be a global company for us, and we will start selling in India for the next few months."

my initial focus will be on South India, apart from Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad, where we have already established our strength," he claimed.

Bhasin discussed the good growth recorded in 2018. "Last year, we closed the Financial Year with about `150 crores for Orange as a company, with 50 per cent going to Clickitbookit and 50 per cent to Island Hopper. The idea will be to double Island Hopper's piece of business to `150 crores. We are anticipating to achieve `150 crores by March 2020."



hotel partners in these islands. Island Hopper is an online business selling hotels in these islands, but what is important is the seaplane transfers, local sightseeing and packages in which Island Hopper excels," he revealed.

On the other hand, Nijhawan added, "Island Hopper and clickitbookit.com will benefit from the size and scale of TBO and give them exposure to international markets. We will

Nijhawan shared that Island Hopper will continue functioning as a brand name but the distribution and travel agents would be common. "We would obviously merge the sales team with our current teams. Earlier, Island Hopper had 10 people in sales but today there are 160 people in the sales force

promoting Island Hopper with

some core senior people from

its team responsible for the

sales and operations. At TBO,

Focus on South India

The entire landmass of the Philippines is made up of islands, thereby ranking as the second-largest archipelago in the world

Robinville woos Indians

Representing European countries, regions and organisations in the Indian subcontinent since 2009, Robinville has added products and services to its existing portfolio to offer attractive packages across India.



With a growing demand for outbound tourism especially towards Central and Eastern Europe, Robinville has pledged to curate, build and grow its business with new products and services to its clients. Ishwinder Maddh, Managing Director, Robinville feels that after getting a high number of repeat clients, it has become the company's responsibility to constantly learn, innovate and identify, whether they be destinations, hotels, attractions, experiences or even food.

"As of 2019, we are now representing the Salzkammergut region. We are now able to offer companies skiing and snowboarding packages, cog railways – St Wolfgang, cable cars and many more attractions. With over 70 lakes across the region, we can now also offer several boating activities. Additionally, with an increasing demand for experiencing different cultures, Robinville has signed with Vienna Mozart Orchestra and Tyrolean Folklore Show as its GSA in India to truly immerse the outbound traveller in the Austrian culture," he informed.

Talking about growth and success in the last one year, Maddh said that 2018 was an exceptional year for Robinville. "We had the benevolent opportunity to represent Central and Eastern European regions. Austria was the key market for us and we superseded our client's targets. We also



Managing Director Robinville

discovered the hidden gems across Innsbruck, Austria and began to offer attractive packages across India. Our recent representation of the Innsbruck tourism board has enabled Innsbruck to see growth of more than 50 per cent over the past four months," he added.

In an endeavour to boost the demand of Indian tourists

across the Central and Eastern European regions, Robinville's marketing plan is to harness the power of social media marketing to promote its partners products and services across India. Maddh said, "We will be using influencers to drive exposure, where the goal is Robinville Productions to focus on identifying film production locations as well as creating international productions across Europe, targeted towards the Indian market. The company is also expanding into the region of Graz in Austria titled the 'Cultural Capital

Our recent representation of the Innsbruck tourism board has enabled Innsbruck to see growth of more than 50 per cent over the past four months

to find someone who creates content that relates to our partners' businesses and whose audience would be interested in their offerings."

Robinville has also announced to create a new vertical called

of Europe'. Robinville will soon start offering skiing in Zell am See - Kaprun, Schladming - Dachstein region, Stubai Glacier Innsbruck and its holiday villages. This means that the Indian traveller will get to experience perfectly-groomed ski pistes, free-ride routes and fun slopes for everyone while being a cheaper alternative compared to other winter sport destinations, claimed Maddh.

The winter adventure sports sector has been rapidly growing in new directions as it adapts to new consumer patterns and behaviours. "It is no longer just about skiing or snowboarding but a lot more that makes up the entire winter experience. The average Indian traveller is also beginning to jump on this bandwagon and engage in completely new experiences. Austria, one of the market leaders in winter sports, has seen an increase in terms of Indian travellers coming to experience numerous winter sports and activities," he concluded. 🐓

AGENTS APRIL 2^m FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019 TRAVTALK 13

Multilink gets an investor | Atlas bets big on Umrah

The third investment made in 2019 alone, Shri Mahalaxmi Vacations has taken up a challenge to reach a combined turnover of `10,000 crore by 2020.



Parag Thakker, Director, Shri Mahalaxmi Vacations, has announced that they have now acquired a stake in online consolidator Multilink for an undisclosed amount. This is the third company that they have invested in this year, the most recent one being Just-ClickKaro.com in March 2019. They had acquired Arzoo.com in January 2019. Mumbaibased Multilink is headed by Nikhil Shah who has forayed into utilities as well, thereby offering a wide range of products in the online segment.

Thakker says, "We have found an able partner in Multilink. The three companies will now work as a group. Right now, I see all the three companies working differently, with their own set of distributors and retailers. With all of them coming together,



we will have deeper penetration across India. That is the idea behind bringing all these companies together. For us, the focus right now is to have better penetration in the market and reach more and more travel agents. We as a group have taken up a challenge to reach a turnover of Rs 10,000 crore by FY 2020. We are not stopping here; there will be more announcements soon."

He adds, "Together, we already record a turnover of `5.000

crore. Our target is to be the fastest growing and leading aggregators in the travel industry."

Nikhil Shah, Co-Founder & CFO, Multilink, says, "Parag Thakker has a clear roadmap drawn up for the future. With this development, we will go to the next level and grow individually as well as together. It is a win-win situation for all. We are working in many areas together and we have similar products; so there are opportunities for more synergy." 😓

Atlas Tours & Travels has launched five categories of Umrah products this year that can be combined with international holiday destinations.



tlas Tours & Travels, syn-Atlas Iouis a Iravelle, e.g., Conymous with Hajj, Umrah and Halal tourism in India, has made further inroads into the business. Led by Hasan Patel, Director, Atlas Tours & Travels. the division is seeing a surge of new travellers from the interiors of India. "This provides us with a great opportunity to empower our partners present in various cities, towns and districts in India. Our on-ground capabilities combined with technology and distribution makes us a formidable strength in the industry," he says.

To further widen its reach in the country, the company had launched India's first online Umrah booking portal in 2018. The platform serves as an endto-end reservation and servicing tool for its booking centres. With listings of various tour



Director Atlas Tours & Travels

programmes year-round, it serves as an easy-to-use booking engine for its partners.

