

Cruise^{talk}

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Cruise^{talk}

AN ACQUIRED TASTE

There has been a lot of talk around cruising of late with a sense of urgency in selling cruises that wasn't apparent before. While for most travellers in India, cruising is a new concept, it is surprisingly so for the B2B channel as well. But a happy turn of events is that more and more cruise companies are interested in tapping India. They are now offering longer itineraries and diverse destinations. Isn't it great that travellers who have braved sub-tropical climate conditions all their lives are eager to go on an Alaskan cruise?

While we use this term 'cruise' loosely, it can mean many things: ocean cruise, river cruise, luxury cruise, expedition cruise, themed cruise, world cruise, etc. So it is important that sellers learn to identify the different genres. That will probably be the next step in the evolution of cruise-selling in India. Until that happens, cruising remains an acquired taste for the average middle-class traveller and it is up to the B2B channel to make this category mainstream.

EDITORIAL

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NEWS IN BRIEF



MSC'S NEW GRANDIOSA TO DEBUT THIS NOVEMBER

MSC Cruises is readying itself to introduce its brand new ship this November, called MSC Grandiosa. She will be christened in Hamburg and will become MSC Cruises' new flagship and the largest ship in the fleet. Apart from a strong emphasis on the new ship, the cruise line also has regular promotions that keep the market buzzing. It currently has a 50 per cent off on the second person promotion focusing on its Gulf sailings this winter along with attractive pricing for its West Med sailings. MSC Cruises is also transforming a former industrial sand extraction site into a flourishing marine reserve and private island destination exclusively for MSC Cruises guests.



Regent Seven Seas Cruises to launch new ship in 2020

Regent Seven Seas Cruises has announced the name of its new ship, scheduled for delivery in the first quarter of 2020. Seven Seas Splendor will set sail in February 2020 with itineraries for up to nine days, 10-14, 15-20 and more than 21 days to destinations such as Bermuda, Caribbean and Panama Canal, the Mediterranean, Transoceanic Crossings, Grand Voyages, and Northern Europe. She is the sister-ship of Seven Seas Explorer.

Norwegian Encore sails for the first time

Norwegian Cruise Line's newest innovative ship, Norwegian Encore, has completed another major construction milestone, when she departed the Meyer Werft shipyard in Papenburg, Germany, and sailed down Ems River towards North Sea. The ship is nearly 1,100 feet long.



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It's a Carnival

Present in India through Discover the World, for the last 10 years, Carnival Cruise Line is here to stay and will leave no stone unturned in extending its support to the trade.

PARTY TIME

- Carnival Cruise Line offers year-round options for three and four days to the Bahamas from Port Canaveral (Orlando) and Miami, to Mexico (Baja Mexico) from Long Beach, Los Angeles and to the Caribbean from Miami.
- Additionally, it offers seven days to Alaska from Seattle and seven days to the Caribbean, Mexico and the Bahamas.
- For the first time, it will have sailing from San Francisco on Carnival Miracle that will sail to Alaska from SFO.

HAZEL JAIN

In India recently for a flying visit, **Luke Smith**, Head International Sales, Carnival Cruise Line, was impressed with the enthusiasm that the travel agents exuded towards cruising. On his first time in India (in Mumbai), he met key travel partners and discussed growth areas. He said, "I'm absolutely loving it. We are here to show our support for the trade and to show our commitment to the Indian market. It is a fantastic growth market for us and definitely one of the markets on our radar. We look forward to growing our network of travel agents."

The cruise line has new ships coming up – Carnival Radiance, Carnival Panorama, Mardi Gras. "This is a really exciting time for us. The product caters well for Indian guests. India has been growing at a faster rate than us globally but it is at a much smaller volume at the



Past numbers for Carnival Cruise Line indicate that there is huge demand for shorter cruises from key home ports like Miami, New York, and Los Angeles

moment. We are only scratching the surface of what we can do with the Indian market," Smith added.

Past numbers for Carnival Cruise Line indicate that there is huge demand for shorter cruises from key home ports like Miami, NY, and Los Angeles that has huge variety.

Smith revealed, "We are seeing multigenerational families and large groups from India. Our aim is to educate our partners through various programmes, incentives, and networking events."

Meanwhile, Discover the World has been working closely with Carnival Cruise Line for over 10 years with strong focus on its B2B partner network pan India. **Dipti Adhia**, Director Sales & Product Head Cruises, Discover the World, says, "We have been working closely with Carnival Cruise Line for over 10 years and have seen significant growth over the years with strong focus on our B2B partner network pan India."

"We educate and train our partners to curate unique itineraries to create more options. We encourage our travel partners to educate their consumers about cruising as a great travel option and help them to experience this by providing excellent service and information. We have seen many examples of

travellers trying out cruising, only to fall in love with it and wanting to experience it over and over again," she adds.

Speaking about the change she has seen in the behaviour of Indian cruisers, Adhia says, "Generally, Indian travellers prefer land plus cruise packages. Hence, short cruises seem to be more popular for now amongst Indian travellers. We believe this trend will also change as Indian travellers become more accustomed to longer itineraries and destinations, and venture to try out more unique cruise experiences."

Carnival Cruise Line caters to every nationality, and approximately 80 per cent of its chefs onboard are Indian and are therefore able to offer a delicious Indian menu for guests.

"I would say that India has become an emerging market for international cruising and there is huge potential for everyone. The Indian traveller has been cruising for the last 20 years or more, with certain segments having graduated to become connoisseurs of cruising, even undertaking expeditions and small-ship cruising, while a large segment enjoys cruising as at least a part of their vacation. M!CE and special events will also continue to be a high point for us in the year 2020," Adhia adds.



