

# Experiential talk

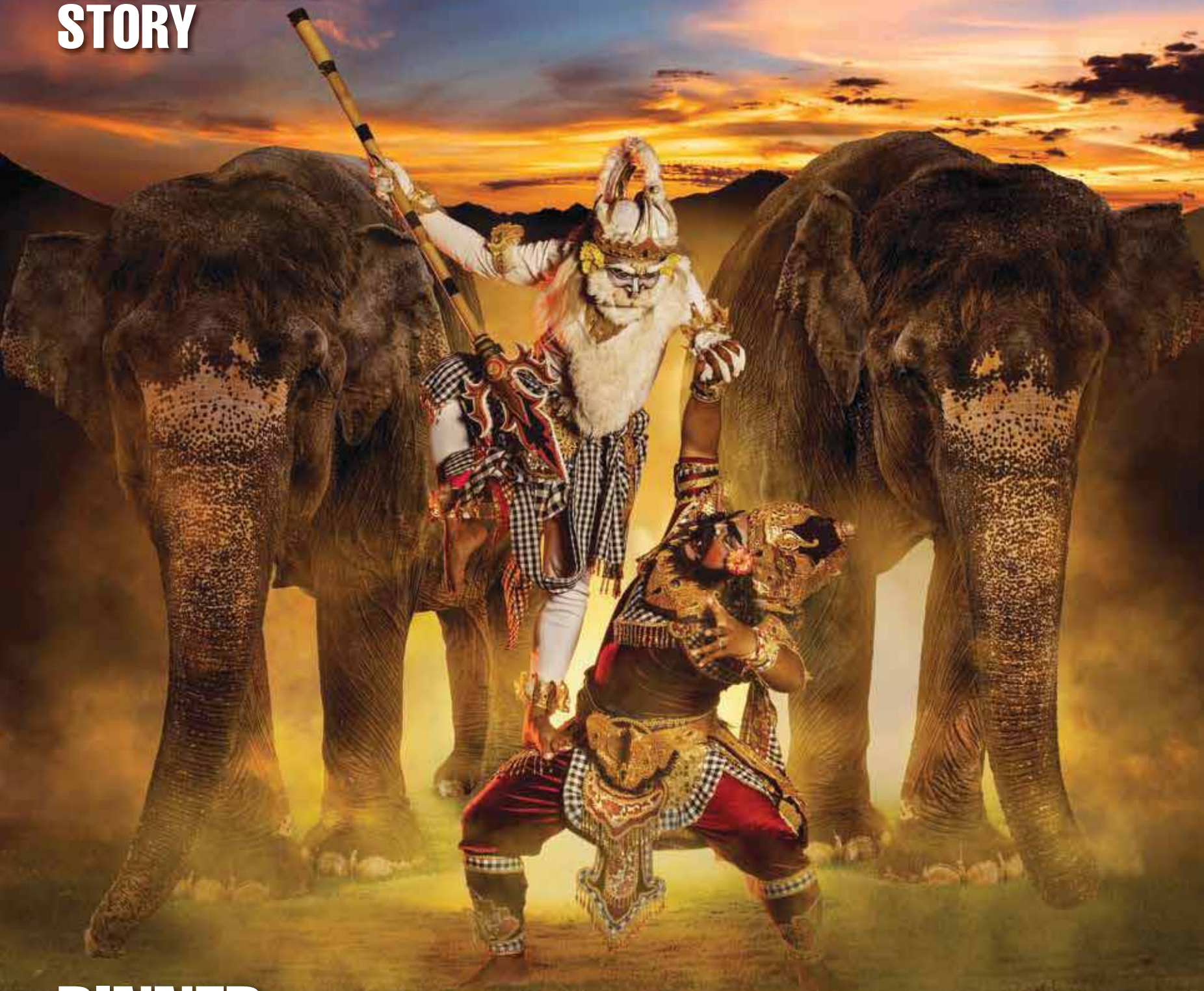
For the discerning traveller

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**HOLLAND ON  
TWO WHEELS**

**THE BEATLES  
STORY**

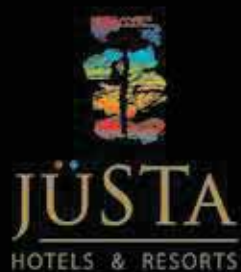
**A CYPRIOTIC  
EXPERIENCE**



**DINNER  
WITH TUSKERS**

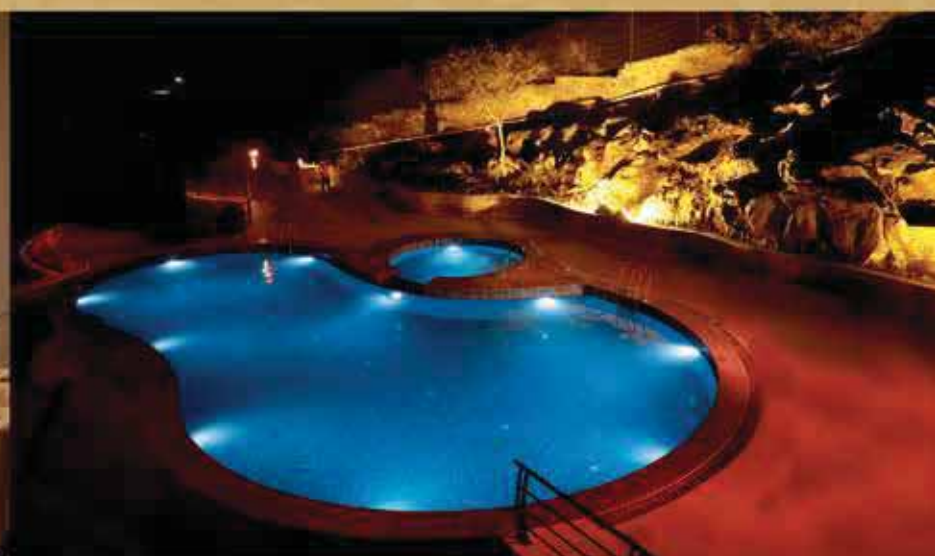
**SWITZERLAND'S  
HIDDEN GEM**





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## Experiential<sup>talk</sup>

### IS IT REMOTE ENOUGH?

Mainstream doesn't cut it anymore. How much it costs doesn't matter. They don't care if everyone is doing it. All they ask is, 'Is it unique and isolated?' Mature travellers are not only seeking experiences, but they have already started to discriminate between experiences in favour of the ones that are off the beaten track, difficult to find, never-heard-of places and things to do. In short, something that doesn't come in the top 10 Google search. This in turn is prompting operators to look hard for products and activities that not many in the market are offering.

An unfortunate turn this new wave is taking is that social media influencers are being trolled for showcasing 'secret haunts' online for fear that these dearly-loved spots of locals will see a stampede of such travellers looking for Instagram-worthy places. Fortunately, such incidents are rare and lie on one end of the spectrum. But they indicate the growing demand for places is a trend that is slowly being defined as luxury.

The truth is that by and large, travellers have become explorers and discoverers. Whether it is just being part of a sustainable environment or wanting to race on an F1 track onboard a cruise liner in the middle of the ocean, it is the experience that matters – not so much the cost or the destination. The India market is slowly moving towards this trend but there is still a large percentage of Indians who continue to enjoy their annual holiday in Thailand or Dubai. These numbers balance the scale and allow others to pursue their dream holidays, except that this niche of travellers doesn't want to 'lose themselves' or 'escape life'. They just want to experience everything.

HAZEL JAIN

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Raashi Ajmani Girdhar

COVER PICTURE:  
Bali Zoo

# NEWS IN BRIEF



### DINNER IN THE SKY TAKES OFF IN THAILAND

Dinner in the Sky Thailand features the world's only suspended high-altitude dinner table where 22 guests with specially equipped safety belts are seated securely at a height of 50m. The entire system is suspended by a 200-tonne European telescopic boom crane where diners can enjoy a four-course gourmet meal with astonishing views of the Bangkok skyline.



### Race track on the mega-ship Norwegian Bliss

Guests will be able to put the pedal to the metal for the first time aboard a North American-based cruise ship with a two-level electric car race track. The longest at sea at nearly 1,000 feet will rev up the hearts of all who race around her many twists and turns with four speed settings, reaching up to 30 miles per hour -- with a special 'turbo boost' available on each lap. Norwegian Cruise Line's 16<sup>th</sup> ship – Norwegian Bliss – will make its maiden voyage in June 2018 and will sail to Alaska and the Caribbean with select voyages to the Mexican Riviera.