"With the online Umrah system, our B2B channel partners can add a new product to their business that can be managed with ease. It enables Atlas Umrah booking centres to be more informed and communicate better with their clients. They

can check live availability of over 350 departure dates from 14 cities in India. Understanding each customer's needs, they can choose from a variety of packages that suit every budget. One of our USPs is that we do not require a minimum group commitment from our booking centres. They can pick any date available online. and the tour requirements will be fulfilled by our 50-member operations team in Saudi Arabia," Patel explains.

This year, the company has launched five categories of Umrah products that can also be combined with international holiday destinations. "We have groups for Turkey with Umrah, Dubai with Umrah, Jerusalem, Baghdad, and many more. Our large distribution capabilities and pre-purchased inventories guarantee the best deals," shares Patel. 😓

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14 TRAVTALK APRIL 2ND FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019

FAMILYALBUM

EKTTA puts spotlight on the 'local'

EKTTA

Enterprising Knot of Travel & Tourism Associates (EKTTA) organised its first annual convention in Bhubaneswar in an effort to develop local tourism and bring forward the unexplored destinations of the state to the limelight. More than 150 tour operators, including 70 of the association's registered members and 15 club members attended the convention.





















Stay abreast of the latest trends

Even though there's no direct generation of business from ITB Berlin, the Indian trade feels that the forum helps them establish contacts with their client base whilst providing a good networking platform.



Karishma Khanna & Harshal Ashar from Berlin



Travel Spirit International

I had a couple of interesting meetings and successfully renewed my contracts with old people. With the new business, I don't think any of the exhibitions are important for getting business. ITB Berlin is essentially a platform to meet your old partners whilst creating awareness for our brand, and most importantly to keep in touch with our old contacts. It is a very powerful networking tool.



RARE India

ITB surprisingly has been consistent through the years. This year too has been a good show. It's also not only about talking about your products but also getting familiarised about the updates. It's when you come here and meet a particular operation that you get to know that they have been selling X or Y property or they have changed their business. Meeting new operators is also key here. The exhibition gives us

access to the European market. It's also a place where we can generate new business.



Vice President Trans India Holidays

ITB Berlin presented the latest

products and trends of the global

networking platform to foster stronger

connections with our participating

tourism industry. It was a great

We have had some fruitful meetings with existing buyers and met more buyers where we can explore the possibility of new beginnings. These solely depend on your connections and the number of appointments you get out of those. We do get a few walk-ins but mostly we come with pre-fixed meetings and these meetings need our time and attention; so it

can't be over in just a matter of a few minutes. We need to start working on them way earlier.

fris was our first year at ITB 2019. We recently started our inbound division and are happy to say that we are getting good response from overseas partners. Without appointments, these exhibitions cannot give any results. We need to improve on space allocation too. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, needs to strategise in the future about participation at such events. ITB is important for us but before visit-



Veena World

ing, the ministry should do some more publicity, both online and $% \left(1\right) =\left(1\right) \left(1\right) \left($ offline. They need to involve more tour operators.

ITB is one of the most well-known travel exhibitions globally. It is a very important forum for us to showcase our property. Even if it doesn't generate any business, it definitely helps us to generate leads. Every year, we evaluate our presence in some of the most prestigious international exhibitions. Depending upon the response, we take a call on whether to come back next year. We had some quality meetings on

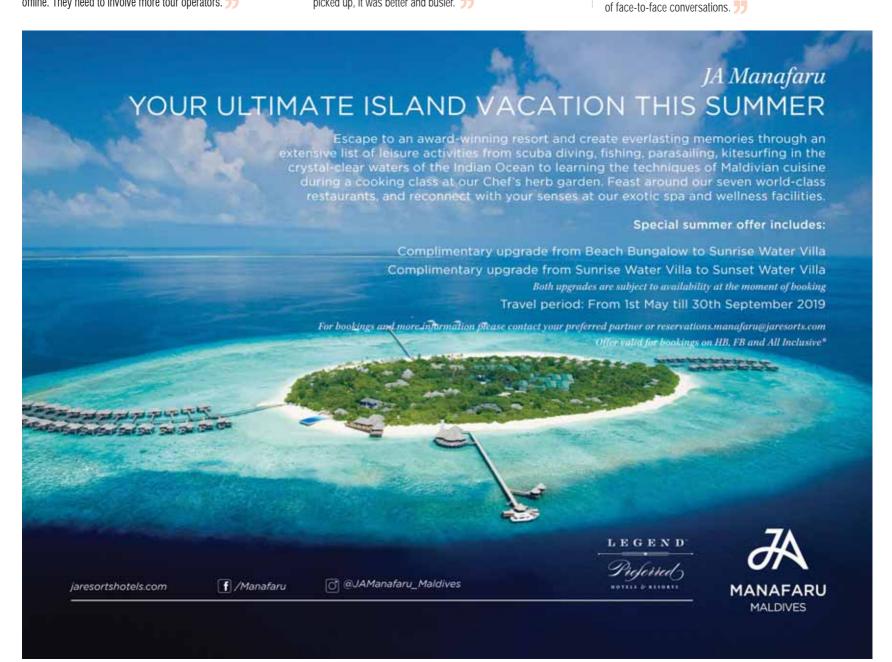
the first day and towards the end of second day meetings had picked up, it was better and busier.



Nikhil Kapur Managing Director

brands as well as a key relationship building opportunity with our potential clientele. The ITB Berlin Convention was also a key attraction that brought close to 400 leading speakers to discuss forward-looking trends in travel. Even in the age of digitalisation, conventions like these cannot replace the power





CRUISES 16 TRAVTALK APRIL 2¹⁰⁰ FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019

Choose from 1500+ itineraries



T Bureau

ruiseBay is India's first Cruises-only company founded 10 years ago, claimed the company's CEO, $\mbox{\bf Nikhil}$ Thakurdas. Sharing further details, he said, "CruiseBay is essentially a B2C platform where we allow people or visi-



As cruising in India is still at its nascent stage, CruiseBay is committed to grow the market in the country. The company also works closely with Cruise Professionals for joint marketing initiatives as well as bookings for certain cruise brands.

on a joint marketing or a joint

promotional level. This year,

we are doing a joint digital

With Jalesh Cruises set to

become a game changer.

