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to Bounce Back**



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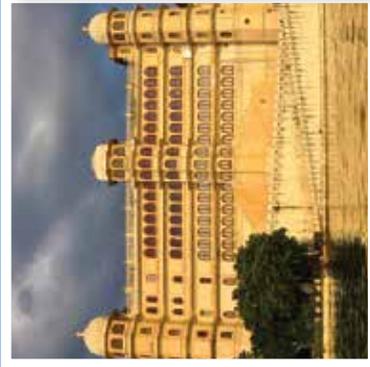
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# Travok

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Dear Reader,

After Covid-19 wrecked 2020, we all are crossing our fingers and welcoming the New Year 2021 with new hopes. By keeping this in mind T3FS covered many professionalists views with respect to market scenario. In our cover story, we picked few International Tourism Boards to know about the global scenario. According to the newest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, international arrivals plunged 81% in July and 79% in August, traditionally the two busiest months of the year and the peak of the Northern Hemisphere summer season. The drop until August represents 700 million fewer arrivals compared to the same period in 2019 and translates into a loss of US\$ 730 billion in export revenues from international tourism. This is more than eight times the loss experienced on the back of the 2009 global economic and financial crisis.

Furthermore, we focused on “2021: year of Domestic Tourism in India”. COVID-19 has tossed out most travel plans for people in 2020. With the travel market gearing up 2021 seems to be the year of domestic tourism in India.

The outlook for tourism economy recovery remains highly uncertain, as the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to heavily hit the sector.

The outcome for 2020 is expected to be a decrease in the international tourism economy by around 80% (downside of previous estimates), with domestic tourism driving the short term recovery.

In hospitality, we focused on the recovery of the hospitality sector. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the world's economy was shut down almost overnight. Hotels are still struggling to keep their doors open and are unable to rehire all their staff due to the historic drop in travel demand.

COVID-19 outbreak has presented unprecedented circumstances before the fragile tourism and hospitality industry. The highly infectious novel coronavirus continues to thwart the sector and raises serious questions about the present and future survival of the sector.

One industry that is suffering the most immediate repercussions is the hospitality and leisure industry. Hospitality is among the hardest hit due to fears of community spread through travel and group environments.

In lifestyle, we covered upcoming automobiles, newly launched products and month's special love talk.

***Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!***

*Vedika Sharma*

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# Travok

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Razvee Hussain, Secretary Tourism, Government of Assam.

“The year 2021 will be road trips not very far from home with people opting for standalone resorts or Homestays in rural areas.” – By

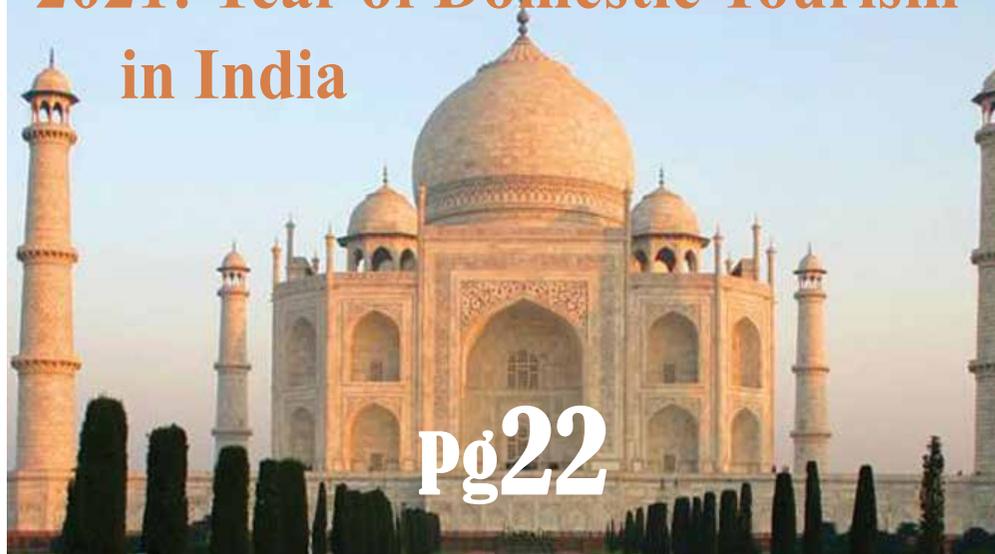
No doubt, tourism has been the worst affected of all major economic sectors. If you are hoping to see international tourism on the cards by 2021 then no, you may need to wait a little longer. The tourism sector has been devastated by COVID-19.

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COVID-19 has tossed out most travel plans for people in 2020. With the travel market gearing up 2021 seems to be the year of domestic tourism in India.

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Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the world's economy was shut down almost overnight. Hotels are still struggling to keep their doors open and are unable to rehire all their staff due to the historic drop in travel demand.



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# In the lap of NATURE

**“The year 2021 will be road trips not very far from home with people opting for standalone resorts or Homestays in rural areas.” – By Razvee Hussain, Secretary Tourism, Government of Assam.**

• **Vedika Sharma**

## Share about the untouched destinations of Assam.

Assam, an all-season tourist destination, is predominantly nature-based and brings forth a series of vivid images – the immeasurable stretch of the only male river of the country - the mighty River Brahmaputra, the one-horned Rhinoceros grazing by a wetland (Beel), has the rich flora and fauna abundant wildlife. You must be aware that out of the 37 UNESCO World Heritage site in India, two are from Assam namely, Kaziranga National park and Manas National Park, Assam. Both the national parks have the success story of conservation in the world by bringing the prehistoric one-horned rhino from the brink of extinction that makes it a unique destination in the world.

In addition to this, the new tourist destinations namely Panimoor and Umrangsu in the district of DimaHasao are pristine picturesque dreamland of undulating hills, valleys, gently flowing streams and waterfalls.

The Chakrasila Wildlife Sanctuary in the Kokrajhar district is popular for its Golden Langur; one of the 25 most endangered primate species in the world. It is mainly a hilly tract running north-south where there are two lakes (Dheer Beel and Diplai Beel) on either side, which are integral to the eco-system of the sanctuary. Besides having wildlife sightings, there is a lot of adventure activities that can be undertaken here like excursions at Sikhri Sikhla, Jarnagra, Baukhungri Peak, Paragliding (Tandem) at Dangdufurhills, Boating/ Picnic at Dheer Beel

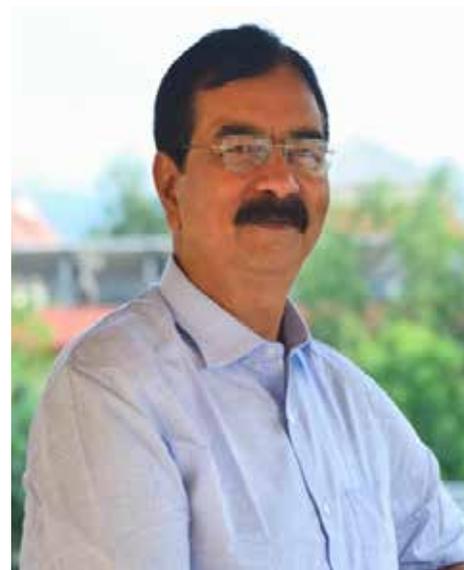
and Diplai Beel.

In the Karbi Anglong district, there is a tiny hamlet namely Shikdamakha, nestled on a plateau that has set examples in cleanliness and economic sustainability for the rural communities of the state. Known to be one of the cleanest villages in Assam, along with its neighbouring hamlets – Bormarjong, Amsai, Langarkhon, Maulen; it is an ideal location for developing rural tourism and providing authentic village experiences to the visiting community.

If adventure excites you, you can experience the thrill of white-water rafting at Bogamati which is located in the Indo – Bhutan border at a distance of 91 km(approx) from Guwahati. It offers a perfect blend of wilderness exposure and incredible scenery. The raw unbridled power of the water is a white water playground with waves, splashes and drops that keep you soaked and smiling or visit the “Elephant friendly Tea” farm at Dimakuchi. It is a small tea garden in the Brahmaputra Valley to have become the first of its kind in the world to secure an elephant-friendly certificate.

Then again the Jeypore rain forest in Dibrugarh under the Dehing – Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary is something that one cannot afford to miss. This forest is famous for its rich biodiversity and it rains almost throughout the year.

Dibru-Saikhowa National park in Tinsukia District is one of the 19 biodiversity hotspots of the world and an identified IBA (Important Bird Area), the park rests under the cover of mystic mist



surrounded by deep dense woods that invite one for a passionate escape into its lush green environment. Boating in the park is an opportunity that ought not to be missed - sailing on clear waters, navigating through the seltic swamps, passing between tall grasses and canebrakes, river dolphins frolicking in the distance, the bright coloured wild horses also known as Feral horses are once in a lifetime experience.

## Share your views about the future of tourism and new travel trends for the year 2021.

With the onset of the tourism season in the state and with the gradual lift on the lockdown, it is observed that the demand of the traveller’s too will soon pick up in measured phases. I think what’s clear to everybody in the industry right now is that there will be a lot of demand for domestic travel and people will prefer to get into a car and drive leisurely for three to six hours, stay in pristine surroundings, enjoy nature and stay there for a week or two.

We, therefore, propose to promote our domestic tourism within the state and target the local as well as the national tourist of India. In this criteria, we have created Ten numbers of circuits for people to travel and stay for the weekend or to go for short road trips. Hence, I think the year 2021 will be road trips not very far from home with people opting for standalone resorts or Home stays in rural areas.

### 2021: year of domestic tourism in India. Comment.

Domestic Tourism is here to stay for some time until we have a vaccination for COVID-19, which helpfully seems not far away.

Slow Tourism/Rural Tourism/Responsible Tourism will be the mantra for reviving the tourism industry, thereby focussing more on the rural people, longer lengths of stay and more fulfilling tourist experiences so that the tourists can prioritize quality over quantity instead of Mass Tourism or over tourism. The lockdown and the prolonged stay indoors have helped most of the people to introspect. Many have decided to slow down or pursue passions that they had long forgotten. So, cycling vacations, walking /hiking tours, fishing; lots of simple pleasures may surface as reasons to holiday but in a different manner. Health farms, nature villages etc. are all new interests which tourists will look up on.

In the present scenario, people are choosing to safely travel together as a family or a close group of friends thereby reducing the risk of being affected by socialising with others during the travel.

### What travel will look like in 2021?

With the introduction of Virtual meetings, business travel will no longer be considered essential. Hence the prices of flight tickets of the economy class will increase. Perhaps the regional connectivity scheme (UDAN) can now be promoted more aggressively by the airlines which will be a win-win situation for the tourists as well as the flight operators. But the routes should be proposed in consultation with the Tourism & Transport Department.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of Digital India by transforming India into a digitally empowered society will have a positive impact in our State as well as our country as henceforth travel will be contactless, paperless booking, self-check-in kiosks and other safety measures are here to stay.

The SOP guidelines too will be in place for some time and contact tracing with all requisite information will be mandatory though there are privacy concerns.

Visiting another country will require mandatory



travel insurance.

Boutique hotels, Homestays, Standalone Resorts will continue to gain attraction over large hotels.

### What are the major challenges you are facing to reboot tourism with the new normal?

For rejuvenating Assam tourism and to boost up the stakeholders i.e. the tour operators etc who were badly affected by the COVID-19 disaster, a scheme named "Sanjeevini" to provide loan to the affected beneficiary was announced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam on the occasion of World Tourism Day held at a Tourism conclave held in last October. Tourism activities have already started in Assam locally i.e. inter-district and interstate after the relaxation of the lockdown. The Tourism Department has not issued any SOP for tourism activities but is following all the guidelines laid down by the Health Department to avoid any confusion. Hence, initially, it was a little difficult because a tourist arriving from another state had to compulsorily undergo home quarantine for a week which was a hassle. With minimal restrictions, if tested negative, Assam is all set to welcome tourists to the state.

### What are the upcoming projects of Assam Tourism?

Assam's rich cultural, historical, religious and natural heritage provides a huge potential for the development of tourism in the country. There is a great scope and need to develop tourist circuits on specific themes to attract the tourists having a special interest in visiting such places. This can be achieved only through an integrated approach by providing engaging experiences for distinct categories of tourists i.e. Domestic and International. In the present contacts, we will be dealing mainly with the domestic tourist i.e. local as well as national.

Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India in association with Department of Tourism, Govt. of Assam has sanctioned the following schemes under Swadesh Darshan & PRASHAD for infrastructure development of tourist destinations:

- Development of Manas-Pobitora-Nameri-Kaziranga-Dibru Saikhowa as Wildlife Circuit in Assam under Swadesh Darshan scheme.

Under the Wildlife circuit scheme under Swadesh Darshan, many upcoming Projects are due for completion soon at a cost of Rs. 9467.94 lakhs.

- Development of Tezpur-Majuli-Sivasagar as Heritage Circuit in Assam under Swadesh Darshan scheme.

Under the Heritage Circuit scheme projects are presently ongoing and will be completed very soon at an estimated cost of Rs. 9790.68 lakhs. These projects are presently being constructed at Tezpur, Majuli, Sivasagar.

- Development of Kamakhya Temple and Pilgrimage destination in and around Guwahati in Assam under PRASHAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive) scheme.

Under the "Prashad" scheme

Development of Kamakhya Temple with components like Multi-Level Car Parking equipped with Public Conveniences, Baby Care & Senior Citizens Room, Cloak Room, Development of Foot Tracks & Ambubachi Mela Ground, View Points, Retaining Wall at Mela Ground, Temple Solid Waste management system, at a sanctioned cost of Rs. 3070.70 lakhs was inaugurated on 10th November/2020, by Dr. Himanta Biswa Sharma Honourable Minister of Finance, Health, Education, etc.

### Convey your message to our readers.

After the onset of COVID-19, the biggest loss was in the Tourism sector. But, after various phases of Unlock, we will have to abide by the Health protocols and agree to the New Normal Scenario.

But, the show must go on and with news of the Vaccines proposed to be available in the near future Tourism looks forward and the light at the end of the tunnel seems almost visible. We welcome all to visit Awesome Assam.

“Once You  
Visit Assam,  
It stays with  
you forever”



## Survival and revival of Indian Travel, Tourism & Hospitality industry

In an interactive session with Mr Prahlad Singh Patel, Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (IC), Government of India, the tourism industry leaders of the FICCI Tourism Committee requested the government for urgent support for survival and revival of Indian Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Industry.

