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11 - 18 Sep, 19

Delhi > Agra > Jaipur > Sawai Madhopur > Jodhpur > Jaisalmer > Udaipur > Mumbai

Itinerary

Wed, 11th Sep - Delhi

Check in at Delhi Railway Station. Enjoy your first evening familiarising yourself with Deccan Odyssey as the train departs for Agra.

Thu, 12th Sep - Agra

A visit to Taj Mahal and lunch at City Hotel. Visit Itmad ul Daulah and Agra Fort.

Fri, 13th Sep - Jaipur

Visit Amber Fort, Hawa Mahal, City Palace & Observatory. Lunch at Jai Mahal Palace.

Sat, 14th Sep - Sawai Madhopur

Morning Village Safari. Late evening enjoy Hi-Tea at the Taj Sawai Madhopur Lodge.

Sun, 15th Sep - Jodhpur

Morning at leisure to enjoy facilities on board. Enjoy Barbeque dinner at the ramparts of the Mehrangarh Fort.

Mon, 16th Sep - Jaisalmer

A sunrise visit of the Sanddunes and a Camel ride tour back to the coach. Sight Seeing at Gadisar Lake, Fort, Havelies.

Tue, 17th Sep - Udaipur

A tour of City Palace and Crystal Gallery followed by boat ride on Lake Pichola.

Wed, 18th Sep - Mumbai

After breakfast on board, check out and bid farewell to the train as your journey comes to an end!

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GITB '19 key to drive inbound

Jyotsna Suri, Chairman, FICCI Tourism Committee, confirms that The Great India Travel Bazaar, which is now in its 11th year, has been growing from strength to strength every year.



Nisha Verma

Scheduled to be held from April 28-30, 2019 in Jaipur, The Great Indian Travel Bazaar (GITB) is organised by Federation of Indian Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in collaboration with Government of Rajasthan, Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India. While the inauguration will be held at The Lalit, Jaipur on April 28, the exhibition will be held at Jaipur Exhibition and

Convention Centre (JECC) on the following two days. A total of 47 countries are participating at GITB 2019 with 290 Foreign Tour Operators (FTOs), 300 Indian exhibitors and over 11,000 pre-fixed B2B meetings.

Jyotsna Suri, Chairman, FICCI Tourism Committee, claims that the event brings together selective tour operators from across the world to interact with Indian exhibitors. Sharing

“India has quite evidently been witnessing a consistent rise of inward foreign tourism year on year”

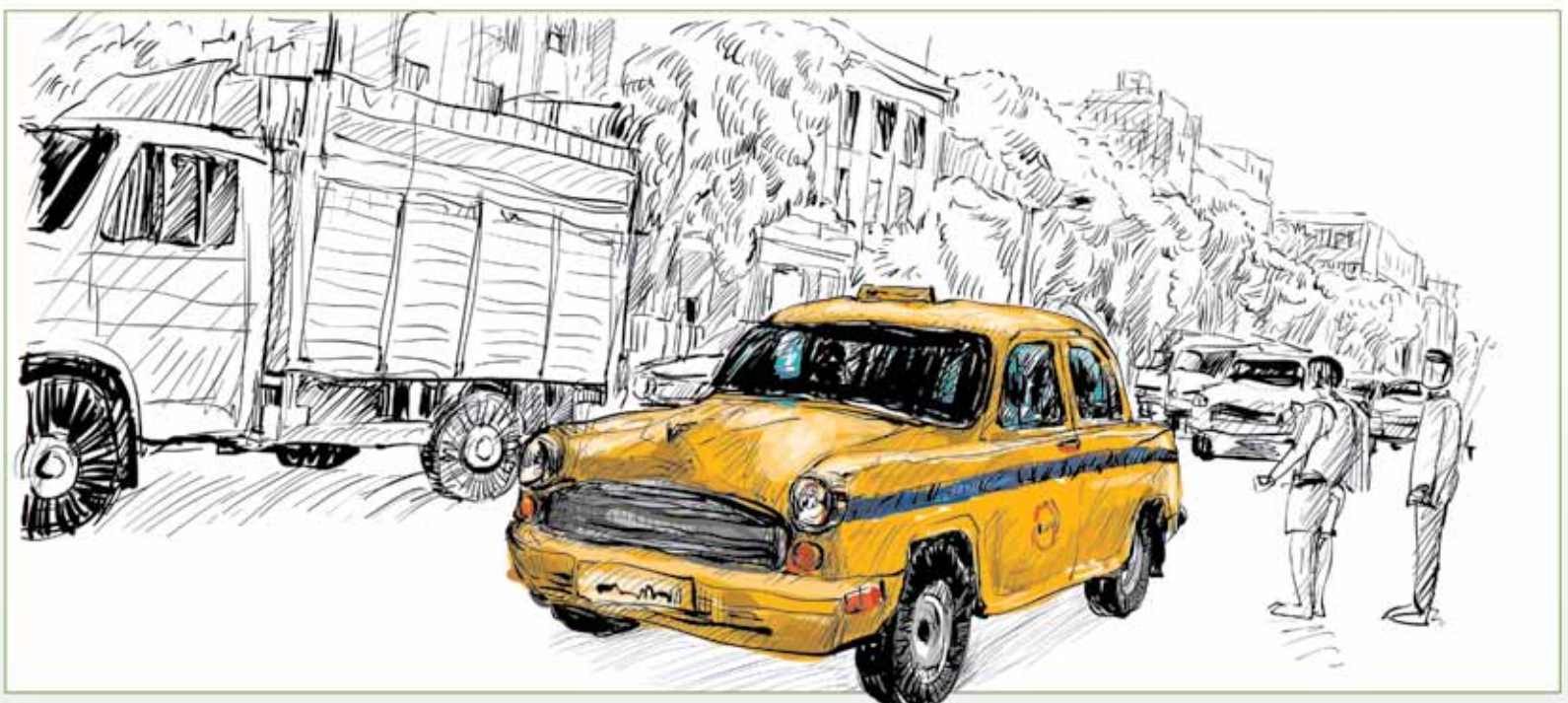
figures from last year's event, she said, “280 foreign buyers from 55 countries had intensive one-on-one meetings with 270 Indian sellers over a period of two days. A whopping 10,963 pre-scheduled B2B meetings were held in the 2018 edition. Other than this, as many

as nine participating states including Rajasthan displayed their tourism products through interactions as well as their promotional literature and visual films. The show also witnessed many first-timers who benefitted from various business interactions under one roof.”

GITB has been a great facilitator for inbound tourism in the country, claims Suri, saying, “India's consistent rise of inward foreign tourism year-on-year can be attributed to flexible government policies, easy availability of e-visas to foreign tourists and developments in tourism infrastructure.”



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Azzure in Goa exceeds expectations

Azzure, located in North Goa, counts Russia, the UK and European countries as its top source markets.

TT Bureau

Azzure by Spree Hotels is a boutique hotel located in a peaceful location away from the crowded areas of Goa. It has a Mediterranean theme and can offer customised food options if notified in advance. The hotel also has a locker for guests to keep their belongings safe.



Jay Nair, General Manager, Azzure by Spree Hotels, says, "We are a cruise ship on land! We believe in offering more to our guests to make sure we exceed their expectations. Our focus segments and markets include the leisure segment.

The countries that we receive a lot of our guests from include Russia, the UK and other European countries."

Nair adds that they will continue to develop the contacts they meet at GITB 2019 Jaipur by sending them mailers and do promotional activities as well as create special offers.

Azzure by Spree Hotels is located amidst the most vibrant belt of North Goa. The hotel is a stone's throw away from Baga beach, 5 kilometres from the railway station and just 1 kilometre from the Calangute bus stand. 📍

Kerala's ode to sustainability

The state's tourism record revenue of ₹36,528.01 crore in 2018 clocked an increase of ₹2,874.33 crore from the previous year, while the number of domestic and foreign tourist arrivals stood at over 167 lakh.

Manas Dwivedi

Responsible tourism is currently the major focus area for Kerala Tourism, informs **P Bala Kiran**, IAS, Director, Kerala Tourism, in which the local community is enormously benefitted by tourism with a sustained effort on environment conservation.

"The project has succeeded in creating a chain of dedicated entrepreneurs and is expected to create a large number of employment opportunities, earn revenue and preserve local culture. Kerala is also the first state in India to implement UN World Tourism Organisation's call for 'Tourism for All Promoting Universal Accessibility' in 2016. Kerala Tourism recently launched the first phase of its 'Barrier-free Kerala' project, making



P Bala Kiran
IAS, Director
Kerala Tourism

around 70 tourist destinations in the state differently abled- and elderly-friendly. The goal is to make all tourism destinations in Kerala differently abled-friendly by 2020," stated Bala Kiran.


Talking about developments made with regard to new tourism products in 2018,

Bala Kiran said that Kerala's new tourism policy focuses extensively on sustainable tourism. "Responsible Tourism, launched a decade ago, will now be expanded across the state. Kerala Tourism will launch experiential tour packages in the flood affected areas, forge linkages with the tourism industry and encourage local entrepreneurs," he mentioned.

Despite a popular leisure destination, Kerala has not figured prominently in the MiCE tourism destinations of the country. Addressing this issue, he said, "The tourism department has decided to hold the national convention of MiCE stakeholders in Kochi by August in association with Indian Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB). Kerala also plans to take ICPB's member-

ship. Further, the introduction of more domestic flights, direct air connectivity to Tel Aviv, and rise in the periodicity of tourist travel will also help achieve the MiCE objective of the state."

After the devastating floods last year, Kerala suffered heavily with tourism revenue losses likely to be around 15 billion dollars. "We have created a 12-point recovery plan aimed at restoring the state as a place of pristine beauty. A roadmap for sustainable tourism has been put in place with a campaign to promote responsible travel and stay options. A report on the state's tourism readiness, outlining the extent of damage caused to the state's infrastructure, has been prepared. It highlights the steps taken to restore things to normalcy and rebuild the rail-road connections to different tourist spots," said Bala Kiran. 📍



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Spotlight on Jaipur

Located in the heart of the city, Hotel Park Ocean is part of a chain of upscale leisure and business hotels that strives to keep abreast of the changing trends.

TT Bureau

Park Ocean, Jaipur, located in the heart of the city, is a short distance away from Sikar Road in Jaipur. The hotel is easily accessible from the railway station (2.5 kms) and the Ajmer-Delhi National Highway, which is about 3 kms away. It is in close proximity to major tourist attractions like Jantar Mantar, Hawa Mahal, City Palace and the walled city of Jaipur.

Sandeep Jain, Managing Director, Hotel Park Ocean, a unit of Jain Hotels & Resorts, that is participating in GITB, says of the show, "GITB is a great platform to meet all of our business partners and international tour operators under one roof. Since our maximum business comes from foreign tourists, we design the itinerary as per their



Sandeep Jain
Managing Director
Hotel Park Ocean

demand and current business trends in order to provide them with bespoke services. We have tailored packages which cater to their requirements."

The plush and spacious interiors at Park Ocean, Jaipur, take the zing up a notch. Park Ocean, Jaipur chain of upscale business

and leisure hotels elevates the Park Ocean experience while retaining the same freshness, quirkiness and energy that Park Ocean is well known for. It pampers the style-conscious and upbeat traveller with its personalised services, premium in-room amenities, award-winning restaurants and fun experiences.

Jain adds that the company's focus segment is the leisure market from Asia, Middle East, CIS and Europe. "We invite all our contacts in these markets to experience our product. We are therefore hosting them to come and witness our bespoke hospitality. In order to meet our partners' expectations, we are upgrading our product on a regular basis to enhance the guest experience. For instance, we have recently refurbished our spa and our rooftop bar," Jain says.

City tour with Mansingh

The common thread that runs through all the four properties of Mansingh Hotels & Resorts is that all of them are located in the heart of the city.

TT Bureau

Mansingh Hotels & Resorts is currently focusing on promoting four of its properties in Rajasthan – 106-room Hotel Mansingh Jaipur; Mansingh Towers Jaipur, a 53 rooms

around and explore the city at leisure.