### Niraamaya Retreats opens in Nagaland

Niraamaya Retreats has announced its expansion to Nagaland with lease of Classic Inn, a boutique property in Kohima. The property has a total of 12 accommodations.

### Detox vacation in Igatpuri

Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) has proposed to develop a wellness hub in Igatpuri by creating wellness zones providing a range of treatments including yoga, ayurveda, reiki and physiotherapy. Igatpuri is a paradise for nature lovers. It has a few tallest peaks of the Sahyadri range and is situated on the NH3 Mumbai-Agra highway, 130 km away from Mumbai. It also has a Vipassana Centre.



## Sustainable acco in New Zealand

Eco-conscious travellers, rejoice! A new accommodation has opened in Glenorchy, a small settlement near Lake Wakatipu in the South Island region of Otago, New Zealand which meets the most rigorous of international sustainability standards. Besides providing comfortable accommodation, the founders behind Camp Glenorchy hope to inspire and share learning about new standards in sustainable tourism. It is a 40-minute drive from Queenstown along one of the country's prettiest routes and is the setting off point for some of the country's best hiking trails, water-based adventures on Lake Wakatipu and access to two national parks. Camp Glenorchy's accommodation comes in a range of budget options from the seven cabins, to two bunkhouses and seven powered RV/campervan sites.



## Great Australian Train Journeys

Safir Tours, a DMC in Melbourne, has announced the promotion of the Great Australian Rail Journeys for 2018-19 in the Indian market. The packages combine the Legendary Ghan train that departs Adelaide for Alice Spring on an overnight journey where guests can experience gourmet meals. The train is an all-inclusive journey from the time you step on with the rugged landscape of South Australia and the Northern Territory unfolding before you. Step off the train into the remote reaches of northern South Australia. If you are travelling north bound, warm yourself with a morning cuppa against the backdrop of an outback Marla sunrise.



## Overlanding in India

Voyages Overland was launched when its founders Bhairavi Sagar and Col Jaidev Singh Rathore wanted to share their love for a different kind of travel. Overlanding is a form of long-distance travel by land that covers offbeat locations, with camping as the principle form of accommodation. It has introduced first-of-its-kind overlanding trucks in India. The passenger truck, 'Bonnie' is air-conditioned and comes equipped with a mini-fridge, personal lockers and roof seats.



## Cape Town Ziplines is back

SA Forest Adventures announces the reopening of its Cape Town Ziplines, one of Africa's longest and highest Zipline tours based in Cape Town. It is one of the longest zipline tours in Africa with a total tour length of approximately 2.3 km. The excursion gives a birds' eye view of Cape Town. It is conveniently located near Kirstenbosch Gardens and a 15 minutes' drive from the V&A Waterfront. Cape Town Ziplines form part of the SA Forest Adventures Adventure brand.



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# Holland

## on wheels

They are as ubiquitous as the country's prominent tourist attractions and perhaps the best way to experience The Netherlands – on a bicycle.

**ELLONA PEREIRA**





When one speaks of the Netherlands, the immediate images that come to mind are its windmills, canals, tulips, wooden shoes and cheese. But it has much more to offer - villages and cities, castles, country houses and its beautiful nature. There is no better way to discover the country than on a bike.

Netherlands has earned a reputation of being a great cycling destination. This country has many well-defined cycling paths. The infrastructure is geared for cyclists with sign-posted cycle routes. Besides, the distances are short, landscape is flat, and cyclists have their own crossings and their own traffic lights.

Holland has a moderate climate; so it is rarely too hot or too cold to ride a bicycle. However, the best time for cycling is from May to September. It is always advisable to check the weather before planning your trip.

### LET'S GO DUTCH

Cycling is also an integral part of the Dutch culture so much so that according to a local anecdote, toddlers are taught how to cycle before they are taught how to walk! Special seats are attached to the bikes making it convenient to travel with kids. One of the leading brands for cargo bikes is based in the Netherlands and has become the international leader for family cargo bikes. Thanks to innovative technology, more bikes are coming in the market for people who are disabled.



Netherlands has earned a reputation of being a great cycling destination. This country has many well-defined cycling paths, short distances and flat landscape





To get an absolute view of Holland on the bike, don't miss cycling inside Hoge Veluwe

National Park whose bike paths run through the forest's woodlands



"Every Dutch person owns at least two bikes. There are more bicycles than people in the Netherlands. Whether you are an amateur cyclist or want your kids to explore the country cycling, Holland attracts all kinds of Indians"

**NISHANT PATEL**  
Managing Partner,  
*The Grand Vacationist*

If you are in good health, there is nothing stopping you to get on a bike in the Netherlands. All you need is a three-speed bike. If you want to explore rough terrains, you can opt for a mountain bike.

#### DIFFERENT ROUTES

For junction routes, there is a sign with the number on each junction, which also has a map so you will always know where you are and where the other junctions are in relation to your current location. Cycle junction maps are available at local tourist information offices. There are over 7,600 bicycle junctions throughout Holland. Themed routes are usually 30 to 50 kilometres long and are sign-posted using hexagonal signs.

The national long-distance cycle network, also called the LF routes, are perfect for multi-day cycle trips. These routes represent a combined length of 4,500 kilometres and were developed especially for longer bicycle tours and holidays.

There are also international routes which don't end at the border and have options to cycle on to Belgium, Germany or Great Britain. With various road signs along all the routes, it is impossible for a cyclist to be lost. Also, rest assured that cycling is safe here as the Dutch are so used to cyclists that they pay particular attention to them even during traffic.

#### CYCLISTS WELCOME!

The Dutch take cycling so seriously that it is ensured that the cyclists' needs are being catered to. Places that carry the 'Fietzers Welkom!' (Cyclists Welcome!) sticker ensure that cyclists are given a warm welcome. At cycle-friendly hotels, you can fill up your water bottle, charge your electric bike, use a bicycle pump, get a tyre repaired or get a first-aid

kit. They also sell or provide cycle maps. You will always receive a warm welcome, even when you turn up in wet rainwear or muddy shoes! Cycle-friendly accommodation providers also offer cyclists somewhere to stay for just one night. What's more, there is always somewhere to park your bike safely. In case you need professional assistance, you will find a bicycle repair shop in most places.

Another important question: Where do you park your bicycle? One can park their bike anywhere except in a place where it clearly specifies 'No Bike Parking' and ensuring that it is in no one's way. In city centres and at train stations, you have an option of guarded bicycle parking with the former also offering the facility of bicycle lockers. Basically, you find bikes parked everywhere in Holland!

#### EXPERIENCE HOLLAND ON A CYCLE

To get an absolute view of Holland on the bike, don't miss cycling inside Hoge Veluwe National Park whose bike paths run through the forest's pristine woodlands, dunes and meadows. You will get a chance to see some wild boar, horses and deers that still roam freely around the park which will excite nature lovers.

One can cycle alongside Texel's coastline and complete the island's entire western shore within a day. The windmills at Kinderdijk, recognised as a UNESCO heritage site, is easily accessible by bike.

A perfect place for youngsters to explore by bike is the Amsterdam Forest which is probably the best park for cycling in the world. Three times bigger than New York's Central Park, it has 50 kms (30 miles) of smooth, wide, tarmac cycle paths, dedicated to cycling only.







# Exploring EILAT

The resort town of Eilat in south of Israel is situated along the turquoise waters of the Red Sea. It is home to some of the world's most spectacular coral reefs and breathtaking water sports.

**S**wim with the friendly dolphins at Dolphin Reef where you can enjoy the company of bottle-nosed dolphins. A half-hour swim with the dolphins will cost you approximately 300 shekels (\$75).

A must-see attraction in Eilat is the Underwater Observatory Marine Park for an amazing view of the underwater world of the Red Sea. It has an array of aquariums, including a shark tank, turtle and stingray pools, plus, underwater observatories to take a peek at life beneath the waves.

When in a beach town, one cannot escape the pristine corals observed during snorkelling and scuba diving. Windsurfing, kite surfing, water skiing, stand-up paddle boarding and parasailing are other activities offered in Eilat.

Head to the Coral beach and dive in the Red Sea. If you're not keen on diving, you can snorkel as well and explore a magnificent combination of various types of corals and an abundance of colourful tropical fish.