"We are only scratching the surface of what we can do with the Indian market"

LUKE SMITH
Head International Sales
Carnival Cruise Line



"M!CE and special events will also continue to be a high point for us in 2020"

DIPTI ADHIA
Director Sales & Product Head Cruises
Discover the World



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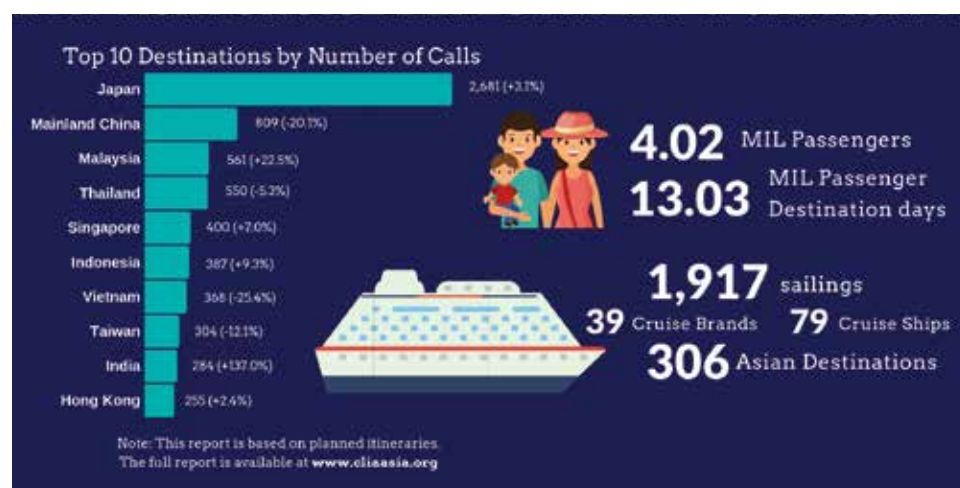
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Where does India stand?

The latest reports published by CLIA (Cruise Lines International Association) indicate that India is showing phenomenal growth as a cruise destination and is expected to witness a 13% increase in port of call.



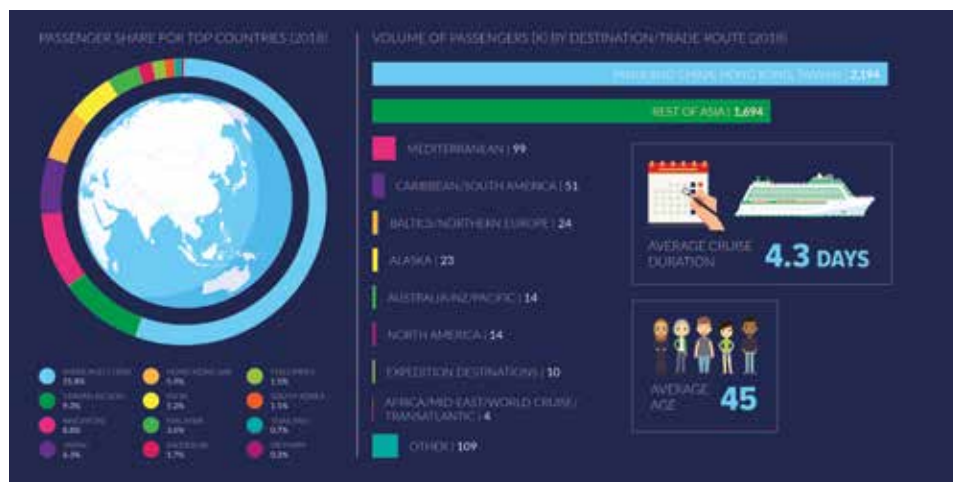
2019 ASIA CRUISE DEPLOYMENT & CAPACITY

Port calls in Asian destinations

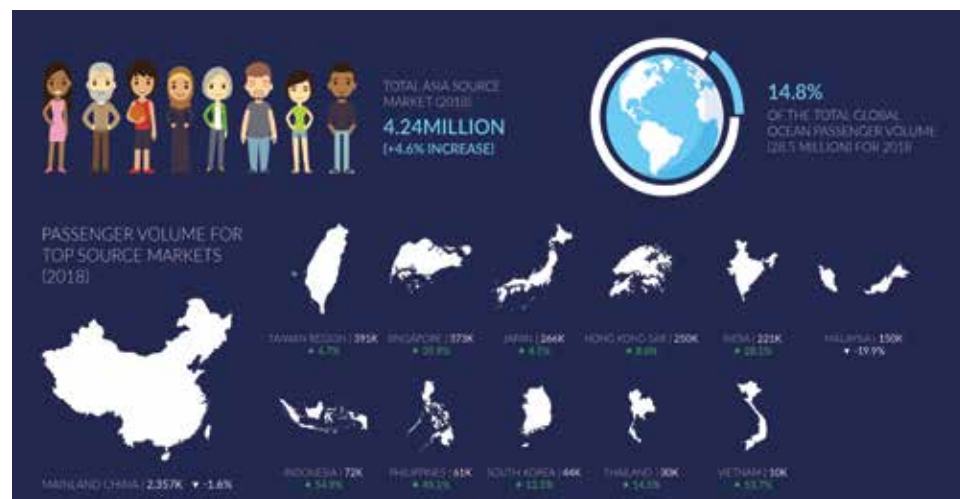
The number of port calls to Asian destinations is expected to fall marginally in 2019. A total of 7,154 port calls will be made throughout Asia, 15 fewer than last year. In Mainland China, port calls will decrease by 21 per cent, while the passenger destination days will decrease by 17 per cent. However, not all destinations will experience a decline in port calls. Many will see growth: India (+137%), Malaysia (+22.5%), Indonesia (+9.3%), Singapore (+7.0%), Japan (+3.1%) and Hong Kong (+2.4%) will see gains in port calls, while South Korea (+28.4%) will bounce back following an 82 per cent dip in 2018. The five-year CAGR of Asia's port calls is 14 per cent, and the five-year growth from 2014-2019 is 88 per cent, continuing an upward growth trajectory.