"Our main focus for these hotels is the clientele from the Middle East and European countries. One thing that we have noticed about them is that they are joyful



Bharat Kumar Aggarwal
Managing Director and Chief Executive
Officer, Mansingh Hotels & Resorts

“Our main focus for these hotels is essentially the clientele from the Middle East and European countries”

boutique hotel, 97-room Mansingh Palace Agra, and its 50-key Mansingh Palace Ajmer. According to **Bharat Kumar Aggarwal**, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Mansingh Hotels & Resorts, the appeal of all the four properties is that they are all located in the heart of the city which makes it easier for the guests to move

people and enjoy every bit of their experience, whether it is inside the hotel or outside it. The company follows the philosophy of providing personalised services to guests so much so that they should never leave the property with a complaint. We believe in providing the best services at the cheapest price possible," Aggarwal says.

The group's two properties in Jaipur include the five-star Hotel Mansingh and Mansingh Towers, a three-star boutique hotel. The other two properties are the 97-key five-star Mansingh Palace Agra and the 50-key three-star Mansingh Palace Ajmer. It has a multi-cuisine restaurant, a bar, banqueting and conferencing facilities.



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Upping the ante on luxury

Buena Vista Resort, Jaipur, offers spacious villas with panoramic views that guests can enjoy while savouring lip-smacking dishes rustled by its French chef.



TT Bureau

Buena Vista Resort, Jaipur, is spread over 11 acres of land and surrounded by the range of Aravalli hills. It has been constructed in a heritage style fusing French and Indian cultures to resemble the ethnic beauty of Rajasthan – a vision of **Jean Luc Benhaim** from France to escalate luxury to the next level.

Buena Vista Resort is built to provide the real luxury experience with distinct features like spacious villas with private



Jean Luc Benhaim
Owner
Buena Vista Resort

swimming pools and gardens with a panoramic view. All villas in the resort are suites to enhance the comfort level of guests and ensure a good experience for them. At the same time, the high standards have been maintained to provide them the 'wow' factor. The resort is located in a peaceful environment which is pollution-free and a 15-minute drive to Amber Fort as well as the City Palace – the two major tourist attractions of Jaipur.

Benhaim, Owner, Buena Vista Resort, says, "We opened the resort for guests a year ago. Hence, we have a large proposition to look into. At this initial stage, we are very happy to showcase our wonderful resort built to enhance the luxury experience for the guests. Our focused market is the leisure FITs, as well as long-staying guests who want to relax and rejuvenate and enjoy our hospitality with delicious international cuisine made by a French chef. Also, we should not miss out on the domestic travellers and Buena Vista becomes a self-sufficient

destination for them to explore big gardens with recreational activities, swimming pools and spa. It is also a paradise for the foodies."

He adds that at the same time, the resort is also targeting the MICE segment

“Our market is the leisure FITs, as well as long-staying guests who want to relax and rejuvenate and enjoy our hospitality”

as it is a perfect venue for luxury destination weddings that too amidst nature for

both national and international guests. "We have a magnificent banquet hall

which can accommodate 150 people approximately for a conference and at the same time many other venues are available for their evening events. For us, the GITB is a platform where we can meet the right decision-makers and those who promote India as a

destination. We need it as we are a new player in town and need to promote ourselves to the world. We are also attending international fairs to promote ourselves in all countries to increase footfalls into Rajasthan and Buena Vista," he says.



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Indians jet set to Vietnam

With the anticipated VietJet Air flight connecting Bali to Vietnam to start by June 5, Lac Hong Voyages is certain that the numbers are bound to blossom.



TT Bureau

Lac Hong Voyages, one of the leading tour operators in Vietnam, is hopeful of increased traveller numbers between India and Vietnam with the anticipated VietJet Air flight to take off from Vietnam to Bali from June 2019. **Jonathan Tran Vinh Loc**, Managing Director, Lac Hong Voyages, says, "Business from India to mainland Southeast Asia has improved a lot with an increase of almost 35 per cent over the last year to Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar due to visitors for the Hinduism and Buddhist circuits that include temples and pagodas. There is a vast outbound opportunity for India for wellness tourism with so many spas in this region. It is the same for the India market to Vietnam and Indo-China as we now have a variety of Indian restaurants."



Jonathan Tran Vinh Loc
Managing Director
Lac Hong Voyages

The company focuses on various destinations in this region such as Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines and Thailand. As far as flight connection is concerned, Vinh Loc says that they were surprised at the suspension of Jet Airways from Singapore, as there is huge traffic in passenger numbers from Singapore

on Vietnam Airlines and Jet Airways. "Hopefully, the flight will be reinstated. Currently, we only have Thai Airways from Thailand and Malaysia Airlines or Malindo Air from Malaysia for flights to India," he adds.

Vinh Loc hopes that by June 5, 2019, VietJet Air will take off from Vietnam to Bali. "We are hoping that the Vietnam flight on VietJet will take off to India soon as there is a potential market for the Vietnamese travellers visiting India. They love to visit India's historical monuments and experience its heritage and culture," he says. Established in February 2004, this tour operator conducts outbound as well as inbound tours. It is also a wholesale tour operator offering ticketing, sightseeing, corporate, tour packages, leisure, luxury travel as well as MICE. 📌

Right products on offer

Having expanded into new markets, Trans India Holidays is now offering a host of experiences for different destinations as per specific demands.



TT Bureau

For Trans India Holidays, 2018-19 turned out to be a good season, claims **Kapil Goswamy**, Managing Director, Trans India Holidays. "We've grown both in terms of dollar revenues and pas-

as in Russia and other CIS countries," he informed.

The company has added different product ranges to cater to different markets. "For the UK and Australia, we've added more of experiential products including heritage



Kapil Goswamy
Managing Director
Trans India Holidays

“In addition to our traditional markets of the UK and Australia, we are now active in Spain and Spanish-speaking Latin American companies, Russia and CIS countries”

senger numbers. In the last few months, we've expanded to new markets, and have now got full-time representatives in Spain as well as in Russia. In addition to our traditional markets of the UK and Australia, we are now active in Spain and Spanish-speaking Latin American companies, as well

walks in several cities, street food tours, slum tours as well as cycling tours. These are products meant to enhance travellers' cultural experience. Offering these in addition to the usual half day city tours also encourages clients to stay longer in a destination, thereby benefitting all—the FTO, the

national exchequer and ourselves. For Spain as well as for Russia, we've started offering short escorted fixed departure tours at attractive price points," shared Goswamy.

Trans India Holidays uses a 360-degree marketing approach with frequent product updates or mailers, Fam trips and webinar trainings. 📌



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jüST(a) another in Delhi

jüSTa Hotels & Resorts is set to launch a new property in Greater Kailash, New Delhi. As a truly designer hotel, the property is set to offer new experiences.



TT Bureau

2018 was a good year for jüSTa Hotels & Resorts as it signed up two new hotels — jüSTa Sajjagarh Spa Resort, Udaipur with 63 keys situated close to Biodiversity Park and jüSTa Atrio, New Delhi in close vicinity to Gurgaon and Aerocity. **Rohit Katyal**, National Sales Head, jüSTa Hotels & Resorts, said, “jüSTa Sajjagarh has an open sky lounge bar, 4,000 square feet of banqueting area and 20,000 square feet of lawn area. jüSTa Atrio is our first hotel on management contract in Delhi. Soon, we will be opening another hotel in Delhi at Greater Kailash.”

Katyal believes that the brand

“We’re exploring opportunities in Varanasi, Gurgaon & Bengaluru to sign new hotels and resorts on management share model”



Rohit Katyal
National Sales Head
jüSTa Hotels & Resorts

has created its own niche. “Sticking to our roots and expanding in our domain has helped us. We will try to sign new hotels with 50-80 keys along with other desired facilities and services. The key

mantra remains the same—to give priority to our guests, followed by our employees. We are passionate hoteliers first and then a business organisation,” he explained.

Compared to 2017, jüSTa Hotels & Resorts has witnessed an increase of 9-10 per cent in occupancy and a similar increase in ADR too, according to Katyal. “The opening of jüSTa Sajjagarh Spa Resort in Udaipur has helped in positioning ourselves at better levels. We are also exploring opportunities in Varanasi, Gurgaon and Bengaluru to sign new hotels and resorts on management or revenue share model.”

On participation at GITB, he said, “With our increasing footprints in Rajasthan and Delhi, our presence at GITB will help us get the right mix of international and domestic clientele.”

True Rajasthali weddings

Rajasthali Resorts & Spa, Jaipur recorded a 25 per cent growth in revenue in 2018. The property has also added new products and is focusing on new avenues.



TT Bureau

As one of the biggest resorts in terms of area, Rajasthali Resorts & Spa is a popular wedding and MICE destination. With a fruitful last year, the property witnessed a rise of almost 25 per cent in its revenue. **Devendra Sharma**, General Manager, Rajasthali Resorts & Spa, Jaipur is confident in achieving around 65 per cent occupancy this year.

“We have a beautiful tented banquet hall in the region which helps our guests to organise indoor events with up to 300-400 guests. Our newly constructed Presidential Suite is one of its kind. This is a two-bedroom tented villa with world-class facilities. The gold-painted sceneries and couches will let you feel like a ‘Maharaja/Maharani’,” briefs Sharma



Devendra Sharma
General Manager
Rajasthali Resorts & Spa, Jaipur

about the new products at the property.

Talking about the relevance of GITB, he says, “GITB is one of the biggest platforms in the industry to introduce yourself and learn about the upcoming trends in the industry. For Rajasthali, it is always good to see masters of travel trade and hospitality together. Through GITB, Rajasthali

could easily be accessible to a wider audience.”

“Our dedicated team is always on its toes to reach out to every segment. Our target is to beat the crucial lean season. We are also targeting to have 40 destination weddings this year,” he further adds.

Commenting on the growth of inbound market in India, Sharma mentions, “With the increasing inbound market in India, it is imperative that we keep abreast of the latest industry trends. Inbound tourists are interested in the Indian culture of weddings and we have started adopting it. We have to be fair enough to provide them true Indian hospitality.”

With changing modern trends, Rajasthali is focusing on new avenues such as pre-wedding shoots and day outings.

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Space reigns at Gokulam

Offering the largest rooms, the largest gymnasium and an infinity swimming pool, Gokulam Grand Hotel and Spa in Bengaluru is a preferred destination.



TT Bureau

Gokulam Grand Hotel and Spa is the first five-star property in the region and conveniently located from the airport as well as the Bengaluru city centre. It offers one of the largest rooms in the region with a large banquet space including two boardrooms and two meeting rooms, all adding up to 25,000 square feet of banquet space.

Prashanth Rajagopal, Director of Business Development & Marketing, Gokulam Grand Hotel and Spa, says, "We have one of the largest gymnasiums on the 11th floor as well as an infinity swimming pool on the second floor. Most of the foreign travellers are very specific about these two facilities and hence we offer them the best of both. We have a spacious coffee shop which offers one of the finest cuisines."



Prashanth Rajagopal
Director of Business Development & Marketing, Gokulam Grand Hotel and Spa

The hotel is also home to Soham Spa – an award-winning spa which boasts of traditional and plush interiors and has highly trained masseurs from the East who offer both Western and traditional Indian treatments. Soham spa has established itself as one of the top brands in Bengaluru.

"Our hotel under the new management has a lot to

offer for both domestic and international guests. We have 182 spacious rooms, including 36 Club Rooms, eight suites and one Presidential Suite. We offer airport pick-up for guests staying over five nights, plus 15 per cent discount on spa services. We ensure every guest get unbeatable value for money that the competition can't match," Rajagopal adds.

One of the biggest clients for this property is the pharmaceutical industry followed by the manufacturing companies. Since it is located close to the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC), it associates with all the corporates who participate in BIEC events. "Otherwise, Mumbai, Pune, Delhi and Gurgaon are our key markets. Around 30 per cent of our guests are foreigners out of which 70 per cent are from the east like China, Korea, Japan, etc." he reveals.

Tell tales amidst nature

Terra Tales Hotel Marketing company promotes only boutique properties that fall in the premium range located in the lap of nature.