For those who do not want to dive or snorkel but still want to explore the mysteries of the seas, you can always Snuba – an Israeli invention

that is a cross between snorkelling and deep-sea diving whereby one breathes through a tube connected to a tank carried on a rubber boat. If a sea adventure is not your cup of tea, go jeeping in the Negev Desert where you will see the change in terrain and wildlife in their natural habitat.

If you're adventurous and fancy hiking in desert scenery, head to the Red Canyon (west on Road 12). The Red Canyon itself is approximately 150 metres long and 2-3 metres wide, reaching a height of 30 metres. Why is it called the Red Canyon? Well, the canyon is mostly deep red sandstone, with shades of red, purple and white.

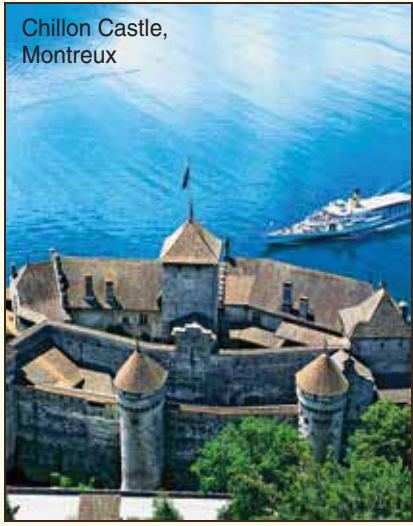
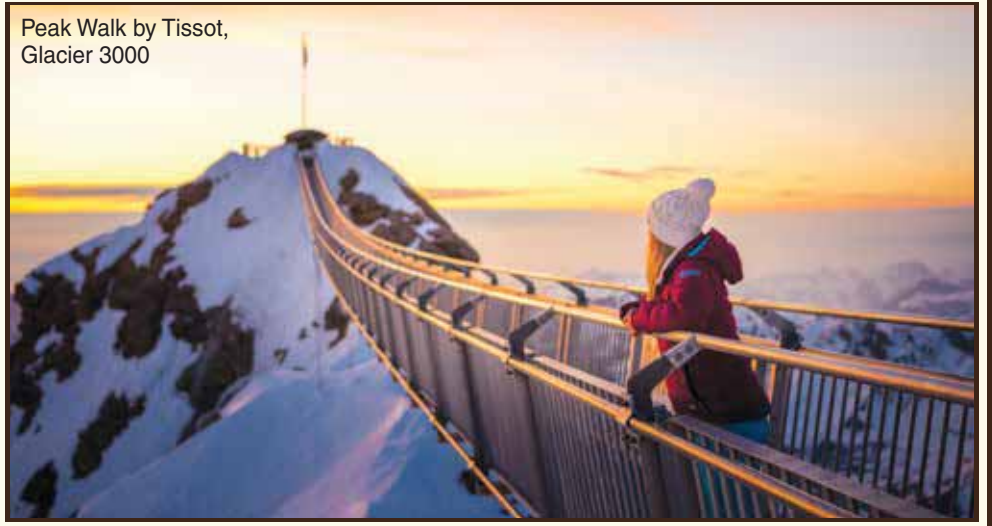
Visit Timna Park to the north of Eilat for a chance to check out the geology of the region amidst amazing mushroom-shaped pillars of rock, more red sandstone cliffs (Solomon's Pillars) and the world's oldest copper mine (dating back some 6000 years). During Sukkot, the park is also host to an amazing hot air balloon festival.

If you're in the mood for the ultimate adrenaline rush, go tandem skydiving for a once-in-a-lifetime experience over the Eilat skies. Go shopping at Eilat and pick up the best brands and products at tax-free rates!

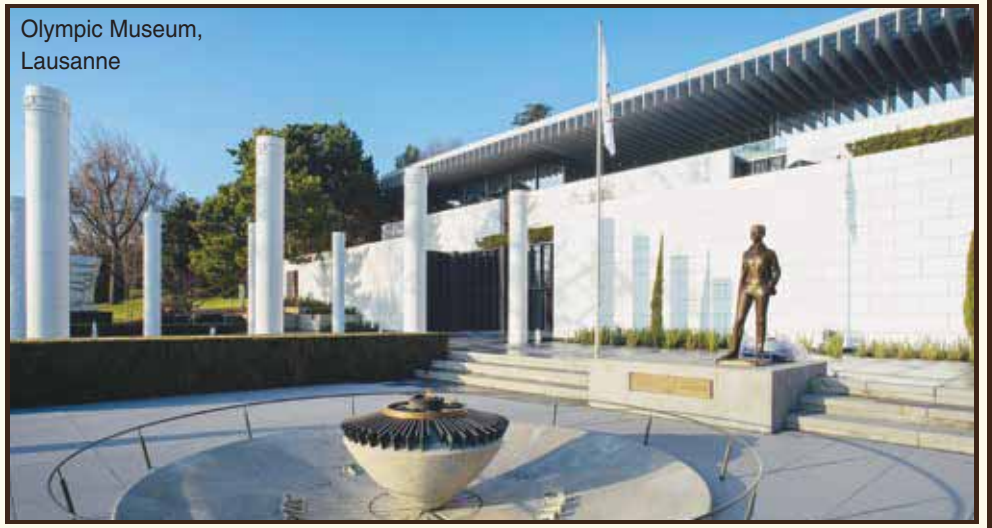


A must-see attraction in Eilat is the Underwater Observatory Marine Park for an amazing view of the underwater world of the Red Sea with its array of aquariums



Chillon Castle,  
MontreuxPeak Walk by Tissot,  
Glacier 3000

Chaplin's World, Vevey

Olympic Museum,  
Lausanne

# Switzerland's hidden gem Geneva Region

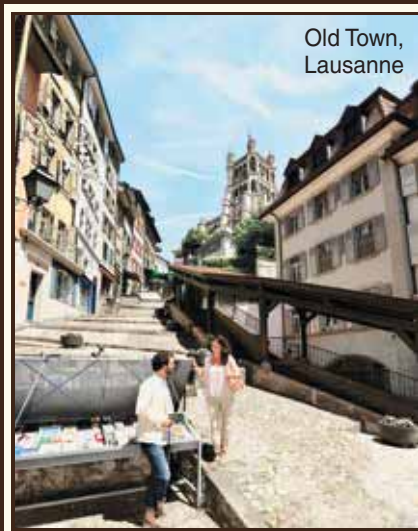
**L**ocated in the French-speaking part of the country, the Lake Geneva Region gracefully blends history, culture, cuisine, wine and music seamlessly to offer vacationers a complete travel experience. For the creative, music-loving traveller, there is Montreux – the pearl of the Swiss Riviera and home to the renowned international jazz festival. For the food connoisseur, Lausanne – one of the leading gastronomic regions in the world has renowned star-studded chefs, and for the wine lovers, Lavaux has one

of the largest vineyard regions in Switzerland.

## MONTREUX

Montreux is nestled between the stunning backdrop of the Swiss Alps and Lake Geneva, and is a stylish yet traditional resort town with near-perfect climate. Its boulevards are lined with flowers, sculptures, Mediterranean trees and grand Belle Époque buildings. At Montreux's famous promenade, you could spend some quiet time reflecting on life while gazing into the crystal-clear still water or stroll down the lake to catch



Old Town,  
Lausanne

GoldenPass Line



Lavaux Vineyards

From its snow-capped mountains to crystal-clear majestic lakes, inarguably, Switzerland is a much-favoured holiday destination for Indians. But even the most renowned places have a few secrets and Switzerland is no exception.

Freddie Mercury  
Memorial, Montreux

The Lavaux vineyards between Montreux to Lausanne are home to Chasselas white grape. Named UNESCO heritage site in 2007, it is an ideal place to sample Swiss wine

stunning reflections of the picture-perfect Château de Chillon on the serene lake.

One of the most sought-after attractions in Montreux, the medieval 13<sup>th</sup> century castle Château de Chillon was owned by the House of Savoy. It houses frescoes, haunting interiors and Gothic dungeons, the latter of which were the subject of a poem penned by Lord Byron, 'The Prisoner of Chillon'. The poet directly references the château in the line, "There are seven pillars of Gothic mould/In Chillon's dungeons deep and old..."

Another must-do from Montreux is Chaplin's World— a museum dedicated to Charlie Chaplin, the artist and the man. Admirers of the iconic star can visit this 14-hectare estate on the slopes above Vevey, where Chaplin lived with his family. His former home, now a museum, showcases his cinematic journey through multimedia displays, movie clips, recreations of film sets, photos and other memorabilia like the legend's trademark hat and cane.