Hurtiaruten."

marketing campaign for two

brands—Princess Cruises and

tors on our website to research cruise options from over 35 cruise companies. We feature over 1,500 itineraries on the website as part of completing 10 years. We have also recently launched a mobilefriendly website. We may look at signing on three to four more franchise partners this

year to grow the business."

back to a time spective companies. As Cruise Professionals represents big cruise brands in India like Princess Cruises, Cunard Cruises, P&O Cruises; we work closely with its team for all our bookings for these brands along with some joint marketing initiatives. As a pure B2C company, I believe that Cruise

Thakurdas said, "We've done Professionals sees value in a fair amount of business with If the 1 per cent becomes 3 per cent, the numbers will increase from 175,000 to 500,000 people. That should happen in the next year too as Indians are big spenders.

The market looks promising in the future ""

working with us to reach out to a wide base of consumers. The partnership has worked well because almost every year we do something together Costa Cruises' India product which sails from December to March. We see a lot of potential in the domestic cruise product to grow and we are excited

to see how this new product by Zen Cruises performs. The Indian cruise market is an extremely new avenue, and we are here to grow its sphere."

Despite lamenting about the current scenario of the growth of cruising in India, he is hopeful about the rising number in the future. "Only 175,000 out of 16 or 20 million people who travel abroad take a cruise which means that not even one per cent of travellers are choosing cruises. Thus, it's a huge upside in terms of being able to sell cruises to our clientele. The market looks promising in the future. If the 1 per cent becomes 3 per cent, the numbers will increase from 175,000 to 500,000 people. That should happen in the next year too as Indians are big spenders. The popular destinations for cruises

include the Far East, Mediterranean, Alaska and Scandinavia. Scandinavia has picked up dramatically in the last couple of years because travellers now want to explore the Baltic in the summer. Earlier, the skew was entirely towards Mediterranean, but now we are witnessing an equal split between Scandinavia and the Mediterranean," he explained. 😓



Celebration over cocktails

Tirun Travel Marketing recently organised a networking event at Tote on the Turf in Mumbai for the Mumbai travel fraternity. Present on the occasion were its CEO, Ratna Chadha and COO, Varun Chadha along with celebrity Chef Ranveer Brar.









AVIATION

APRIL 2¹⁰⁰ FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2018 TRAVTALK 17

IndiGo strengthens base

IndiGo has temporarily added approximately 20 new departures each from Mumbai and Delhi in a phased manner from April 15, 2019 for summers.



IndiGo has announced six new routes, out of which four will be serving Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) RCS scheme, starting June 22, 2019. The airline has also announced new non-stop daily flights from Mumbai to Jeddah and Abu Dhabi from June 5. From July 5, IndiGo will also be set to fly to Dammam daily from Mumbai.

Sharing the details, William Boulter, Chief Commercial Officer, IndiGo said "As major cultural and commercial centres in the UAE, Jeddah and Dammam are critical markets for strengthening our presence in the Middle East. Mumbai is the commercial hub of India and we see great potential connecting the Middle East with this city. With the addition of these new international flights and enhanced domestic



William Boulter Chief Commercial Officer

to provide flexibility of choice to our customers as IndiGo continues to offer on-time, affordable, courteous and hassle-free flying experience consistently."

The UDAN routes include Kolkata-Allahabad, Allahabad-Kolkata, Raipur-Allahabad, Allahabad-Raipur. On the other hand, the airline launched new flights between Kolkata, Allahabad, Raipur and Jabalpur, while developing regional hubs

As major cultural and commercial centres in the UAE, Jeddah and Dammam are critical markets for strengthening our presence in the Middle East 77

frequency, we are committed to expanding our network to meet the requirements of both business and leisure travellers. It is our constant endeavour at Allahabad and Kolkata. The routes will be serviced by an ATR aircraft and boost IndiGo's connectivity in Tier-II cities with fares starting from `1,999. &

Hahn Air adds 10 partners

Celebrating a successful first quarter, Hahn Air has integrated 10 carriers into its global network of more than 350 air, rail and shuttle partners, so far.



A mong the new partnerships, two are new interline agreements. The flights of the Thai low-cost airline Nok Air (DD) and of Precision Air (PW) from Tanzania can now be issued on the insolvency-safe HR-169 ticket. Travel agents can find and book their flights under the airlines' own two-letter-codes in selected GDSs even in markets where the carriers are not members of the local payment systems (BSPs).



In addition, eight new carriers joined the network of H1-Air partners of the global consolidation service Hahn Air Systems. On behalf of the President Travel and Tours, four Nepalese carriers are now using the H1-Air product



Rahim Virmani Regional Vice President—Airline Business Group, Hahn Air Lines

— Buddha Air, Himalaya
Airlines, Shree Airlines and
Yeti Airlines. Moreover, AB
Aviation from the Comoros
Islands, Flair Airlines from
Canada, Skyway CR from
Costa Rica and Germania Flug
from Switzerland opted for the
H1-Air solution. As a result,
all eight carriers are now
available under the designator
H1 in all major GDSs. Over

100,000 travel agents in 190 markets can book their flights and issue them on the HR-

Rahim Virmani, Regional Vice President—Airline Business Group, Hahn Air Lines said, "Airlines without a GDS presence benefit from global distribution solution H1-Air via one of our companies Hahn Air Systems. They can outsource their complete indirect distribution to us and can enter all major GDSs immediately. We are pleased that more partners opt for a dual partnership with the Hahn Air Group, which means they are combining an interline agreement with our H1-Air product."

Four existing partners extended their cooperation with Hahn Air by entering into a dual partnership with the leading provider of distribution services.



18 TRAVTALK APRIL 2^{III} FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019 **NEWS**

Explore Europe in 'low season' Of network & negotiation

Travelling to Europe in summers is being challenged by Globus with its 'Escapes by Globus' for low season with travel starting at \$699 for 2019-20.



Escapes by Globus' is Ea compilation of best itineraries offered during the low season travel. Escapes showcases vacations to destinations which are attractive even during the winter months from October to April. Travellers can now visit the must-see landmarks and experience the culture without the crowdsand even better-without the high-season prices. Starting from as low as \$100 per person per day, these Escapes offer the trademark premium quality that Globus provides to all its travellers. Just like a regular Globus tour, an expert tour director escorts them around and indulges them in authentic destination experiences. The group comprises international travelling companions.

"Escapes by Globus is for the travellers who are looking



Middle East, Globus family of brands

experience the local culture." says Varesh Chopra, Regional Director – South Asia and Middle East, Globus family of brands. "We are very excited with the selection of new tours for the 2019-20 season, with such great itineraries we envisage an even greater success of the Escapes by Globus for this vear," he said.