TT Bureau

Terra Tales Hotel Marketing endorses only exclusive, boutique properties that have a common attribute – each of them falls in the premium category range with a touch of luxury set amidst nature in such a way that guests feel they are breathing in nature at every moment. "This is the unique proposition we offer in all our properties. We have just signed up a contract with three



Gita Chaudhry
Founder
Terra Tales Hotel Marketing

“Offerings from Terra Tales include luxurious stay, amazing meals, range of activities, experiences and bespoke itineraries”

such resorts. In the south, we have Nahar Retreat in Kotagiri and Glyngarth in Ooty, and the Tendu Leaf Resort, Panna in central India," reveals **Gita Chaudhry**, Founder, Terra Tales Hotel Marketing.

She says, "Offerings from Terra Tales that include luxurious stay, pampering hospitality, amazing meals, a range of engaging activities, mesmerising experiences, bespoke itineraries, diverse and

wide range of options – are all fairly priced for all inbound partners at The Great Indian Travel Bazaar (GITB)."

Terra Tales is currently working to build a perfect niche in two segments — nature and wildlife and its current properties are a clear reflection of these focus areas. "We are moving ahead not only to further strengthen our position but also emerge as the most established yet organic player in India in these two segments for both inbound and domestic partners," Chaudhry adds.

The team at Terra Tales will stay actively connected with the contacts it forges at GITB and proactively cater to their requirements. "We are widening our presence at a swift pace yet cautiously and expect to emerge as an established player in wildlife and nature properties," she shares.



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Kanj focuses on competency

Currently operating and managing seven properties across Rajasthan and Gujarat, Kanj Hotels & Resorts is one of the youngest and fastest-growing mid-market leisure and business segment chains in India.



TT Bureau

Established in 2017, Kanj Hotels & Resorts is a hotel management company that also operates stand-alone hotels, resorts and heritage hotels. It maintains a strong presence in the leisure and business segments. The company is proud to have a distinctive portfolio that includes ingeniously-designed resorts and heritage hotels that merge old-world charm with contemporary design and smart, engaging service.



Mahendra Singh Tanwar
Managing Director
Kanj Hotels & Resorts

According to **Mahendra Singh Tanwar**, Managing Director, Kanj Hotels & Resorts, the company is one of the young and fast-growing, mid-market leisure and business segment chains in India. It operates in the three and four-star categories and presently operates/manages seven properties across Rajasthan and Gujarat. These locations include Udaipur, Kumbhalgarh, Pushkar, Jaisalmer, Rajpura (near Sundhamata Temple in Jalore district) in Rajasthan and Sasan Gir in Gujarat. "All our properties are away from the city giving our guests a perfect holiday experience surrounded by peace and tranquility," Tanwar says.

The hotel company is participating at The Great Indian Travel Bazaar 2019 (GITB). Explaining this move, Tanwar says, "It is a large platform where an individual or a young and fast-growing hospitality company like ours can get an opportunity to showcase their products and reach a large audience associated with the travel and tourism industry. Most of our properties are located in offbeat locations,

away from the main city. They are true value resorts where an individual can experience the new world of comfort which includes all hi-tech amenities along with peace and tranquility."

Most of these properties also

“Most of our properties are located in offbeat locations where guests can experience a new world of comfort”


have huge banqueting and meeting venues that are ideal for weddings. Kanj Hotels &

Resorts is targeting mid-market leisure and business travellers in cities as they are

ones who travel the most to all the destinations where it has its properties.


Speaking about creating more such platforms, Tanwar adds, "GITB and the tourism ministry need to ensure that the hotel and resort operators get more

such platforms to interact directly with travellers, agents and investors. The Indian government should give more emphasis on promoting tourism and creating employment, as it is one of major resources towards the state revenue and livelihood of the people."




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TT Bureau

Being awarded as the 'Best Eco-Friendly Forest Lodge' by Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board was a major feat by Kanha Village Eco Resort, claims **Navneet Maheshwari**, Owner, Kanha Village Eco Resort. Sharing information about the property, he said, "Staying with us means living in the wilderness without compromising on modern amenities. Ours is the only property in Central Indian forests which gives you an ethnic mud house experience. We work with local communities and help them improve their lifestyle. If you are looking for a responsible tourism property when visiting Kanha, we are your perfect choice."

However, the restriction on safari vehicles did affect business last year. "Wildlife



Navneet Maheshwari
Owner
Kanha Village Eco Resort

tourism in Central India had faced a big setback after Supreme Court's order when the number of safari vehicles has been restricted. A welcome move for wildlife, but the way carrying capacity has been calculated is beyond anyone's understanding and needs to be recalculated logically. For us, 2018 had been good as people who were looking for a real wildlife experience

preferred staying with us. Earlier travellers used to visit any national park to spot wildlife, but now they have started visiting to experience nature and biodiversity," he informed.

Wildlife tourism, especially in the context of responsible tourism, has its limits. "We have been providing nature and wildlife experience to guests through activities like nature walks, medicinal plants identification walks, village visit, ethnic food at village home, along with wildlife safaris to Kanha National Park. We have been working with local communities for the last few years and taking a step further, we are starting an educational programme in which we will be visiting local schools and spreading awareness about saving our forests and wildlife," he added.

Road to development

DS Group has opened a couple of new properties under its hospitality division and is dedicated to constantly improve its product line.

TT Bureau

Excelling in businesses across sectors, DS Group's hospitality division is making inroads into the mainstream of Indian economy.

Nikhil Vahi, Senior Vice President—Hospitality Operations & Development, DS Group informs, "After Manu Maharani Nainital, Namah Corbett, Radisson Guwahati and Crowne Plaza Jaipur, the hospitality division has just



Nikhil Vahi
Senior Vice President—Hospitality
Operations & Development, DS Group

stressed corporates. Additionally, we have plans of setting up properties in Dehradun, Ranthambhore and Goa in the future."

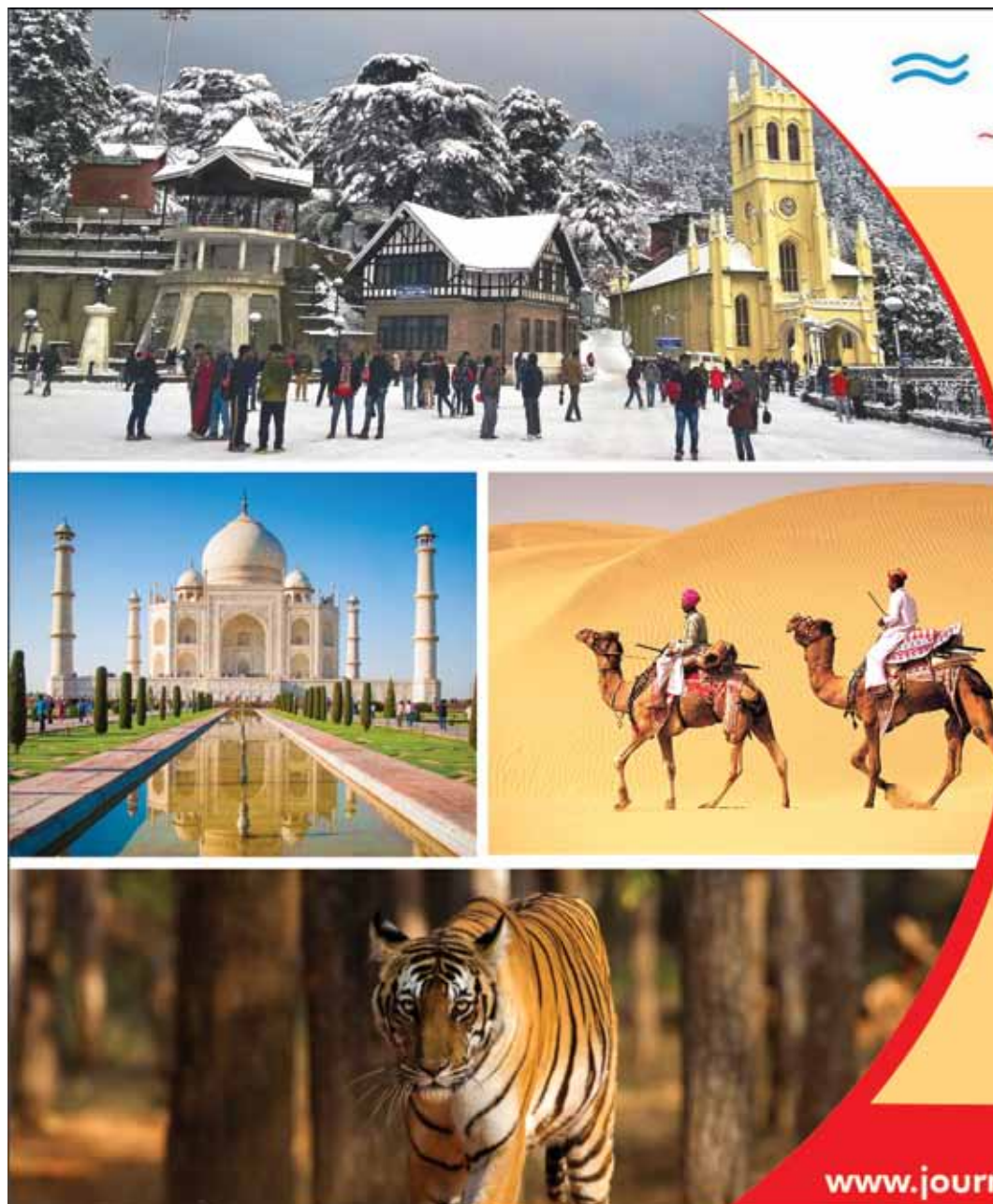
The brand aims to be at the top of every segment they operate in and provide value for money to all buyers. "We are looking to increase our plethora of in-house activities, promotional activities, food festivals and a host of other activities to get our guests glued. We try to meet guests' expectations whilst creating an enriching experience for them," shared Vahi.

DS Group has been in line with its planned targets whilst being armed with objective strategies for its various units. According to Vahi, the path ahead not only looks fulfilling but also promising for the hard-working teams.

"We have recently developed a health villa, Swasthyagram at Manesar, Gurgaon to completely rejuvenate the mind and body"

got a shot in the arm with a 120-key brand-new property at Kolkata Airport signed up with IHG. We have also recently developed a health villa, Swasthyagram at Mane-

sar, Gurgaon to completely rejuvenate the mind and body using natural therapies amidst a serene atmosphere. Built within an area of 17 acres, the place has modern equipments and is specifically aimed at



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# Glamping with Synergi

Synergi Hospitality is looking forward to explore business in the northern region of the country with plans to create more glamping options this season.

TT Bureau

Encouraging tourism that stems out from travelling to far-flung places while connecting local habitat to the world, each property of Synergi Hospitality takes responsibility for assisting in local growth. Talking about growth in the last one year, **Shruti Pandey**, Proprietor, Synergi Hospitality Marketing says, "We saw a jump in numbers in 2018, especially for remote locations like Jawai, Jhadol and Gujarat. This hike has given us a boost to push for movement aggressively towards these locations."

The company is expanding its horizon in Tier II, III cities, for which it is already in touch with local travel agents in cities like Aligarh, Jaipur and Trichy. "The movement from such cities have been steadily increasing. Their choice of travel has



**Shruti Pandey**  
Proprietor  
Synergi Hospitality Marketing

started varying from travel to a city, now to more remote places where there is a lot of outdoors and lots of explore. We do regular promotions in these cities as advertisements and package offers. The agents are also connected through calls and emails. We are also starting with Golden Retreat Stok in Leh, a quaint retreat near Stok Palace where guests

would be able to go for long walks, hot picnic lunches and breakfast with local Ladakhi families," she explained.

Each Synergi partner property is unique. "Offbeat in their locations, the properties take pride in their ability to connect guests to the character and atmosphere of that locality. There is a lot of outdoors with safaris, treks, horse rides, heritage walks, tribal tours and camping options. All these properties are either heritage hotels or are camps, resorts and retreats. We also promote glamping or luxury mobile camping where temporary camp set-ups are created and operated at offroad locations. The last such event was at Prayagraj for Ardh Kumbh. On a fresh note, we have also started working with a restaurant - The Finch - in Delhi and Mumbai," she said.