## LAUSANNE

Situated just a few minutes away from Montreux is the city of Lausanne with its quaint old-town, beautiful cathedral, lake-facing promenade as well as a variety of museums. The Olympic Museum celebrating athletes and the history of the Olympic games make it a must-see attraction. Lausanne is also one of the leading gastronomic cities with traditional as well as avant garde new-age restaurants.

## LAVAUX

The Lavaux vineyards between Montreux to Lausanne are home to the Chasselas white grape. It was named a UNESCO heritage site in 2007 and is the ideal place to sample Swiss wine. You can tour the vineyards on the mini train – Lavaux Express – or just walk or bike through it, visiting and sampling the best of Lavaux wines at the many locally-owned cellars. The trip would be incomplete without a train journey on the Golden Pass Line. The train's large windows offer panoramic views of the changing landscapes of the region.



# glamping in India

A perfect marriage of luxury and camping, glamping in India has evolved over the years to cater to the growing demands of seasoned travellers. It is not only offered by big hotel brands but also independent companies.

**NISHA VERMA**

**W**hether it is the big hotel brands like Taj Safaris' Banjaar Tola at Kanha National Park and The Oberoi Hotels & Resorts' The Oberoi Vanyavilas in Ranthambore or independently-owned companies, the glamping market in India is definitely

getting adequately populated with creative products at inspiring locations. These luxury camps offering five-star comforts in remote locations, often in the middle of nowhere, introduce their guests to local life, wildlife safaris, local festivals, CSR activities, as well as sustainable practices.

## THE ULTIMATE TRAVELLING CAMP (TUTC)

TUTC can easily be called the torchbearer of glamping in India, not only because it offers all the accoutrement of a super-luxury stay in a camp but also because of the moveability of its camps. Every year, the camps are pitched in some of the most beautiful locales around the country. Currently, TUTC has four camps—Chamba Camp, Thiksey and Diskit in Ladakh, Kohima Camp in Nagaland and the Jaagir Lodge in Dudhwa.

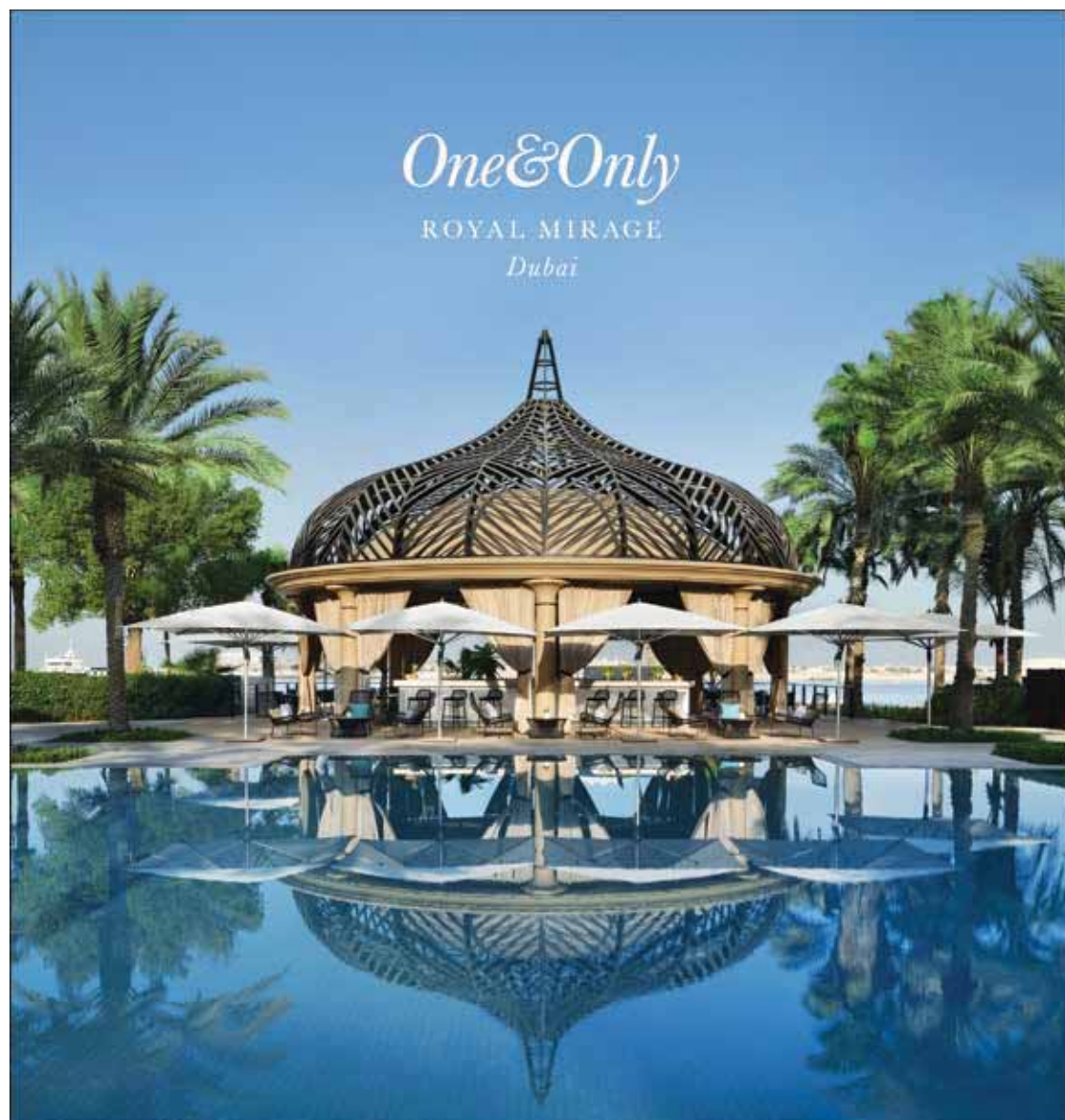
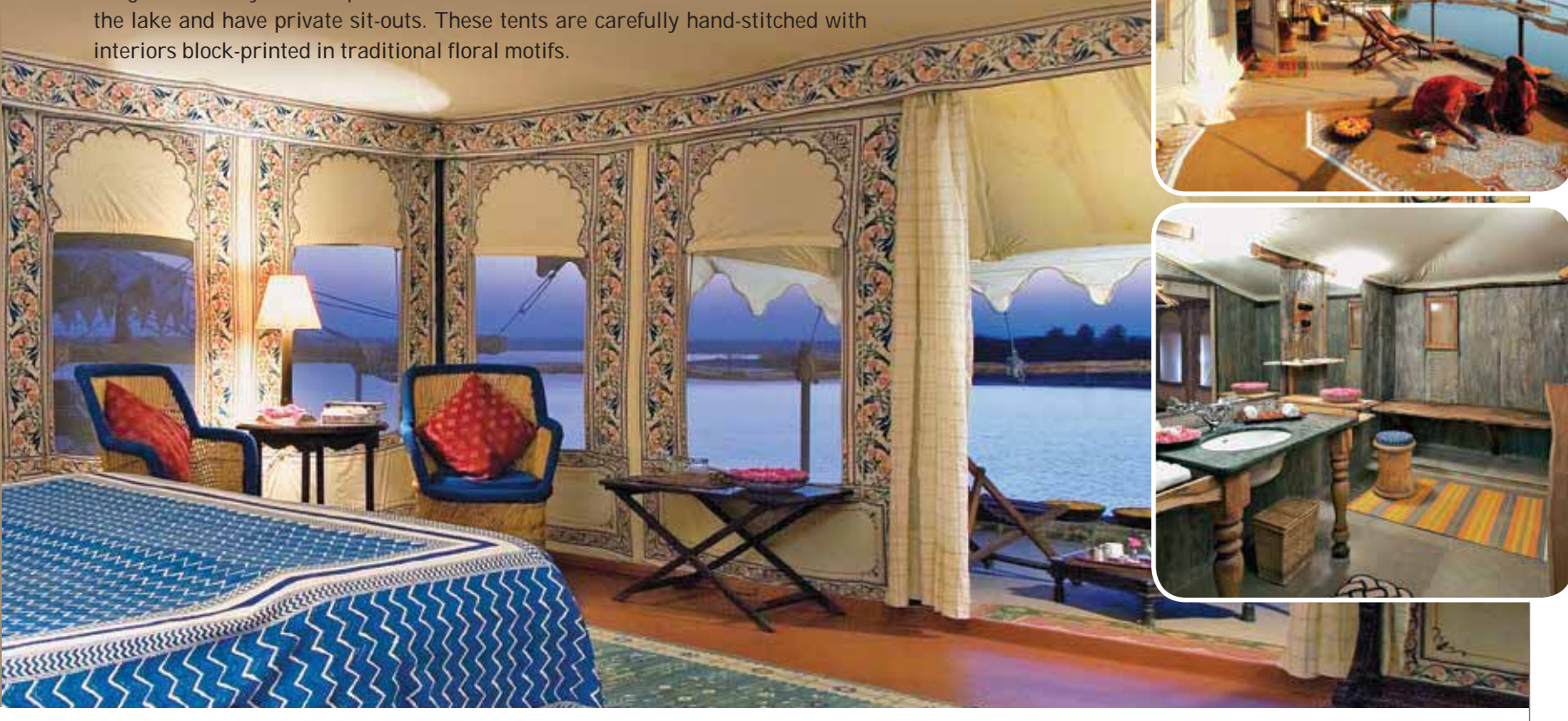
As its first venture in the wildlife lodge category, TUTC's Jaagir Lodge in Dudhwa will be open till June 15, 2018. Guests can discover the fascinating land of the Terai, the marshy jungle between the Himalayas and the great plains of India. They can choose to explore the secrets of the wild in the forest reserves of Dudhwa, Katarniaghat, Kishanpur and Pilibhit. With a fixed structure, this property has a variety of options ranging from luxurious rooms, suites, and villas. Guests can enjoy jungle walks, big-game safaris, bird-watching trips and visits to local villages. TUTC is set to open another camp in Hampi soon.