FICCI Tourism Committee members submitted key recommendations for the survival of the industry which includes extending the moratorium for another 1 year; period of restructuring for hotels should be extended till March 2024; payment of the Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) scrips which is due to the tour operators for the financial year

2018-2019; export status for foreign exchange earnings for inbound tours and hotels and grant of extension under the EPCG scheme in export obligation period by a period of additional 3 years beyond 6 years for all licenses expiring during current and next 5 financial years, without attracting any penalty or interest.

The Committee members also urged to extend the repayment period for the hotel industry under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Schemes (ECLGS) to 10 years; create a separate Tourism fund under the aegis of Ministry of Tourism and bail out packages to fund and support the salaries in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector in this time of crisis.

## FITUR 2021, a strategic edition for tourism recovery

IFEMA is working on a very special edition of the International Tourism Fair, FITUR 2021, with the challenge to set a turning point and contribute to the recovery of the tourism industry. An edition that is adapting to the current context and to the needs of companies, countries and destinations that, with their support and participation, support FITUR as a platform for reviving the tourism industry. We must point out how well the announcement

for FITUR 2021 was received, to be held in-person and during exceptional dates, from the 19 to 23 May 2021, by all of the national and international companies and professionals who usually meet at this event. The possibility of returning to in-person meetings, in a safe environment, is a key factor in strengthening business relations at a time when face-to-face meetings are even more valuable to boosting business and international tourism activity.

## HAI presented the request of hoteliers to government

Government should immediately open online applications for hotels to claim the benefits under SEIS for FY 2019-20: HAI

As the Hospitality & Tourism industry struggles to cope with the devastating impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, hotels continue to look for a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. The Reserve Bank of India has recognized tourism as one of the most severely impacted sectors. With almost no guests, close to zero revenues and high fixed costs, hotels are struggling to survive while also saving jobs and livelihoods. In spite of such odds the Hotel

Association of India (HAI) has highlighted that its member Hotels have worked alongside the government in the fight against the pandemic by preparing millions of food packets for frontline Covid workers & migrants, offering safe & hygienic accommodation not only to doctors and sanitary workers but also to stranded Indians repatriated under the "Vande Bharat" initiative.

The hospitality industry is facing an existential crisis due to lockdown and the ongoing pandemic. The sector is relying heavily on the support and favourable policies of the government for its recovery.

## OTOAI: Updated SOPs/Guidelines for Indian traveller

Taking the lead by becoming the first and only Outbound Travel Trade Association in India to ask NTOs, Embassies and Consulates to lay down the travel guidelines for Indians wishing to go abroad, OTOAI has once again raised the bar of its commitment to the outbound travel community in India. In a recent initiative, the Association has drafted a 10-point letter and circulated to all the NTO heads in India, asking them to clearly state the Rules/SOPs / Guidelines etc. that an international traveller

has to be aware of.

Ever since the air-bubble arrangement started in India in July 2020, there has been a plethora of changes in the guidelines and SOPs to be followed. Also, since the number of COVID cases keeps changing, many countries often end up altering their travel guidelines, which are not made very clear to an outbound traveller. This letter by OTOAI, will require the NTOs to clearly state down the protocols and will give the much-needed clarity to the Indian outbound traveller.

## Targeted Tourism Pre-Vaccine Transition Corpus

FAITH has urged the Government to set up a Targeted Tourism transition corpus which makes available funds on a direct benefit transfer through Ministry of Finance for Indian tourism, travel & hospitality industry, till the vaccine is deployed.

The path to vaccination is becoming clearer now reportedly with multiple vaccines being considered for approval. Reports across the world indicate that by mid-year of 2021 vaccine will hopefully be deployed across most of the international markets and across India too. Tourism will then only see recovery as people will feel safe to travel post vaccination.

Currently barring some spurts of domestic travel during long weekends, almost all segments of tourism are currently non-performing: inbound tourism, corporate travel, meetings & events travel, outbound travel. All these segments will get unlocked post the deployment of the vaccine.

Faith has thus requested till then a bridge fund targeted at the tourism sector be setup to enable tourism travel and hospitality companies to draw down from this corpus set up by MOF on a direct benefit transfer basis on an interest free which they can utilise to repay their salaries and operating costs till vaccine is fully deployed.

This drawdown by the tourism enterprises may be adjustable over 5 years against their GST & income tax liabilities.

## IATO in search of Government Support

President of Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), Mr. Pronab Sarkar has requested the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Home Affairs to announce the dates for restoration of E-Visa and Tourist Visa and Resumption of International Flights at the earliest to start inbound tourism to India, which is highly stressed sector in absence of any tourists arrivals and Government stimulus package and is looking for survival.

Referring to the announcement made by Union Health Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan and Dr. Randeep Guleria, Director AIIMS that the vaccine will be available in a couple of months, Mr. Sarkar in his letter addressed to the Secretary Tourism and Additional Secretary (Foreigners), Ministry of Home Affairs, has mentioned "it is imperative that our Ministry should plan for inbound tourism to start as early as possible for which Ministry of Tourism and the stakeholders should start international marketing. This can only be possible if the industry stakeholders know of Government's plans of opening of e-Visa and Tourist Visa and resumption of international flights, so that accordingly we can inform our foreign tour operators and clients and they can promote India as a safe destination well in advance".

Mr. Sarkar has requested that besides announcing the dates for opening of e-Visa and Tourist Visa, government should also announce the dates for commencement of international flights. This is very important because international tourists take at least 3 to 6 months to commence their journey for their holiday travel to India. Foreign tourists plan their tours well in advance and they will not travel immediately.

# How technology can boost Indian traveller confidence and accelerate demand?

**G**lobal traveller study commissioned by Amadeus discovers mobile applications that provide on-trip notifications and alerts is the most appealing technology for 56% of Indian travellers to increase their confidence to travel in the next 12 months.

As 2020 comes to an end, leaders in governments and key industries are working to determine how people can safely return to work, particularly in travel and tourism where jobs in hospitality, airlines,

cruises, travel agencies, car rentals, rideshares, events, attractions and so much more, accounted for 1 in 10 jobs in the world pre-COVID. (Source: World Travel & Tourism Council) To gain more insight into how the travel industry and governments can work to rebuild traveller confidence, Amadeus, a global leader in travel technology, commissioned research to learn more about traveller's top concerns and what types of technology would help travelers feel safe and comfortable enough to travel and help

spur recovery of the travel sector.

Informed by over 6,000 travellers across India, Singapore, France, Germany, UK and US, the study found that technology plays a crucial role in supporting recovery, as over 4 in 5 (84%) travellers said technology would increase their confidence to travel in the next 12 months by addressing concerns around mixing with crowds, social distancing and physical touchpoints. Approximately 1,000 respondents came from India.



*Cyril Tetaz, Executive Vice President of Airlines, Asia-Pacific, Amadeus*

India's travel industry has started to show green shoots for recovery in the past months, and India's aviation minister recently suggested that domestic passenger traffic could reach pre-Covid levels by the end of the year. This new consumer research further affirms the optimism for travel as many of the concerns can be addressed by technology available now, at every stage of the traveller experience. We have seen COVID-19 accelerate trends that were already present, such as the drive towards digitalization and contactless technology, which were key themes picked out by Indian travellers in order to feel confident traveling again. These are areas that we are already working closely on with our airline, airport and hospitality customers, and we will continue to focus on this. Beyond technology, collaboration across industry and governments will continue to be key to this recovery. Together, we need to educate and provide travellers with the right information around safety and sanitization measures during the stages of their journey. For example, we have seen that social distancing and hygiene while traveling remains a high traveller concern, despite recent research from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) on the extremely low rates of transmissions onboard aircraft

due to cabin air filtering systems and other protection measures. Giving travellers easy access to the information they need to be assured of their safety is a fundamental tool in order to build traveler confidence and speed up recovery.

# Canada Visa Application Centres to accept biometric enrolments for selected categories

**A**s per the latest directive of the client government, limited visa services will resume in VFS Global Canada Visa Application Centres across India.

Effective 25 November 2020, Canada visa applicants who have submitted online applications for family class priority (FCP) – spouses, partners and children category – can enroll biometrics at the Canada Visa Applications Centres in 6 cities: Delhi, Jalandhar, Chandigarh, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, and Bengaluru.

A prior appointment is mandatory to visit the Visa Application Centre to enroll biometrics.

Effective 02 December 2020, Canada visa applicants who have submitted online applications for student (SP) category and family class priority (FCP) – spouses, partners and children – can enroll their biometrics at the Canada Visa Applications Centres in 6 cities - Delhi, Jalandhar, Chandigarh, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, and Bengaluru. Effective 02 December 2020, Canada visa applicants who have submitted online applications for categories of student (SP) and family class priority – spouses, partners and children (FCP) can enroll their biometrics at the Canada Visa Applications Centres at Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune.

Appointments will be available online for the remaining cities from 25 November 2020.

Customers who have already submitted their applications for these categories will receive a Biometric Instruction Letter from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to enroll their biometrics. This letter must be carried for their appointment.

For all other categories, biometric enrolments are not being accepted until further notice. If you have booked an appointment for categories other than student and family class priority, you will be turned away and your biometrics will not be enrolled.

## DO YOU KNOW?

- **Effective 25 November 2020, Canada visa applicants who have submitted online applications for family class priority (FCP) – spouses, partners and children category– can enroll biometrics at the Canada Visa Applications Centres in 6 cities: Delhi, Jalandhar, Chandigarh, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, and Bengaluru.**
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- **Effective 02 December 2020, Canada visa applicants who have submitted online applications for categories of student (SP) and family class priority (FCP) – spouses, partners and children– can also enroll biometrics at the Canada Visa Applications Centres in Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune.**
- **Those who have already submitted applications will receive a Biometric Instruction Letter from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to enroll biometrics.**
- **Prior appointment is mandatory to visit the Visa Application Centres. Those who have booked an appointment for categories other than students (SP) and family class priority (FCP) will be turned away without having their biometrics enrolled.**
- **As part of health and safety precautions, only those enrolling biometrics will be allowed inside the Visa Application Centres; accompanying visitors will not be permitted inside the building premises.**
- **Paper applications will not be accepted at the Visa Application Centres until further notice.**

# International Tourism to Bounce Back

**No doubt, tourism has been the worst affected of all major economic sectors. If you are hoping to see international tourism on the cards by 2021 then no, you may need to wait a little longer. The tourism sector has been devastated by COVID-19.**

• Vedika Sharma



*Zurab Pololikashvili,  
Secretary-General, UNWTO*

This unprecedented decline is having dramatic social and economic consequences and puts millions of jobs and businesses at risk. This underlines the urgent need to safely restart tourism, in a timely and coordinated manner.

The engaged participation of every part of our sector will be needed to restart tourism and drive recovery. From the start of this crisis, tourism has led the way in adapting to the new reality and putting public health concerns first. Now, tourism needs the support of governments and international organizations to grow back and grow back stronger and more resilient, benefitting many millions of people and businesses worldwide.

“Restrictions on travel introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic continue to hit global tourism hard”

According to the newest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, international arrivals plunged 81% in July and 79% in August, traditionally the two busiest months of the year and the peak of the Northern Hemisphere summer season. The drop until August represents 700 million fewer arrivals compared to the same period in 2019 and translates into a loss of US\$ 730 billion in export revenues from international tourism. This is more than eight times the loss experienced on the back of the 2009 global economic and financial crisis.

### Recovery short-lived

All world regions recorded large declines in arrivals in the first eight months of the year. Asia and the Pacific, the first region to suffer from the impact of COVID-19, saw a 79% decrease in arrivals, followed by Africa and the Middle East (both - 69%), Europe (-68%) and the Americas (-65%).

Following its gradual reopening of international borders, Europe recorded comparatively smaller declines in July and August (-72% and -69%, respectively). The recovery was short-lived however, as travel restrictions and advisories were reintroduced amid an increase in contagions. On the other side of the spectrum, Asia and the Pacific recorded the largest declines with -96% in both months, reflecting the closure of borders in

China and other major destinations in the region.

Demand for travel remains largely subdued due to the ongoing uncertainty about the pandemic and low confidence. Based on the latest trends, UNWTO expects an overall drop close to 70% for the whole of 2020.

### Rebound in international demand expected by Q3 2021

UNWTO’s Panel of Experts foresees a rebound in international tourism in 2021, mostly in the third quarter of 2021. However, around 20% of experts suggest the rebound could occur only in 2022. Travel restrictions are seen as the main barrier standing in the way of the recovery of international tourism, along with slow virus containment and low consumer confidence. The lack of coordinated response among countries to ensure harmonized protocols and coordinated restrictions, as well as the deteriorating economic environment were also identified by experts as important obstacles for recovery.

*By keeping all these factors in mind, T3FS come up with Tourism boards views on UN panel predicts “International Tourism won’t come back until late 2021”; Challenges to reboot tourism with new normal and future travel trends of their respective country.*

# NEW ZEALAND: 100% Pure



**Steven Dixon, Tourism New Zealand's Regional Trade Marketing Manager, Asia**

**UN panel predicts “International Tourism won’t come back until late 2021”. Comment.**

New Zealand is taking a cautious approach to reopening borders which is part of the government’s efforts to prevent Covid-19 from entering the country. Public/private working groups with New Zealand’s airports and airlines have been making recommendations to the Government on how safe pathways for future arriving international travellers will take place.

Tourism New Zealand is the organisation responsible for marketing New Zealand as an international visitor destination and is supporting the country’s

economic recovery and the tourism industry restart and recovery.

This activity is focused on encouraging domestic tourism and keeping brand New Zealand alive internationally. Tourism is likely to look very different from what it once was – it presents an opportunity to reshape the sector and ensure it enriches the country and people.

## **Challenges to reboot New Zealand tourism with the new normal.**

We think it’s important to consider visitor expectations post Covid. Both trade and consumers want to be informed about health and safety precautions before booking, but this will vary by a number of factors.

Key concerns include:

- distancing policies
- PPE availability, use or traveller requirements
- cleaning or sanitation procedures
- contactless end-to-end processes (minimising contact)

This will change with time, vaccine availability and COVID-19 infection rates. To support this we will, via Qualmark introduce a New Zealand accreditation alongside the existing health, safety and wellness criteria to identify measures in place and those businesses meeting expectations of international visitors.

The Government has even outlined a number of funding packages and programmes of support for tourism recovery in New Zealand. Support

goes beyond broad-based financial support and is aimed to help businesses identify their future, support Māori tourism, protect strategic tourism assets and secure long-term sustainability for the sector.

Programmes of work include the Tourism Transitions Service (delivered through entities like Qualmark and the Regional Business Network), the Strategic Tourism Assets Protection Programme (STAPP), Tourism Ministers’ Group and the Tourism Futures Taskforce. It also outlines Tourism New Zealand’s work to support domestic visitation and future international visitors.