# MiCE jewel in Crowne

With 45,000sqft banqueting space, Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road has been the preferred choice for glamorous destination weddings in 2018.

TT Bureau

Catering to high profile weddings, conferences and making the best use of the season in 2018, Crowne Plaza Jaipur has received a good share of inbound tourism in the last one year. **Vishvapreet Singh Cheema**, Area General Manager, North India (IHG) and General Manager, Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road informs that the hotel has above 90 per cent occupancy with competitive ADRs.



**Vishvapreet Singh Cheema**  
Area General Manager, North India (IHG) and  
General Manager, Crowne Plaza Jaipur Tonk Road

located just minutes away from Jaipur Exhibition and Convention Centre (JECC), weddings, conferences and events are our biggest revenue generators," reveals Cheema.

Cheema further mentions that F&B has a huge potential to become a game changer in the MiCE segment in 2019. He says, "Weddings have always been the trendsetter; though conventions and conferences this year will see size, scale and ease of execution ramp up. Innovative themes especially outdoor catering will see a surge in popularity this year."

In 2019, the hotel plans to use a two-pronged strategy for its marketing and promotions. Cheema says the hotel has IHG brand support, channels and promotions to increase the brand recall and reach at the global level.

“Weddings have always been the trendsetter; though conferences this year will see size, scale & ease of execution ramp up”

"Jaipur attracts some of the biggest volumes of tourists in the country. There is a captive audience and we have tourists coming in from across the

world – we specifically want to target bigger volumes from the UK, the USA and the Middle East. Far East is also a growing market for us. As a MICE hotel,



## Welcome to smart hospitality at SPARROW INN by MGB Hotels

Sparrow Inn by MGB Hotels forays into new heights of hospitality and exhibits the same warmth and standards as its parent hotel. A sanctuary of refined tastes, warm welcomes and endless fascination, where families, business travellers and groups can retreat in utopian splendor and you can experience a lasting sensation of wellbeing. Located in Alwar (NCR), Sparrow Inn ignites envy for its ideal location coupled with the perfect fusion of modern facilities and unparalleled hospitality.

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# Swosti invites buyers to Odisha

Experiencing the Swosti hospitality is the only way to understand the hospitality major's unique offering, which includes four renowned properties in the beautiful state of Odisha.



TT Bureau

‘Once our guest, forever our friend’ is what **Jitendra Kumar Mohanty**, MHCIMA, CMD of Swosti Group, Chairman of Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha, and Chairman – IATO, Eastern Region, believes in. He adds that the group, in its constant endeavour to provide the best of services, has been the pioneer in the state of Odisha's hotel industry since 1981.

Swosti Group has four properties – two in Bhubaneswar called Swosti Premium and



**Jitendra Kumar Mohanty MHCIMA**  
CMD  
Swosti Group

Swosti Grand; one in Gopalpur called Gopalpur Palm Resort; and the newly-opened luxury resort called Swosti Chilika Resort, located on the banks of Chilika lake, the largest lake in the northern hemisphere.

“We are not only opening new properties but also upgrading our existing ones. Our Swosti Premium has now been classified as a five-star hotel in March 2019 and is the largest convention hotel in the state of Odisha with the highest capacity in halls and rooms. Our latest property Swosti Chilika Resort is an internationally renowned five-star standard resort,” Mohanty adds. This is an eco-resort that has received the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) Platinum Class Award.

High quality landscaping, greenery, herbal gardens and use of plants from within India and abroad makes Swosti Chilika Resort a unique property. It has individual spa rooms, 78 villas, presidential suites, sports bar, restaurant, an open-air coffee shop, boat-

ing facilities for islands, yoga centre, an amphitheatre and bicycle tours for guests.

“It is a perfect destination to cater to all segments, i.e. high-end business as well as leisure travellers. Within a short span of time, this property has

received huge appreciation from both international as well as domestic tourists and has become a well-known MICE destination. Many high-end Indian weddings have already been successfully hosted here. Foreign tourists would find this an exotic destination situated

inside a rural village next to a lake that attracts the highest number of migratory birds from Siberian countries from November to February. The resort is also within two hours distance from the Golden Triangle of Bhubaneswar-Puri-Konark,” Mohanty shares. Gopalpur

beach is just an hour away and many attractions are all within a range of two-and-a-half hours.

Speaking about participating at the show, he says that the group wants to attract more international buyers to Odisha. “After meeting the buyers at

GITB, we want to invite them for familiarisation tours to the state as our guests to witness and promote the tourism potential of Odisha. Our focus segments are inbound tourists to see the 65 ethnic tribes of Odisha besides our flora, fauna and wildlife,” Mohanty adds. ➔

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# Taste the rich essence of Gujarat

Gujarat is an ideal holiday destination offering a riot of colours, a touch of romance, heritage, scenic beauty, breathtaking sites and a mystique that attracts discerning travellers. An enriching experience awaits you...



**R**ich in every sense, Gujarat has much to offer to the discerning tourist. Beautiful beaches line the coastline, dinosaur fossil fields and ancient cave art contrast with

stunning white Jain temples. The mouth-watering food will satisfy any foodie, while the wildlife of the Rann of Kutch and Gir and the last bastion of the Asiatic lion will more than gratify nature lovers.

Gujarat has always been known for its splendid and evocative festivals. An estimated two thousand festivals are celebrated every year in Gujarat and more than two hundred of these are unforgettable occasions that attract tens of thousands of people. Fairs in Gujarat reflect customs and traditions, ethics and values, faith and beliefs of the people of Gujarat.

Renowned for its rich culture,

Gujarat is well termed as the 'Land of Festivals and Fairs'. With almost 3,500 of them being celebrated in different parts of the state every year the festivals and fairs of Gujarat revolve around an occasion - be it the turn of a season, the time for harvesting a golden field, or a religious event from India's extensive and rich mythological traditions.

Regarded as a holy land, numerous temples and religious

places are situated in Gujarat. The innumerable Shrines in Gujarat spread the message of peace, non violence, love and enlightenment. Apart from festivals, fairs and pilgrimages, Gujarat is also blessed with mesmerising unmatched natural beauty. The state also offers an intoxicating mixture of scenery and wildlife.

A land with a long and deep historical past, Gujarat is well known all over the

world as the habitat of the Asiatic lion.

With this in mind, Cox & Kings has launched 12 holiday packages that cover the prominent locales, wildlife and pilgrimage of Gujarat.

The packages embrace Gujarat's art and cultural festivals such as Navratri, Jain Yatra and Tarnetar Fair thus bringing out the diversity of Gujarat that makes it a destination worth exploring.

## Clarks Inn in Raipur

Exuding old-world-charm with its heritage style architecture, the 52-key Clarks Inn Suites, Raipur opens door to guests in the central state of Chhattisgarh.

TT Bureau

**C**larks Inn Group of Hotels has opened its latest property in Chhattisgarh. The 52-room Clarks Inn Suites, Raipur, is located in the city centre and is in close proximity to Raipur Airport. **S N Srivastava**, President & Co-founder, Clarks Inn Group of Hotels, said, "We are particularly thrilled to debut in the fast-growing hospitality market of Chhattisgarh with such a top-of-the-line hotel property. We expect this property to be the most sought-after hospitality address of Raipur whilst striving hard to leverage our presence here."

The property has on offer the latest in amenities and world-class guest services. For corporates and social occasions, the hotel boasts huge event space, as well as several F&B outlets, lounge and bar, health club, spa and more.



**S N Srivastava**  
President & Co-founder  
Clarks Inn Group of Hotels

Srivastava added, "Clarks Inn Group of Hotels has made giant strides as a hospitality chain and has emerged as one of the most admired and fastest growing hotel companies in the South Asia region. Today, we have established our presence in over 20 states of India and Nepal with a slew of developments to unfold in various parts of the country and overseas in the South Asia and ASEAN region in the coming months."

Rakesh Agarwal, Promoter, Clarks Inn Suites, Raipur, said that the brand boasts of a hospitality legacy of more than three-quarter of a century in serving hotel guests from across the world. Speaking on the partnership with Clarks Inn, he said, "Our tie-up with Clarks Inn is not only to promote this wonderful property but also benefit from their tremendous brand equity and help place Raipur and Chhattisgarh on the tourism map of India."

Speaking about the property, Sanjay Tewari, Promoter, Clarks Inn Suites, Raipur, said, "We have worked hard to bring about this property in a brand-new avatar in tune with the expectations of new-age travellers. Today, its distinct advantage remains the city-centre location in proximity to various businesses and commercial hubs and the airport."

## RARE adds brand value

RARE India is focussing on its brand identity of creating value for partner hotels by spreading awareness through knowledge building and storytelling.

TT Bureau

**A**t a time when there are so many hotel representations coming up in the market, RARE India is holding its turf, standing tall with its ethos and beliefs on what kind of properties it takes under its umbrella. Elaborating further is **Shoba Mohan**, Founder, RARE India, who says, "RARE India is a sales, marketing, PR and communications company for boutique concept hotels,



**Shoba Mohan**  
Founder  
RARE India

“One of the key focus areas is to intensify DMC and agency engagement for our hotels and simultaneously kick-starting direct bookings from the Indian market”

wildlife lodges, palace and fort hotels in India, Nepal and Bhutan. Our USP is the strict audit and personal review we work on before bringing any hotel into the RARE community. There is a clear advantage

of being on the RARE list and that is seen in the agency and traveller endorsements."

When asked about the growth last year, Mohan claims, "We had deliberately kept our growth

prospects low. The idea was to intensify efforts for better sales. We reached out efficiently to the domestic market through co-branding exercises, roadshows and media partnerships."

However, she insists that they have lots to offer this year, saying, "One of the key focus areas is to intensify DMC and agency engagement for our hotels and simultaneously kick-starting direct bookings from the Indian market. We believe the domestic market is where the maximum growth for our community will come from in the coming years."

In terms of marketing, Mohan is planning to reach out to new markets and participating in roadshows. "We accomplished some fantastic media coverage for our ourselves and our partners in the US, the UK, South America, Australia, and of course India, especially in the luxury segment."

# Shahpura scales up in India

Shahpura Hotels has signed up seven new properties with its eyes set on five more. The brand hopes to have a pan-India presence by 2022, aided by technological innovations and reach to travel agents through domestic and inbound travel shows.



**D**igraj Singh Shahpura, Director, Shahpura Hotels, has announced that the brand has signed up seven new properties to expand its portfolio. "We have signed up seven new hotels in Rajasthan. We already have five properties and with the new additions, the count will go to 12 with four hotels in Jaipur, three in Udaipur, two in Kumbhalgarh and

one in Ranthambhore. We started with two properties—Shahpura Haveli on the Delhi-Jaipur road and Shahpura House in Jaipur. These are owned by us. However, the properties that we are now signing are on management contract so as to expand our pan-India presence."

It is important to create your own niche in a market that has an abundance of heritage properties. "The new properties are all a mixture of weddings, boutique, heritage and business hotels. We cover everything now because that's the demand in the market. One needs business and MICE hotels as much as wedding hotels to all kinds of business. This is how we are expanding," he said.

Revealing more about the services at these hotels, Shahpura said, "All these properties are four-star and above. Majority of wed-



ding properties are in Jaipur and Udaipur. The business hotels are near the airport in Jaipur. In fact, we will be adopting the same marketing strategy we had for our previous hotels. We will be engaging with travel agents and even do online promotions, as well as get featured in magazines, both trade and consumer. Some of the hotels we have signed up are all existing hotels but new properties. The marketing strategy for those will be different from what it was earlier."

Participating in travel shows is also a step towards engaging with both inbound and domestic travel agents. Talking about GITB, he said, "GITB is an inbound show and we have been dealing with this market for the last 20-25 years. We already have a strong foothold in inbound. We also participated at Rajasthan Domestic Travel Market (RDTM) last year, which again caters to the domestic market, where we focus on wedding segment."

Shahpura Hotels is supposedly the most technologically advanced heritage hotel brand. "We are the only chain which has introduced automation in hotels in the heritage sector. This makes us stand apart from our competition. When we reach out to the agents, we tell them that we have introduced tablets in the room, dock stations and allow guests to give instant feedback digitally. The same technology will be seen in all

the new properties we are signing, including fast internet across the property," he asserted.