Passenger Destination Days (PDD)

PDD is a measure of potential visits from cruise passengers when a ship calls at a destination, and an increase translates to more tourism impact for the destination. Contrary to the decline in port calls, Asia will see an increase in PDD. In 2019, there will be 13.03 million PDD, which is a 1 per cent increase from the 12.9 million PDD expected in 2018. The increase will come from Southeast Asia (+8.6%) and South Asia (+106.8%). South Asia's growth will be fuelled by India's expected 137 per cent year-on-year growth in port calls. Singapore moved up to be the top port hosting 991,000 PDD. Despite a short dip, Japan remains the top destination, hosting 4,726,000 PDD. India (+150%), Indonesia (+46%), Malaysia (+40.2%) and Singapore (+10.1%) saw double-digit growth in PDD.



PASSENGER SHARE & VOLUME OF PASSENGERS BY DESTINATIONS (2018)



INDIA HITS A RECORD HIGH IN 2018 WITH 4.24 M CRUISE PASSENGERS

Asia Ocean Source Markets 2018

Asia sourced cruise passenger numbers hit another record high in 2018 with 4.24M taking an ocean cruise (up 4.6%). In 2018, global ocean passenger volume was 28.5M, and Asia accounted for 14.8 per cent (versus 15.1% in 2017). After China, Taiwan remains the second largest Asian source market (9.3% share) followed by Singapore (8.8%), Japan (6.3%), Hong Kong (5.9%), India (5.2%) and Malaysia (3.6%). Passenger volume from Singapore, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam had double-digit growth. Asian cruise passengers are found across the age spectrum with an estimated average age of 45.4 years. Only three markets show real divergence: India, a young 37 years average; Indonesia, a young 39 years average; and Japan, an older 57 years.

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Indian tourists set sail

India is regarded as a key source market for Singapore, which presented its latest cruise offerings to the travel trade at a forum organised by Singapore Tourism Board (STB) in association with **TRAVTALK** as knowledge partner.

NISHA VERMA

At Singapore Tourism Board's recently-organised forum themed 'Growing Cruise Connections, Achieving Together' in New Delhi, the travel trade along with cruise liners and professionals from the cruise industry deliberated on opportunities and potential of Singapore as a hub for Indians looking to cruise. The forum delved into the growing overseas cruise tourism from India via focused conversations and a stirring exchange of ideas.

Addressing the gathering was **GB Srithar**, Regional Director (India, Middle East & South Asia) at STB, who shared that the tourism board was adopting a two-pronged marketing strategy for India's outbound cruise market. First, it would raise awareness and promote cruising as a hassle-free holiday option for the Indian traveller and second, it would look to establish Singapore as a favoured cruise holiday destination by presenting the island city-state's varied tourism offerings for pre and post-cruise experiences within. Srithar said, "STB partners with stakeholders in the cruise industry to secure a vibrant pipeline of cruise ships and new cruise offerings in Singapore. Cruise holidays in Singapore present an opportunity to explore the popular attractions, rejuvenated precincts, the growing café culture, innovative bars



"Cruise holidays in Singapore present an opportunity to explore the popular attractions"

GB SRITHAR
Regional Director
(India, Middle East & South Asia), STB

and restaurants, while embarking on a variety of interesting tours available."

The objective of the forum was to help connect with the trade and educate them on the different schemes, said **Raymond Lim**, Area Director, India (New Delhi), STB. "Such programmes can help the travel trade to promote Singapore better. The Cruise Development Fund gives marketing assistance to cruise companies or cruise agents who wish to sell Singapore and market it for cruising with pre and post-cruise programmes. It ensures that we stay relevant and competitive against other destinations."

For **Jiali Wong**, Regional Manager (Asia), Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), it was a fruitful session. "There were a lot of good partners together and the topics discussed were interesting. Everybody had a lot to share, which is great because we all know that India is a market with a lot of potential and currently has a very low market penetration for cruises."

Srithar presented the 'Valued Tourism Partner' awards on the occasion, to representatives from key cruise liners operating out of Singapore.

Singapore Tourism Board's recent forum delved into the growing overseas cruise

tourism from India via focused conversations and a stirring exchange of ideas

Cruising along the tide

Comparing the market scenario to what it was earlier, stakeholders of the cruise industry claim that the future is only bright and cruising is here to stay with Indians looking for a plethora of experiences on board.

NISHA VERMA



“

Cruising as of now is probably one of the fastest growing segments in the tourism industry and India has been a very substantial contributor. We started slow a couple of years back, but I think we are catching up with the pace of other markets. Passengers are evolving themselves from not just cruising in Asia, but are moving beyond and reaching to other parts of the world, whether it is Mediterranean or the Bahamas, and even Alaska. It is very exciting now to see Indians getting on to expedition cruises as well. I think as a market, Indians have evolved over the years and it is a segment, which is only going to grow by the year.

NARESH RAWAL
Vice President, Sales
Genting Cruise Lines

“

Travellers are getting educated, and understand the value that cruise products offer. I always say—once a cruiser, always a cruiser. The biggest advantage now is that we have a ship in India, allowing people to get their first experience of cruise within the country and then moving to other countries like Singapore, Europe etc. People are progressing in terms of cruising.