## **Future travel trends of New Zealand**

Tourism is vital to New Zealand and its success. From large organisations, to individual Kiwis, tourism enriches our country while providing exceptional experiences to both domestic and international visitors. The cornerstone of our strategy is our purpose and despite the world around us changing so much over the past year - our purpose remains the same, to enrich New Zealand by maximising the contribution of our visitors by delivering on four key capitals: economy, nature, society and culture. We want to make sure that tourism gives back more than it takes, to our people and home.

On the travel trends, we expect to see independent travel and self-drive likely to be the preferred choice of travel style over group tours. We could see incentive travel begin as well.

However, we see that travel as a discretionary activity will become more exclusive, purposeful and less spontaneous. Outbound travel rebound is likely to be stronger among younger travelers who are less risk-averse. Additionally, travelers would have potentially reassessed their priorities in life and possibly pursue more purpose-based trips to connect beyond material wellbeing. They will likely be more interested in eco/sustainable, wellness, organic, nature-based experiences they would be seeking an escape to, or to rejuvenate in, a pristine environment and reconnect with nature while maintaining material comforts.



# BHUTAN: Happiness is a Place



## UN panel predicts “International Tourism won’t come back until late 2021”. Comment.

While it is something I don’t wish to agree with, but I have to, given the circumstances. However, I also believe every crisis gives rise to opportunity, therefore looking forward to taking maximum advantage of the situation.



### Challenges to reboot Bhutan tourism with the new normal

*Dorji Dhradhul, Director General Tourism Council of Bhutan*

All challenges are related to COVID 19 pandemic and its uncertainty. Economic recession, travel restrictions, inadequate air connectivity, health safety protocols, and decreased confidence of travellers are some specific challenges.

### Future travel trends of Bhutan.

Interestingly, the so-called “the new normal tourism” post-COVID 19 is actually, something that Bhutan under the tourism policy of “High-Value Low Volume” has been practicing for the last 50 years.

The extraordinary fact about this policy is that – this policy was envisioned and adopted by our Fourth King in the early 1970s amidst the immense pressure to embrace mass tourism for quick economic fortunes. Today after 50 years, when this policy is being appreciated by many even globally, we bow with deep gratitude to His Majesty The Fourth King of Bhutan for the timeless gift to the tourism world.

This policy basically avoids mass tourism, over-tourism, ensure a balance between economic returns and non-material gains such as preservation of our environment, culture, history, arrivals guided by the carrying capacities of the various services and resources to ensure wellness and wellbeing of our guests. These are the elements of future trends in tourism.

I believe the restart of tourism for Bhutan would be much easier and faster, as we would not have to change much to keep abreast with the new or the future trend.

# Australia: There's nothing like Australia



**Nishant Kashikar, Country  
Manager- India & Gulf,  
Tourism Australia**

## UN predicts that “International Tourism won’t come back until late 2021”. Comment

The outbreak of the pandemic has certainly caused a slowdown in the global economy and subsequently in the travel and tourism industry. However, as we emerge into the ‘new normal’ the tourism industry is expected to bounce back strongly. This is because, following months of muted travel activity, we are expecting a stronger comeback from those travellers looking to seize the opportunity to travel.

In light of the introduction of travel bubbles and arrangements between countries, international travel is expected to see a slow but steady resurgence and this will gradually affect tourism once we transition from emergency and necessary travel to leisure travel. Initially, travellers will naturally show a preference for domestic alternatives and destinations within a local radius. This is due to the changing nature of air travel and the robust safety protocols adopted by various countries.

Even though the lifting of international travel remains restricted in parts of the world, it is vital for us to remain optimistic and realize that the industry will rapidly recovery as soon as travel resumes.

### Challenges to reboot Australia tourism with the new normal

Assuring people that safety will not be compromised will help to

re-establish confidence in outbound travel. While travel is on the path to gradual normalcy and recovery, health and safety will be the most vital aspect that will greatly impact and inform all future travel plans. In order to re-stabilize the tourism industry, traditional tourism experiences will need to be redesigned such that hygiene, social distancing and sanitization are prioritized.

The revival of domestic tourism, with the gradual and cautious opening of the state borders in Australia, will prove to our international travellers, our ability to recuperate and recover.

### Future travel trends of Australia.

In the ‘new normal’, travellers will likely seek out opportunities to spend time away from busy and crowded cities by opting for wildlife or outdoor adventure-based experiences. To cater to this growing trend, Australia already has a plethora of unique experiences that are away from the hustle and bustle of the city, thereby adhering to social distancing protocols.

Slow tourism is also another travel trend that is expected to pick up, as it will allow travellers to explore a variety of experiences in a destination over a period of several weeks.

For cautious travellers, self-drive and road trips are expected to gain popularity, especially in expansive countries like Australia and can offer a wide array of secluded, sparsely populated and scenic journeys that are largely reachable via private automobiles.

The wide portfolio of the Signature Experiences of Australia collective, including the Luxury Lodges of Australia, offers travellers the opportunity to stay at exclusive properties across the country while enjoying restricted access to incredible nature escapes including, the Outback, Great Barrier Reef as well as the Daintree Rainforest.



# GERMANY: Simply Inspiring



*Romit Theophilus, Director, Sales & Marketing, German National Tourist Office, India*

**UN panel predicts “International Tourism won’t come back until late 2021”. Comment.**

Even as airlines and authorities put safety measures in place, people will have to feel safe before demand picks up. Safety is not the only factor. As the economy sours, people are also nervous about splurging on air travel to luxury destinations. It could be 18 to 24 months before travel picks back up. Air travel in particular will be slow to recover. Travel will resume in a slow, careful and highly phased manner. It will kick off with local outings as the economy reopens. From there, some people will increasingly feel

confident driving for a night or two away from home. It could take much longer before most people are comfortable getting on a plane for a long-haul trip.

**Challenges reboot Germany tourism with the new normal**

Nearly every country exposed to the virus is facing a similar conundrum, however, I would like to mention certain updates on the current situation from the **desk of Mrs. Petra Hedorfer, CEO of the German National Tourist Board.**

- Reports on how the coronavirus pandemic is developing seem to change by the hour at the moment. The German government’s intention to extend financial support for tourism companies and provide further sector-specific aid is therefore a welcome signal in times like these.
- Many companies in the industry are heavily reliant on these measures, as the recovery scenarios we had so far envisaged have already been overtaken by events.
- The analyses of the current situation are sobering, but ultimately they are the starting point for all strategic and operational approaches to finding ways out of the crisis.
- The latest Anholt Ipsos Nation Brands Index has once again confirmed Germany’s excellent image with a no. 1 ranking. It should be noted that the survey of 20 countries was conducted between 7 July and 31 August, i.e. in the midst of the pandemic.
- In view of the shift in global economic growth that has become apparent in the last two to three years, and of the geostrategic and geopolitical changes in the world order, many market players are asking themselves how they can regain the growth from high-potential overseas markets in the medium term.
- To achieve this, we have to research the markets in detail. We can then formulate marketing strategies that are sustainable in the long term and use the expertise gained to support our partners in Germany’s inbound tourism industry.

• Previous crises have highlighted that Asian countries overall are much more wary of crises than other source markets for global tourism. Little surprise then that coronavirus had the biggest impact on travel intentions in Asia, according to the initial round of interviews conducted by IPK International in May 2020. Only 29 percent of respondents still intended to travel abroad in the next twelve months. By October, this had increased by around a third to 38 percent. We can see that the direct influence of the virus on travel intentions is diminishing, but scepticism is still much more pronounced than among Americans and Europeans.

• Many German towns and cities are also facing rising numbers of cases. The tightening of rules in a number of federal states, such as the current ban on providing accommodation to guests from coronavirus hotspots, is significantly dampening people’s appetite for travel.

Clearly, the coronavirus pandemic will influence our work for a long time to come. But it is also clear that Destination Germany has a good chance of emerging from the crisis even stronger than before. We are optimistic this will happen as long as we continue our efforts to position our strong brand in the markets.

**Future travel trends of your Germany**

Businesses will probably cut back on travel and look to do more virtual meetings. That means airlines and hotels will find themselves catering to travellers and may offer major discounts as they desperately look for business. In the meantime, “staycations” will become increasingly common, particularly those involving outdoor activities. Rather than the standard excursions, which might involve booking a tour bus for a large group, instead a hotel would have opted as a luxurious place to spend the night after a hike in a nearby national park. Trips with an emphasis on the outdoors might be particularly appealing after people have been cooped up in their homes for months.

India was becoming an increasingly large group travel market for first-timers and middle-class families. Both for reasons of affordability, and safety fears, this segment are likely to shrink.

Our ongoing mission is to maintain the strong image our customers have of Germany as a travel destination and to provide the expertise, up-to-date market analysis and effective marketing activities that will enable our partners in Germany’s tourism industry to make a fresh start. In terms of our strategy jointly with our Headquarters, German National Tourist Board, we are currently working hard to put our marketing on the right track both in response to the crisis and looking further ahead. In light of the current trends, we are also strengthening our collaborations with tour operators/travel agents. The experiences gathered during the virtual GTM are helping us here.

Future-focused marketing in a crisis or even a lockdown is targeted not only at sales and revenue figures but also on securing customer loyalty over the long term and on making the strengths of the brand more visible among Indians. The brand values of Destination Germany including credibility, responsibility and safety are now more important than ever in what has become a much more competitive travel market.

The content of our campaigns for 2021 ‘German.Local.Culture’ are geared towards the new challenges.

# Israel: Land of Creation



PC:Dafna Tal



PC:Itamar Grinberg



PC:Dafna Tal



**Sammy Yahia, Director, Israel Ministry of Tourism – India & Philippines**

**UN panel predicts “International Tourism won’t come back until late 2021”. Comment.**

It is expected that international tourism will not recover without the release of a vaccine however, countries have already established "air bubbles". This has ensured businesses and trade can begin again, as well as encourage tourism, both of which will assist the nation's economy.

**Challenges to reboot Israel tourism with new normal.**

The onset of Covid-19 earlier this year presented us with multiple challenges, including changing our plans for the year. Not counting the current situation, which is filled with the uncertainty of when life, and tourism, will resume to normal, emphasised by the limited information available about the virus. With the team making changes to the goals for 2020, we adjusted our strategy to adapt to the evolving changes in both India and Israel, in order to achieve our goals. My strategy is to keep the notion of Israel as a holiday destination in the mind of every Indian traveller. To successfully do that, we are constantly in touch with our partners in the industry, including travel agents and tour operators, airline partners, media partners, corporate and consumers using tools like emailers, virtual meetings and social media, amongst a few.

**Future travel trends of Israel.**

Israel is a dynamic destination which provides all the needs for travellers such as pilgrims, leisure, MICE, Culinary and niche trips.



# SOUTH AFRICA: Inspiring new ways

## UN panel predicts that ‘International tourism won’t come back until late 2021’. Comment

There is a pent-up demand for international travel. Our travel trade partners tell us that Indians are raring to travel. We are already seeing plenty of interest and queries for destination South Africa, especially from Indian business and leisure travellers. At South African Tourism, we expect to see Indian traffic to the destination early in 2021, subject to border restrictions and connectivity.

### Challenges to reboot South Africa tourism with the new normal

News about the second Covid-19 wave is creating a certain amount of uncertainty. However, there is also hope of a vaccine being rolled out soon.

We are aware of the effect the pandemic has on the global economy, and have been repackaging accordingly, with the intent to offer consumers’ excellent deals and discounts. Safety measures are transparent and well-communicated and have been factored into overall packages so that there is no surprise or extra-cost to travellers. We are also in conversation with several airlines to figure out how we can best optimize and reduce travel costs.

In addition, attractive currency exchange rates make South Africa a lucrative, value for money long-haul destination. There are alluring experience options for both – the high-end planner and those on a budget.

Prior to the pandemic, we announced the rolling out of e-visas for the Indian market. While pilot runs were ongoing, the pandemic hit us, thus delaying the process. We want to assure Indian travellers that we are focused on issuing e-visas as soon as possible, as we want to make it as easy as possible for Indians to come to South Africa.

We want travellers to come back enriched after an easy, fluid journey.

### Future travel trends of South Africa.

Experience-seeking millennials, HNIs and the family-oriented middle-class segments are anticipated to be the driving force behind leisure travel recovery, while MICE travel can be expected to recover early next year albeit with smaller group sizes. These travellers

are now actively seeking safety assurance and good deals – and the competitive pricing edge that South Africa has over most other long-haul international destinations will go a long way in aiding travel conversions.

We are looking at introducing newer, customized experiences, products and itineraries for the rising FIT traveller segment. Given that travellers are predicted to seek offbeat destinations, with good connectivity and a large number of activities within confined areas – we anticipate that South Africa’s new regions and geographies will be a hit with Indian travellers post-Covid.

Most travellers will now enter through cities that have restored international connectivity, so either through the Mother City – Cape Town, Johannesburg or Durban, and use these cities as a gateway to the rest of these picturesque new regions, including the stunning and relatively unexplored Port Elizabeth, Robertson, West Coast, Drakensberg and Panorama Route.

We also expect self-drives to be popular with Indian travellers given that South Africa has some of the most beautiful self-drive routes in the world. The fact that Indian licenses are valid in South Africa is a huge bonus!

We anticipate that the immersive travel trend will continue in a post-Covid world, with a greater focus on sustainability. This means that travellers will be more conscious of where they spend their money, what kind of accommodation they choose, where they dine, and how they travel locally. Towards this, we intend to educate consumers regarding our sustainable product offerings and ecotourism experiences, like cycling tours, nature safaris, conservation projects and rural experiences.



*Neliswa Nkani, Hub Head – MEISEA, South African Tourism*





# Spain: #Spainindetail



**UN panel predicts “International Tourism won’t come back until late 2021”. Comment.**

We are living in the most unprecedented times and no one really can predict the future. Travel industry players have started finding innovative ways to survive the impact of Covid-19. It is important to stay ahead of the game by taking experiences virtual, follow all hygiene and safety protocols, build and regain traveler confidence. Recovery of international tourism largely depends on the time taken to contain the pandemic at a global level. If the pandemic is contained sooner than later, then travel demand will immediately begin to rebound and we can be optimistic about looking at international tourism recovery.

**Challenges to reboot Spain tourism with new normal.**

Tourism remains in survival mode due to the pandemic, and continued government support for the sector is needed. Spain has declared a sustainable economic package to support and reboot tourism sector in Spain. Some of the major challenges faced due to the pandemic are: maintaining a balanced image of the destination, restoring traveler confidence, providing clear information backed by figures to limit any uncertainty, build a more resilient, sustainable tourist destination. Another challenge has been staying ahead of the digital curve and using digital methods and mediums to clearly communicate and connect with travel partners, stakeholders and end consumers.