## CHHATRA SAGAR, RAJASTHAN

Chhatra Sagar luxury camps pay ode to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Royal, Thakur Chhatra Singh of Nimaj and his ambitious project of creating the Chhatra Sagar dam. This dam was later used to create Camp Chhatra Sagar for dignitaries visiting Namaj. It was his great grandchildren who recreated these camps and opened them for guests. Today, the camp has 11 tents on the dam and two on the hill. All of them overlook the lake and have private sit-outs. These tents are carefully hand-stitched with interiors block-printed in traditional floral motifs.



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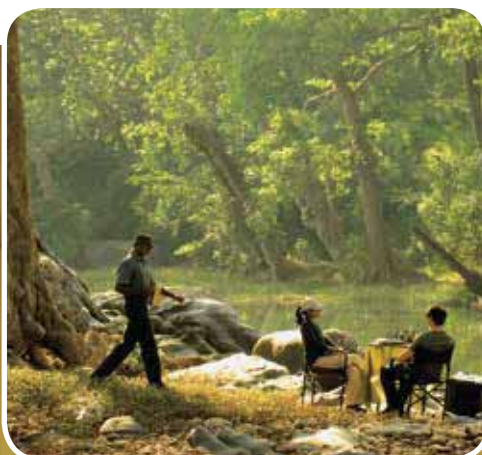


## JAMTARA WILDERNESS CAMP, PENCH

Leave the city life behind, as you drive up to Jamtara Camp and embrace the calmness in the air. This unique camp is situated in the village of Jamtara, near Pench National Park. Each of the 10 luxury tented rooms overlooks the forest and is designed to feel light and open. Guests can roll up the front panels of the tent and bring the outside in. Sleep inside the tent or even outside on the patio. Go one step further and book one of the machaans set up in the middle of the farms for you and your partner. These starbeds offer the ultimate romantic experience. Each of these machaans have four-poster beds, fitted with mosquito netting. A majority of the revenue generated from this experience is given back to the farmer. Visit the Jamtara village and experience the rural life up, close and personal.

## BANJAAR TOLA, KANHA NATIONAL PARK

The opulent tented suites at Banjar Tola at Kanha National Park beckon even the most puritanical camper. The stilted tents of each of the jungle lodges have spectacular glass doors that open out to a floating verandah that offers picturesque views of the Banjar river and the core zone of the national park. Plush interiors with bamboo floors, raw timber furniture and canvas wardrobes give a classy camping experience. Each lodge has a cosy sitting area with a small library.





## THE OBEROI VANYAVILAS, RANTHAMBORE

Just ten minutes away from the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, The Oberoi Vanyavilas, Ranthambhore, offers the quintessential Oberoi luxuries with an opportunity to see the Royal Bengal tigers in their natural habitat. The property is spread across 20 acres of lush, landscaped gardens, housing indigenous plants and birds. Spot wildlife at the nearby watering hole from the observation tower while sipping champagne at sundown. There are specially curated Oberoi Experiences which include jungle safaris, Chambal River Safari, spa, dining under the stars or by the lake, and cooking class with masterchefs.

### EXPERTS' SPEAK



"Something about having the outdoor next to the skin of your tent brings out the sense of wild and free in you."

SHOBA MOHAN  
Founder-Partner, RARE India



"The idea behind introducing luxury mobile tents was to offer the pleasures of being close to nature."

RAJNISH SABHARWAL  
COO, TUTC



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# EXPERIENCE like no other

There is a thirst for understanding destinations on a deeper level through authentic experiences and connecting with the locals, says

**GAVIN TOLLMAN**, Global CEO, Trafalgar.

HAZEL JAIN

## WHY IS EXPERIENCE SO IMPORTANT WHEN ONE IS TRAVELLING?

In an ever-busy world, we are constantly searching for something, with the most precious commodity now being time. When we take a break, we want to feel differently to have that sense of connection. The value proposition for travel has changed. We now have a desire for a deeper understanding and appreciation of where we are going, who we are meeting and what we are encountering. We have changed from being passive to active travellers.

## WHAT TRAVEL TRENDS DO YOU SEE EMERGE IN INDIA?

Traditionally, we know that India has tended to have shorter lead times when it comes to booking holidays – sometimes as late as 10 days! That said, like many places, we are seeing shifts in booking patterns to the point that the ‘pattern’ is not fully determinable. We are also noting a shift towards in-depth exploration of a destination – truly uncovering the local way of life. There is more emphasis now on immersive cultural experiences – living the local way of life and gaining a different perspective of differing cultures beyond the obvious. Some of the destinations remain favoured like France and Britain. The way in which Indians are consuming travel is changing as we observe a growing thirst to uncover the real thing when it comes to understanding local customs and culture and feeling a real connection with its people.

## ARE INDIANS TRAVELLING TO NEWER DESTINATIONS NOW?

Europe and Britain are perennially popular with a growing number of Indian travellers choosing to visit the Balkans. We are also seeing a spike in bookings for our North America and Canada national park trips and to Latin America – Costa Rica, for example.



There is more emphasis now on immersive cultural experiences – living the local life and gaining a different perspective of differing cultures beyond the obvious



**WILL BEING MINDFUL OF THE ENVIRONMENT WHILE TRAVELLING BE A BIG PART OF EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL?**

We are seeing Indian travellers slow down the pace and take holidays that really enable them to get to know a destination in depth. There is a thirst for understanding the destinations on a deeper level with authentic experiences. More guests are seeking sustainable travel experiences and we are responding to that by expanding the breadth of our JoinTrafalgar initiatives.

In North Ireland, Trafalgar helped build a new sustainable Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre. From working with the National Trust in the UK to help sustain sites of historical significance to helping to preserve the ancient art of weaving, our initiatives to

support local communities and help our guests reduce carbon footprint have clearly resonated.

**IN WHAT WAY DOES TRAFALGAR PROMOTE 'EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL' TO INDIANS?**

We ensure that we are making a difference – both to the communities we visit and to our guests. Our focus is to deliver meaningful experiences.

From staying in a property that is more than a bed for a night – such as a castle in Ireland or a converted watermill in the South of France, to shopping with a chef at the local market in Florence and heading back to his restaurant in Tuscan Hills to prepare a sumptuous feast with him. Our 'Be My Guest' experience offers an opportunity to dine with locals at their homes.





# Amble beyond the ORDINARY

Serene Experiences represents international luxury hotels and resorts, catering to the outbound market from India. Below are its four distinctive properties offering unique experiences...

## DAIOS COVE LUXURY RESORT & VILLAS, Greece



**PANOS ALMYRANTIS**  
General Manager, Daios Cove  
Luxury Resort & Villas, Greece

### LUXURY BEYOND MEASURE

Set against the visual drama of a secluded bay, Daios Cove Luxury Resort & Villas is nestled on a hillside on the beautiful northern coast of Crete. From every angle, the views are sublime: the calm turquoise sea in a quiet cove, spectacular verdant slopes, lush terraced gardens, a yellow crescent of private beach, and a wide expanse of azure sky. Then there's the interior and exterior design. Daios Cove is minimalist and modern with a carefully created designer style. Its elegant and sophisticated architecture has been crafted from the natural environment. Daios Cove blends beautifully into its picturesque rural surroundings.