PRADEEP SABOO
Partner
Guideline Travels



“

The cruise market in India is at a very nascent stage. However, there is only growth ahead. This growth will further enhance with the local Indian cruise liners making a headway with Jalesh and Angriya. This would allow Indians to get a taste of what cruises are all about, which would in turn trigger the demand amongst the travellers. The market will grow exponentially.

PANKAJ NAGPAL
Managing Director
Travstarz Global Group



“

The cruise industry in India started from small towns when Star Cruise was introduced. Since then, the market grew from 18-20 per cent year-on-year. In the last few years, charters, events on cruises, and theme-based cruises, have really done well. At least 20-30 families have done over 10-12 cruises in these many years with us. There is also a rise in five to seven-night itineraries from India.

KISHAN BAYANI
Managing Director
Ark Travels



“

India is a market with immense potential. At the moment, it has a very low market penetration for cruise, and it's heartening to see a lot of interest. If the travel agent is able to put their customers on the right cruises, I am very sure that the market will grow at a very fast pace. India has been seeing double-digit growth, and in 2018 as a source market, we saw year-on-year growth of more than 28 per cent.

JIALI WONG
Regional Manager- Asia, Cruise Lines
International Association (CLIA)



“

The future of the cruise industry is great in India. Firstly, a cruise is a complete package and one doesn't need to look at anything beyond the cruise liner. There are a lot of experiences on board that one can try. That's where cruising becomes an option, where one can have 100 per cent holiday and enjoyment once on board. In fact, for cruising there are different segments in India, right from luxury to budget. In case someone has had a taste of luxury cruising, they don't want to come down to anything budget. People are now looking at different experiences.

GULDEEP SINGH SAHNI,
Managing Director
Weldon Travels



“

In the last six to eight months various cruise companies have started approaching us for bringing social events, weddings, anniversary celebrations and other private functions to the genre. I believe that cruise is a very cost-oriented product. However, when it comes to Indian weddings, people are ready to spend. We are talking to a lot of cruise companies and evaluating how to work with them for Indian weddings. M!CE is already a hit on cruises, and social events have also happened there. I am confident that cruising will become big in the near future.

RAJEEV JAIN
Director
Rashi Entertainment

“

Cruising is an evolving market, where consumers, after cruising once would go to different destinations and cruises. I see the potential of Indian consumers not only from main cities, but even smaller towns, grow phenomenally. For us, the interest in cruises, in terms of number of queries and generations have grown 300 per cent and we've grown almost 30 per cent over last year in cruising.

DEEPAK RAWAT
Senior Vice President, Holiday Products
& International Markets, Make My Trip



“

Multi-generation family travel to celebrate special occasions on cruises is increasing. There is an interest to go for exploratory or expedition cruises to places like Antarctica. Cruisers are getting younger by the day. We are seeing young families travelling with children. A lot of people are travelling with friends, where they form a group of four to five couples with kids.

NIKHIL THAKURDAS
Chief Executive Officer
CruiseBay



“

Indians look for longer itineraries and more cruises. Initially, they would prefer to go with big groups, but now they are willing to go with families and small groups, as well as take trips on their own. In fact, because of technology, travellers are well informed. However, if there are 28 million cruisers around the world, India contributes to about 180,000 which is 0.0005%. The opportunity is huge.

NALINI UDAI GUPTA
Managing Director- Lotus Destinations
GSA for Costa Cruises



“

India is one of the largest source markets for Singapore cruises. There is no market for cruise in India currently. From how the market looks like, the growth from India will be slower until we have brands represented in our own backyard. However, till that time Singapore is our home port, but for India to grow as a market, we must homeport out of India.

RATNA CHADHA
Co-Founder and Chairperson
Tirun Travel Marketing -
representative Royal Caribbean Cruises



“

I believe that the last five years have seen the real expansion of the cruise market in India. Our numbers, the kind of queries that we get for cruising, and the kind of conversions we are getting on the same, are showing that. We are seeing a very consistent demand of over 20 per cent on a regular basis for cruises. Last year, we saw a growth in cruises when combined with multiple types of land packages and stand-alone cruises. We are seeing a growth in excess of 25-30 per cent, and an increasing interest in all kinds of cruises across the globe.

ROMIL PANT
Senior Vice President - Leisure Travel
Thomas Cook India



India has been seeing double-digit growth and in 2018, as a source market, it saw year-on-year growth of more than 28 per cent, which reflects the fast pace



“

The Indian cruise market is maturing fine and fast. In our six-month existence, we had around 50,000 guests. Most of them are first time cruisers, and very few have cruised for the second time. I think cruising is going to become very trendy in India. Soon, Indians will be ready for more ships and more companies to come. Everybody's working very hard to put India on the map of cruising. There are still some challenges because cruise business in India is new, but support from port operations, board of ports, secretaries of tourism and shipping, has been very good.

JURGEN BAILOM
President & CEO
Jalesh Cruises

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Luxury dining on Arabian Sea

Queensline Cruises changed the way Mumbai dined with its super luxury floating restaurants – Queensline Sea YAH and Queensline Neverland – that are docked near the city's famous landmark — Gateway of India.

Not only can Mumbai savour the best international cuisines money can buy in the middle of the sea à la the French or Italian Riviera, guests will also be able to cruise along Mumbai's iconic coastline with stunning views while dining. Converted into Mumbai's largest super-luxury floating restaurants, Queensline Sea YAH and Queensline Neverland opened their gates in October 2018 near Mumbai's iconic point – The Gateway of India. This was the brainchild of **Shripriya Dalmia Thirani**, a 38-year-old first time restaurateur from Delhi.