For 2019-20, new vacations have been introduced for Italy, Scotland, Spain and the

With such great itineraries for 2019-20, we envisage an even greater success of the Escapes by Globus for this year ">>

to explore Europe hotspots without the high price tag and deluge of summer tourists. Besides travellers paying less for their Globus tour, with far less tourists about there will be plenty of opportunities to

much-awaited vacation to Egypt. Travel agents will be spoilt for choice when offering winter vacations on Escapes by Globus to their clients and can capitalise on getting more business during the dull season. 😓

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director-ME, ATM, speaks on how innovative technologies have revolutionised the travel, tourism and hospitality sector.

TT Bureau

What is new at Arabian Travel Market (ATM) this year?

Cutting-edge technology and innovation will be adopted as the show theme and launched as a platform to inspire the travel and hospitality industry about the next generation of technology whilst bringing together senior travel executives to conduct business with innovative tech providers. Launching this year will be the inaugural Arabian Travel Week from April 27 – May 1, 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. Arabian Travel Week will take place at the Dubai World Trade Centre. This year's edition is expected to bring together



Arabian Travel Market

almost 40,000 travel professionals representing over 150 country pavilions showcasing over 2,800 products and destinations from around the world.

Are there any new countries or exhibitors this year? ATM 2019 will welcome more than 100 new exhibitors including Expo 2020 Dubai, flynas, Belarus National

Tourism Agency, Moscow Committee for Tourism and Montenegro National Tourism Organisation, South Africa Tourism Bureau and Zimbabwe Tourism Authority.

This year has some interesting seminars lined up. Could you share more details about them? Debuting this year is Arabia China Tourism Forum on April 28. With China set to account for a quarter of international tourism by 2030, an expert panel will discuss how destinations around the world can capitalise on this growth. The forum will also include a 30-minute networking session with over 80 Chinese buyers. Another debutant this year is ATM Hotel Industry Summit which will host various expert panels to provide an insight on the latest hotel developments shaping the future of the hospitality sector. 😓

Casino nights & cruises in Mumbai

The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) Western Region along with Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) recently hosted a special evening of cocktails and dinner in Mumbai to give their members an opportunity to mingle with the region's committee and other members. The attendees enjoyed the special casino night theme that was interspersed with presentations by Qantas and Jalesh Cruises made by Guideline Travels.



IATO works with state govt | Ladakh creates buzz in Delhi

ASSOCIATIONTALK

The association is now part of the government think tank that deliberates on showcasing Maharashtra as a destination for tourism, art, culture and entertainment.

Ever since she has taken over the position, **Vasuki** Sundaram, Chairman (Maharashtra Chapter), Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has been immersed in activating the association's regional arm. She is now part of the government think tank that was formed by Vijay Kumar Gautam (IAS), Former Principal Secretary—Tourism, Government of Maharashtra. Vinita Vaid Singhal has since been named as the state's new Tourism Secretary.

Speaking about the think tank, Sundaram says, "Stakeholders from various segments of the industry are part of this. We have people from the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), from Bollywood and various



Vasuki Sundaram Chairman (Maharashtra Chanter) Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO)

production houses, from the tourism industry, artists, etc. It is necessary to have representation from different segments to get a wider perspective. We deliberate on how to showcase Maharashtra and Mumbai to the rest of the country and the world. We have been talking about opening up all recreation centres. In fact, we recently had a show where all the gardens were

opened and about 100-plus artists had performed on a Sunday. So they are trying to have a single-window license wherein people can access and perform in various spots."

This, she said, will ensure greater footfalls into Mumbai with visitors enjoying live entertainment. IATO's Maharashtra chapter is also working on



pushing cruise tourism and taking stock of the development of the new cruise terminal. 😓

Representatives from various tourism bodies discussed how they can ensure sustainable tourism in Ladakh at Ladakh Travel Meet held recently in Delhi.



The Ladakh Travel Meet was attended by 70 delegates including tour operators, members and government officials. Tsetan Angchuk, President, All Ladakh Tour Operators Association of India (ALTOI) said, "The purpose of this event is to give an overview of the development. sustainable tourism, and all the facilities and infrastructure in Ladakh over the decade. We also want to promote Ladakh's adventure and culture. We invited 40 agents and 30 officials that included our own members and government officials from J&K Tourism."

With almost 110 peaks, most of which are bordering China or Pakistan, Ladakh is a great opportunity for adventure lovers, Angchuk informed. "The Ministry of Home Affairs



President All Ladakh Tour Operators Association of India

(MHA) has opened nine routes among which five are cultural routes for jeep safari and four are new adventure trekking routes. The inner line permit to places like Nubra Valley, Pangong Lake, Samori Lake and Aryan Valley has been extended to 15 days from the earlier seven days," he said.

The connectivity to Ladakh has been enhanced to further boost numbers to the destination. "As Ladakh airport is maintained by the Indian Air Force (IAF), there are some restrictions during military exercises. Indian Air Force has given us two extra bases so that the maximum number of flights can be accommodated. Currently, we have about 14 to 15 flights operating directly from Delhi, Mumbai and Chandigarh," said Angchuk.

Ladakh is cut-off from the rest of the world for six months during winters. "In the six months of summer, tourists can visit through Leh-Manali from the Srinagar highway. The roads are better now and the travel time has reduced by three to four hours. We have 16,000-17,000 bed capacity of hotels in Leh alone," he concluded. 🐓

IAAI welcomes Maha team

With the new team in place for its Maharashtra chapter, IAAI has also announced new plans including formation of a women's cell.



The IATA Agents Association of India (IAAI) welcomed its new committee members for its Maharashtra chapter in Mumbai recently. Presided over by Biji Eapen, National President, IAAI, the team conducted its Annual General Meeting followed by a networking evening. Eapen said, "The previous Maharashtra Committee headed by Chetan Gandhi and Siddharth Shah couldn't get enough time to actively take forward IAAI matters due lack of time and support. So, an extraordinary AGM was called on December 29, 2018 to form an ad-hoc committee to take up the responsibility and nominated a new committee headed by Manish Synghal, Director, Dimaz Aviation."

The members unanimously accepted the new team for the Maharashtra chapter which comprises Manish Synghal of Dimaz Aviation as President.