Our stylish rooms are deluxe open-plan doubles and beautifully designed and furnished with a lush, fresh, ergonomic contemporary look. The GOCO Spa Daios Cove Experience lets you explore a carefully crafted collection of spa, fitness and wellness experiences designed to inspire the overall well-being. Equipped with advanced body scanners, the spa's wellness activities include sessions with our resident Master of Yoga from India and expert visiting practitioners.

### EUROPE TOPS THE CHARTS

People who visit us are well-travelled and enjoy exploring destinations, cultures and food. They are people who look for new experiences while enjoying the comfort we provide. We are proud of having built a solid guest base. United Kingdom, Germany and France are the leading markets at Daios Cove.

### DESTINATION OF ADVENTURES

Our exclusive collaboration with Land Rover provides a great opportunity to explore mountainous areas in the luxury of the latest Land Rover models. Guided tours offer an opportunity to experience the wild side of the island. A guided boat trip on our brand-new RIB boat would thrill those who love exploring the surroundings in the luxury and safety that Techohull offers. Golfers will not be disappointed by the newly redesigned 18-hole Cretan Golf Club that is only 20 minutes away from Daios Cove.



Daios Cove is minimalist with a carefully created designer style. Its elegant and sophisticated architecture has been crafted from natural environment





## CHALET ROYALP HÔTEL & SPA, Switzerland

### COME ONE, COME ALL

Chalet RoyAlp Hôtel & Spa is a member of Leading Hotels of the World and Healing Hotels of the World. An hour and half from Geneva and 45 minutes from Lausanne, it is open all year round with direct access to the slopes in winter and golfing in summer. It has 63 rooms and suites and 30 residences. The Spa by RoyAlp occupies an area of 1,200 sqm and includes six treatment rooms including a Duo Suite for couples, an outdoor terrace in summer, a private spa, sauna, jacuzzi and hammam, a fitness centre, a large heated swimming pool with a fireplace, multi-sensory showers, a tea room and a relaxation room, with personal coaches on request.

### TRAVELLERS ARE WELCOME THROUGH THE YEAR

The hotel enjoys high season during the winters (Christmas, New Year till February). Families can enjoy dedicated facilities for children with direct access to snow and mountain activities. During the medium season, (December to March), the hotel welcomes families to experience tailor-made packages. In the low season (April to mid-June and October to November), attractive packages are offered to the Indian clientele. The Chalet RoyAlp Hôtel & Spa is surrounded by five most exclusive international schools with more than 800 pupils every year. As a result, it is a preferred place to stay for parents who come to visit their children.

### MAKING PRESENCE FELT

We provide an overview of the property on our website, with offers and activities available in our region. We are active on social media and digital marketing campaigns. International travel fairs are also important.

### VISITING AROUND

Villars-Gryon-Les Diablerets is a family mountain destination accessible by public transport using the Swiss Travel Pass. Within 30 minutes from Villars, you can find nearly everything associated with Switzerland - lakes, mountains, cheese and chocolate-tasting, private schools, luxury shops, golf, tennis, cable cars and panoramic trains, fine gastronomy and farm food, Lavey thermal baths, as well as a glacier.



**MICHAEL GIROD**  
Resident Manager  
Chalet RoyAlp Hôtel & Spa,  
Switzerland

**Naresh Chandnani**, Founder and CEO, Serene Experiences, has over 30 years of hospitality experience in sales and marketing and strategic business and brand development. He has extensive, talent and associations in the hospitality industry to increase business from the Indian market for these properties.







**GUIDO FIORENTINO**  
Owner & CEO  
*Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria,  
Sorrento, Italy*

## GRAND HOTEL EXCELSIOR VITTORIA, Sorrento, Italy

### TAILOR-MADE EXPERIENCES

We tend to customise our guest experiences, both on the hotel ground and the surroundings. For instance, we organise pizza cooking lessons with our chef, and guests can taste the pizzas they make themselves. We have organised tours to the most ancient tailors in Naples to let guests have their tailored shirts or shoes, as well as private tours with our yacht along the Amalfi coast and Capri island or a helicopter tour.

### BEST MARKETS

Our clientele is mostly leisure. Our main markets are USA, UK and Italy, with a good mixture of all other markets.

### DINE IN LUXURY

The Excelsior Vittoria is a unique iconic family hotel, 184 years in the same family and well-positioned in the luxury travel segment. We have three restaurants; one is a Michelin-starred gourmet restaurant, Terrazza Bosquet, with traditional local Italian cuisine and a vegetarian menu as well.



## HOTEL CAESAR AUGUSTUS, Anacapri, Italy

### JUST WHAT GUESTS WANT

For foodies, we offer the opportunity to tour the kitchen garden with our chef and pick the ingredients for two dishes which guests can then prepare for dinner with the chef's help. Early risers can even accompany the chef to local fishmongers to select the fish.

Agents can request our Sandal Experience, whereby they are accompanied by a top member of staff to the local sandal maker's workshop and have a unique, made-to-measure pair created for them while they wait.

### 11 OR MORE ONLY

Today's travel-savvy guests are less interested in branded luxury hotels and want something unique with a local touch. Although we continue to be popular with couples, we have a lot more multi-generation bookings as well as requests for small groups of friends.



**FRANCESCO SIGNORINI**  
Owner & General Manager  
*Hotel Caesar Augustus,  
Anacapri, Italy*





Before heading to dinner at Gayo Restaurant, visitors continue the tour with a visit to the Sumatran tiger, sun bear exhibits & nocturnal animal encounter session



# Dinner with the Elephants

As the day cools, the sun sets and twilight takes over, an adventure unfolds on a magical island with Bali Zoo's latest attraction – Dinner with the Great Elephant.

It is the first activity of its kind where visitors can observe the gentle giants bathe and experience feeding them before sitting down to a buffet dinner at Gayo Restaurant next to the Sumatran Elephants, followed by two inspiring cultural dance performances.

Upon arrival at Bali Zoo in the evening, visitors first pass through a spacious Deer Park exhibit featuring a collection of Bawean, Sitatunga, Kijang Timor and Javan Rusa deer. From the zoo, they take a short double-decker bus ride to 100-year old traditional Sumatran buffalo house. After disembarking at the grand two hectare Kampung Sumatra wildlife exhibit area, they can participate in the Elephant Encounter session that includes taking photos and feeding dozens of Sumatran elephants that are currently classified as critically endangered by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature).

Before heading to dinner at Gayo Restaurant, visitors continue the tour with a visit to the Sumatran tiger, tapir and sun bear exhibits as well as a stop at the nocturnal animal encounter session located at the nearby waterfall

area. Dinner is served from 6:30 to 9:00 pm. After choosing from a variety of soup, salad and grilled items from the buffet, they are seated at a table just a few metres from a herd of six elephants adorned in colourful fabrics inspired by the decorated royal pachyderms of India, all accompanied by their mahouts in traditional Sumatran costume, and perfectly set up for photo opportunities.

At 7:30 pm, the troupe of elephants will lead in the performers for a Saman dance (the Dance of a Thousand Hands) before temporarily exiting the area at 8:20 pm. Saman is a fast-paced traditional dance from the Gayo ethnic group of Sumatra that is usually performed to commemorate important occasions. The elephants return at 8:30 pm with a parade leading in the performers for the next attraction – a 20-minute fire dance inspired by the legendary great battle between the Hanuman, the monkey god, and Ravana, the great King of Lanka, as told in the Hindu epic poem, the Ramayana. The programme ends at 9:30 pm with a photo session with the troupe of elaborately attired dancers. A perfect conclusion and souvenir moment for an elephant dinner date!



# THE BEATLES

## Story

EXHIBITION



THE BEATLES  
Story

EXHIBITION

ORIGINAL EXPERIENCE

If Liverpool has Anfield for football lovers, the Beatles Story at Albert Dock is mecca for lovers of John, Paul, George and Ringo. There is also a relic of Joan Lennon.



# Follow the beat of the BEATLES



'The Beatles Story' is the world's largest permanent exhibition devoted to the lives and times of the rock band located in their hometown of Liverpool on the stunning UNESCO World Heritage site.