A scion of one of India's most affluent and revered Dalmia clan – Thirani is the granddaughter of Jai Dayal Dalmia, the co-founder of Dalmia Cement and OCL India. She brought this experience to India by winning the most coveted tenders to start India's finest floating restaurants and cruises next to Mumbai's iconic site on the Arabian Sea. Each ship has a capacity of 200 people and will cater to the international taste buds of India's young and old. Queensline will bring to India some of the



SHRIPRIYA DALMIA THIRANI

best chefs from across the world to whip up international cuisines besides allowing Indian chefs to play with traditional specialities. Celebration, some quite family time, or even a corporate get-together will have a new meaning with the best views of India's Maximum City and an explosive gastronomic experience. Thirani made waves by initiating and hosting the first-ever literature festival on sea. She will, in December 2019, host India's most unique and largest Queensline Culinary Congress (QCC) across India that will have flavours of the past interact with the flavours of the present in a single gigantic platform.

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The rivers of Europe

From exploring the continent through its pebbled paths to experiencing it via its rivers, Indian travellers have come a long way, says **Neelu Samant**, Director, Quantum Travels.



KNOW?

DID YOU

Italian cruise line, MSC, tends to omit deck 17 due to Italian superstitions surrounding the number.



“As a company, we handle the globe, but our focus is Europe and cruising in Europe”

NEELU SAMANT
Director
Quantum Travels

A river cruise is probably not for the first-time traveller to Europe, but can definitely be combined with some city stays. This way, they can experience the local culture, the countryside and the essence of the destination at the same time. River cruising is an inclusive product that includes excursions with attractive deals that are on offer for a limited time. So we cannot call it a popular product.

Itineraries change every year and are carefully curated with feedback from past travellers. Seven to ten nights is the ideal duration for the Indian travellers for this. Cruises can also be chartered for a shorter duration. Destinations include and are as varied as the Duoro River valley in Portugal, and hidden gems such as Arles in France and Durnstein in Austria.

River cruises are appealing to travellers as the ship does not accommodate more than 150 to 200 travellers because of its size, as against 1,000 upwards in ocean liners.

This ensures exclusivity and privacy. Moreover, in terms of F&B, each meal on the cruise is a plated gourmet meal where the guests' food preferences are taken into consideration. There are no buffets. This also indicates a level of exclusivity.

Destinations include Duoro River valley in Portugal, and gems like Arles in France and Durnstein in Austria



River cruises also work well with solo travellers as they are likely to meet like-minded and well-travelled guests on the cruise. Also, since excursions are included in the package and availed by almost everyone on board, by the end of day two, guests know at least half their fellow cruisers. There are also activities for children available for those travelling with families. So it can appeal to the entire spectrum of travellers.


As a company, we organise tours to all continents, but our focus is on Europe and particularly cruising in Europe. All our products are niche and are thoroughly researched by our team personally who travel to these destinations. We also work closely with the travel trade and have created a great rapport with travel agents over the years. We also have an updated website now with new products that will be of interest to the agents.

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Where to cruise?

Experts tell us where Indians are cruising. Europe is a clear winner but surprise entries are Alaska and Scandinavia.

HAZEL JAIN

“The Indian cruiser is very diversified today. I would put the Indian cruiser in three buckets.

The first-time cruisers prefer destinations like

Western Mediterranean, Alaska or the Caribbean and of course Asia (Ex Singapore). These are easy cruising destinations which have well-appointed port facilities and great flight connectivity. The second kind of cruisers are luxury or experienced cruisers who have mostly done more than five to seven cruises and are now on the lookout for more bespoke destinations such as Baltic and Scandinavian countries, South America or river cruises in Europe on the Danube or Rhine. The adventure or expedition cruisers opt for Antarctica followed by the Galapagos, Arctic, Amazon, Raja Ampat and Komodo. These destinations promise a surreal nature experience, taking them up-close to wildlife.

IAN BANERJEE
Director
Global Anchor Cruises



“We offer itineraries to more than 300 destinations around the globe but some of the popular ones amongst Indians

are the Western Mediterranean, Alaska, Scandinavia, Greek Isles and the Bahamas. The seven-day Western Mediterranean cruise from Barcelona to Spain, Italy, and France is quite popular as it gives an opportunity to explore some of the most scenic on-shore excursions in each of these countries. Another popular itinerary is the Alaskan voyage. Cruising is the best way to see and experience most of Alaska. Scandinavia, Russia and Baltic from Copenhagen is also high on the list. This is because guests can experience the best of Baltic by land and sea. A cruise is the best way to explore and immerse in the beautiful destinations of the Baltic Region and Greek Isles, especially with shore excursions.

MANOJ SINGH
Country Head, India
Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings



“In my experience, all parts of Europe are doing well with cruisers from India. The Greek Isles are also high on the list but this is only for three to four nights. They don't go for the seven-night itineraries. But those opting for West Mediterranean of course do the seven-night one because it includes all key cities of Rome, Naples, Florence, Monte Carlo, and Nice – so Spain, France and Italy. Slightly mature travellers do Norway and further north, the Baltics going up to Russia, Helsinki to St. Petersburg. Basically, Indians want to start with destinations they have heard of first. Once they are comfortable with this, they then plan lesser-known places to explore like some of the islands because no one wants to go to random islands which don't have brag value. Croatia along with Greek Islands is also popular with mature cruisers as this is a 14-nighter and is also cheaper than doing a land holiday here.

VIVEK JAIN
Managing Director
Griffon



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HAZEL JAIN



"Peruvian Amazon and Indonesian archipelago are perfect destinations for the Indian market"

FRANCESCO GALLI ZUGARO
Founder and CEO
Aqua Expeditions

Aqua Expeditions caters to modern-day adventurers seeking active exploration in destinations best discovered by cruising. Highly experiential in nature, Aqua Expeditions' journeys encompass tailored activities with guided small-group excursions with a 1:1 crew-to-guest ratio. There is also a strong focus on sustainability and conservation.