Director Dimaz Aviation

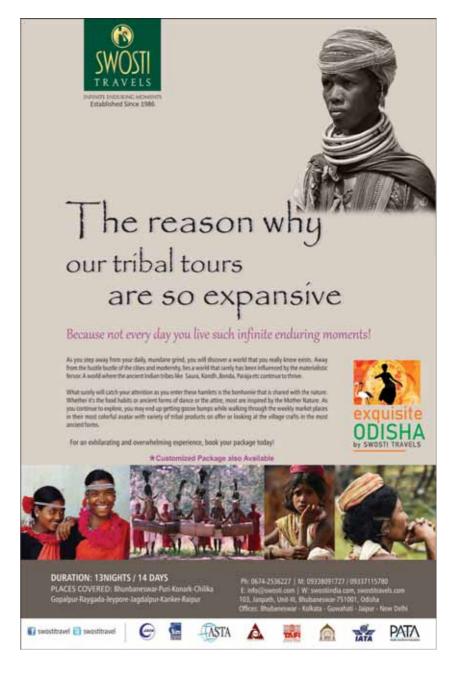
Rajesh Acharya of Balaji Travels as Vice President, RT lyer of Farsak Travels as Secretary and Sarosh Parakh of Aero Agencies as Treasurer. The Managing Committee members include Arvind Tandon, Ark Travels, Rosita Haribal of Travel Forte, Neelu Bhat of Welcome Travels. Chetan Gandhi of Travel 360 Tours & Travels and Siddhartha Shah of Primark Travel House.

Commercialising i-Top Eapen informed the members

that during the National Managing Committee meet in March 2019, it was decided to commercialise the i-Top project so that all the members who are also the stakeholders in this project will get their respective share. "We are in the process of formulating a strategy. Many products are already integrated in the i-Top platform and we need a dedicated team to work for its promotion and marketing. i-Top offers three different platforms — ticketing through GDS, access to OTAs and consolidators pricing and NDC via internet," he said.

IAAI Women's Cell

Eapen also announced the formation of an 'IAAI Women's Cell' to be headed by Aruna Shetty, Director, IAAI and requested her to co-opt members from all other states to form an official committee before June 2019. 😓



20 TRAVTALK APRIL 200 FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2019

Seminal year for New York City

Outlining the newest developments, openings, events and destination highlights, **Fred Dixon**, President & CEO, NYC & Company tells us why 2019 will be a monumental year for New York City.



On its recent visit to India, NYC & Company, New York City's official destination marketing organisation, presented a new global initiative—'2019: A Monumental Year'—spotlighting several iconic openings and developments debuting in the city along with a historic anniversary that will make New York a must-visit destination this year. The NYC team promoted new developments, attractions and hotel openings across eight key cities in India through one-on-one meetings and workshops.

"It is a particularly exciting time in New York City with unprecedented developments in terms of attractions and hotel openings. We want to encourage visitors to enjoy these brand-new attractions



NYC & Company visits Mumbai and Delhi

and plan ahead for what is regarded as a seminal year for New York City," said **Fred Dixon**, President & CEO, NYC & Company.

The number of visitors to New York from India increased approximately by 6.8 per cent in 2018 as compared to last year. The city welcomed a record 65.2 million global visitors in 2018 holding its position in being the number one US destination for international visitation, visitor spending and economic impact.

Some of the major new large-scale developments

opening in New York City in 2019 include Hudson Yards on Manhattan's far west side—the largest private real estate development in the history of the United States; The Shed, a multi-arts centre dedicated to global displays of visual art, design, media; and Vessel, a climbable urban landmark created by British designer Thomas Heatherwick.

"2019 will also see the opening of the new Statue of Liberty Museum, which is expected to debut in May along with the opening of the TWA Hotel at JFK Airport in Queens. Additionally, the Mu-

Equinox will also open its first hotel within Hudson Yards," informed Dixon.

In June 2019, New York City will also welcome WorldPride, the first time the event will be held in the United States with three million expected over the 30-day event (majority of the events will be held from

The number of visitors to New York from India increased approximately by 6.8 per cent in 2018 as compared to last year

seum of Modern Art (MoMA) is undergoing renovation and expansion that will increase gallery space by 30 per cent and enhance public spaces. The first phase of renovations is now complete and the next phase will be completed later this year. Fitness brand

June 25 to 30). The LGBTQ celebration coincides with the historic 50th anniversary of Stonewall Uprising. Talking about hotel development in the city, Dixon said that the company is expected to raise rooms' inventory to 136,000 by the end of 2021.

Get the island experience





Atout France organised a three-city workshop for Reunion Island and its tourism suppliers in Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai to develop close synergies with the Indian market and augment Indian visitor arrivals to the island. A delegation of seven suppliers showcased the island's tourism offers to members of the trade in the cities. An informative presentation on the island followed by meetings with suppliers led to an in-depth understanding of the destination.

Luring business travellers

Effotel Hotel by Sayaji, Gurugram does not fail to impress guests with its efforts to create unforgettable experiences.



Situated right opposite a newly-opened mall, Effotel Gurugram by Sayaji has the distinction of being located near the metro station, hospital, eating joints and amusement park, all at a walking distance. Adding another feather in its crown, Abhishek Narain, General Manager, Effotel Hotel by Sayaji, Gurugram informs that the hotel has been completely refurbished recently.

"We are looking to target weddings and corporate events at the hotel. The competition is never ending with the growing number of hotels in the NCR region, but with a zeal to fight it with our past, present and future connections, we are looking to do better than our competitors," said Narain.

The hotel is looking to attract business travellers essentially.



Abhishek Narain General Manager Effotel Hotel by Saya

"We want to promote ourselves among the corporates and the travel agents with an approach to focus on MiCE events. We are also looking forward to welcome the niche clientele including expats along with our regular F&B clients," he mentioned.

Besides providing accommodation with 50 spacious rooms, the hotel is equipped with facilities and services to host weddings, events,

seminars, meetings and conferences at the refurbished banquet space with a total capacity of 250 pax along with a 200 sq ft board room.

Talking about the hotel's current marketing and promotional plans. Narain said that he wants to make the hotel visible online. "We would like to plan in a way that our hotel is easily searchable online; we would do remarketing time and again with an appropriate budget for promotion. We want to target the right audience for which we are looking to introduce incentives, memberships and customer loyalty programmes. Most important would be to market the location," he added.

The Indian hospitality Industry boomed at one point of time but Narain believes that the government's tax policies for hotels, among others, have been a roadblock to growth.

Relevance of trade shows

Underlining the worth of international travel trade shows like ITB Berlin, WTM London and ATM Dubai, winners of India Travel Awards and India MiCE Awards explain why these platforms are important for their business.