**PEDEN DOMA BHUTIA**

*'Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away.'*

Sitting in the sweltering April heat of Delhi, this Beatles ditty seems profound, especially when it feels like only yesterday that, aboard the yellow submarine, we turned the pages of The Beatles Story!

Ever imagined what it would be like to watch George Harrison sit with a pint at the Cavern Club or hear Paul McCartney and John Lennon play on the opening night of the Casbah Coffee Club, the place where it all began? The Beatles Story has some stunning replicas of these places that have become so synonymous with the Fab Four. If Liverpool has Anfield for football lovers, the Beatles Story at Albert Dock is a mecca for lovers of John, Paul, George and Ringo. And occupying pride of place is Brian Epstein, rightly called the Fifth Beatle. Brian, who was the band's manager, will always be remembered for introducing the four young lads of Liverpool to a global audience.

What's more, there's also a replica of John Lennon's 'the White Room', which featured prominently in his immortal song 'Imagine'. If, while listening to 'Walls and Bridges' or 'Double Fantasy', you have ever marvelled at Lennon's skills on the piano, then you'd love to see his last piano which is now on display at the museum, along with his iconic granny glasses.

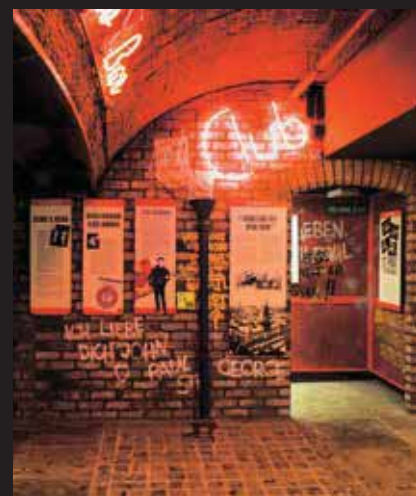
The museum serves as the perfect chronicler of every significant development in the band's history leading up to The Break Up of 1968, and tracks how each goes on to start his own individual career.

After you have had your fill of The Beatles Story, don't forget to pick something up for The Beatles fans back home. The Fab4 Store at the museum has one of the largest collections of official Beatles merchandise and memorabilia in the world. So, once you are done with your visit, make sure you get some of those T-shirts,

CDs or limited-edition merchandise for them. Don't forget to get something for yourself as well – a little souvenir to remind you of your very own magical mystery tour!

## THE BEATLES AND THE YOGI

Fifty years after The Beatles arrived in India, the museum is celebrating their time in Rishikesh with a special exhibition. Titled 'Beatles in India', it opened on February 15, 2018 and celebrates the 50th anniversary since The Beatles travelled to Rishikesh to the Ashram of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Here you will witness never-before-seen memorabilia, imagery



## DID YOU KNOW?

Paul McCartney used the working line 'Scrambled eggs, oh my baby how I love your legs' for the song Yesterday as its music was written before the lyrics. Also, Penny Lane in Liverpool experienced constant disappearances of its street sign ever since the 1967 hit of the same name.

and personal accounts from people who were there with the band in 1968.

A sitar used by Ravi Shankar is on display with the new immersive area, loaned to The Beatles Story by the Ravi Shankar foundation. As George Harrison's mentor, the sitarist's influence on the band ultimately helped to popularise the use of Indian instruments in 1960's pop music. The exhibit will also include photography from Paul Saltzman who photographed The Beatles during their stay. He is responsible for some of the most iconic and intimate images of the Fab Four in India.



# Spa your stress away

Spas are no longer considered a luxury, thanks to the growing awareness among people about wellness. Three hotels with renowned spas talk about the unprecedented growth of this sector.

**ANUPRIYA BISHNOI**



**RITU JOSHI**  
Executive Housekeeper  
Fairmont Jaipur

## Ritu Joshi Executive Housekeeper, Fairmont Jaipur

At Ruhab, the hotel's spa, we offer a range of therapeutic massages by trained professional therapists using products that are natural and sustainably sourced. One of the signature experiences includes creating customised treatments based on 'doshas' as per the 'Three dosha theory' in ayurveda. These 'doshas' represent three elements representing mind, body and the environment. Our upcoming Willow Stream Spa to be introduced in 2020 will feature unique Indian and international treatments.

### SPA IS A NECESSITY

Spas were once considered to be an indulgence. This perception is beginning to change as spas are becoming

a way to destress. Modern-day spas are not just limited to steam rooms and massages. Weight management, physical fitness and sports, beauty treatments, relaxation and stress relief, meditation, yoga and procedures or treatments using conventional or alternative medicine like ayurveda are gaining prominence.

### PERFECT SPA ROOM

Designing a spa room is both an art as well as a science. It not only helps in creating an aesthetic atmosphere but also impacts the senses for a stress-free environment. For example, colour schemes in a spa are critical. Our focus is to ensure that spaces feel open and get plenty of natural light for scents to help create a relaxing effect.





## Ralph Radtke

### General Manager, Çırağan Palace Kempinski Istanbul

The most unique experience in our spa is the VIP Turkish Bath's hamam treatments. Hamams not only serve for cleansing and relaxing the body but are also venues for socialising and celebrating, especially among women, who would chat, feast on home-made foods and sing or dance during their hamam outings. At Sanitas, the Turkish bath session comforts and nourishes the body in the traditional oriental manner. It's warmth and exotic aromas recreate the luxurious atmosphere of Turkish bath enjoyed by the sultans. We also have our signature hamam treatment called 'Sherazad', where the body is carefully rubbed with a textured mitt and

covered with the fragrant froth of soap to revitalise the skin. In addition, special aromatic oils and circular massage movements are used to refresh the muscles while attention is paid to the scalp, hands and feet.

#### PRODUCTS USED

We use dermo-cosmetic brands which produce high concentrate of effective ingredients, especially those which contain plant stem cells for younger and healthier skin. It has different product series for different skin problems such as pigmentation, anti-aging, moisturising and purifying.



**RALPH RADTKE**  
General Manager  
Çırağan Palace Kempinski Istanbul



## Sanjeev K Nayar

### MIH, General Manager WelcomHeritage

Select WelcomHeritage properties that have a spa on premises endeavour to create the perfect spa experience topped with royal touch with exquisite fragrances, soothing music, soft lighting and relaxation areas to provide guests with a relaxing ambience. Our properties have created a personal spa experience offering outstanding treatments that reflect a fusion of traditional and international therapies. All spa experiences at these properties have been carefully crafted to stay true to the traditional style that was available to the royalty of a bygone era.

#### SPAS GAIN FOOTHOLD

Today's hectic lifestyle has necessitated the relaxation of the body and mind. Earlier, spas were visited occasionally but over the years travellers are becoming more and more interested in utilising these services. This has resulted in mushrooming of city spas in major cities. The easiest way is to escape to a picturesque location and get a rejuvenating experience which not only soothes the body but also the mind. Spa is one of the best ways to relieve stress-related diseases and illness.

#### ADHERING TO NATURALS

All our hotel spas use products that are carefully selected to complement the environment. We are



committed to use natural ingredients like rose petals, jasmine flowers, milk, saffron and honey that offer proven benefits.

#### SPA STRUCTURE

For a perfect spa room, there should be peace, natural light and soothing colours on the walls, alluring fragrances to stimulate the senses, relaxing treatment furniture and a professional spa therapist.

If a spa room has dim light, soft music and an attendant who speaks local language, experiences are already enriched.



**SANJEEV K NAYAR**  
MIH, General Manager  
WelcomHeritage





# A Cypriot Experience

Cyprus is a small island with a long history that has been influenced by three different cultures by virtue of it being located at the crossroads of three continents – Europe, Asia and Africa.





HAZEL JAIN

**M**ighty Aphrodite! With a rich culture that spans thousands of years, Cyprus – Aphrodite's birthplace – is among the oldest civilisations in the Mediterranean. Situated at the crossroads of three continents – Europe, Asia and Africa – the island's unique geographic position has played an important part in its turbulent past. Cyprus gets its Greek roots from the Mycenaean Greeks who introduced and established their civilisation here. After that, many other cultures followed including the Assyrians, Egyptians, Romans, Franks, Venetians, Ottomans and even the British who left behind their impressions.

As a result, Cyprus today is like a mosaic of different cultures. That is why it makes for a fascinating destination to explore and experience.