Established in 2007, Aqua Expeditions began with the launch of three Aqua Expeditions river cruise vessels, the Aqua Amazon and Aria Amazon in 2008 and 2011 respectively in the Peruvian Amazon, followed by an expansion in Southeast Asia (Cambodia and Vietnam) with the Aqua Mekong in 2014.

In 2019, Founder and CEO of Aqua Expeditions, **Francesco Galli Zugaro** announced two new vessels and three new destinations. Aqua Blu, the cruise line's first-ever ocean going explorer yacht, will explore three new coastal destinations of East Indonesia, including the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Komodo National Park. Aqua Nera, a new-build river cruise ship, will sail the Peruvian Amazon in August 2020.

Speaking about how he thinks this will be received by the India market, Zugaro says, "We believe that the Peruvian Amazon and Indonesian archipelago are perfect destinations for the Indian market. In the Peruvian Amazon, you can travel on our newest vessel – the Aqua Nera – which will set sail next year in October." Aqua Nera is touted to be the most state-of-the-art river boat to sail the Amazon.

"In Indonesia, guests can travel on our new luxury expedition yacht called the Aqua Blu. It is our first coastal ship and the first-ever long-range explorer yacht with year-round departures to be permanently based in East Indonesia—the heart of the Coral Triangle and the fabled Old World spice trade route. Aqua Blu is one product that we would like to promote in the India market," he adds.

For such a niche product, the company has found some traction in the Indian market. "Yes, we do see some growing numbers from India. However, it is still a very small market for Aqua Expeditions. It might take a bit more time to develop some consistent bookings from India. We believe that with our luxury expedition yacht portfolio, we will have more chances to target such a niche clientele," Zugaro shares. The company currently works with Global Anchor Cruises, which in turn introduces its cruises to luxury travel agents. Aqua Expeditions also takes advantage of the Virtuoso and Traveller Made portfolio/network focusing on getting exposure from the trade partner. While it does not have an incentive structure for the B2B channel for the Indian market at this stage, the CEO adds, "The moment we see an increase of business from here, we will customise our incentives for this market. We are still a relatively small team and need to ensure we invest our human resources in the right markets at this time."

DID YOU KNOW?

Cruise ships are getting more futuristic. Passengers can expect a futuristic experience on board a number of liners in just a decade's time.

Ark Travels' Voyage

The cruise specialist reached out to untapped Tier-III cities like Dehradun and Agra, and UTs like Puducherry, as part of its 21-city roadshow.



Ark Travels is promoting a seamless travel experience from Singapore

Airport to Marina Bay Cruise Terminal in partnership with Jewel Changi Lounge

Ark Travels successfully completed a 21-city roadshow in October 2019. The roadshows were planned and executed in association with Genting Cruise Lines and Dream Cruises, and were aimed at educating the travel trade about the services, new offers, value-add-ons and benefits of cruising. The events were organised in major metro cities like Delhi, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Mumbai (seven events including in Thane and New Mumbai) and Chennai, along with Tier-II cities such as Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Lucknow, and Mangaluru. The company, primarily in the business of selling international cruise vacations to Indian travellers, is also the first to touch base with travel agents in cities like Dehradun, Agra, Coimbatore and Madurai, and UTs like Puducherry, by hosting cruise-specific roadshows.

To further reward its travel partners, Ark Travels organised a familiarisation trip on board Dream Cruises' newest cruise ship – Explorer Dream. To add on to their experience, agents were hosted in Singapore and were taken to Hong Kong on a Jetstar chartered flight by Genting Cruise Lines to board the cruise. In total, 64 travel agents were hosted from across India for the inaugural five-night-sailing itinerary (October 8-13) on Explorer Dream, giving agents an opportunity to explore destinations like Hong Kong, Nha Trang, Ho Chi Minh City, and Singapore.

India being a major fly-cruise market, the partners were also given the opportunity to understand the fly-cruise concept by visiting Jewel Changi Lounge, which is a nature-themed entertainment and retail complex near Changi Airport, Singapore. Ark Travels is currently promoting a seamless travel experience

from Singapore Airport to Marina Bay Cruise Terminal in partnership with Jewel Changi Lounge. The B2B travel company that has been a trendsetter in the cruise industry has celebrated this milestone by being the first Indian PSA to send 50,000 passengers from India to travel on board the fleet of Genting Cruise Lines comprising Star Cruises and Dream Cruises.

Attributing its success to a well-rounded marketing strategy, **Kishan Biyani**, Managing Director, Ark Travels, says, "Our aim is to reach every nook and corner of India to educate travel partners about the benefits of cruising. The unmatched luxury on board these floating resorts has been projected as a unique destination to host theme parties and events, be it MICE, weddings, birthdays, or anniversaries."

"We make continued efforts to strengthen our relationship with our partners and empower them through our digitally-driven tool called DECK PRO, which is our online booking engine," adds Biyani.



NARESH RAWAL
Vice President – Sales &
Marketing India & South Asia
Genting Cruise Lines

“It's now time to explore opportunities in Tier-II and III markets through the support of our PSAs like Ark Travels”



Naresh Rawal, Vice President – Sales & Marketing India & South Asia, Genting Cruise Lines, says, "Ark Travels has always played an integral role in our growth story in India. We believe that educating our travel agent fraternity about our existing services and newer introductions is an essential component of our continued penetration into the Indian market. With a sizeable amount of awareness already existing in the metro cities, it's now time for us to explore newer opportunities in Tier-II and III markets through the continued support of our PSAs like Ark Travels."