Fastest Growing Luxury Travel Agency T3: Takeoff-Transit-Travel

According to **Dhruv Somaiya**, Director, T3: Takeoff-Transit-Travel, it is crucial to attend major travel trade shows like WTM, ITB, ATM, among others owing to the kind of recognition and acknowledgment they get for their hard work. "Our company, T3 will soon be coming with a very exciting range of products and shall also be spreading nationwide by the first quarter of 2019. We are following a distributor model that will be a major opportunity for us," he said about his plans.



Best Destination Management Company- Domestic Mountain Edge Tours & Holidays

Prakash Kumar Raj, Director, Mountain Edge Tours & Holidays feels that major trade shows hold a great relevance to the industry where travel suppliers and agencies get the opportunity to interact under a single roof. "These shows are the biggest sources for getting current updates about the industry from across the globe. It is also an important forum for us to showcase our products to buyers from all over the world in just three days," he said.



Best Business Car Rental Company Niljyoti Travel Agency

For Sanjib Acharjee, Proprietor, Niljyoti Travel Agency, shows like WTM and other major international trade events have helped his business grow in his state. "Travel trade shows like WTM are very useful for my business. After getting the travel trade award, the numbers of tourists are increasing day by day, who love visiting our state, Tripura. Most of them are bestowing their trust on us and are choosing our company as their travel partner.



Best Luxury Camp The Ultimate Travelling Camp

Dhun Cordo. Co-Founder, TUTC, believes that travel trade shows like WTM and ITB are a vibrant global platform to exchange notes on travel, destinations and offerings with the best industry professionals. "It is a great platform to exhibit our offerings to the travel and tourism industry. On our business front, TUTC has opened bookings for Chamba Camp Thiksey and Chamba Camp Diskit in Ladakh. The mobile luxury camp will be operational from May 15 to October 10, 2019," she said.

Indian agents explore new regions

The Indian trade delegation recently attended the two-day 'Rendezvous en France 2019' in Marseilles hosted by Atout France India and explored the potential of regions yet unfamiliar to the Indian travellers. The 32-member delegation included tour operators from Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Chennai and Bengaluru who met with vendors from different regions.











EUENT TALK

arabian travel market





APRIL 2019

Asian Destinations Expo 2019	Cambodia	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-May1

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

JUNE 2019

75th IATA Annual General Meeting	Seoul, South Korea	1-3
Best of Australia roadshow	Pune	4
Best of Australia roadshow	Ahmedabad	5
Dubai MiCE Workshop	Hyderabad	10
Dubai MiCE Workshop	Chennai	11
Dubai MiCE Workshop	Bengaluru	13
Dubai MiCE Workshop	Kolkata	14
Beijing International Tourism Expo 2019	Beijing	18-20
Asian Destinations Expo 2019	Malaysia	21-24
Asian Destinations Expo 2019	Singapore	26-29

JULY 2019

Asian Destinations Expo 2019	Indonesia	2-5
International Conference on Tourism and Hospitality (ICTH)	Singapore	4-5
TTF	Hyderabad	5-6
Kiwi Link India 2019	Mumbai	8-9
Kiwi Link India 2019	Kolkata	11
Kiwi Link India 2019	Delhi	12
Travel Wedding Show	Mumbai	13-14
MICE INDIA and Luxury Travel congress	Delhi	17-18

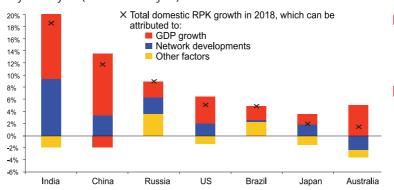
For more information, contact us at: talk@ddppl.com

20% growth in new air routes

The growth of more than 20 per cent in the number of new routes in India provided a sizeable boost to passenger demand in the market, according to a latest report by International Air Transport Association (IATA).

New airport pairs connections propel India growth to 1st place

% year-on-year (2018 calendar year)



■ Although the combination of GDP and network developments explain more than three quarters of the variation in domestic revenue passenger kilometers (RPK) growth rates over time, other factors such as tourism attractiveness, availability of travel alternatives, trade flows and demographics account for the residual growth in traffic in the country.

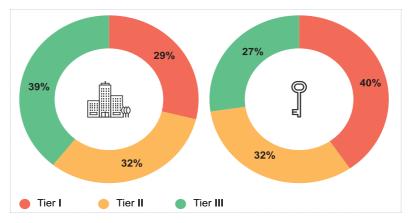
- The surging number of international flyers is drawing airlines to new air routes in India.
- The increase in international air traffic from India and a focus on business and leisure travellers has prompted not only foreign airlines such as Air Italy and NokScoot to launch new routes to destinations in the country but has also got several Indian carriers including Jet Airways and IndiGo to start operations on foreign routes.

Sources: IATA Economics, IMF, SRS Analyser

¹/₃ hotel signings from Tier-III

Rapid urbanisation in India is increasingly making Tier-III markets more relevant in the eyes of the hotel brands, according to a 'India Hospitality Industry Review' report by HVS ANAROCK.

Brand Singings: Tier Classification



Nearly a third of new hotel signings emerge from these markets despite hotels being much smaller than those located in Tier-I markets. This is also happening on account of newer hotel management companies setting shop as also the smaller ones looking to grow rapidly through franchise or management agreement of smaller standalone hotels in Tier II, III cities.

Source: Source: HVS Research

Medical tourism to flourish

Medical tourism in India by international travellers is expected to grow to USD13.3 bn by 2022, according to a report published by KPMG India and Google.

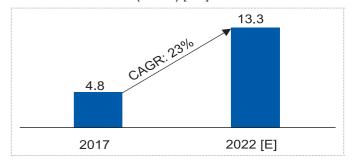
About 1.5 million medical tourists are expected to visit the country in 2022. The medical tourism market in India has grown rapidly over the past decade with India becoming one of the largest global medical tourism hubs.

Growth has been driven by a rise in international awareness of India's affordable healthcare, qualified healthcare professional base, coupled with investment into healthcare infrastructure and privately funded healthcare.