**Future travel trends of Spain.**

- After 2020, we foresee the rise of the conscious traveler; this is someone who is far more discerning about the journeys they go on, willing and able to be away from home for longer, more appreciative of their surroundings and local people. Staycations will become the new normal along with the need for wide-open spaces to hang out and recreate in a larger group. As people think more carefully about the way they travel, they will seek out hotels and travel companies that are doing everything that will help minimize their impact on the planet. We can also expect



*Elisa Robles Fraga, Director  
– Tourism Office of Spain in  
India*

accreditation to gain prominence, as consumers look for reassurance from legitimate “eco-tourism” certifications. I think in the year 2021 the perspective of travelers may change and they will give more emphasis to health security, responsible behavior etc. Mostly, the new normal will see a lot of individuals and small groups pursuing travel together.

- In 2021 and beyond, we can expect travelers to look forward to offbeat experiences with safety. Travelers will give more importance to health and well-being. Wellness tourism will be increasingly popular.

- During the post-pandemic period, people will be focused on doing things they never did before, practicing adventure sports like hiking, rafting, scuba diving, sailing, bungee jumping, etc.

- Engaging with local communities in a safe and respectful way will also be an important aspect of trips in the future with tourists keen to learn and form human connections.

- Another possible trend that could be on the rise in the post-Covid world would be that of ‘workations’, where visitors combine work with vacations, embedding themselves for longer periods of time in a certain place.

- Safety, sustainability and flexibility for change in plans will be in front of mind while booking trips and choosing a destination.

# Singapore: Passion Made Possible

## UN panel predicts “International Tourism won’t come back until late 2021”. Comment.

We are reopening our borders in a safe and calibrated manner, allowing foreigners to enter Singapore in limited numbers, with the necessary safeguards in place to ensure public health considerations are addressed. Singapore has announced reciprocal green lane arrangements such as those with China, Japan, Malaysia, and South Korea to facilitate official and essential business travel. Singapore will also continue to facilitate passenger transfers at Changi Airport.

Most of our tourism industry has safely and gradually re-opened for business, in tandem with the rest of the Singapore economy. However, the recovery for tourism will take time and mass international travel is not likely to return in a significant way any time soon – even if a vaccine is found. In the meantime, we remain committed to our recovery efforts, as well as building capabilities for the future. This is to ensure that Singapore can emerge stronger from the crisis as a top destination when international travel resumes.

### Challenges to reboot Singapore tourism with the new normal

Globally, slow pickup in positive travel sentiment along with travelers’ concern about safety will be among the challenges going into 2021. Tourism remains an important contributor to the Singapore economy and we remain confident in its long-term prospects. To overcome our current challenges and to chart a new path forward for our industry, we are focusing on three areas: Safety, Recovery and Transformation. The majority of the economy has re-opened since Singapore entered the second phase of “A Safe Singapore” in mid-June 2020.

As more and more of our economy re-opens, we will continue to engage and guide our industry in implementing safety management measures to ensure that businesses can re-open safely. We have been working closely with the National Environment Agency (NEA) and other government agencies on the "SG Clean" campaign, our national mark of excellence for safety and hygiene. This quality mark aims to reassure the public that our local businesses maintain high standards of cleanliness and sanitization. As of November 2020, more than 27,000 individual premises in Singapore have been certified.

On 25 and 26 November, ITB Asia and the Singapore Tourism Board hosted TravelRevive -is the first international travel tradeshow to take place physically in the Asia Pacific during COVID-19, with both local and foreign attendees and exhibitors. Through events such as TravelRevive, we look forward to seeing the revival of Singapore’s MICE industry, such pilot events allow us to study the findings and data to refine the safe management measures and best practices for MICE events progressively and to solidify our position as a global and regional business hub.

### Future travel trends of Singapore

Singapore is well-positioned to emerge from this crisis. According to STB’s Brand Health Survey, overall sentiments remain positive towards Singapore. We are seen as among the most favourable city destinations for leisure and business travel even at this time, compared to other major city destinations in the region.

We remain confident in the long-term prospects of Singapore’s tourism sectors – both for leisure and MICE & business travel – as the fundamentals that make Singapore an attractive place for unique,

high quality travel and MICE experiences, and a key business hub remains unchanged. Singapore has secured the rights to host the Worldchefs Congress and Expo in 2024 and the 110th Lions Clubs International Convention in 2028. The Lions Clubs International Convention is expected to attract around 20,000 foreign delegates. These successes build upon Singapore’s track record as Asia Pacific’s top meeting city for 18 consecutive years and the confidence in Singapore’s robust and transparent handling of the Covid-19 situation.

This is why we will continue to forge ahead with major tourism infrastructure and redevelopment projects, tapping on new consumer trends coming out of the pandemic such as wellness, nature and sustainable tourism. For instance:

The impact of COVID-19 has further underlined the need to diversify Orchard Road’s offerings beyond retail. Increased interest and focus on health and well-being has sharpened the need to provide a variety of delightful public spaces and walkable streets that promote social interactions and healthy and active lifestyles in a safe and conducive environment. With plans to introduce more greenery and enhanced public spaces, there will be more opportunities for visitors to enjoy the outdoors.

We are currently looking at reimagining Singapore Racecourse as a future leisure destination that celebrates both its equestrian heritage and lush green spaces, and to complement it with the nature-based Wildlife Reserves attractions in the adjoining Mandai area with Edu-adventure and wellness offerings.

In early November, STB and Airbnb Experiences jointly developed an exclusive co-branded destination portal on the Airbnb platform; Singapore is the first and only international destination to have such a portal on the platform. Titled Singapore Virtual Trips, this portal provides destination content and highlights a curated lineup of Online Experiences, developed by our tourism industry partners.

While the overall tourism recovery takes time, here in India, we continue our trade and consumer engagement initiatives to keep Singapore in the mind space of the Indian travellers and be ready to welcome them when international travel resumes. We are working alongside partners in India to share relevant destination content and updates in travel experiences. A most recent collaboration is with ‘BookMyShow’ to give users a glimpse of the iconic culture and beauty of Singapore. Themed ‘My Singapore Connect – Where passions meet’, this initiative brings together acclaimed talents from India and Singapore, through a four-part web series, released exclusively on the streaming platform BookMyShow Online, on November 28th & 29th and December 5th & 6th.

We will continue to embark on initiatives to ensure Singapore remains top-of-mind and the destination of choice among our future visitors, when the time is right for them to visit.



**GB Srithar, Regional Director (India, Middle East and South Asia), Singapore Tourism Board**

# WASHINGTON, DC: #WeGotThis



**Elliott L. Ferguson II, President & CEO, Washington DC**

**UN panel predicts “International Tourism won’t come back until late 2021”. Comment.**

According to Tourism Economics, international visitation to the United States is not expected to reach its prior peak until 2025.

International tourism continues to be extremely important for Washington, DC. Though overseas visitors only represent 7 percent of the total number of visitors to DC, international visitors [overseas visitors plus visitors from Canada and Mexico] represented 27 percent of visitor spending for 2019.

Prior to COVID-19, India was Washington, DC’s third overseas market, according to visitation data from 2019, and India remains an important market for us.

We continue to engage with media and tour operators. We have in-market representation through Indiva Marketing. Earlier this year, we launched an online-based global travel agent training program designed to train and engage with travel agents around the world who are interested in becoming Washington, DC experts.

**Challenges to reboot Washington, DC tourism with the new normal**

While Washington, DC remains in phase two of reopening, we continue to see modifications for restaurants and attractions as well as new testing requirements for travelers. We encourage those considering travel to Washington, DC to visit our website, [washington.org](http://washington.org), where we have the latest information.

There will continue to be an increased focus on cleanliness, health and safety, even post-pandemic. As an industry, we will need to focus on building consumer confidence with travel.

Travelers will expect enhanced communication about these processes and the procedures in place throughout their travel experience.

We are hoping the recent positive news of the rapid vaccine development will also help the travel and tourism industry.

**Future travel trends in Washington, DC.**

Travelers will be looking for family-friendly destinations as well as budget-conscious experiences, two things that Washington, DC is especially known for.

Visitors to the District will be able to experience the city’s monuments and memorials as well as our collection of Smithsonian museums, which are all free of charge.

We have also seen several new attractions open the past few months including the Planet Word Museum, the world’s first voice-activated museum, as well as the new National Native American Veterans Memorial.



# 2021: Year of Domestic Tourism in India

COVID-19 has tossed out most travel plans for people in 2020. With the travel market gearing up 2021 seems to be the year of domestic tourism in India.

• Vedika Sharma



The outlook for tourism economy recovery remains highly uncertain, as the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to heavily hit the sector. The outcome for 2020 is expected to be a decrease in the international tourism economy by around 80% (downside of previous estimates), with domestic tourism driving the short term recovery. For travellers, domestic travel will be key as safety and cleanliness will continue to be top priorities due to COVID-19. As per Airbnb's latest travel trends for the upcoming year, 62 percent of people surveyed expressed interest

in taking a vacation that is closer to home. As restrictions on travel begin to ease globally, destinations around the world are focusing on growing domestic tourism, with many offering incentives to encourage people to explore their own countries. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), with domestic tourism set to return faster than international travel, this represents an opportunity for both developed and developing countries to recover from the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Recognizing the importance of domestic tourism, the United Nations

specialized agency has released the third of its Tourism and COVID-19 Briefing Notes, -Understanding Domestic Tourism and Seizing its Opportunities.- UNWTO data shows that in 2018, around 9 billion domestic tourism trips were made worldwide – six times the number of international tourist arrivals (1.4 billion in 2018). The publication identifies ways in which destinations around the world are taking proactive steps to grow domestic tourism, from offering bonus holidays for workers to providing vouchers and other incentives to people travelling in their own countries.



**Manmeet Singh,  
Chairman IATO  
Punjab & ADTOI  
Haryana, Punjab,  
Chandigarh, Northern  
India**

**Future of tourism and new travel trends of 2021.**

The future of the tourism and hospitality industry was is and will always remain bright, it is just that tourism is very vulnerable and can

get affected very easily due to no fault of the industry but due to external factors Like Peace and security in the region, health scenario, climatic changes etc.

At present also, the same condition has cropped up due to Covid 19 pandemic and once it is being controlled and cure is found a very good high surge in domestic and international travel will be seen. Firstly because travelling is the basic nature of human being and secondly, this time pandemic has made to experience internal self-realization to all humans about the fragile nature of Life. So now as soon as the medical environment starts becoming normal and borders open, One will like to visit different destinations depending upon their pocket they will choose domestic or international destinations.

**2021: year of domestic tourism in India**

This purely depend upon how fast the cure of Covid 19 will come out worldwide and what different countries leaderships decide regarding the allowance of foreign tourist to their respective countries. It also depends on the financial conditions of multiple airlines world around and about their restorations of flights to all regions at a competitive price.

If the medicine or vaccine will take time to come & prove its medical effectiveness people will prefer travelling within India, as they have already started to do so to some extend and no sooner different countries open up with secured normal or new normal medical environment people will start availing international holidays too.

**Challenges to reboot tourism with the new normal**

I believe this is a temporary scenario. Right now all the segments of tourism are affected.

Due to travel and medical restrictions people/tourists are not visiting places, taking flights as pre covid 19 period, therefore air ticketing segment is suffering.

People trying to avoid travelling by taxi's and Coaches or using public transportation, so transporters are suffering. Due to financial problems transporters decide how many vehicles they should make operational because of the uncertainty of business volumes.

In fact, the entire tourism and hospitality industry ownerships are constantly under pressure to decide how many offices with how much staff should they make operational. We all have to try and control our fixed cost also and open up keeping in mind the sustainable actual business we are getting these days.

Covid 19 pandemic has definitely taught all of us some things and it is up to us how we take it as learning and decide our future course. The tourism and hospitality industry will also resume its positive growth for sure.



**J.K. Mohanty, CMD  
- Swosti Group;  
Chairman - Hotel &  
Restaurant Association  
of Odisha & IATO  
Eastern Region; Co-  
Chairman - FICCI  
National Tourism  
Council / Convenor -  
CII (Tourism Panel)**

**Future of tourism and new travel trends of 2021.**

Hospitality and the Tourism Industry world over has been battered and badly hit by the COVID 19. It will take at least a year after lifting of the lockdown period declared by the Government, for the tourism business to get back to full-fledged operations. People will be scared to travel by air and train, people will be scared to attend meetings, conferences, weddings, and social functions, etc. as social distancing would become standard practice. The hotel industry which is dependent on transport, air & rail travel, is bound to take beating for the next 12 to 18 months.

In a post-COVID-19 world, travellers will love to travel to places rich with nature's beauty and such destinations that make it easy to maintain social distancing practices. Tour operators will need to get creative by designing itineraries that avoid public forms of transportation and crowded tourist areas.

If we give priority to the Health and safety of every tourist, travel in 2021 should be as exciting as we hope.

**2021: year of domestic tourism in India**

Now the Domestic Tourism is the main driving recovery to the tourism sector. Although the domestic tourism flows have also been heavily affected by restrictions on the movement of people, but are expected to recover more quickly once the lockdown is lifted. The most important thing now is to focus on the vast potential of domestic tourism and the vigorous marketing plan required. Now it is time all-state Governments should come together and think about the promotion of road tourism within interstates with proper prevention/safety measures for tourists as well as tourist destinations.

**Challenges to reboot tourism with the new normal**

The new normal of doing hotel business has now completely changed with health and safety as most important. Sanitizing hotels and cleaning each and every inch of our hotel to fight the coronavirus is now the priority mission of all hotels. Our Govt. is also very much concerned about the health and safety of everyone and is campaigning for promotion of the tourism industry post lockdown through many virtual road-shows in various states throughout the country. The State Tourism Department is taking tremendous aggressive measures and steps towards the promotion of tourism.

As domestic tourism has restarted and is helping to sustain various state governments in the country has announced or in the process of announcing the new tourism policy to give a new direction and dimension to their tourism policies. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India has also circulated the Draft New Tourism Policy seeking the industry's feedback to make it more robust and implementable. Odisha Govt. has also incorporated new elements in its new tourism policy aiming at promoting high potential investments in 13 priority destinations through proactive outreach and facilitation as well as to design and develop 9 tourism circuits to world-class standards by involving institutional and individual expertise.



**Randhirsingh Vaghela, Chairman, IATO Gujarat Chapter**

**Future of tourism and new travel trends of 2021.**

As per the current scenario future of tourism does not look very bright and until the vaccine comes out and gets available throughout the country as well as globally there is limited hope of getting back to the old status.