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A maritime adventure

Inspired by the Sagarmala Project, Angriya has reactivated the Mumbai-Goa sea route after a gap of three decades.

HAZEL JAIN



India has a 7,000-plus kilometre coastline that is bedazzled with unique seascapes, cultural diversity, and an array of marine biodiversity. To showcase these to the Indian as well as global travellers, **Captain Nitin Dhond**, Chairman & Managing Director, Angriya Sea Eagle, started the company whose name has been inspired by Kanhoji Angre, chief of the Maratha Navy in 18th century India. “The maritime history of India is thousands of years old and serves as an inspiration to the global maritime sea-farer and sea-lover community. Yet, there was not a single Indian domestic cruise liner with an Indian flag in recent times. Our endeavour at Angriya was to change that,” he says. With inspiration from the Sagarmala project – a Ministry of Shipping initiative – and support from the Indian maritime and tourism fraternity, Captain Dhond decided to lead by example and launch Angriya, India’s

CAPTAIN NITIN DHOND
Chairman & Managing
Director, Angriya Sea Eagle

“We plan to effuse life into new and old maritime routes that have tremendous tourism potential”

first domestic cruise ship in its class. The aim was also to pave way for others and open this sector of marine tourism on the Indian coast. Angriya has successfully reactivated the Mumbai-Goa sea route for sea travellers after a gap of three decades, and connected the financial capital to the holiday capital of India. He adds that Angriya has been able to promote change in the Indian maritime sector with its thrust in the marine tourism sector by bringing into limelight the demand for cruise tourism. “With its focus on developing smaller coastal ports in the Konkan belt of Maharashtra and the states of Goa and Gujarat, Angriya plans to rekindle the sea travelling traditions of Indians. Smaller vessels that will showcase maritime and marine diversity, while promoting green ship mandates, are goals that have been set with dedicated timelines by Angriya. This includes a major thrust on enthusing more travellers

After completion of over 175 voyages and hosting over 50,000 passengers

from India and abroad, Angriya has re-established the culture of sea travel



KNOW?

DID YOU Ships have been called 'she' for centuries; it's a seafaring tradition that began with the earliest sailors and is still widely practised today.

to travel and holiday on Indian seas and also use sea routes for water transport as well as corporate and social events. Angriya envisions to connect people, cultures and experiences at sea with its outlook and commitment of safe seas and happy sea farers at all times," Captain Dhond adds.

PROMOTING CRUISE TOURISM

Angriya has helped build confidence amongst travellers in India about sea travel. Earlier, safety at sea and sea sickness were two challenges that the Indian traveller always pondered before embarking on a sea voyage, from a catamaran to an international cruise liner. After completion of over 175 voyages and hosting over 50,000 passengers from India and abroad, Angriya has succeeded in re-establishing the culture of sea travel without worry or anxiety.

With vast open decks, an infinity pool and an array of 'under the starlit sky' activities, Angriya promotes local cuisine, celebrates the famed Maratha supremacy of Sarkhel Kanhoji Angre at sea, and documents marine life at sea. "Angriya has also helped rekindle interest in state monuments like the Light house at Vengurla that can be viewed whilst sailing on the Mumbai-Goa route.

Empowering local and coastal youth and creating employment in this freshly emerging sector has been Angriya's strength. We plan to expand further and effuse life into new and old maritime routes that have tremendous tourism potential on the Western coast of India," the Captain asserts.

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IRCTC makes waves

In June 2019, the Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation identified the potential that cruise tourism offered and has introduced the first international cruise package along with Norwegian Cruise Line.

The Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been a pioneer in various business modules with different verticals with online selling. One of them is cruise tourism which it has started promoting on its portal since June 2019. It has conceptualised international cruise as well as river cruise tourism which may be launched shortly along with domestic river cruising.

IRCTC introduced the first international cruise package in partnership with Norwegian Cruise Line on June 24, 2019 in Baltic Ocean. It was ex-Delhi for 13 days and 12 nights and included a nine-night sailing on Norwegian Cruise Line. The starting fare was ₹ 295,817 per pax on double sharing basis in a Balcony Cabin on Norwegian Cruise Line which included transfers, meals, poolside activities, access to fitness facilities, insurance, visa charges, hotel stay (1+1 nights) and return airfare on Emirates Airlines (ex-Delhi). It has already booked and operated 12 cabins on Norwegian Getaway from June 24, 2019 to July 6, 2019 (12N/13D).

Rajni Hasija, Director Tourism & Marketing, IRCTC, says, "We have collaborated with GSAs and PSAs of various cruise lines that have a presence in India. We have recently loaded 33 different itineraries covering 11 cruise liners covering maximum outflow from India during the months of May-June-July-August 2020. This means a choice of 104 itineraries during the summer vacation when schools are closed. We are receiving daily queries on the package price which will be launched shortly as the agreement with the party is in the pipeline. We intend to have tie-ups with all major

ON IRCTC

- Costa Cruises
- MSC Cruises
- Holland America Line
- Regent Seven Seas Cruises
- NCL
- Princess Cruises
- Seabourn
- Celebrity Cruises
- Hurtigruten
- Royal Caribbean International
- Carnival Cruise Line



"We have collaborated with GSAs and PSAs of cruise lines that have a presence in India"

RAJNI HASIJA
Director Tourism & Marketing
IRCTC

cruise lines sailing globally." The payment gateway will be an option available on the IRCTC portal. Live inventory is not available on the portal yet, but this key element will be added in the near future. Speaking about the growing cruise tourism in India, Hasija adds, "The market size of Indian cruises is around 1.8 lakh, which is a small drop in the large ocean of outbound Indian travellers at global cruise numbers. The Indian market is growing at an aggressive pace where IRCTC is targeting its own online market base for this."