Source: Source: HVS Research

About 1.5 million medical tourists are Opportunity assessment for Indian players from medical tourists

Medical Tourism market in India (USD bn) [106]









एसबीय : ट्रैवल & वेकेशंस SBU: Travel & Vacations

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> । पद - मुंबई 1 position in Mumbai

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Co-ordinator / Sr. Co-ordinator (Operations) - Europe

> 1 पद - मुंबई 1 Position in Mumbai

को-ऑर्डिनेटर / सीनियर को-ऑर्डिनेटर (टिकटिंग और एयरलाइन कांट्रेक्टिंग)

Co-ordinator / Sr. Co-ordinator (Ticketing and Airline Contracting)

> 1 पद - मुंबई 1 Position in Mumbai

कनिष्ठ अधिकारी (ट्रेवल) Junior Officer (Travel)

2 पद – हैदराबाद और चेन्नई में 2 positions - one each in Hyderabad and Chennai

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> > 1 Position in Delhi

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virgin atlantic

Marketing Executive Virgin Atlantic

Experience & Qualifications required: Basic Graduation/Masters in Communication; Minimum 3 years of experience; Must have relevant experience in Marketing

- Implement digital marketing campaigns that successfully deliver ROI for the business and ensure that all marketing activities are on-brand
- Responsible for planning and executing B2B events and promotions for travel agents on a regular basis
- Collateral & asset development and updating web content on a regular basis

 Manage public relations activities with key
- stakeholders
- Establishing relations and liaising with teams in HQ Responsible for financial reporting on marketing
- budget and producing monthly reports Implementation of on-ground events, ensuring
- optimum brand visibility Limited domestic and international travel for

marketing events and meetings **Business Analyst**

Virgin Atlantic

Experience: 4-6 years of experience in a similar capacity; Education: Graduate with educational background in Data Analysis, Market Research, & Airport Economics, Forecasting and Research Methodology

Job Description

- Business Analysis: Assists Business Unit Head/Reporting Manager in developing tactical and strategic product, services and/or programs to support the business unit's goals
- Analysing the business unit's activities and trends and comparing analyses against the service standards and best practices.
- Market Research: Conducts and coordinates financial, product, market, operational, and related research to support strategic and business planning for the BU.
- Reports/Presentations/Data Interpretation: Interprets, evaluates, and interrelates research data, and develops integrated business analyses and projections for incorporation into strategic decision-making.
- Business Development: Identification of new business opportunities & ensure proper application of resources
- Framing & implementing Marketing Strategies to increase Market Share & Profitability
- Develop comprehensive Project Reports in response to Request for Proposal(RFP) received from potential (corporate) clients.

Reservation & Ticketing Agent Virgin Atlantic

Experience & Qualification required:

Graduate, having done a course in reservations & ticketing. Minimum 12 months of relevant experience with working knowledge of GDS, preferably Amadeus or Galileo.

Job Description:

- Telephonic assistance to direct passengers as well as trade partners, i.e. CUGs, TAs, TMCs, OTAs etc.
- Telephonic Sales queries new reservations
- Walk-in customer handling
- E-mail handling
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MOVEMENTS

Indian Association of Tour Operators

Delhi

Rahul Chakravarty has joined Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) as its Chief Operating Officer. Prior to this, he was working

with Federation of Indian commerce Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), heading the tourism division for the industry body for the last 15 years. In his new role, Chakravarty will be guided by the Executive Committee (EC) of IATO, put forth the views of IATO members and strive for service to IATO members and in turn to the industry. He started his career in 1985 with India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) where he worked for 19 years.

ITC Hotels

Delhi

Anil Chadha has been designated as Vice President—Operations, ITC Hotels Division. Chadha was responsible for the growth and



Four Points by Sheraton Navi Mumbai, Vashi

Mumbai



Hyatt Place Hampi

Hampi

Hyatt Place Hampi is pleased to announce the appointment of **Shalabh Verma** as the new General Manager of the hotel. With

over two decades of experience in the industry, Verma will be responsible for the entire operations and will spearhead the growth and development of the hotel. A skilled revenue analyst and market strategist, his core expertise lies in delivering successful outcomes by empowering the teams and building efficient processes. Verma's past experience includes working with hotel brands like InterContinental and Leela. He is an alumnus of the Institute of Advanced Management with a BA in Hospitality.

Indana Hotels

Mumha

Indana Hotels announced the appointment of **Sumit Shah** as its General Manager—Sales and Marketing. He brings with him



The Westin Pune Koregaon Park

Pune

The Westin Pune Koregaon Park welcomes **Abhay Singh** as Director of Operations. He will be responsible for heading and managing the

hotel operations and maintaining high standards of guest satisfaction. An industry expert, Singh holds an experience of more than 10 years in hospitality industry converting strategic vision into measurable results at various hotels. Prior to joining Westin Pune, he served as Director of Food & Beverage at Westin Langkawi Resort & Spa and Langkawi International Convention Centre. He has completed his hotel management degree from Institute of Hotel Management Aurangabad.

JW Marriott Hotel Bengaluru, Sheraton Grand Brigade Gateway & Renaissance Bengaluru Race Course Hotel



Nikita Das has been appointed as the Senior Cluster Marketing and Communication Head for Marriott International Bangalore Hotels. She started her career with Ogilvy & Mather in 2010. She then moved to DDB Mudra Communications as a Manager Brand Communications. In 2014, she joined Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi and soon after was promoted as Director PR & Marketing for Taj's flagship hotel in New Delhi

UNIGLOBE Mod Travel

Dolh

UNIGLOBE Mod Travel has appointed **Ankur Khurana** as its Chief Transformation Officer (CTO). During this role, Khurana will be



Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru

Bengaluru

Mahema Bhutia has been appointed as Director of Marketing at Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru. In her current role, she is

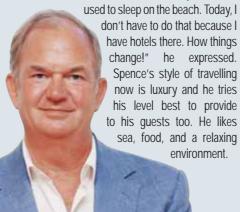


PR & Marketing for Taj's flagship hotel in New Delhi.

Kishu Gomes, Chairman, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, likes to de-stress by sprinting followed by a body-toning workout. "Besides being a



Maldives is a favourite for **John Spence**, Founder & Chairman, Karma Group. "I also love the Greek Islands. I first went there when I was 18 years old. I



Ibrahim Hakki Guntay, General Manager—Western & Southern India, Turkish Airlines travels a lot and likes watching movies on a flight. "One of my most

memorable holiday moments was when I was travelling on a flight from Niger to Mali in a desert and reading 'The Little Prince' for the first time. Only the ones who have read the book will understand my sentiment," he said. Among his favourite holiday destinations in India is the Taj Mahal in Agra and its garden. Guntay has travelled to more than 30 countries but hasn't seen a city like Porto

in Portugal, he confesses.







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Premium route for virgin atlantic

David Hodges, Country Manager—India, Virgin Atlantic, shares that the airline will be getting a new aircraft with an increased number of premium seats for customers on its Delhi-London route.