Even today, the largest EU groups by nationality settled in Cyprus are Greeks, British, Romanians and the Bulgarians. Fortunately, language is not a problem here as English is widely used throughout the island as a common language. The island has a very high proportion of English speakers because it has been part of the British Empire for over 80 years, with almost 80 per cent using English as their second language. Many Cypriot educational institutions have a British university affiliation. But Greek and Turkish are the official languages.

### FOOD IS A SOCIAL EVENT

Since Greek is the largest ethnic group in Cyprus, a lot of people speak Greek. The architecture is similar and so is the weather. Food is Mediterranean and follows a lot of norms that Greeks do such as the ritual of sharing food on a table. Fresh local cuisine is an important part of the island's culture, and is intrinsically linked with every social event,

from family gatherings and special occasions to religious festivals – each marked with its own distinct delicacies and recipes.

From hearty meat dishes and specialty cheeses to unique desserts of carob and grape, the Cypriot cuisine is an exotic blend of Greek and Middle Eastern cultures, sprinkled with remnants of ancient civilisations such as indigenous Roman root vegetables or old Phoenician delicacies. A 'Mediterranean diet' is considered to be of the healthiest, thanks to its abundance of heart-healthy olive oil, pulses, lean meat, local herbs and freshly grown fruits and vegetables.

### PRAY AND PARTY IN AYIA NAPA

While Larnaca is where all international flights land, the main cities where tourists throng are Nicosia – its capital – and Limassol. Ayia Napa, a Mediterranean resort town on the southeast coast of Cyprus, is the party place and is known for its beaches. The name is derived from a Venetian-era monastery of the same name that is located in the centre of the town, next to the square that today has become the clubbing centre. The magnificent stone church of Agios Lazaros, one of the most remarkable examples of Byzantine architecture in Cyprus, lies over the tomb of the saint.

The town of Agia Napa shuts down during the winter – the hotels close down for repairs and maintenance and the restaurants down their shutters. But come April and the entire town blooms as a rose bud. Tourists and locals gather in the main square, music is blasting, and restaurants and bars do amazing business. Entertainment takes a front seat and the entire place is buzzing with no place to move.

### NICOSIA

The capital is the largest city on the island of Cyprus. The country's most important museum is here, with its impressive archaeological collection. It has more than 15 museums! The Old City of Nicosia is worth a visit and the best way to truly discover it is on foot.

Unfortunately, Cyprus is split in two when in August 1974, the second Turkish invasion resulted in the capture of approximately 40 per cent of the island. The Green Line can be seen across the cities of Larnaca and Nicosia where army has check points.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Cyprus also has many wine routes. Its rich wine history has been alive for almost 6,000 years. Visitors can take any of its seven routes to experience Cypriot hospitality and be introduced to the world of Cyprus wine. These include 41 modern wineries that currently operate on the island.





# One size doesn't fit all

Understanding that the way people fly economy is changing; Virgin Atlantic unveils new ways to fly economy as part of its multimillion-pound investment in the cabin for the new traveller.

DEVIKA JEET



The seven bedrooms with well-appointed suites and luxurious bathrooms offer views of the gardens, some with sit-outs and others with bay windows (gokhras)





**S**ir **Richard Branson**, founder of Virgin Atlantic has been famously quoted for saying, "If we continue to judge ourselves by our ability to fit in, we will never stand out". Taking inspiration from this popular quote, Virgin Atlantic has continuously introduced innovation in the skies and its three new ways to fly Economy is a testament to just that.

Providing more value and more choices and recognising that one size doesn't fit all, from Spring 2018, Virgin Atlantic will introduce 'Economy Delight', 'Economy Classic' and 'Economy Light' tickets. The three new and innovative ways to fly will allow customers to choose the product that suits their budget and travel style – but never compromise on inclusive food and drink, unrivalled service and inflight entertainment.

Economy Delight will offer the leading Economy product of any UK airline. Customers will enjoy a seat with 34-inch legroom, priority check-in and boarding as well as advanced seat assignment. Economy Classic will now offer free seat assignment, providing extra reassurance for families and groups. The new Economy Light ticket will always offer Virgin Atlantic's lowest fare, thereby making long haul travel affordable and accessible for millennials, and customers jetting off on city breaks.

Making Economy rich again, **Craig Kreeger**, Chief Executive, Virgin Atlantic, says, "I'm really proud we are flying in the face of how airlines

are operating at the moment, cramming more seats in and losing the romance and joy of flying. We're about giving more, not taking away. The way people fly Economy is changing, customers want more value and more choices. They want an affordable Virgin Atlantic experience and the millennials in particular, tell us that they want a cheap entry point product."

Unveiling the biggest change to the Economy cabin in over a decade – launching three new ways to fly, and a host of innovations on the ground and in the air as part of a wider £300 million investment. Virgin Atlantic customers can afford to be choosy and still travel in the UK's leading economy cabin.

"We always want flying with Virgin Atlantic to be more special than other airlines, and we'll never compromise on excellent service, industry leading food and drink and cutting-edge inflight entertainment. Regardless of which Economy ticket our customers are travelling on, they'll be able to enjoy all this onboard," adds Kreeger.

Continuing with their promise to pamper passengers, Virgin Atlantic has also partnered with leading British candle maker Rachel Vosper to create a new scent called 'Air,' designed to evoke wellbeing and inspire future travel.

In 1984, Branson announced to the world that a high quality, value for money airline will service their demands. "When I started Virgin Atlantic, I wanted to challenge the status quo and make flying amazing; and that holds true even today," he adds.



# Luxurious homestay at Deogarh

Nestled on the edge of the Ragho Sagar Lake at Deogarh, Dev Shree is an amalgamation of modern and traditional.

ANKITA SAXENA

**D**ev Shree in Deogarh is a stately home, constructed in a traditional *haveli* style with deep verandahs and elaborate courtyards. The property promises a luxurious homestay in the middle of nowhere.

## EXPERIENTIAL STAY

The sun rising over the Gokul Fort at the far end of the *haveli* streams through the palm trees on the swimming pool. The interiors of the property are airy and spacious, and the décor has a contemporary twist. The seven bedrooms with well-appointed suites and luxurious bathrooms offer views of the gardens, some with sit-outs and others with bay windows (gokhras). Sitting in the verandah with the lawn stretching out to the shore of the Ragho Sagar Lake is an ideal bird watching spot. The central courtyard has been described as a 'Moroccan Kasba'. At this *haveli*, friendly staff cooks up a homely Indian



meal with local Mewari specialties to treat the taste buds. **Shatrunjai Singh Chundawat**, Owner, Dev Shree Deogarh, explains, "The accent is to serve meals as prepared in Indian homes and an effort is made to keep away from dishes served in restaurants. The menu is drawn up daily taking guest preferences into consideration. We try to offer local produce which is seasonal and fresh. With a small kitchen garden, our farms supply most of the vegetables and food grain."

## ACTIVITIES GALORE

Activities at the property include an artisan walk through the village, a guided walk from Dev Shree to the main shopping street coursing through the artisan alley passing the potters street and farmers houses; a lake walk; culinary workshops; yoga classes; rural train ride from Phulad to Khamblighat across the Aravalli range; bird watching; day trips to the famous Jain temples of Ranakpur, Kumbhalgarh Fort, Chittorgarh Fort, etc.

The seven bedrooms with well-appointed suites and luxurious bathrooms offer views of the gardens, some with sit-outs and others with bay windows (gokhras)







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EXPEDITION  
VOYAGES  
LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCES

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December 15-22, 2018

INVITE UP TO 44 GUESTS AND CELEBRATE IN PARADISE!



## 7-NIGHT SEYCHELLES VOYAGE

### M/Y PEGASUS

The twin-hulled Pegasus was completely renovated in 2016. She accommodates up to 44 guests in 21 cabins, in a relaxed and congenial atmosphere. On board you will enjoy magnificent sea views as you stroll on 2,550 square feet / 240 m<sup>2</sup> of open deck. You can relax with friends in the handsomely appointed lounge, browse in the well-stocked library or enjoy ocean view dining in the convivial and spacious restaurant area. A platform on Pegasus stern enables you to swim when weather and anchorage conditions permit. She also offers you relaxation in a zen mini spa.

**CHARTER RATE:** 7-nights/8-days charter rate **\$99,750** plus **\$415** per person in weekly port and conservation fees

- Inquire about other dates at slightly higher fares, Christmas Dec. 22-29, 2018 and New Year's Dec 29, 2018 - Jan 5, 2019.
- Inquire about Greek Isles charter Oct 19-26, 2018
- Travel professional commission 25 percent