The incredible tour package that IRCTC made for the Norwegian was done by selecting the most popular international destinations among Indians such as Denmark, Germany, Poland, Finland, Russia, and Sweden on optional charges basis directly on the IRCTC website. "These European destinations are known for their old-world charm, and also modern marvels. Being such an old part of the world, Europe is full of historical places, and this IRCTC international cruise offer gives a closer look into the great wide world," Hasija reveals.

The package includes meals in the dining venues as allotted by IRCTC, and this includes – two main dining rooms on every ship except Norwegian Breakaway, Norwegian Epic, Norwegian Escape, and Norwegian Getaway; buffet; 24-hour dining venue (on select ships); outdoor buffet (on select ships); pool bar and grill (on select ships); and coffee bar (on select ships). Guests also get the chance to enjoy all entertainment onboard with the exception of dinner and lunch theatre entertainment.

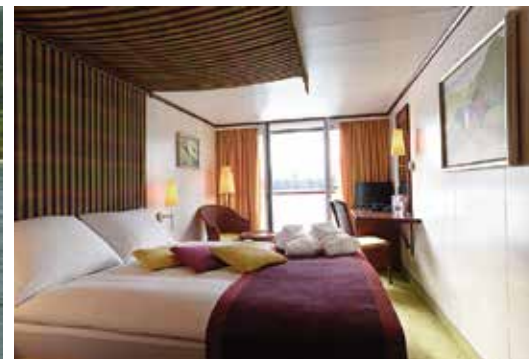
The incredible tour package that IRCTC made for the Norwegian was done by selecting the most popular international destinations among Indians

River cruising on A-Rosa

There is always something to see from these ships as both sides have a shore. Add to this the early booking discount offered by STIC Travel Group, which gives agents a chance to save anything between €80-600.

The A-Rosa river cruise provides a comfortable, simple, and stress-free way to see Europe. Its six premium international ships – A-Rosa Flora, Brava, Stella, Donna, Silva and Viva – offer cruises on Europe's rivers Danube, Rhine, Rhone and Seine. Unlike ocean cruising, river cruises have ports in the city centre, thus minimising transfer time to and from the ship.

A-Rosa sails on the Rhine/Main/Moselle, Danube, Seine and Rhone/Saone, and covers Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Serbia, Romania, Bucharest, Slovakia, Prague, Wurzburg and France. Currently, STIC Travel Group has extended an offer called 'Double Super Early Booking' discount which gives agents a chance to save €80-600, depending on the sailing, including premium, all-inclusive offers and a free trip cancellation insurance. During this promotion, the departures have been increased to make the most of this limited time offer. It is valid until the cabins are sold out or November 30, 2019. A-Rosa Rhine sailing gives guests a chance to cover ports from Cologne to Mainz,



During this promotion, departures have been increased to make the most of the limited time offer

Amsterdam, Koblenz, Rotterdam, Gent, Antwerp, and Nijmegen. Meanwhile, A-Rosa Danube covers ports from Engelhartzell to Vienna, Budapest, Bratislava, Melk, Wachau, Belgrade, etc. A-Rosa Full Board Plus includes breakfast, lunch and dinner buffets, premium drinks through the day, children (two to 15 years) travel free, discount on spa treatments, and free use of on-board facilities.





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Explorer Dream arrives in Sydney

The inaugural arrival of Explorer Dream heralds Dream Cruises' first sailing beyond Asia to Australia. It features 928 cabins and a generous variety of culinary options.



Dream Cruises' arrival of Explorer Dream in Sydney at the White Bay Cruise Terminal heralds the start of Dream Cruises' global aspirations to sail beyond Asia for the very first time. During Explorer Dream's seasonal homeport deployment in Australia, travellers can explore a variety of round-trip cruise itineraries across Australia departing from Sydney and Brisbane between now and December 1, 2019 and from February 9-23, 2020.

Michael Goh, President of Dream Cruises and Head of International Sales, Genting Cruise Lines, says, "Dream Cruises is excited to begin a new chapter as we chart new waters beyond Asia to homeport in Australia starting this year for the very first time, creating new milestones as Dream Cruises evolves into 'Asia's



"Dream Cruises begins a new chapter as we chart new waters beyond Asia to homeport in Australia"

MICHAEL GOH
President of Dream Cruises and Head
of International Sales
Genting Cruise Lines

Global Cruise Line'. Explorer Dream will provide an additional unique vacation experience for local Australian travellers and inbound international tourists with the growing fly-cruise opportunities, which will pave the way for the return of Explorer Dream to Australia again in Q4 of 2020."

During Explorer Dream's seasonal homeport deployment Down Under, inbound international travellers can experience Dream Cruises. Travellers can choose a series of round-trip cruises from Sydney with a variety of seven-night cruise itineraries or, from Brisbane on six-night, seven-night and eight-night cruises to Australian destinations.

KNOW?

DID YOU

Australian millionaire Clive Palmer plans to create a working replica of the Titanic—the ship will be ready to depart sometime in 2022.



Explorer Dream will provide a unique vacation experience for local Australian travellers and inbound international tourists with the growing fly-cruise opportunities



DREAM CRUISES

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Genting Dream



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IRCTC introduces International Cruise Packages

- IRCTC operated first international cruise package in June 2019
- It has collaborated with GSAs and PSAs of various cruise line companies that have a presence in India
- It currently has 33 different itineraries covering 11 cruise liners on its portal
- Largest travel customer base in India
- IRCTC is always looking to innovate its offering and will soon launch river cruises



For details, contact:

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