In addition to the Vaccine, the other important

factors which shall help in determining the future revival and growth of tourism in India is the Government's Approach and Support to the Tourism Industry. The question is would they see tourism as an isolated industry and not help or would they see it as a source to provide employment and livelihood to so many stakeholders across the value chain. If it is the latter the Government shall have a proactive approach in supporting tourism with its taxation policies as well as creating an environment for more people to travel to various destinations by proper guidelines of travel.

New trends will be there as travel will never be same as today & Mask, Social Distancing, Covid 19 Negative report have already become mandatory & what I feel that new trends like once it gets normal than every tourist would have a vaccine passport which they will have to carry when they travel but there would be challenges country-wise as which Company vaccine will be considered more acceptable globally as every country will have their own selection of vaccine.

**2021: year of domestic tourism in India**

Yes, it is good that 2021 is declared a year of Domestic Tourism in India but as I mentioned this will only possible once the vaccine comes and everybody gets the same than people will get

confidence and start travelling within the country. MOT is doing a good job in promoting India via Dekho Apna Desh, Storytelling by India Tourism – Mumbai, etc. Currently, people have started travelling to nearer driveable destinations within State or adjoining State. So to promote Domestic Tourism in India there should be uniform guidelines for all State as traveller plans their trips well in advance and traveller should not face any problem going from one State to Other and this would be a very key factor if domestic tourism as going full swing in India.

**Challenges to reboot tourism with the new normal**

The biggest challenges we face is the unplanned imposing of curfew, lockdown, new revised guidelines by different State as traveller will plan their trip in advance and at the travelling date if curfew, lockdown, new revise guidelines etc is imposed then they will be forced to cancel the trip resulting on no refund from airlines, hotels etc & other big challenge is that if traveller as planned a trip and get infected by Covid 19 one night before the travel date than they have to cancel the travel & it becomes hard to get a refund from the airline, hotels etc. Government as to play a key role in making uniform guidelines for all State and ensure traveller do not suffer.



**Sunil C Gupta, Chairman - IATO North Chapter**

**Future of tourism and new travel trends of 2021.**

The future of tourism for most of the year 2021 shall be dismal for inbound, outbound and mice segments. Only domestic tourism shall continue in leisure segments. The new trends are more of weekend tourism, Fits and families.

The group movement and MICE may take much longer to start even in domestic and may depend on effective

distribution of the vaccine.

**2021: year of domestic tourism in India**

Yes, it is the only segment which may sustain due to our own huge population. Due to the safety concerns on overseas travel, a huge portion may shift to domestic from the outbound. The Mice segment shall contain small meetings and very large conferences of above 500 pax may not happen during 2021.

**Challenges to reboot tourism with the new normal**

For inbound it is the discontinuation of tourist visas and international commercial flights, absence of credible certification of SOP'S being followed by all involved in tourism, lack of communication and assurance to travellers all around that it is safe to travel. For Outbound except for very few most countries are yet to open Visa for Indian tourists.



**Sejo Jose, Chairman, IATO Kerala Chapter**

**Future of tourism and new travel**

**trends of 2021.**

Future of tourism and new travel trends of 2021.

Tourism will definitely bounce back. 2021 is going to see the return of tourism, though not like what one saw in the year 2019 but improving slowly and steadily. Local tourism is reaching its peak with drive away destinations becoming popular. These tours could be for a day or two but this new tourist called the Local tourists is in a great mood to discover their neighbourhood destinations. This helps them to build confidence and start travelling within the country and thus improving domestic tourism.

However, I still feel by the fourth quarter of 2021 we may see the start of International tourists.

**2021: year of domestic tourism in India**

The confidence build by tourists by doing local tourism would first venture to discover their own

country, as it is said by Awakes that “humans like to discover new things and love to travel”. No doubt, by seeing the present situation that 2021 would definitely be a year of Domestic tourism.

**Challenges to reboot tourism with the new normal**

The major challenges faced in rebooting tourism would be as follows:-

- Hotels and Tour operators compromising on the SOP laid by the government to stop the spread of Covid. It could result in another wave and thus locals of the destination will fear any tourist visiting that destination. This can be a great concern.

- The price war for sake of doing tourism can be the next big challenge. The destination loses its potential and would be difficult to give a quality experience due to a big drop in pricing by the service vendors. Long run the destination will lose its charm for the compromised service.

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# Maharashtra Fighting Back Covid-19

The sector which is still reeling under the stress caused by the outbreak of COVID-19 witnessed a sense of relief in the state of Maharashtra where the government came out with different policies to uplift the tourism sector in the state.

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing and largest employment generators in the state. To continue with the same trend, when the governments across states and the central government are busy tackling the COVID-19 situation, the Maharashtra government went a step ahead and continued to support the other sectors with policies that were long-awaited.

The honorable Cabinet Minister, Mr. Aaditya Thackeray in an urge to uplift the urban and rural tourism in the state has come out with different initiatives like Caravan services, Agro-tourism, industry status, and reducing the license requirement for setting up a new establishment.

With all these initiatives the government has aimed to create a balance between urban and rural development. This in turn will help promote the rural economy by promoting entrepreneurship and employment in the rural areas. The reduction in-licenses from 70 to

10 to open a business was aimed towards bringing ease of doing business and reducing the time to set up a new establishment under the tourism sector.

To keep up with the changing trends, MTDC in association with Motohom (Moving hotels on Wheels) has launched the caravan services. The initiative is primarily focused on those who like to spend their holidays outdoor and independently. This will allow people to explore the wilderness that Maharashtra has to offer.

The agro-tourism policy of Maharashtra will invigorate the rural sector and agricultural practitioners with a steady source of an alternative income and alternative employment through tourism like farm stays, local cuisines, and cultural aspects. Though the agro-tourism policy has been across multiple countries already, Maharashtra has taken a lead in India to implement such a policy.

Individual farmers, agriculture cooperative societies, agriculture research centers, agriculture universities, or farmer companies can set up agro-tourism centers. The Tourism Department will certify these centers after which they can be eligible for loans and other tax benefits. The requirements to register under the policy include owning an area of two to five acres with residential arrangements and facilities for meal supply.

The much-awaited industry status provided for the tourism sector will ensure a reduction in operational cost which can in turn act as one of the best support provided by the government during these times. In the first phase of developments, the industry status will provide a rebate in the property taxes, electricity charges as well as water charges. All the establishments classified as hotels by the Union Ministry of Tourism will be eligible for the benefits under the newly awarded status and will be able to reap the benefits from 1st April 2021.

## Madhya Pradesh: Film / TV shootings

Madhya Pradesh is the first state to start the film promotions post unlock. The state is taking all the necessary measure for the shooting.

The government released a set of Standard Operating Guiding Principles to restart the film shooting in the state that has to be followed at all the places where shootings will take place.

Madhya Pradesh also has predominantly a Hindi speaking state, making it more viable and manageable for Bollywood pictures. The peaceful law and orders are another supporting factor. The availability of production facilities, Line Producers, Artists, Local Crew etc, makes it much more economical to shoot here.

Till now more than 200 projects including feature films, TV Serial/Series, TVCs & Reality shows have been shot in Madhya Pradesh, of which few names are Stree, Sui-Dhaga, Kalank, Manikarnika, Luka Chhupi, Padman, Toilet ekPrem Katha, BajiraoMastani, Paan Singh Tomar, Lion, C, Aarakshan, Raajneeti.

Currently few renowned actors like Anupam kher and Bhumi Phednekar has completed the shooting in Madhya Pradesh for their movies. And few shootings with actors like Vidya Balan is in pipeline around last week of November.

Commenting on the restart of the shoot Mr Anupam kher said "It is picture wrap for our movie #TheLastShow!! What an amazing, creatively satisfying and courageous journey



it has been. We will miss this time together. But I think we have created something, the memories of which will last us for a lifetime. 'Thank you' is a small expression to express our gratitude. But we couldn't have created this gem without the help of #MPGovt, local authorities and people of #Bhopal. Especially @mptourism dept. Jai Ho to you all. #Film #PassionAndPaseenaFilms" Madhya Pradesh Tourism department is liable

to coordinate with the different concerned departments for shoot permission on behalf of Film maker. To simplify the shoot permission and making Madhya Pradesh a shooting friendly state, Film Tourism Policy is being developed.

The vision of this Policy is to make Madhya Pradesh a major Film making hub & generate a number of employment opportunities in the state.



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# Bridge to Peace: Tourism in the Middle East

The Abraham Accords, signed on September 15, 2020 set in motion a host of business opportunities and intergovernmental agreements between Israel and the UAE.

• **T3FS Desk**

**I**t created an enormous potential for bi-lateral tourism as well as increased tourism partnerships in the region, for the first time. Concurrently, Israel and the Kingdom of Bahrain also signed an agreement to launch full diplomatic relations a month later.



Interaction between tourism companies in the Middle Eastern nations was encouraged and began as soon as the intention to sign the agreement was published, with the expectation that future tourism will increase to the three countries.

Relevant bodies have been working tirelessly to ensure there will be seamless travel between Israel, UAE and the island nation of Bahrain, encouraging trade and tourism. Establishing routes with direct flights (approx. 3 to 4 hours), as well as connecting travellers from various destinations would encourage tourists to combine the countries in one visit. Thus, creating an interesting tourism product that will attract new audiences, with the potential of joint tourism packages with Israel, the Gulf States and other countries in the region.

Following the historic agreement to normalize ties between Israel, United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Bahrain, on

October 8, 2020 the Israel Transportation Ministry announced that a historic aviation agreement has been signed with Jordan that will allow flights from the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain to fly through to Israeli airspace. In the near future, flights of UAE and Bahraini airlines, as well as any international carrier, will be able to fly over Israel to destinations in Europe and North America and back. This new aviation agreement, facilitated by Brussels-based European air traffic control agency EUROCONTROL, will significantly cut flight times on some routes to the Gulf countries, Asia and the Far East, Europe, and America. This will lead to fuel savings, a reduction in pollution and making a positive contribution to the environment. It is hoped that regular and direct flights between Israel, the UAE and Bahrain will soon be in operation, thereby boosting tourism opportunities throughout the Middle East.



*Orit Farkash-HaCohen, Minister of Tourism, Government of Israel*

Governments sign agreements, but people make peace. The development of bilateral tourism between countries is very significant in the economic cooperation between countries, and tourist traffic between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain is the fulfillment of peace agreements. I have already spoken with my counterpart in the UAE, H.E. Dr Ahmad Belhoul Al Falasi, and with the head of tourism in Dubai, HE Helal Saeed Al Marri. There are draft umbrella agreements for cooperation in the field of tourism between the countries and I look forward to a conversation also with my Bahraini counterpart, HE Zayed R. Alzayani. We are looking forward to tourists visiting Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, the Galilee Region and the Dead Sea, the Negev Region and Eilat when the skies open.

## Christmas Sparkle

Typical German traditions and winter activities in the great outdoors are showcased in ‘Christmas sparkle’, the German National Tourist Board’s latest campaign, which invites visitors to take virtual trips to Germany in the run-up to Christmas.

**U**sing the hashtag #GermanyXmas, the GNTB is offering travellers inspiration in the shape of stories and images relating to customs, traditions and festive food and drink.



*Petra Hedorfer, Chief Executive Officer of the GNTB*

We are deliberately focusing on dialogue and interaction in our communication strategy, even during the coronavirus crisis. In the past, the festive season with its more than 3,000 Christmas markets and numerous culinary and cultural events has been a big draw for travellers. In the months of November and December alone, international visitors (excluding business travellers) have made over 9.6 million overnight stays and spent almost €1.4 billion, providing a considerable boost to the hotel industry and retailers in many towns and cities. During lockdown, we are communicating not only empathy in view of this unprecedented situation but also inspiration. Our aim is to strengthen brand loyalty with the clear objective of welcoming many visitors back to Germany next year.

# South Africa is now open for all travellers

South African Tourism (SA Tourism) is delighted by government's recent announcement that South Africa is now open to all international leisure and business travellers from all over the globe.

The opening of all international travel follows President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement that South Africa would be moving to augmented alert level 1, thus opening up international borders for all countries from 11th November 2020.

All travellers coming into the country will need to supply a negative PCR (polymerase chain reaction) COVID test not older than 72 hours from the date of departure from their country.

South Africa recently won big at this year's World Travel Market including Sun City voted as Africa's leading casino resort, Plettenberg Bay as Africa's leading beach destination and Durban voted as Africa's leading city destination.

Earlier this year South Africa took top spot when booking company Tourlane asked its community where their perfect post-coronavirus trip destination would be. The survey saw South Africa as the go-to safari destination, packed with outdoor adventures, applauded for pristine and well-kept beaches.

## *Sisa Ntshona, Chief Executive Officer, South Africa Tourism*

We are excited by the full opening of our international borders because this is a strong testament of the fact that we are open for both business and leisure travel. This opening brings certainty for South Africa, as a travel destination putting us back on the map and on the radar for many travellers who want to come explore our beautiful country.

We know that now more than ever, traveller behaviour is influenced by trust and confidence so our country has put in place globally-benchmarked health and safety protocols. We thank all partners here in South Africa and across the world for their ongoing support and patience. As we gradually welcome tourists and business travellers from all over the world, we look forward to engaging with our partners once again as we work together to package South Africa for various tourists' needs.

While we know that there won't be an immediate influx of tourists as other countries are now experiencing second waves of the pandemic and have imposed travel restrictions for their citizens, we look forward to welcoming those tourists that are able to come. They can finally get to enjoy the wide open spaces, scenic landscape, unique and authentic cultural experiences that South Africa has to offer.



# Tricable Gondola in Europe

On December 5, 2020, Jungfrau Railways will be inaugurating the brand new Eiger Express tricable gondola which will take travellers from Grindelwald to the Eiger Glacier station in just 15 minutes.



*Urs Kessler, Director of Jungfrau Railways*

In these difficult times, we want to send a positive signal for tourism in the Jungfrau Region and the Canton of Bern. The worldwide renown of this project will help us to emerge from the crisis stronger.

The launch of the new tricable gondola, will reduce the transportation time to Jungfrauoch by 47 minutes from popular destinations including Interlaken Bern and Zurich! With 44 gondolas and 26 seats each, the Eiger Express breaks the world record as the heaviest tricable gondola. With the new lift project, visitors can travel by public transport much faster than before from several of Switzerland's major cities to the Jungfrauoch and Eigergletscher slopes.