The brand is also associated with Preferred Hotels and Resorts, its global sales partner. "Two of our hotels were included in the Historical Hotels of the World list. Today, big brands and international chains sign up with hotels for only two to three years that disrupt the market. However, we have long-standing associations with all our owners and partners. With a brand consistency, when we approach anyone for a deal, they can see our long associations, the number of properties as well as the brand image," Shahpura elaborated.

Claiming that 2018 was a good year, Shahpura stated, "We were 15-20 per cent up from last year in terms of turnover and sales as compared to 2017. By 2019 we will be able to cover four to five more cities apart from the ones in Rajasthan. We are now signing new hotels in Mumbai, Goa, Gurgaon and Agra. We are also looking at leisure destinations like Manali and Varanasi to have heritage properties by taking over old havelis and refurbishing them."

## Awards Galore

Shahpura House was awarded as Luxury Heritage Hotel by World Luxury Hotel Awards 2018

Shahpura Hotels became a member of Historic Hotels of the World

The brand was included as Lifestyle Member of Preferred Hotels & Resorts. It also joined hands with them for global sales alliance



# 10 Alliance hotels in 2019

Forecasting good growth in 2019, Alliance Hotels and Resorts is set to open a number of properties across South India and Andaman & Nicobar.



Alliance Hotels and Resorts is all set to roll out a panoply of properties in Andaman & Nicobar Islands as well as the south of India. Sharing details of the new properties, **Zia Siddiqui**, Managing Director, Alliance Hotels and Resorts, said, "We recently opened Alliance The White Coral, a 46-room hotel in Port Blair, and we will soon be opening two resorts in Havelock—one is a five-star with 70 rooms and the other is a three-star deluxe with 40 rooms. Apart from these, we are also adding six hotels by October 2019 in South India under Alliance Management. As of date, we have signed 10 hotels under



**Zia Siddiqui**  
Managing Director  
Alliance Hotels and Resorts

the Alliance brand to open this year between October and December 2019."

The business, according to Siddiqui, took a hit last year. "Our business was affected

due to the devastating floods in Kerala but 2018 was a satisfactory year. The charts for September 2019 till date look encouraging, and we are still getting queries for series," he informed.

He shared that GITB is a great venue to meet all their business associates under one roof. "The show allows us to exchange our views about the market trends and update them about our openings and future expansion plans. We also collect the feedback about our product and take corrective measures to cater to GenX in the future," added Siddiqui. GITB is a platform to connect with foreign tour operators (FTOs), and he said that they will have a lot on offer for them. "Reasonable price, good product and excellent experience strengthen our relationship with our associates," he shared.

“We recently opened Alliance The White Coral, a 46-room hotel in Port Blair, and will soon be opening two resorts in Havelock”

# Mosaic eyes 13% growth

Witnessing a positive revenue growth of 10 per cent year-on-year, Mosaic Mussoorie is targeting an overall growth rate of 13 per cent this financial year.



With a mantra to offer a unique personal touch, Mosaic Mussoorie seeks to offer a one-of-a-kind experience to each one of its guests. "Our hotel is as unique as the city around it. At Mosaic Mussoorie, you can design your own mix, sink into the leisurely pace of life or walk on to the Mall Road to feel the hustle-bustle of an age-old town. Whether it is the bright lights of the Mall Road you crave for or a romantic dinner under starlit skies at our terrace restaurant Charcoal, bring us your wishlist and we would help you check all the boxes on that list, says **Vijay Singh**, Operations Manager, Mosaic Mussoorie while talking about the USP of the hotel.

Speaking about the hotel's growth in the last one year,



**Vijay Singh**  
Operations Manager  
Mosaic Mussoorie

Singh mentions, "The hotel has seen a positive revenue growth of 10 per cent year-on-year with RevPAR showing a rise of ₹320 for the previous financial year closing at around ₹3620 with an average occupancy of 55 per cent. ADR also saw a raise of ₹637 closing at ₹6637 for FY 2017-18. For the coming financial year, we are targeting an ADR of ₹7186 with a Rev-

PAR of ₹4016. We are targeting an overall challenging growth rate of 13 per cent for the current financial year. To broaden our reach across the globe, we have also tied up with Preferred Hotels & Resorts."

Technological upgradation remains Mosaic Mussoorie's prime focus, under which the management is looking at exploring areas like multi-level parking, see-through sliding glass enclosure for its open deck restaurant, to name a few.

Working in tandem with travel agents and tour operators, Singh says that they work with their partners on net rates. "Some of our consolidators are doing regular promotions for our property only. We have such a unique relation with our travel partners that we remain their first choice for the city," Singh shares.

# Eye for mid-scale hotels

Lords Hotels & Resorts is now looking for branding and operating opportunities for hotels owned by independent and first-generation hoteliers in India.



In an effort to bring in more standardisation and using its expertise in the field, Lords Hotels & Resorts is looking for hotel properties across India for branding purposes. Sharing this is **P R Bansal**, COO, Lords Hotels & Resorts, who says, "Our focus right now is to tap the mid-segment hotels in India, especially the first-generation and independent hoteliers who are not attuned to the current market scenario and its demands. We want to bring in our brand and show them how a good brand can increase their GOP and put them on the tourist map by bringing in a new level of expertise."

He explains that independent hoteliers sometimes are not aware of the industry norms, rates and how to bring in operational efficiencies and this is where a brand like Lords Hotels & Resorts can come



**P R Bansal**  
Chief Operating Officer  
Lords Hotels & Resorts

in. "This will not only increase their profits but also streamline the processes. Of course, we are not restricting ourselves to them, but they are more important in the entire scheme of things that we want to focus on," Bansal adds.

He gives an example of how Lords can bring in more efficiencies even without the owner being present at the 118-key hotel in Kurnool,

Andhra Pradesh that it signed recently. "Since we are an Indian brand, we understand the market dynamics and the requirements better than an international brand. We will sign up any property in India as long as it is in the mid-segment – the real mid-segment, not luxury not a guest house, in the USD 50 range," he says.

Bansal goes on to explain that while the Lords branded hotels are in the mid-segment, they are the best in that city. "We are the best in Ankleshwar but still in the mid-segment, we are the best in Rajula but in the mid-segment, the best in Porbandar, in Saputara, and in Somnath and yet all mid-segment properties," he adds.

Lords Hotels & Resorts is now preparing to open a world-class club in Rajkot by September 15, 2019. It will be a 40-room property called Aarya Lords Club & Resorts.

# Tourists' retreat in Delhi

Catering to travellers all over, Colonel's Retreat is known for its hospitality and is looking to curate an in-house experience of local street food.



Having enjoyed a reasonably good last one year with all parameters experiencing a rise in terms of occupancy, RevPAR as well as ADRs, Colonel's Retreat feels that there is still room for more growth in the future. "Even though 2018 has been a very good year for us, there is still room to rise as we still have not touched 2012 levels in USD", says **Suman Anand Khanna**, Founder, Colonel's Retreat.

Colonel's Retreat has two properties located in the heart of New Delhi and another in close proximity to the city's IGI airport. With FITs and

small groups being the target segments, the UK remains the largest source market for Colonel's Retreat, followed by the US and Germany.

Khanna believes that GITB is the only show of its kind catering solely to the inbound tourist. "GITB emerges as a key platform to meet various stakeholders of the industry. Our only expectation from the show would be that the quality of the buyer must be carefully assessed before invitation," she tells.

"The inbound market in India has been reasonably good for all segments in recent times. I believe that the e-visa regime has certainly made an impact on the-



**Suman Anand Khanna**  
Founder  
Colonel's Retreat

spur-of-the moment travellers," says Khanna on the growth of inbound tourists to India.

For the next one year, Khanna believes that they want to carry on the momentum of good growth in 2019 in better ADR for the property. Colonel's Retreat has been one of the finest B&Bs in the capital city and is a favourite among business travellers and overseas tourists.

“The inbound market in India has been reasonably good for all segments. The e-visa regime has certainly made an impact on the-spur-of-the moment travellers”



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# Heralding a new beginning

**Himmat Anand**, an industry veteran, who has spent years leading India's largest inbound tourism company and then launching his own hotel brand, recently joined as the Honorary Chairman of Travel World Experiences (TWX). Giving an insight into the latest developments, Anand talks about future plans.



TT Bureau

For **Himmat Anand**, working in the tour operating business is a comeback of



sorts. "As an individual, I need challenges to keep me going. In my earlier years in tourism, heading India's leading inbound company gave me that kick. Then I ventured to start the Tree of Life Resorts & Hotels from scratch. With that business being on track and my son Akhil managing the same, I had more time in hand. I was approached a few weeks ago by the key TWX stakeholders to assist them in re-structuring and giving direction to the company. I agreed to join them in an honorary position and devote the necessary time and effort for the company's revival," he reveals.

TWX was amongst the leading inbound

**“We will make sure that our team members continue to believe in the TWX story who are recognised for their loyalty”**

operators until recently. However, things have changed now. Anand says, "The company had a turnover of around ₹160 crores with multiple overseas locations and an amazing market positioning much ahead of its peers. In a span of 18 months, things changed owing to wounds self-inflicted by people who did not care about systems, processes and most importantly, integrity. I am perplexed to see the levels of mismanagement with many rules and processes of business being flouted in our first audit report after the downfall. This in turn

led to non-payment to our vendors and a cash flow crisis within the company."

The solution, according to Anand, will be long haul but he is determined to get things back on track. "What is most important for us is to regain confidence, both internally and externally. Internally, it is the existing staff who we need to handhold and get them to believe in our future. Systems are being streamlined with a more professional approach towards our deliverable. Externally, our reputation has taken a beating, as many vendors have not

been paid their dues for almost two years. Hence, they are apprehensive to do business with us. We are putting in place a very clear time schedule of payments and hope to clear most of these old outstandings by the end of this summer. We are also sitting with our business partners and explaining the crisis to them whilst hoping that they will see sincerity in what we plan," he shared.

Anand is confident that TWX will be able to get back within this financial year as a stronger and more streamlined organisation. "Our dedicated team members, who still believe in the TWX story, is our biggest strength. Secondly, company directors Hemant Golchha and Sanjay Mathema – who have been misled – are determined

to make sure that TWX gets back on its feet. TWX also operates in Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam as a locally registered company, doing inbound business into these countries," he claims.

With a core team of four, Anand now wants a strong corporate governance. "We will make sure that our team members continue to believe in the TWX story who are recognised for their loyalty. We will be a company where the bottom line coupled with a great standard of service and fair play with our partners becomes our driving force. The company will also take all necessary legal and criminal actions against those who have brought it to the current state," he affirmed.

## TCTT now in Paris

Having generated good business in the Dubai market, Travellers Choice Travel & Tourism is opening a new office in Paris and eyeing inbound in India.



TT Bureau

Dubai-based DMC, Travellers Choice Travel & Tourism is now looking to target newer markets other than India, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, where it already has a good presence. The company is set to open its office in Europe, informs **Navin Srivastava**, Director—India, Travellers Choice Travel & Tourism (TCTT).

"We are targeting other markets for the Dubai business because the Indian market is fully captured by travel agents. Along with Dubai, we will focus on other destinations and inbound business of India. We are starting our business operations in Mumbai too," says Srivastava while providing the information.

Expressing his views on the changing travel trends in the industry, Srivastava feels that



**Navin Srivastava**  
Director—India  
Travellers Choice Travel & Tourism

today's travellers are showing interest in unexplored destinations for leisure trips along with an increase in international travel. "Outbound travelling has grown faster (60 per cent from last year) than domestic trips (37 per cent). The robust growth this year could partly be attributed to the shift from offline to online bookings. We are also planning to start an online booking tool for agents' convenience," he shares.

Srivastava believes that DMCs need to raise awareness in order to gain recognition. "Lack of well-developed infrastructure and industry in India poses a challenge to DMCs at local levels. Lack of proper policy frames for destination management creates frauds and corruption at local levels making India less-reliant for destination management. Marketing and budget packages with lucrative offers can maximise travel business. Social media, its sharing culture and badge value of destinations are playing a very critical role in shaping travellers' choices," he feels.