Nisha Verma

2019, claims David Hodges, Country Manager—India, Virgin Atlantic, is going to be an exciting year for the airline. "We are introducing a new A350 aircraft with an all new design that would be servicing our New York route. There will also be some exciting changes for Delhi. We are getting a new aircraft with a huge number of premium seats as well as a fully refurbished upper cabin, A new Business Class onboard the A330 is also coming to Delhi in the next few months," he shared.

Virgin Atlantic's partnership with Jet Airways turned out to be successful, especially for the Mumbai-London route on the Indian full-service carrier. "Delhi is performing very well; the year overall was also positive for us," Hodges said.

The airline is set to conduct interesting campaigns throughout the year. Hodges

Enjoy new experiences onboard



We are now entering a new expansion phase with new aircraft joining the fleet whilst focusing on customer experience and widening our network. We are the first European airline to fly with Airbus A350-1000, the largest version of Airbus A350. We are working to bring new customer experience to our Upper Class, Premium Economy and Economy Class customers.

We have been in the Indian market for close to 20 years now. In 2020 we, will celebrate our 20th anniversary in the country. Currently, we fly daily to Delhi from London and get passengers from Mumbai through our partnership with Jet Airways.

This year is very special for us as we are celebrating the fifth anniversary of trans-atlantic partnership with Delta Air Lines on the cooperation on North Atlantic. We have also partnered with Air France- KLM to enhance our presence in Europe and subsequently in the Asian market. This year, we'll take the next step in our journey through an expanded joint venture with Delta, Air France and KLM and we're excited to bring our unrivalled service to even more customers.

films or the best Indian food or the local crew. Among the variety of aspects we're pushing in the Indian market, we are looking to increase our local crew on board from Delhi this year."

For the MiCE segment, the airline wants to explore more. "We are an airline which doesn't have the highest

as there is a real opportunity in that cabin. In fact, we have witnessed the growth of conference facilities across Delhi, especially Aerocity, that is going to benefit the market immensely from an international

sharing a cordial relationship with the travel trade, Hodges explained "We want to make sure that it's a win-win situation where the travel trade is also very successful in this market. We've got some great partners and I think it's an exciting time for all of us

a major segment for Virgin Atlantic, and currently

perspective," he said. Elaborating on

Even students are

in this sector



Hodges is reviewing the

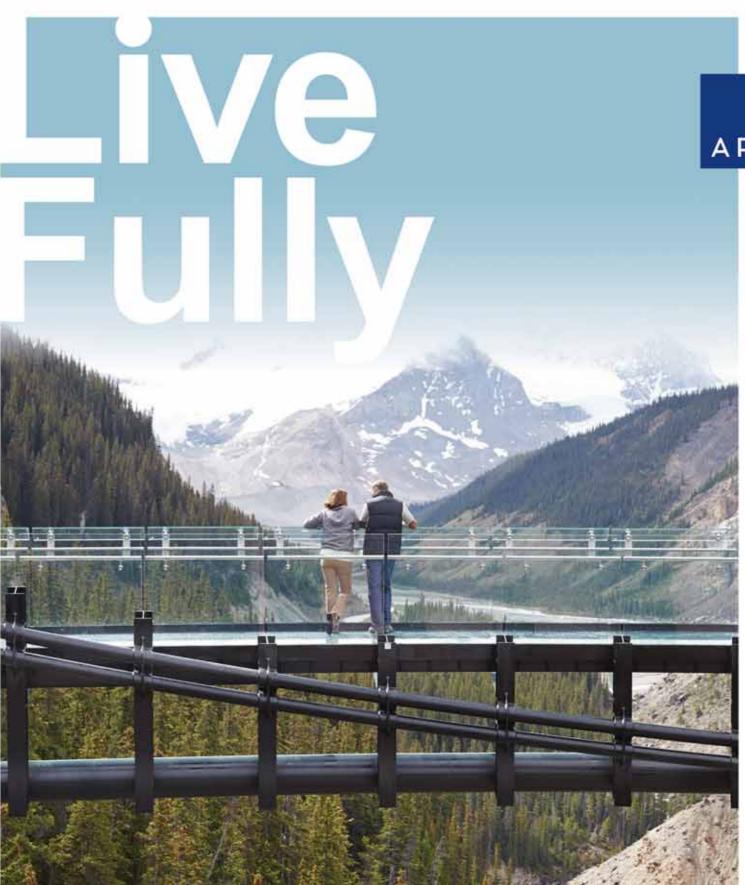
airline's student offer.

66 We have on board an amazing customer proposition, which continues to be very popular, whether it is the Bollywood films or the best Indian food or the local crew ""

further said, "Catering to the fundamentals of what really excites Indian passengers, we will continue to showcase what Virgin has to offer. We have on board an amazing customer proposition, which continues to be very popular, whether it is the Bollywood

capacity on the Delhi route; so we have certain limits on how much of MiCE we can accommodate However this is something which we are looking to expand this year, particularly as we grow our premium capacity by 37 per cent from the summer season





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Enjoy a complete Marvel experience at Hong Kong Disneyland



Check out more on the world's first attraction featuring Ant-Man and The Wasp and download the latest sales materials of Hong Kong Disneyland Resort!

Hong Kong Disneyland Resort situated in the lush beauty of Lantau Island. You will embark on a journey through seven themed lands in the Park - Adventure-land, Grizzly Gulch, Mystic Point, Toy Story Land, Fantasyland, Tomorrowland and Main Street, U.S.A. In March 2019, an all-new attraction — "Ant-Man and The Wasp: Nano Battle!" will be opening which is only available at the Hong Kong Disneyland Resort! Enjoy your magical vacation in Hong Kong Disneyland Hotel, Disney Explorers Lodge or Disney's Hollywood Hotel and having breakfast with your favorite Disney friends & 1-Day or 2-Day Park Admission Ticket. It is a friendly and safe oasis for families & Disney fans of all ages.

Inclusions:

- ✓ 2 nights stay at Disney Themed Hotels with daily breakfast
- ✓ Transfers from HKIA Hong Kong Disneyland Hotels in Hong Kong or V.V.

√ 2-Day Park Ticket

Disney's Hollywood Hotel



From **US\$ 449** pp*

Disney Explorers Lodge

From **US\$ 499** pp*

Hong Kong Disneyland Hotel



From **US\$ 549** pp*

Remarks: Rates are per person on TWN/DBL sharing basis, commissionable to agents. Rates are indicative prices valid for travel till 31°Jul 2019. Rates and offers are subject to change without prior notice & Subject to availability. No refund on any unutilized services. *Terms & Conditions apply.



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