The Eiger Express can transport 2,200 passengers every hour which will minimize the queues and waiting time for travellers going to the mountain top. Each cabin will have heated windows, which guarantees a great view regardless of the weather, as well as Wi-Fi and heated seats. All the power will be generated by the cables pulling the lifts. The long awaited Eiger Express is the second part of the impressive project V-Cableway that consists of two gondola lifts from Grindelwald to the mountains Männlichen and Eigergletscher. The first stage (to Männlichen) was inaugurated last year.

*Ritu Sharma, Deputy Director and Marketing Head-India, Switzerland Tourism*



Jungfrau is one of the most popular mountain peaks amongst Indian travellers! With the launch of the brand new Eiger Express gondola, we are positive that its popularity will only increase, with an easier mode of transportation and a reduced travel time from major tourist destinations like Zurich, Interlaken and Bern. This will allow the travellers to plan their day trips to the mountains with ease.



# Thai Golf Pass-Season 4

When it comes to hospitality no country comes closer to perfection than Thailand offering something for everyone of diverse interest, every age and every budget.

**• T3FS Desk**

From pristine sandy beaches to lush jungles, bustling busy cities to traditional villages, Michelin star menus to roadside noodle stalls, historic Buddhist temples to 21st century sky scrapers, Thailand is truly amazing!

Amazing Thailand also has Amazing Golf facilities. Ideally located more than 250 golf courses throughout the country, by the sea, by the mountains, by the lakes, inside the cities even besides the airports. Top quality courses, reasonable green fees, friendly caddies. From the beach resorts in the south such as Phuket to the mountainous surroundings in the north or the

bustling cities of Bangkok and Pattaya, there are golf courses to suit every preference.

To promote the Amazing Golf Experience, SLW, the leading Golf Management company had launched the first ever loyalty program for a country in 2017. ‘Thai Golf Passport was launched in India to offer Indian golfers a seamless golf experience in Thailand. Indian golfers can be a part of this Amazing reward programs whenever they tee off in Amazing Thailand’ said Mr. Anil Dev, Managing Director, SLW.’ More than 250 quality service providers like Callaway and a number of Golf Courses, Resorts and hotels are on board



as partners. While travel business took a hit due to Covid19, we are gearing up to make Thailand the destination of choice when travel resumes’ he added.

**Vachirachai Sirisuman,**  
*Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) New Delhi Office*

Golf is one of the important segments which we focus on and continue to promote Thailand as Indian Golfer’s favourite destination. In fact, I am happy to work closely with SLW to launch “Thai Golf Pass” – Season 4 and would be more excited to see all golfers joining the programme. I would like to take this opportunity and look forward to welcoming all Indian golfers to have first tee off in Amazing Thailand once the situation improves.

**Shashank Chaudhary,**  
*Sales & Marketing Director, Callaway Golf India*

Golf has long been the game of corporate and business people who are also avid travellers. Thai Golf Passport creates a membership that shares common values and interests, and at the same time provides an engaging golfing and networking platform for all stake holders-members and sponsors alike. We are excited to partner with this innovative initiative for the 4th season which helps us reach our customers directly.

**Chitranjan Bakhshi,**  
*Business Head, SLW Golf Holidays*

Thailand is the most popular destination got golfers from India. The Thai Golf Pass, which is supported by TAT, is a brilliant scheme to reward the keen golfers to experience this destination diversity and vast choices of golf courses throughout the country are key factors attracting the large numbers of visitors coming to play golf in Thailand.

**Daniel D'souza, President and Country Head, Leisure, SOTC Travel**

Our association with SLW enables us to showcase a unique side to the destination. We are happy to work with SLW to launch "Thai Golf Pass" – Season 4 and look forward to Indian golfers being a part of this programme. Thailand has been a favourite destination among Indian travellers for its pristine white beaches, thriving cities, rich culture, authentic Thai food and shopping.

**Rajan Sehgal,**  
*President Indian Golf Travel Association*

Our association welcomes this move which is a program unique to India. While hotels and airlines have loyalty programs this will be a first of its kind where a Country has created such a program. We support all golf tourism initiatives and are sure that this will really encourage golf travel.

# LEGOLAND® Dubai prepares to reopen on 1st December 2020

LEGOLAND® Dubai is excited to announce the long-awaited re-opening of its Theme Park gates to the public on Tuesday 1st December, 2020 – welcoming families with children aged 2-12 to build awesome new memories together.

Opening just in time for the National Day public holiday, the Park will make for the perfect family day trip adventure during the long weekend, with 49% off ticket prices in celebration of the 49th UAE National Day. From 1 – 5 December, LEGOLAND Dubai will bring back its unique UAE Hand Salute LEGO® Model, made from an awesome 108,231 LEGO bricks – the perfect family selfie opportunity.

Maintaining visitor health and safety as a top priority, the team at LEGOLAND Dubai has been working hard to ensure hygiene and safety measures are enhanced throughout the Park, including temperature checks on arrival, enhanced cleaning, one way systems, social distancing markers at ride queues, shops,

restaurants and more. These measures, in line with government regulations and global standards, provide peace of mind for families as they continue having fun within a safe environment. Families can once again enjoy the LEGO themed rides and attractions across 6 lands – whether it’s conquering the exhilarating Dragon Coaster, recovering a pharaoh’s stolen treasure in Lost Kingdom Adventure, or letting their creativity run wild in IMAGINATION and LEGO CITY.

LEGO fans will love visiting MINILAND to see Dubai’s iconic skyline and key iconic landmarks from around the Middle East and international destinations, all made up from over 20 million LEGO bricks.

Visitors can also purchase their favourite

LEGO themed souvenirs from the Park’s retail stores, while stopping by the LEGO themed restaurants for a quick snack.

The UAE National Day ticket offer at LEGOLAND Dubai can only be availed online and is available to book now for visitation between 1 - 5 December 2020. The theme park will be open from 10am – 8pm from 1 – 4 December, and 10am – 6pm on Saturday 5 December. Following this, the general opening times for LEGOLAND Dubai will be from 10am - 6pm from Saturday to Wednesday, and 10am - 8pm on Thursdays and Fridays.

The LEGOLAND Dubai Annual Pass can also be purchased with an awesome 3 months free when you buy online - 15 months for the price of 12 months.



## Magical Holiday

The Downtown Holiday Market returns to the nation's capital for the 16th year. Downtown DC's spacious, open-air village is open until Wednesday, December 23, filling two entire blocks of F Street NW, from 7th to 9th Streets NW.

**H**ere is a list of fun things to do at the Downtown Market:

### Engage in interactive digital experiences

This year, additions to the market include an exciting mixture of interactive digital experiences, which include an awe-inspiring lumina projection show by artist Zak Forrest titled "Chroma" blanketed on the National Portrait Gallery. ARTECHOUSE presents a first-of-its-kind mixed reality (XR) adventure throughout the market, utilizing smartphone technology and the museum's XR app to unveil Instagrammable surprises at various checkpoints.

### Be mesmerized by various stage performances and holiday-fun films

Shoppers will encounter an 8'x16'

jumbotron screen illuminating the heart of the village, replacing live center stage performances with curated, streaming entertainment including holiday-fun films, Saturday Morning Theater Shorts from The National Theatre and musical acts. Already scheduled to perform are Howard University's famed jazz singers Afro Blue, King Street Bluegrass, Jazz Trotters, the Washington Youth Choir and others.

### Shop from a unique "Made in DC" pop up store

Curated by the DC Department of Small and Local Business Development's (DSLBD) and The Pop-Up Collective, visitors can explore a range of collectibles from the city's finest artisans and crafters. From produced goods to environmentally sustainable trinkets, customers can shop items certified "Made

in D.C." including one-of-a kind Little Likes Kids' toys for ages 6 and under and BicycleTrash, gifts for bicycle lovers and beer enthusiasts.

### Find award-winning fashion collectives at District of Fashion's Holiday Booth

The premier fashion program of Downtown DC has launched an open-air boutique for the first-time this month. Visitors can find the award-winning fashion collectives by female designers Shari Henri, Abram's Wearable, luxury menswear from Andrew Nowell, contemporary fashion designer Shafei Han and eclectic selections from Ida's Idea. From December 15-19, shoppers and beauty enthusiasts alike can meet District of Fashion's hair and makeup director and celebrity stylist, Eva Styles.



# Switzerland: A solo traveller's haven

**Travelling alone can be the most therapeutic form of self-indulgence!**

• T3FS Desk



**B**y traveling alone, one can engage with their new surroundings unfiltered by the prejudices, tastes, or preferences of a traveling companion and connect with the soul of the place by hanging out with the locals

Switzerland is a solo traveller's haven, one of the safest and easiest places to navigate, - the sheer variety of things to see and do ensures that your solo trip is a memorable one, especially if it's your first!

Here are some of the activities we recommend you should add to your itinerary!

## **Not just a place to stay, but to experience:**

Switzerland has a number of reasonably priced youth hostels around the country that are clean, safe, centrally located and with a choice of single room, double room and bunk beds with central kitchens and lobbies and lounges – perfect if you're looking to meet other travellers. Other than hostels, travellers can choose to stay in single rooms available at lower rates than double rooms, in most hotels-whether budget, mid-priced or luxury.

## **The ultimate travel partner- The Swiss**

## **Travel Pass:**

When travelling solo, a Swiss Travel Pass is a boon! Swiss Travel System makes traveling alone in Switzerland trouble-free with their efficient network of public transport- from the high-speed and famously punctual trains to buses, boats and trams. The Swiss Travel pass offers exciting discounts on most mountain excursions and gives you a free entry to almost 400 museums!

A part of the country's heritage and history, Switzerland's panoramic train routes are among the most beautiful rail routes in the



world. To experience Switzerland's majestic mountain scenery, idyllic valleys and villages; along crystal-clear lakes and ice-blue glaciers- a journey on The Glacier Express, or The Bernina Express is highly recommended!

#### **Adventure Escapades:**

With the stunning landscapes and action-packed activities, Switzerland will surely unravel the hidden adrenaline junkie in you! Whether you choose to jet ski over crystal blue waters, dive from the sky into lush green valleys or ski down steep terrains of the snow-capped alps, there's an adventure to suit every person when in Switzerland. We recommend trying mountain biking or e-biking or sliding down the fastest Toboggan Run in Pilatus

The best part? Your daring escapades aren't limited to just one season. Whether you plan your trip in the summer, autumn or winter, Switzerland will always welcome you with towering alpine peaks, emerald green valleys and shimmering blue lakes!

#### **Gastronomic Adventures:**

In Switzerland- cheese and chocolate will be your go-to choice of food. But Switzerland's local cuisine has the influence of 3 different cultures- German, French and Italian, so whether you are a meat lover or vegan, you will never run out of options to eat!

If you are on a budget, many restaurants offer a "meal of the day" which includes a salad/soup, a choice of 2 or 3 main courses and a dessert. Many mountain excursions offer a 'picnic' option where you can carry your own meal. Another must try when traveling to the

country is Swiss Wine; one of the country's best kept secrets is that almost all regions in Switzerland produce their own wines. The Viognier, Pinot Gris and Chardonnay from Lake Geneva region and Merlot Bianco from Ticino are particularly well known. However, if you consider yourself a wine connoisseur a trip to the Lavaux vineyards is a must!

When you are done trying the rich wines and scrumptious Swiss Delicacies and are craving a taste of home you can try one of the many amazing Indian restaurants in the country.

#### **Swiss Cities- the fusion of old with the new!**

Swiss cities are a true wonder! Surrounded by the spectacular scenery that dominates Switzerland's landscape, the cities embody quality of life, urban flair and are perfect to base yourself to explore when travelling independently.

Zurich is a perfect example of Swiss cities, which are a blend of the old and new! While the old town will show you the rich history, the newer parts will cater to your young spirit with the best of Zurich nightlife with trendy bars and clubs. Any cosmopolitan swiss city such as Zurich or Geneva, will fill your calendar with festivals, fireworks, and al fresco fun, where you can meet different people and make connections for life!

And the best thing is that a 10-minute train ride can take you into countryside, so compact are even the biggest of cities in Switzerland.

#### **Idyllic countryside landscape:**

The picturesque villages of Switzerland have made for some of the most gorgeous backdrops of our Bollywood movies! Tucked in the lap of the Alps and surrounding valleys, these villages offer you a chance to unwind or pair up with other tourists and experience local life and culture!

In addition to being a paradise for hikers in summer and skiers in the winter, every village offers a multitude of attractions and mountain excursions throughout the year!

#### **Rewarding mountain excursions:**

The snow-covered peaks with panoramic viewpoints, thousands of hiking trails and many other alpine highlights make Switzerland an established destination for different mountain excursions. The journey to the mountaintops is either on board a cogwheel train, a cable car or the world's steepest funicular, is a unique experience in itself.

When in Switzerland, you have to try the golden round trip to Lucerne's home mountain Mt. Pilatus or experience the world's first revolving cable car - TitlisRotair while heading up Mt. Titlis! A fun visit to the snow park at Jungfraujoeh - Top of Europe or discovering the Glacier palace at Matterhorn Glacier Paradise will also make your day eventful!

Solo travel gives you the chance to indulge yourself fully, and Switzerland's dramatic landscapes serve as a playground for fun, frolic and action giving travellers an experience to remember and come back for!



# Experience the Holiday Festivities in Philadelphia

**Did you know that the Macy's Christmas Light Show in Philadelphia has been a holiday tradition since 1956? Or that 2020 marked the 101st anniversary of the annual Thanksgiving Parade in the city?**

## • T3FS Desk

Celebrating the holidays in all its joy and fervor in the historic city of Philadelphia and the Countryside of Philadelphia has its own charm. With one of the largest Christmas markets in the USA, a pop-up market and ice rink at City Hall, a not-to-be-missed Macy's holiday show, mesmerizing festive display at Longwood Gardens and a plethora of other holiday experiences, this region is definitely a must-visit for all holiday lovers.

Here are some of our favorite activities to do in the city to experience the holiday spirit.

### Enjoy a beloved Philadelphia holiday tradition online

A Philadelphia tradition since 1956, the Macy's Christmas Light Show in the Wanamaker Building features whimsical holiday scenes made of over 100,000 LED lights — including a 34,500-LED tree — that dance along to classic tunes from the historic Wanamaker Organ during daily performances. This year, the show can be enjoyed online by millions of visitors globally. Macy's Santaland at Home also brings the iconic holiday tradition — and an animated version of the store's Dickens'

Village — to audiences around the world, available to be accessed anytime for free via the online portal. TIP: If visiting Macy's to view the tree and organ in person, be sure to complete your holiday shopping and take advantage of tax-free clothing and shoe shopping in Philadelphia!