Going by the market demands, the industry needs to focus more on promoting unexplored destinations. He says, "How quickly a travel agency can respond to customer inquiries has a direct impact upon how likely a customer/B2B agent is to complete a booking."

## TAB brings local flavour

Travel at Blue strives to showcase untouched corners of Odisha through its 'Tours by Locals' concept which shows locals as the true brand ambassadors.



TT Bureau

Travel at Blue (TAB) is an ambitious venture of a travel enthusiast who transformed his passion into professional perfection, organising exceptional travel programmes to discover wonderful people, places and cuisines of the world within India or abroad.

**Chandi Patnaik**, Leisure Travel Curator & Owner, Travel at Blue, says, "TAB is all about humans seeking exciting travelling opportunities to experience life's adventures around the world. In the outbound segment, we are recognised for our handpicked luxury experiences while in the inbound and domestic segments, TAB has been gradually increasing its presence by organising exceptional tour programmes to explore the eastern part of India from a different perspective."



**Chandi Patnaik**  
Leisure Travel Curator & Owner  
Travel at Blue

TAB has created its own niche by promoting off-the-beaten-tracks of eastern India. Whether it's walking on virgin forests or surfing a remote island; whether it's trekking around a red sandstone hill top or swimming in the waters of an isolated lake; TAB excels in creating seamless itineraries to experience the east uniquely.

According to Patnaik, Odisha is not just about temples,

monuments or gorgeous beaches and lakes although it certainly does these well. "We strive to showcase the untouched corners of the state and alternative hidden spaces to those willing to head out on offbeat tracks in the state. We believe that locals are the brand ambassadors of their places and can show a tourist an edgier, more in-depth and more beautiful version of their places. We aspire to introduce 'Tours by Locals' – a new concept of travelling in the state of Odisha.

To this effect, TAB recently organised a one-of-a-kind tour by launching 'Cuttack by a Local' escorted especially by Patnaik himself who is a local by birth and passionate about sharing curated experiences of his hometown -- a millennium city which is 1,000 years old and fondly known as 'Baban Bazaar, Tappan Galee' (which means '52 markets, 53 lanes').



#### **Hotel Mansingh, Jaipur**

106 beautiful designed luxurious rooms, a haven of pure delight. Embrace the ethnic charm of the city and enjoy the finest of Indian and Mughlai cuisines along with live music at its new restaurant-lounge-bar SANDSTROM. Rajvillas I & II, the banquet hall with theatre-style seating arrangement for 225 persons and 80 persons respectively. The swimming pool, health club and SPA keep you relaxed after your hectic schedules.



#### **Mansingh Palace, Agra**

Cherish the luxury of elegantly furnished rooms and relive the centuries-old romance. 100 beautiful rooms. Ripples is the 24-hour coffee-shop and Sheesh Mahal the multi-cuisine restaurant. Tequila, the well-stocked hotel bar, swimming pool and health club to rejuvenate the self as well as soul. A delightful experience to savour for a long time.



#### **Mansingh Towers, Jaipur**

An Executive Block with 53 well-appointed rooms & suites, designed to mix business with pleasure, with the provision of personal valet, mini bar and jacuzzi in every suite. Fax machine and PC on demand. There's more an executive lounge, a well-equipped business centre, library, a well-stocked bar and multi-cuisine restaurant Garden Court to delight the palate.



#### **Mansingh Palace, Ajmer**

Rejoice in the holy and festive environment of the town and bask in the ancient and majestic ambience of the hotel designed like an 18th century fortress. It's a memorable experience to live in the family suites that are an architectural marvel and to savour Continental, Chinese, Mughlai & Rajasthani cuisines at its Sheesh Mahal restaurant.

# Indian Hospitality At Its Best



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## GHR in Tier-II, III cities

In existence for almost five-and-a-half years, Global Hotel Representations today represents 15 hotels across different parts of the country.



In the times to come, more hotels will opt for the franchise model and management contract with large hotels, believes **OP Mendiratta**, Managing Director, Global Hotel Representations (GHR). According to him, the marketing business will essentially grow to mark its presence as it is a viable option of promotion.

Coming into existence almost five-and-a-half years back with one hotel, Global Hotel Representations today represents 15 hotels namely St Marks in Bengaluru, Swosti Group in Bhubaneswar, Chilika and Gopalpur-on-Sea, Hotel Madhuban Highlands in Mussoorie, Dehradun, Radisson Hotel Kathmandu in Nepal, JC Residency in Madurai, Shri Radha Brij Vasundhara Resort & Spa in Govardhan, Four



**OP Mendiratta**  
Managing Director  
Global Hotel Representations

Points By Sheraton Navi Mumbai, Orcha Resort in Madhya Pradesh, Ell Bee Ganga View in Rishikesh, Rivatas By Ideal and The Amayaa in Varanasi, Hotel Centre Point, Nagpur and Spangle Heights, Shimla.

On promoting these hotels in Delhi/NCR, Mendiratta says his company uses social media, bulk mailing, traditional

sales calling, covering MiCE companies, tour operators, B2B operators, event managers and corporate houses besides attending trade fairs.

"We have already entered the Tier II, III cities and we only take the hotels having good rating on Trip Advisor. Trade shows such as GITB will have a great impact on tourism growth since we deal directly with the domestic and inbound tour operators," he mentions on his association with GITB.

Commenting on the growth of the hospitality industry, Mendiratta says that the industry is growing gradually and so is the competition. "We always keep in mind the Market Mix/RevPAR and leave no stone unturned to grab any opportunity. Hotels associated with us have seen healthy growth," he adds.

## Braving all odds

Inspite of a challenging business scenario, The Leela Raviz Kovalam closed the financial year with an occupancy of 71% and ADR growth of 4%.



With a healthy market mix covering leisure, corporates, MiCE and weddings, Ayurveda is one segment which provides long stayers to The Leela Raviz Kovalam consistently irrespective of seasons. **Ajith Nair**, Director of Sales & Marketing, The Leela Raviz Kovalam explains that his primary focus will be to maintain the position of the hotel as a luxury resort for international and domestic leisure as well as a high-end MiCE and wedding destination.

Sharing new updates about the property, Nair says, "The latest addition at the hotel is the 'Kovalam Palace'. Erstwhile



**Ajith Nair**  
Director of Sales & Marketing  
The Leela Raviz Kovalam

known as the Halcyon Castle, it was built in 1932 in the princely state of Travancore. It was constructed by HH Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi, Regent of Travancore, as a retreat for her family. Today, Kovalam Palace

**“Kovalam Palace houses four super-luxury suites with state-of-the-art interiors while preserving its historical might”**

houses four super-luxury suites with state-of-the-art interiors in the palace while preserving the historical might of the palace. The concept has been designed with an idea to incorporate the best of both worlds in creating a unique experience encompassing the heritage of the royal lifestyle while providing state-of-the-art technology and international lifestyle. We want to position Kovalam Palace as India's only cliff-top luxury palace with an ocean view."

The hotel managed to maintain its market share despite a challenging business scenario amid the outbreak of Nipah virus and the monsoon floods in Kerala. "We haven't had many cancellations in our volume-driven segments of weddings and MiCE. We closed FY 2018-19 with an occupancy of 71 per cent with an ADR growth of 4 per cent," he says.

## Rise of the new Suryaa

With new and upgraded public areas and banquet areas, The Suryaa New Delhi is set to welcome its guests with the best in services and F&B options.



**Dhananjay Kumar**, General Manager, The Suryaa New Delhi, believes that it's important to upgrade products and services to meet guests' expectations and stay relevant in the market. "We have completely renovated public areas, banquet and meeting facilities. We have also refurbished our few guests' rooms with wooden flooring," he revealed.

The Suryaa's biggest strength, according to Kumar, is its team members. "About 35 per cent of our team members are working with us for a long time — a reason why guests' preferences and recognition is strong that helps us in getting repeat guests. To meet



**Dhananjay Kumar**  
General Manager  
The Suryaa New Delhi

our core value 'Service So Memorable', we have a strong process in place. We assign GRO to guests, who are staying with us for more than two nights, to look after their daily needs. Our chefs customise our long stay guests' dietary

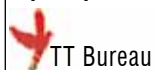
requirements. We also have in-house qualified nutritionists who helps our guests with special dietary recommendations. Besides, we enjoy a strategic location for all segments," he explained.

The overall growth at The Suryaa was about 10 per cent over 2017. Insisting that digital is the way forward for marketing, Kumar added, "We have gone completely digital in terms of promoting our F&B outlets, room promotions and health club offers. Communications take place through videos, GIFs and paid ads on social media rather than spending on collaterals such as flyers, inserts, etc. Potential guests are reached through e-flyers, emailers and SMS. We are also looking forward for few tie-ups for sponsored listing to increase our visibility and reach out to potential guests. However, we do propose print media for annual activities."

**“About 35% of our team members are working with us for a long time — a reason that helps us in getting repeat guests”**

## WelcomHeritage grows

True to its ethos of small boutique properties, WelcomHeritage is geared up to open a number of properties across India this year.



Amidst the launch of various openings, the immediate focus of WelcomHeritage is to launch three properties that are in the advanced stages of completion, informs **Sanjeev Nayar**, MH, General Manager, WelcomHeritage. "These properties include Tadoba Vanyavillas Resort & Spa in the forest reserve of Tadoba near Nagpur, Badi Kothii in Prayagraj and Inderpura Resort in Udaipurwadi, Rajasthan. We are hopeful that all of them will be flagged in the next two to three months. The nature resort in Tadoba will be our first property in the state of Maharashtra," he shared.

WelcomHeritage registered a reasonable growth over the last year. "During the last year, we also flagged a 19th century heritage property — WelcomHeritage Ashdale in Nainital, besides another nature resort



**Sanjeev Nayar**  
MH, General Manager  
WelcomHeritage

with a private waterfall in Coorg — WelcomHeritage Ayatana and Kalyan Bhawan, a heritage hotel in Jaisalmer. Overall, it was a very productive year for us," Nayar said.

The brand is also looking to tap the burgeoning wedding segment of 'Small and Intimate Weddings' for its properties. Nayar further revealed that they are adding new properties in the WelcomHeritage

portfolio. "These properties are part of our strategic expansion plans. We aim to expand our horizon in the South and Northeastern region of the country with three or four new properties for evaluation this year. These properties will help the brand expand its footprints across India."

In an endeavour to ensure regular brand awareness and inspire customers, WelcomHeritage has adopted modern technologies and mediums to reach out to these globe trotters. "We are present on social media and we conduct digital media activities to reach out to these new-age travellers. The need of the hour is to keep abreast of the latest technological advancements. But, for heritage properties, located in offbeat destinations, this continues to remain a big challenge because of the non-availability of certain trained resources," he expressed.

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# Madhya Pradesh

## Discovering the 'Heart of India'

Exploring Madhya Pradesh offers a variety of tourism products ranging from pilgrim tourism, wildlife tourism, heritage tourism, to Buddhist circuit, adventure sports and cultural tourism. The state boasts of a wide variety of attractions to cater to all tourists.



Nestled between the Vindhya and the Satpura mountain ranges, Madhya Pradesh is home to the plains in the east, meandering rivers, rocky hills and ravines, to lush green forests.

Ancient temples, national parks and sanctuaries, stupas, forts, palaces, a host of cultural and tourist festivals and venues for international conference and conventions of global standards attract large number of domestic and international tourists from all segments.