### Shop, drink, and dine at an authentic German Christmas Village

Another Philadelphia holiday tradition, the Philadelphia Christmas Village returns to LOVE Park and the northern apron of City Hall for another season of festive fun and plentiful shopping experiences. The pop-up market opened on Thanksgiving Day and runs through Christmas Eve and features over 60 local artisans and makers selling hand-crafted goods. Don't miss the Christmas Village Carousel, which is stationed in the City Hall courtyard along with additional vendors. TIP: Crowds are lighter Monday-Thursday each week!

### Ice skate beside City Hall...

One of two seasonal ice rinks in Philadelphia, the Rothman Orthopedics Ice Rink and its accompanying Cabin opens for the season

in November and runs through the end of February. To reduce crowds, timed skating tickets purchased in advance are strongly encouraged. The Cabin features an open-air layout this year to allow for increased air flow.

### ...then finish your holiday shopping at Dilworth Park

From November 21 through New Year's Day, the Made in Philadelphia Holiday Market joins the ice rink and cabin in Dilworth Park, featuring over 50 local makers from the Philadelphia region. Alongside holiday-inspired crafts, gifts, and other goods, the market features food, confections, and local beer which can be enjoyed at seats throughout the park, such as those at the nearby Wintergarden.

### Immerse yourself in a 160,000 square foot wonderland in the sports complex

Philadelphia's newest holiday experience, Winter on Broad Street: A Holiday Light Spectacular, sets up shop outside of the Wells Fargo Center from November 27 through January 3. The dazzling walk-through wonderland features 193 large displays illuminated by over 500,000 light



bulbs, including a 25-foot reindeer, 20-foot ornament, and over 45 glimmering trees that form a magical glen. At the Broad Street Lodge, Holiday Spirits, Claus' Kitchen, and Tinsel Towne Treats stands visitors can enjoy seasonal food and beverage options (think: warm cookies and spiked ciders). The Mistletoe Marketplace features hand-made goods and gifts from a collection of local artisans available for purchase, while performances and holiday tunes fill the air at the Tinsel Towne Square. TIP: Look for a special holiday photo station featuring 'Gritty Claus'.

### **Marvel at a miraculous South Philadelphia light display**

Each year, residents in the South Philadelphia neighborhood team up to create a truly stunning holiday display for visitors of all ages to enjoy, which Travel + Leisure regards as the best holiday light show in the state of Pennsylvania. Over 300,000 lights are strung along the street, crossing from house to house overhead while each building features their own unique holiday theme, such as The Grinch, A Christmas Story, and even Star Wars. On view from Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve.

### **Enjoy an enchanted garden railway display at Morris Arboretum**

Morris Arboretum's popular Holiday Garden Railway Display features a quarter mile of track with buildings all made of natural materials (bark, leaves, twigs, hollow logs, mosses, acorns, dried flowers, seeds and stones) to form a miniature landscape with rivers and buildings that are exact replicas of the original including Independence Hall and other Philadelphia-area landmarks, all decorated for the holidays. The Holiday Garden Railway Nights allow visitors to

enjoy the display in a festive, illuminated environment.

### **Get festive at the Four Seasons**

Once again this year, the Four Seasons Hotel Philadelphia at Comcast Center will feature beautiful floral arrangements and decorations as part of Jeff Leatham's holiday art installation, but the seasonal experiences don't end there. Guests and non-guests alike can reserve spots at special holiday workshops, including floral centerpiece classes with Floral Director Eduardo Verdi, holiday cookie and gingerbread house decorating sessions with the hotel's pastry team, and cocktail classes with the hotel's expert mixologist, among other events. Those looking to stay at the Forbes Five-Star-rated hotel can take advantage of their Experience More offer, where they'll receive a \$100 credit towards spa treatments or dining at either Vernick Fish or Jean-Georges Philadelphia (who will each have special holiday menus).

### **Transport yourself to a winter wonderland at Longwood Gardens**

This Christmas, experience the spectacular both indoors and out at Longwood Gardens with A Longwood Christmas and living floral displays, opulent ornaments, stunning trees, musical performances, organ sing-alongs and much more, November 20 through January 10 in nearby Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. Timed tickets are available now online, with sellouts likely.

### **Admire miniature trains and holiday critters at the Brandywine River Museum of Art**

The Holiday Magic at Brandywine experience celebrates the season with the O-gauge model train display, featuring nearly 2,000 feet

of track, trees decorated with thousands of "critter" ornaments, and antique dolls from the museum's collection now through January 10. New this year, the train display will feature two model sets once owned by Nicky and Jaime Wyeth, the sons of American painter, Andrew Wyeth, whose work is featured throughout the museum.

### **Ancient Alcohol After Hours at Montgomery County**

Join the Penn Museum for a fun virtual event. Ancient Alcohol: Tour and Wine Pairing will uncover 9,000 years of wine culture around the globe. Log on, pour yourself a glass, and virtually explore how our ancestors partied like it was 7000 BCE. Your tour guide, Janelle Sadarananda, will answer your history and wine related questions along the way.

### **Experience the wild lights at the Elmwood Park Zoo**

Wild Lights is an age-old and favorite family tradition at Elmwood Park Zoo. With fascinating lights and decorative attractions, and animals on exhibit, this is a perfect family getaway for this holiday season. Take a stroll through "Oh" Christmas Tree, and be surrounded by a glistening forest, or visit with our big cats in Trail of the Jumping Jaguar. Each night of Wild Lights features live entertainment, unique animal encounters, performances, holiday music, and a chance to see Santa himself.

### **SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING at SPRING MOUNTAIN ADVENTURES**

When the temperatures dip, Spring Mountain is home to the closest skiing and snowboarding to Philadelphia. With its state-of-the-art snow guns, Spring Mountain is coated in fresh powder even before the first snowfall of the year.

# Phase of Recovery

“We expect that we can offer travel agencies even more travel choices on the HR-169 ticket in terms of routes and partner airlines, once the industry is on the path to recovery.” Said Kimberley Long, Vice President Agency Distribution at Hahn Air

• **Vedika Sharma**

**What travel will look like in 2021?**

In 2021, we will continue to see an emphasis on security. When considering buying travel, passengers want to see their personal health, as well as their financial investment protected. Travel agencies can count on Hahn Air’s free insolvency protection Securtix that is automatically included with every HR-169 ticket and guarantees a refund in case the operating carrier should become insolvent. Additionally, Hahn Air offers protection for stranded passengers. We are the first company in the industry to offer this kind of protection since 2010 and we have already issued 43 million insolvency-safe tickets through travel agencies worldwide.

In addition, NDC will continue to play a major role to make the customer journey more convenient, tailor-made and seamless. However, the advancement of NDC may

be slowed down by the pandemic, as many airlines may not have the financial means to invest in their NDC solutions. Luckily, service providers like Hahn Air can assist to add NDC to their distribution mix.

We expect that we can offer travel agencies even more travel choices on the HR-169 ticket in terms of routes and partner airlines, once the industry is on the path to recovery.

**What are the new travel trends you are coming up within the year 2021?**

For the phase of recovery, we will focus our efforts on standing by our partners to support them in getting their businesses back on track. We will also ensure our airline partners’ availability in the GDSs on our HR-169 ticket as soon as they take up their routes again. As usual we are working on further extending our partner portfolio to offer

travel agents more ticketing choices. We see a strong demand for our H1-Air and X1-Air solutions amongst airlines looking to sell via GDSs. We expect to add many additional partners that will become available under the codes H1 and X1 in the GDSs. Finally, we are further developing our NDC platform by adding new partners, new content and new features.



# Rebuilding Air Connectivity

An exclusive partnership designed to help airports recover from the most challenging period the aviation industry has ever faced has been signed by Routes and Airports Council International (ACI) World.

The formal agreement between the two organizations will provide platforms and guidance for airports at a world level, recognizing the vital role they will play in driving economic recovery in a post-pandemic era.

The coming together of Routes, the organizer of the world’s leading route development forums, and ACI World, the association that advances the interests and acts as the collective voice for the world’s airports respectively, demonstrates the recovery of the

aviation industry will have its foundation in collaboration.

ACI World estimates the airport industry will suffer a 60% reduction in revenues in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19, amounting to a decline of more than \$100 billion. The complex challenge presented by the pandemic has therefore forced airports and airlines to be reactive, meaning that planning for Summer 2021—what will be the industry’s most important season—will be critical for both the short- and long-term recovery.

The partnership forged at a global level between Routes and ACI World will support the world’s airports in planning for this season, ensuring they continue to provide the economic and social benefits to the local, national and global communities that they serve.

Routes’ forthcoming event Routes Reconnected is the company’s first event since the onset of the pandemic and is designed to support the industry in restoring and reshaping the world’s air services.



*Luis Felipe de Oliveira, Director General, ACI World*

The partnership we have forged with Routes will help move the industry forward down the path of recovery. Aviation is an interdependent and interconnected industry and partnerships like this will be crucial in supporting a globally-consistent recovery. We look forward to working with Routes during the recovery process and beyond in support of airports and the wider aviation ecosystem.



*Steven Small, Director of Routes*

The sustainable recovery of the aviation industry will be driven by the cooperation and alignment between airports, airlines and destination stakeholders. Having worked closely with ACI World for many years, we believe that our first formalized agreement will drive deeper collaboration across the industry and will deliver real value for our airport partners.

For over 25 years, Routes has united airlines, airports and destination stakeholders to negotiate new and existing air services. In the last two years, alone over 3,500 new air services have been connected to meetings at Routes events. We are delighted that ACI World will be supporting our upcoming event, Routes Reconnected, and our 2021 programme

# Sustainable Green Projects

AAI's Chennai International Airport and Vadodara Airport have been awarded in Platinum category by ASSOCHAM GEM Green Building Council for sustainable green projects.

Shri Arvind Singh, Chairman, AAI received the award by Shri Sandeep Narang, Member (ASSOCHAM) in presence of Shri Anuj Aggarwal, Member (HR), Shri I.N. Murthy, Member (Operations), Shri A K Pathak, Member (Planning), AAI & Project developers on 19th November, 2020.

ASSOCHAM has formed a Council for Green and Eco-friendly Movement (CGEM) that executes the 'GEM Sustainability Certification Program' with an objective to promote environment friendly green building design and construction. The sustainable installations resulting in the green architecture of Vadodara Airport has got it certified as a rated 5 GEM project. The Vadodara Airport Terminal displays the influence of an engineering marvel and at the same time holds a strong identity

featured with simplicity. Inspired by the body and wings of an airplane, the building's bold sweeping form has been an outcome of the fusion of transparent and cloudy façade on North-South and East-West respectively and wraps the entire terminal with one single metal skin. High level of sustainability in design aspect of Chennai Airport's terminal that includes restoration of native landscape, energy conservation build-up, waste-water treatment & dispersal systems along with other green drives have proffered this airport a rated 5 GEM project status. The Chennai Airport project is an ambitious project that pushes the extents of design and technology to the next level. The great 24 m cantilever roof structure protruding at the front (landside) is one of the largest in the entire Asia Pacific. Unlike any other airport in the world,

lush green gardens including vertical gardens are visible throughout the terminal creating a unique dialogue between engineering and nature, interior and exterior spaces and man's relationship to earth and air travel. The new generation of terminal architecture at the Chennai Airport gives a world class travel experience.

AAI is complementing current practices in creating greener structures, thereby attempting to minimize a building resource consumption, waste generation, and overall ecological impact based on accepted energy and environmental principles.

As a part of its commitment to quality and sustainability, a certification of 4-star rating, under the GRIHA guidelines has been established as a project goal for each project costing more than Rs. 50 crores.

## ICRA: Recovery Expected only in FY2022

Air cargo volumes has been witnessing a faster recovery as compared to passenger and aircraft traffic since April 2020 despite a 45% contraction in the cargo volumes in H1 FY2021 as compared to the corresponding previous period.

The faster recovery in the cargo volumes is because of the trade of the essential supplies majorly in the pharmaceutical, medical equipment and agricultural produce sectors besides the expanding e-commerce business. During the period under consideration, the passenger traffic and aircraft traffic movement declined at a much faster pace, by 86% and 75% respectively.

Aircraft traffic movement contracted sharply in April 2020 and May 2020 in the backdrop of nationwide lockdown and suspension of commercial air travel, which recommenced from May 25, 2020 with restrictions. The total aircraft traffic declined by 75% in H1 FY2021 over

corresponding previous - with international traffic contraction at 78% YoY and domestic traffic at 74% YoY. On the supply side, the airlines adopted cargo on seats and dedicated freighters to meet demand while there was inherent fear to travel during COVID-19 pandemic amongst business and leisure travelers - the major contributors to passenger traffic historically, which kept travel demand subdued. The cargo volumes in September 2020 reached to 89% of pre-COVID levels (February 2020) when compared to passenger traffic at 29% and aircraft traffic at 44%.

The international aircraft is limited to Vande Bharat rescue operation flights and bilateral 'Air

bubble' agreements. The international cargo volumes account for 60-65% of the total cargo, with the remaining accounted by domestic cargo. The steady ramp up in international cargo volumes to 143,814 tonnes in September 2020 from 39,960 tonnes in April 2020 is attributed largely to increase in share of cargo transported by international freighter aircraft for cargo movement to 60-70% from 40-45% pre-COVID, as per ICRA's interaction with players. As belly space remains limited with restriction on international commercial aircraft traffic to flights operated under 18 air bubble arrangements besides the permitted flights for relief/ evacuation.

## Star Alliance Biometrics is launched at Frankfurt and Munich

Star Alliance, the world's largest airline alliance, has completed development of an interoperable biometric identity and identification platform that will significantly improve the travel experience for frequent flyer programme customers of Star Alliance member airlines.

The Star Alliance Biometrics platform advances the vision of Star Alliance member airlines of delivering a seamless customer journey, while strengthening loyalty value proposition within its travel ecosystem.

Lufthansa Group (LHG) airlines, Lufthansa (a founding member of Star Alliance) and SWISS will be the first to use Star Alliance Biometrics for selected flights starting in November. Specific infrastructure is being installed at hub airports Frankfurt and Munich, reaping operational benefits at both locations.

Members of the Lufthansa and SWISS Miles & More Frequent Flyer Program who opt-in to biometrics

will be able to pass through both security access and boarding gates in a touchless manner, an important health and hygiene safety measure in times of COVID-19.

In keeping with the requirement to wear masks in the airport terminal, it is not required to remove the mask for the biometric identity check. The identification process works for passengers wearing masks.

The Star Alliance Biometrics service is built upon NEC Corporation's NEC I:Delight biometric and identity management platform software. The secure service is available at no cost to customers of the Miles & More program who have consented to share their biometric data with stakeholders of their choice during travel.