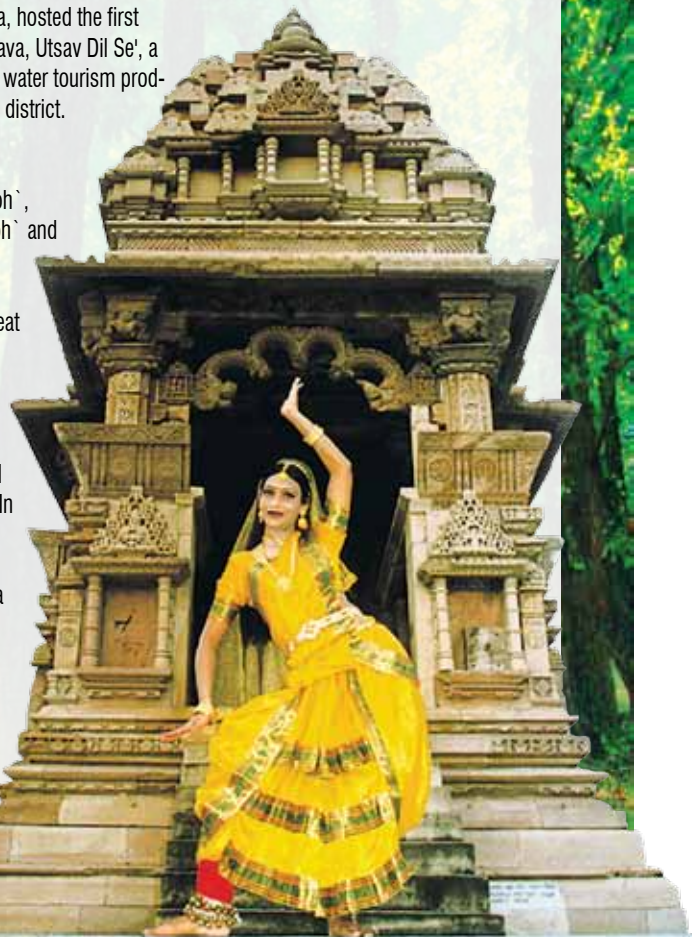
The principal destinations are Khajuraho, Kanha, Sanchi, Mandu, Gwalior – Shivpuri, Pachmarhi, Bandhavgarh, Satpura National Park, Pench, Amarkantak, Ujjain, Omkareshwar, Bhedaghat, Orchha and Chitrakoot and the dynamic business centres of Bhopal and Indore. Madhya Pradesh has also explored the potential of Water Tourism in the state. Hanumanthiya, on

the banks of Indira Sagar Dam, one of the biggest man made water reservoirs in Asia, hosted the first ever 'Jal Mahotsava, Utsav Dil Se', a festival to create water tourism products in Khandwa district.

in vividness before Holi festival in the month of March.

### Festivals

'Kalidas Samaroh', 'Tansen Samaroh' and a dance fete in Khajuraho are celebrated, in great fiesta, with vast number of avid participants. Religious festivals too are observed with veneration. In West Nimar and Jabua regions of Mandhyanchal, a colorful festival called Bhagoria Haat is feted by the Bhils and Bhilalas tribes. It is a mass 'swayamvara,' held



# Buoyant on MiCE, weddings

Registering a growth of 12% in the last financial year, Clarks Shiraz Agra is looking to strengthen its position in the Agra market with a focus on MiCE.



TT Bureau

Clarks Shiraz Agra registered a growth of around 12 per cent in a competitive market like Agra in the last financial year 2018-19, informed **Debasish Bhowmik**, Senior Vice President, Hotel Clarks Shiraz Agra. He attributed the success primarily to the growth in MiCE and online bookings that have registered a good growth in terms of percentage and RevPAR.

The largest source market for the hotel remains the inbound market and foreign tourists coming to the city of Taj. "Over the years, we have had Europe as our main strength

in terms of welcoming guests at the hotel. We are looking forward to the Southeast Asian market and targeting on enhancing our reach. We are also focusing on the Australasian market as we are receiving good support from there," shared Bhowmik.

Agra is gaining popularity as a medical tourism destination. "Quite a few guests are coming to our hotel from different parts of the country for treatments in Agra. Golf tourism is also booming in Agra with the presence of a good golf course overlooking the Taj Mahal, which needs a lot of promo-



**Debasish Bhowmik**  
Senior Vice President  
Hotel Clarks Shiraz Agra

tion," explained Bhowmik. He further said that the hotel is also considering to introduce fitness and rejuvenating programmes as new

products that can be added to its existing offerings.

Talking about the growing demand of destination weddings in Agra and Clarks

**“Golf tourism is booming in Agra with the presence of a good golf course overlooking the Taj Mahal, which needs promotion”**

Shiraz Agra is capitalising on this opportunity, Bhowmik said that weddings are an important focus area. "Clarks Shiraz Agra has been well known for its hospitality and food over the years. We have got excellent infrastructural

facilities available at the hotel along with multiple venues and open areas to accommodate destination wedding arrangements. We have also got some value-added wed-

dining packages which we have been marketing. We have a contract with one of the leading wedding planners in the country. We are actually seeing the wedding segment grow by leaps and bounds in Agra. Weddings have

now become a completely different ball game; the kind of RevPAR you get from a wedding is unmatched," he said.

It is important to have a common agreement among the stakeholders of the tourism industry on ways to promote tourism in the country. "We sometimes miss what exactly can be done at the ground level. I believe that every tourism product should be made available for booking online. We need to sit and discuss how tourism products can be developed according to the convenience of tourists," Bhowmik concluded.

# Welcome to a world of heritage

Boasting of properties across offbeat destinations in the country, WelcomHeritage offers its guests great natural surroundings and old-world charm whilst representing some of the finest traditions of heritage hospitality.



TT Bureau

## WelcomHeritage Ayatana Coorg, Karnataka

Deep in the heart of Coorg's verdant hills, is an experience waiting to enchant you with the unbridled magic of the Western Ghats. Ayatana offers 53 well-appointed rooms, each offering a spectacular show of Coorg's dreamy escapes. The restaurant fills the soul with views of a gregarious river while the hotel's chefs prove a worthy gastronomic match to the view. Besides, the hotel provides facilities such as spa, infinity



WelcomHeritage Badi Kothi, Prayagraj

pool, trekking, rappelling, safari, snooker, table tennis, chess, to name a few. Come, allow the spirit of the land to infuse your very being, and coax you gently on a personal voyage of discovery.

## WelcomHeritage Tadoba Vanyavillas Resort & Spa

Spread across 65 acres, WelcomHeritage Tadoba Vanyavillas Resort & Spa is situated at Chimur Taluka of Chadrapur District near Nagpur in Maharashtra, has its own private lake.

The property is located in 1.5 kms radius of the Tadoba forest, which is home to the highest number of tigers

and cubs in central India. Now in advanced stage of completion, the property is set to be launched in the next few months. The property comprises 36 exquisitely designed rooms segregated into three categories - Premium Cottages, Deluxe Cottages and Tents. The resort features two in-house restaurants and a bar near the swimming pool. As far as leisure and recreational activities are concerned, the hotel provides facilities such as swimming pool, gym, gaming zone and spa. Outdoor activities like nature walks, bird watching, jogging track, cycling, biking and city tours can also be made available.

## WelcomHeritage Badi Kothi, Prayagraj

WelcomHeritage Badi Kothi was built in the year 1897 during the

Mughal Era with a monumental façade, exquisite stone carvings and a royal architectural marvel. It offers a unique heritage experience to visitors as well as to those who want to experience the royal zamindars culture and lifestyle.

The property is in its advanced stage of completion and features 25 exquisite rooms offering modern day comfort while retaining its old-world charm. The in-house restaurant serves a variety of cuisines. Recreational activities include yoga, jenga, chess, carom and badminton. While staying at WH Badi Kothi, one can also take excursions to Shakti Peeth, Anand Bhawan Museum, All Saint Cathedral Church, Allahabad Fort, to name a few.

WelcomHeritage Tadoba Vanyavillas Resort & Spa



WelcomHeritage Ayatana Coorg, Karnataka



# Himachal Pradesh

## Boost your adrenaline



Equipped with a reasonable level of fitness and a burning desire to be adventurous is all one needs to enjoy Himachal Pradesh. For the expert or beginner, the state offers a niche of sport and adventure for everyone.

### Water sports

The state has become a focal point of water sports with a variety of river rafting possibilities available. The sport is now being held on the Sutlej at Tattapani near Shimla on the Beas near Kullu, the Ravi

near Chamba and Chandra in Lahaul. Possibilities are also being explored on the river Spiti. If river rafting is not your thing, then you can also enjoy still water sports of the likes of water-skiing, surfing, kayaking, rowing, canoeing and sailing. Water sports activities are also available on the waters of the Gobind Sagar near Bilaspur, the Chamera Lake near Dalhousie and the Pandoh Lake on the Mandi-Manali highway.

### Mountain cycling

The entire state is a playground for those who wish

to gear for high adventure with an expedition on cycles. You can pedal your way past high passes or simply make a day-adventure. The lower regions of the state – Kangra, Una, Hamirpur and Bilaspur offer gentle routes. Or you can stretch your mind, muscle and stamina to reach out to the trans Himalayan tract of Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur.

### Trekking

With well over 200 defined trails, the variation in terrain is enormous in the state for an active adventure like trekking.

The main trekking areas in Himachal are the Dhauladhar and Pir Panjal ranges, routes over the passes between the Shimla region and the Kullu valley, the numerous treks out of Kullu and select treks in the trans-Himalayan regions of Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti. Most trekking areas are between 1,500 metres and 6,000 metres.

### Ice Skating & Skiing

The Shimla ice-skating rink has the largest open-air area with natural ice in this part of the world. Ice skating

Few places in the world are as richly endowed as Himachal Pradesh. Rivers cutting through deep gorges, placid mountain lakes, thick forests, snow capped mountains piercing the skyline, alpine pastures; all excite the spirit for outdoor activities, sports and adventure.



under clear skies, Shimla's temperature provides a series of uninterrupted sessions. Ice-skating normally begins in early December and goes on

till February. Kufri near Shimla is one of the oldest places in India to be associated with skiing and the slopes are still in use during winter.

## When Fortune smiles

Fortune Hotels is gearing to expand its presence in India whilst offering the best in hospitality with an emphasis on personalised service at great value.

TT Bureau

The last year has been a path-breaking year for Fortune Hotels in terms of opening new hotels and expanding footprint in demand-dense cities and leisure locations pan-India. "With the opening of five new hotels, we are all geared up to give our customers more choices at different locations. Accelerating our focus on the leisure portfolio, we have inaugurated new resorts in Mashobra (Shimla) and Kasauli and opened business hotels in strategic locations like Jalandhar, Vellore and Durgapur. Apart from that, with 52 signed alliances and 3918 rooms across 46 cities in the country, we continue to scout for new opportunities across India. We are keenly looking at entering demand-dense markets as well as key leisure destinations like Agra, Dehradun, Nainital, Jodhpur and Udaipur, to name



**Dhananjay Saliankar**  
Head—Sales & Marketing  
Fortune Hotels

a few. We are also evaluating some options in the East and Northeast parts of India," shared **Dhananjay Saliankar**, Head—Sales & Marketing, Fortune Hotels.

A wholly-owned subsidiary of ITC, Fortune Hotels' brand philosophy revolves around providing contemporary accommodation to business and leisure travellers through a wide range of accommoda-

tion in pertinent destinations. "Our branding strategy has been built hugely on word-of-mouth recommendations of our customers as all brand growth essentially thrives on the customer experience. This reflects in our rankings and feedback on multiple review sites. Over 95 per cent of our hotels maintain a healthy rating of four and above," claimed Saliankar.

He insisted that FY 2018 was a positive year for Fortune Hotels. "Both hotel occupancies and ADR saw an upward trend. While the average occupancies across the industry grew to around 65 per cent, we clocked average occupancy in the range of 68-70 per cent across our hotels pan India," he added.

On the marketing front, Fortune Hotels is looking to enhance the brand website experience to enhance ease of bookings. 📌

## Cygnett sets standards

With a phenomenal 2018, Cygnett Hotels & Resorts earmarked the year by signing the maximum number of hotels with new 24 new properties.

TT Bureau

The growth trajectory of Cygnett Hotels & Resorts displays an upward trend. With all hotels running on average occupancy of more than 69 per cent and an ADR of Rs 2950+ on a group level, the hotel is now eyeing international markets. Elaborating on the achievements of Cygnett, **Sarbendra Sarkar**, Founder and Managing Director, Cygnett Hotels & Resorts said, "We have been ranked at the top in HVS Anarock India Hospitality Review 2018 under the maximum number of hotels signing in the previous year by outpacing other esteemed industry brands. We are in motion to introduce concepts where guests



**Sarbendra Sarkar**  
Founder and Managing Director  
Cygnett Hotels & Resorts

can reconnect with nature. Cygnett will launch hotels in niche destinations away from the concrete jungles. Cygnett Resort Mountain Breeze - Nainital, Cygnett Inn Grand - Jaipur and Cygnett Inn Trendz - Itanagar have been launched

in the past three months. We will be marking our flag in Rishikesh, Jim Corbett, Srinagar, Pahalgam and a few other destinations in the coming month."

Talking about the diversity and versatility of Cygnett as a multi-brand portfolio, Sarkar said that his company has a pan-India visibility. "We already have initiated our operations in leisure destinations like Nainital, Gangtok and Itanagar. Soon, we will take this step in the same category for Rishikesh, Jim Corbett and Pahalgam. Our portfolio consists of 70 per cent hotels situated in metro destinations while 30 per cent in leisure destinations. The metro locations cater to guest in an 80:20 ratio where 80 per cent are business guests and 20 per cent is leisure while we attract 80 per cent tourists and 20 per cent MICE business in leisure destinations," he explained. 📌

“ We have been ranked at the top in HVS Anarock India Hospitality Review 2018 under the maximum number of hotels signings ”

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# Personalisation for expats is key

From entertainment to food and safety, Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi has it all down so it can cater smoothly to the expat community which forms a big part of its clientele.

TT Bureau

Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi is positioning itself to become an upper-upscale lifestyle hotel in the submarket and also one of the most desired hotels for MICE events from its corporate, social, and leisure clientele, according to its General Manager, **Pankaj Saxena**. The upcoming projects include the largest spa in the submarket that is sprawled over 3,000 sq ft, its Presidential Suites with state-of-the-art technologies to host diplomats and dignitaries, as well as a new trendy watering hole to

cater to the millennial group.

He says, "Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi's main offerings for the expat travellers include ensuring guest safety and security at the global level standard with 24/7 sniffer dog vigilance, CCTV cameras throughout all public areas in the hotel, hi-tech scanning machines to deter entry of any unwanted materials along with sophisticated and well-trained security guards manning all guest areas round the clock." The hotel also offers expat guests round the clock entertainment with a choice of news, sports, music



Pankaj Saxena, General Manager, Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi

“We create localised menus to attract customers while incorporating the farm-to-table trend into our restaurant by offering seasonal foods that are locally available”

and lifestyle TV channels to keep them updated on all the happenings back home.

“We also celebrate various international festivals at the

hotel to engage with the expat guests to make them feel at home away from their homeland. Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi emphasises on offering unique and personalised

stay experiences for discerning business travellers and leisure companions. This results in creating long-term relationships with guests and getting repeat and loyal clientele,” Saxena adds.

Another big focus is on food and offering expats a choice of their F&B. “Our chef is specialised in various cuisines from around the world. Promoting local dining experiences with the farm-to-table trend continues to be in demand, and we create localised menus to attract customers while incorporating this trend into our hotel's restaurant by offering seasonal foods that are locally available,” Saxena shares.

Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi's special offer includes stay combined with experience of local leisure attractions, shop-

ping, and speciality dine-ins influenced by regional cuisines for groups of travellers. It also offers a tailor-made stay package with choice of F&B, sightseeing, health and wellness experience for smaller groups and individual travellers. “We focus on FITs, MICE from Western Europe (Germany, France, UK and Scandinavia Region), South East Asia Region (PRC, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong), and the Oceanic Region (Australia, NZ),” he adds.

## Feel at Home

Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi emphasises on offering personalised stay experiences for discerning business travellers and leisure companions to create long-term relationships

# Food for thought: Eros Hotel

Eros Hotel New Delhi, Nehru Place is set to boost its F&B experiences with a new Executive Chef on board. The hotel also expects healthy growth this year and hopes to exceed stakeholders' expectations.

TT Bureau

In a bid to give a new touch to its F&B offerings, Eros Hotel New Delhi, Nehru Place, now has a new Executive Chef. The hotel's General Manager, **Davinder Juj**, shared the details, saying, “The latest addition to our team has been our new executive chef, Sudarshan Bhandari who

comes with almost two and a half decades of experience in kitchen with various hotel chains. His mandate is to exceed guests' expectations from the perspective of food and beverage offerings.”

Located in the centre of South Delhi's business and commercial district, Eros Hotel is perfectly placed for guests'

business needs, whilst offering multiple leisure activities in its immediate vicinity, claimed Juj. “Tastefully appointed rooms and suites coupled with efficient staff ensures a comfortable stay. Inspired by the design of famous British architects Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker, the hotel presents a mélange of style coupled with. Service at Eros

“We had seen increased demand from the corporate last year along with a surge in online booking via various OTAs”

Hotel is personalised, attentive yet unobtrusive and always accompanied by warm smiles,” he added.

2018 had been a great year for Eros. Juj shared, “The first half of 2018 was excellent. We had seen increased demand from various sectors and corporate. We have also seen a surge in online booking via various OTAs and our own brand website.” He mentioned that 2019 looks promising, adding, “We have our plans and a budget to achieve and so far we are on the right track. Yet again, we will be able to exceed stakeholders' expectations.”

Juj shared that their marketing

plan is made at the beginning of the year and the budget is allocated accordingly. “We keep on amending the plan as per the market trends, conditions and guest feedback. Our promotional activities are planned anticipating guests' needs and demand, especially for food, beverage and spa. We loop in key departments for their contribution in understanding guest needs, competition analysis, current market trends and technology,” he informed.

He believes that GITB is one of the leading networking platforms for inbound tourism and provides an opportunity to showcase their property. “We hope to reach out to as many



Davinder Juj  
General Manager  
Eros Hotel New Delhi, Nehru Place

buyers and operators in this short period of time as well as meet the maximum number of FTOs via one-on-one meetings. We have our core sales team deputed for this. As a luxury property, we have a bouquet of offerings from choice of rooms, large event space, multiple dining options, health club, pool and spa,” shared Juj.



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# Leisure on fast track

With a focus on leisure destinations across India, Leisure Hotels is planning to invest around ₹100 crore to add more properties by the end of 2020.



TT Bureau

Prominent hospitality chain in Northern India, and largest in Uttarakhand, Leisure Hotels offers a unique blend of history, culture and luxury. Focusing on leisure destinations in Uttarakhand, Goa and Himachal Pradesh across bespoke villas, boutique resorts, luxury camps and smart business hotels, the group is looking to expand its portfolio aggressively. Furnishing more details, **Vibhas Prasad**, Director, Leisure Hotels informed that the group has several projects lined up for execution. "We are looking to invest around ₹100 crore to add 10 properties — a mix of owned and managed — by the end of 2020. We are targeting other



**Vibhas Prasad**  
Director  
Leisure Hotels

projects too, which include a hostel in Rishikesh by 2019, a business hotel in Greater Noida and a luxury resort in Haridwar by October 2020, a resort in Naukuchiatal April 2021, along with a plan to open a resort in Tehri by 2022," said Prasad.

"Over the years, our hotels have carved a niche for themselves, attracting discerning travellers who desire more than just a stay. The mix of domestic and international guests at Leisure Hotels has been nearly 25 per cent international and 75 per cent domestic. The revenue growth of the group in the last decade has been more than 25 per cent year-on-year largely due to the growth of domestic travellers. This has led to robust occupancies and enhanced ADRs, further increasing the revenue potential," further added Prasad.

The company gets most of its business from Delhi-NCR and Western India (Gujarat and Maharashtra) along with a considerable number of travellers from Pune, Kanpur and Lucknow. 📌

# Alwar with MGB Hotels

MGB Hotels has rebranded one of its hotels in Alwar and is working towards creating its niche in the region whilst positioning Alwar on the hospitality map.



TT Bureau

In an endeavour to match up to the increasing tourism opportunities in Alwar, MGB Hotels rebranded one of its hotels as Sparrow Inn Ankur. "The rebranding was part of our efforts to provide the best hospitality services to all the explorers travelling to this hidden paradise in Rajasthan. We have also initiated steps to take over more hotels to expand to the vast territory of



**Manish Bhatia**  
Managing Director  
MGB Hotels, Alwar

“Currently, we have four hotels under us, of which three are solely managed by MGB Hotels and one by Lemon Tree Hotels”

the city. Currently, we have four hotels under our wings, of which three are solely

managed by MGB Hotels and one is handled by Lemon Tree Hotels. We are looking forward

to becoming the ideal stay partner for vacationers travelling to Alwar," said **Manish Bhatia**, Managing Director, MGB Hotels, Alwar.

Claiming that its motto acts as the major USP, he said, "As a modern pioneer in the hospitality industry in Alwar, our motto is to provide the best stay experience along with the best professional services to all our guests."

MGB Hotels witnessed a growth of around 10-15 per cent from its chain of hotels in 2018. The brand looks forward to spread its wings by adding more hotels. Sharing plans for 2019, Bhatia mentioned, "We are planning to develop more customised packages for our hotels." 📌

# Jodhpur gives a 5 star

Being an international five-star brand in the Blue City gives Radisson Jodhpur an advantage over many others, especially while dealing with FTOs.



TT Bureau

Radisson Jodhpur is the only international five-star hotel brand in Jodhpur. "The hotel has an approachable location and is closer to the airport as well as the railway station. Situated in a silent locality close to the iconic Umaid Bhawan Palace, the heritage theme hotel offers contemporary interiors to cater to discerning guests in the city," said **Neeraj Joshi**, Director of Sales, Radisson Jodhpur.

Having faced a difficult Q2 2018, the hotel successfully regained itself in Q3 and Q4 with strategic planning and pricing techniques. Joshi attributed this comeback to the hotel's focus on online travellers and inbound



**Neeraj Joshi**  
Director of Sales  
Radisson Jodhpur

tourism in the initial months after the hotel opening.

As Jodhpur is a leisure destination, the hotel targets weddings, leisure and the transient segment to post at least 35-40 per cent growth over 2018. Joshi

claimed that the hotel will be participating in travel fairs to reach out to agents. "The hotel plans to participate in travel fairs particularly in feeder markets of Gujarat, Mumbai and Delhi. Further, print and social media shall also be crucial to reach out to maximum digital medium users," he said.

GITB, for Radisson Jodhpur, is a relevant platform to showcase products to foreign buyers. "FTOs are aware of the brand Radisson. FTOs are the major business producers for leisure markets like Jodhpur during the lean period in summers and the peak period in winters. We have given them special commercials for 'off season' to promote last-minute travellers," informed Joshi. 📌

# Ideal boutique getaways

Tree of Life Resorts & Hotels has stuck to its core of being boutique. Educating tour operators about its products has helped the brand grow.



TT Bureau

The boutique and experiential nature of properties has facilitated the recent expansion Tree of Life Resorts & Hotels. "Tree of Life Resort & Spa, Varanasi, saw its first proper season and I am happy to share that we did an average occupancy through the winter season of 68 per cent with an ARR of about ₹13,200. Our property in Ranthambore is another exciting development which has filled a gap in that market at the ₹9000 mark," informed **Akhil Anand**, Director, Tree of Life Resorts & Hotels.

Elaborating on the USP of the brand, Anand said, "Common opinion states that boutique and experiential cannot go



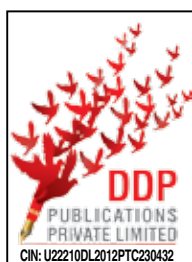
**Akhil Anand**  
Director  
Tree of Life Resorts & Hotels

hand-in-hand with scalability. Boutique hotels are mostly perceived to be owner-run single properties. Over the years, we have found a sweet spot of being able to offer a unique experience at each of our six locations. Quite naturally then,

these cannot be owner-run and we are very fortunate to have a team of like-minded individuals who believe in our vision."

Earlier, Tree of Life Resorts & Hotels also had a sister brand—Tree Leaf Hospitality—representing properties not owned by Anand. "We later realised that all properties under the Tree Leaf brand would benefit more from the traction and exposure that brand Tree of Life already has. We have now decided to have two segregations within the brand Tree of Life itself."

Tree of Life Resorts & Hotels measures its success by guest satisfaction, repeat guest ratio and multi-city usage in an inbound itinerary. 📌



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