Jeffrey Goh,  
CEO of Star  
Alliance



We are exceedingly proud to have founding member Lufthansa as the first airline to implement the Star Alliance Biometrics solution in both of its Frankfurt and Munich Airport hubs. This is a customer-centric solution that furthers our credentials in innovation, particularly its multi-airline and multi-airport capability. Whilst it offers a seamless customer travel experience, it is also a critical development that addresses the expectation of customers for a more touchless and hygienically safer experience. Star Alliance Biometrics is a key part of our strategy to be the most digitally advanced global airline alliance.

# Air New Zealand awarded more international cargo flights

Air New Zealand has been awarded more international cargo flights under the International Air Freight Capacity (IAFC) Scheme.

This comes after the Government announced Phase Two of the IAFC scheme which runs from 1 December 2020 through to 31 March 2021. Air New Zealand will operate approximately 55 international flights per week going forward.

Since the airline started flying under the IAFC scheme in May, it has operated more than 1100 return flights, carrying over 39,000 tonnes of cargo in and out of New Zealand.

*Anna Palairet, General Manager Cargo, Air New Zealand*

This is great news not only for the airline but for importers and exporters wanting to get their product to key markets around the world.

It's great to see the extension of the IAFC scheme as it provides much-needed support and stability to New Zealand importers and exporters. Our flying schedule remains largely the same and it's exciting to see new services to Guangzhou and Perth, as well as some enhancements to the ongoing schedule to improve the connectivity for South Island Exporters.

With the festive season just around the corner, these additional flights will be instrumental in helping New Zealand exporters get their produce on holiday tables around the world. We'll be sending more than 1,000 tonnes of lamb up to the UK in time for Christmas and more than 3,500 tonnes of stone fruit around the globe with a majority moving into China for the Chinese New Year.



# Travel Intent Survey by AirAsia India

AirAsia India, announced the findings of its recently conducted study to identify the 'Travel Intent' among the Indian consumers.

The airline conducted a survey of its customers who flew in the last 24 months to understand their travel purpose and preferences - pre and post Covid, and their travel intent going forward.

The behavioral data collected states that 'while the demand has been slowly and steadily recovering post-Covid lockdown, it is encouraging to see the optimism for travel over the next 3 months - 50% of surveyed respondents stated that they definitely planned to travel over the next 3 months and another 36% indicating that they are considering travelling.'

The airline also identified that 'while business travel demand remains significantly impacted, VFR (Visiting Friends & Relatives) including

travelling to / from hometowns contributed to over 2/3rds of travel in the months post the lockdown.'

The study further established that 'the massive reduction in Leisure / Holiday travel during and immediately after the lockdown resulted in significant pent up demand, especially among younger demographics who have exhibited more resilience and optimism about travelling in the current festive season. The travel intent suggests the contribution of holiday traffic to increase notably in next three months compared to previous few months post the covid-lockdown.'

The survey also indicates a change in demographic mix of the travellers with the age group between 18-29 years increasing its share.

Whether they have flown post Covid or not,

people rate taking a flight as less of a Covid risk than most activities including eating out or visiting a mall, with only ordering in, visiting close friends / family or visiting their local store considered safer. According to the survey, 'the perception of risk is even lower for people who have actually flown post Covid vs. those who have not yet experienced post-Covid flying.' This is also validated by the high NPS scores AirAsia India has observed on the Covid-protection measures implemented on-ground as well as in-flight.

To sum up, the survey indicates that, 'for those who intend to travel, flights and personal vehicles have increased as preferred modes of transport, gaining share from other modes of transport, specially train travel.'

# Cathay Pacific :Long-Term Competitiveness of The Hong Kong Aviation Hub

Cathay Pacific welcomes the Hong Kong SAR Government's commitment to strengthening Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness as a leading global aviation hub and international logistics centre, as outlined in the 2020 Policy Address given by the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong SAR Government, Carrie Lam.



*Augustus Tang, Chief Executive Officer, Cathay Pacific*

We are grateful to the Hong Kong, Guangdong and Central governments for their commitment to the continued development of the Hong Kong aviation hub. We share their confidence that Hong Kong will continue to prosper as the city has an unrivalled position as part of the Greater Bay Area (GBA), a region that presents wonderful opportunity for Hong Kong, and will be the growth engine for the world economy over the coming decades. We welcome the deepening cooperation between Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) and Zhuhai Airport to establish a globally competitive world-class airport cluster, leveraging their complementary strengths. We also look forward to the commissioning of the entire Three-Runway System in 2024, and the completion of the premium logistics centre and the SKYCITY development projects. We are greatly encouraged by the focus placed on enhancing the overall transportation network and capacity, connecting HKIA and the various transport links and infrastructure of the airport island. We also welcome measures that greatly facilitate 'land-to-air' transit travel for passengers from the GBA to fly via HKIA. For more than 70 years, Cathay Pacific has been privileged to be the home carrier of Hong Kong. We are proud to have played a significant role in the development of our home city into a leading international aviation hub and our commitment remains.

# Flydubai expands its network

The first scheduled commercial flight operated by flydubai from Dubai International (DXB) landed at Tel Aviv Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV) on Thursday 26 November at 11:35 to a watersalute.

The inaugural flight was flown by Captain Patrick Gonzenbach and Emirati First Officer, Abdulla Al Shamsi.

On board the aircraft was a delegation led by Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer, flydubai. They were met on arrival by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, along with a delegation that included the CEO of Ben Gurion International Airport Shmuel Zakay and representatives from the aviation industry.

Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer at flydubai, said: "Today's inaugural flight sees the air transport agreement realised. The creation of these direct air links will support the development of commercial ventures across a number of sectors helping to drive success and prosperity. We look forward to welcoming the first passengers from Israel as they come to explore the UAE."

Jeyhun Efendi, Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations and E-commerce, said, "Since we announced the launch of operations

to Tel Aviv we have seen strong demand for services from both Israel and the UAE. We received our first bookings from both tourists and business travellers shortly after the schedule was published. There is opportunity to further grow our double daily service."

Its extended codeshare partnership with Emirates offers travellers more seamless connections through Dubai's international aviation hub to 155 destinations between both the Emirates and flydubai networks including Australia, China, Indian Ocean, Japan, South Asia and the United States. flydubai offers convenient and reliable travel services. Passengers will have the option to experience Business Class enjoying space and privacy in the cabin, a comfortable spacious seat, inflight entertainment with films and TV shows available to watch and a range of dining options. Kosher meals are available to pre-order. Passengers will also benefit from a priority check-in service at Terminal 3, Dubai



International.

Passengers travelling in Economy Class will enjoy a Recaro designed seat offering optimal levels of space and comfort in the air during the less than four-hour flight. flydubai continues to roll-out WiFi across its fleet enabling passengers to stay connected during their flight and can browse the web, send emails, use social networks and get the latest news. Passengers are able to choose between bundled (Flex/Value) or unbundled (Lite) fares depending on their travel needs.

# IndiGo: More than 650 weekly flights to and from UP

India's leading carrier, IndiGo, is currently operating more than 650 weekly flights including the RCS routes to and from the cities of Lucknow, Varanasi, Prayagraj and Gorakhpur in the state of UP.

The airline witnessed highest air travel demand from Lucknow which is directly connected to 13 domestic destinations including new direct flights to Indore & Raipur. In addition, IndiGo also operated approximately 300 Vande Bharat and Air Bubble flights connecting UP with Dubai, Doha, Sharjah, Jeddah, Kuwait, Dammam, Riyadh & Abu Dhabi.

Currently, IndiGo connects Varanasi to 7 domestic destinations including Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Hyderabad & Chennai. The airline operates direct flights to 7 domestic destinations which includes Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Pune, Kolkata, Gorakhpur & Raipur from Prayagraj (Allahabad). IndiGo connects Gorakhpur to 5 domestic destinations which includes Kolkata, Delhi, Hyderabad, Prayagraj, with Mumbai being a new route.

*Sanjay Kumar, Chief Revenue and Strategy Officer, IndiGo*

Uttar Pradesh being the largest state in the country has a huge potential for revival of air travel. We have witnessed moderate air travel demand and are optimistic that there will be more people travelling to meet their families after many months of being home bound. Being the safest mode of travel, flying has become the leading choice for people travelling across segments including migrant labour, especially with limited rail and bus operations. This trend is being further fuelled by affordable fares, ease in government restrictions and lesser travel time onboard our lean, clean flying machines.



# Jet Aviation Geneva gains Part 145 approval

Jet Aviation is pleased to announce that its maintenance facility in Geneva has received approval from the Russian Federation Civil Aviation Administration (RFCAA).

The approval permits the company to support aircraft that are registered in Russia to the full extent of its maintenance approvals.

Jet Aviation Geneva offers full heavy maintenance services for the Bombardier Global Express series, Gulfstream aircraft and Boeing business jets (BBJ). With this new approval, the company is authorized to provide line and base maintenance to these Russian-registered aircraft types.

*Edgar Guerreiro, Senior Director MRO & FBO and General Manager Geneva*

Russia has a significant fleet of private aircraft and we are delighted to receive this important approval from the Russian civil aviation authority. This authorization provides Russian owners and operators the comfort and security of knowing our team of dedicated maintenance professionals is here for them when they fly through the region. We look forward to welcoming them to our facility in Geneva.



# Etihad Cargo, Abu Dhabi Ports Group, Rafed and SkyCell collaborate

Amid an anticipated surge in vaccine logistics demand, Abu Dhabi is poised to cement its position as the global logistics hub to facilitate COVID-19 vaccine distribution across the world, after spearheading the launch of the Hope Consortium.

Comprising leading Abu Dhabi and global entities, the Hope Consortium represents a complete supply chain solution to address vaccine transport, demand planning, sourcing, training, and digital technology infrastructure, and facilitate vaccine availability across the world.

The news follows Hope Consortium member Etihad Cargo and the consortium transporting five million vaccines in November on behalf of the Department of Health – Abu Dhabi, which is spearheading the consortium and will oversee regulatory compliance, full chain expertise and scientific insight. The consortium also includes Abu Dhabi Ports Group, Rafed, the healthcare purchasing arm of Abu Dhabi-based ADQ, and

Switzerland’s award-winning SkyCell, which develops next-generation, temperature-controlled logistics containers for the pharmaceutical industry. As part of the Hope Consortium, SkyCell will establish a regional service and manufacturing centre in Abu Dhabi. The Hope Consortium has pooled its collective expertise to garner a multi-faceted capability to provide logistics services to handle over six billion doses from the vaccines being developed and manufactured around the world – whether in single or multi doses – in cold and ultra-cold conditions in 2021, rising to over three times more doses by the end of next year – the largest capacity and logistics capability regionally and one of the largest globally.

Distribution of the vaccines, which will be stored in Abu Dhabi Ports Company facilities, will be carried out by Etihad Cargo, the first Middle Eastern carrier to gain IATA’s Centre of Excellence for Independent Validators (CEIV) certification for pharmaceutical logistics. The UAE’s national carrier will leverage its extensive intercontinental network, fleet and charter flights to supply vaccines globally. As part of the Hope Consortium, Abu Dhabi Ports, which has the Middle East’s largest capacities for cold chain and ultra-cold storage, will leverage its capabilities as an innovation epicentre serving the Middle East and wider world through Abu Dhabi as a supply chain gateway connecting East and West.



*HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Hamed, Chairman of the Department of Health – Abu Dhabi*

The Hope Consortium is a prime example of how Abu Dhabi is leading in providing solutions, capabilities and capacities to help the world get through this global pandemic. It is a continuation of all players’ collaboration of a UAE-based public-private partnership that spans the globe. While assuring vaccine supply to the domestic market, the Hope Consortium will offer international governments, non-governmental organisations, and vaccine suppliers a cohesive solution across every supply chain step – from air freight, regional storage and temperature monitoring, to inventory management, cold and ultra-cold container solution, regulatory clearance, and healthcare and pharma quality assurance. Developing a vaccine is only the first step in getting to a solution, getting that vaccine to the whole globe, while maintaining a robust integrity of temperature is an equal challenge by itself, the Hope Consortium will provide that solution on the highest level of quality. Consortium partners already have extensive expertise in the global delivery of millions of COVID-19 related items, such as personal protective equipment, diagnostics consumables, vaccines and pharmaceuticals. As we progress talks with vaccine manufacturers to apprise them of our global distribution capabilities, the Hope Consortium will harness the united expertise of various

Abu Dhabi and UAE stakeholders to provide a fully-fledged, end-to-end solution specifically for COVID vaccine distribution needs.

*Tony Douglas, Group Chief Executive Officer, Etihad Aviation Group*

With two thirds of the world’s human footprint within a four-hour flight of Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital’s investment in technological expertise and world-class infrastructure facilities means we can serve as a global logistical hub to, and for, the world. Etihad Cargo’s role in the consortium will leverage our outstanding pharmaceutical logistics expertise and specialised pharma and healthcare service, PharmaLife, the IATA CEIV Pharma certified product capable of facilitating temperature-sensitive cargo between +25°C and -80°C. Our network reach across key destinations will be supported by the utilisation of our charter operations to meet global demand for swift and secure COVID-19 vaccine shipments. We are already managing all anticipated shipment elements through our dedicated COVID-19 vaccines workforce. A dedicated pharmaceutical handling facility to accommodate increased capacity at our Abu Dhabi hub is also currently under review, as well as additional thermal covers and enhanced capabilities at origin stations based on established pharma trade lanes and specific requests.



*Captain Mohamed Juma Al Shamisi, Group CEO of Abu Dhabi Ports*

This collaboration is in line with our ethos of creating innovative ideas, concepts, solutions and opportunities. Abu Dhabi Ports plays a key role in supporting the Abu Dhabi vision in advancing logistic services in the emirate and leading the post-COVID-19 revival and economic recovery through robust partnerships. Our expansive operations at KIZAD are among the largest cold chain and ultra-cold storing in the region and enable us to support the emirate’s drive to spearhead global immunisation efforts that will positively impact millions of lives. In addition to leveraging our world-class trade facilitation expertise, our efforts also rest on our Maqta Gateway subsidiary, which is playing a leading role in the development of integrated, digital, global commerce.



*Rashed Al Qubaisi, Chief Executive Officer, Rafed*

Our expertise in centralised procurement services will provide vital support to the consortium.

Through our collaboration we will better consolidate our efforts for the benefit of our global partners in the public and healthcare sectors.



*Richard Ettl, Chief Executive Officer of SkyCell*

Our hybrid containers will safeguard the full efficacy of vaccines that are vital to defeat the pandemic, all while reducing long-term business and environmental costs. The Hope Consortium

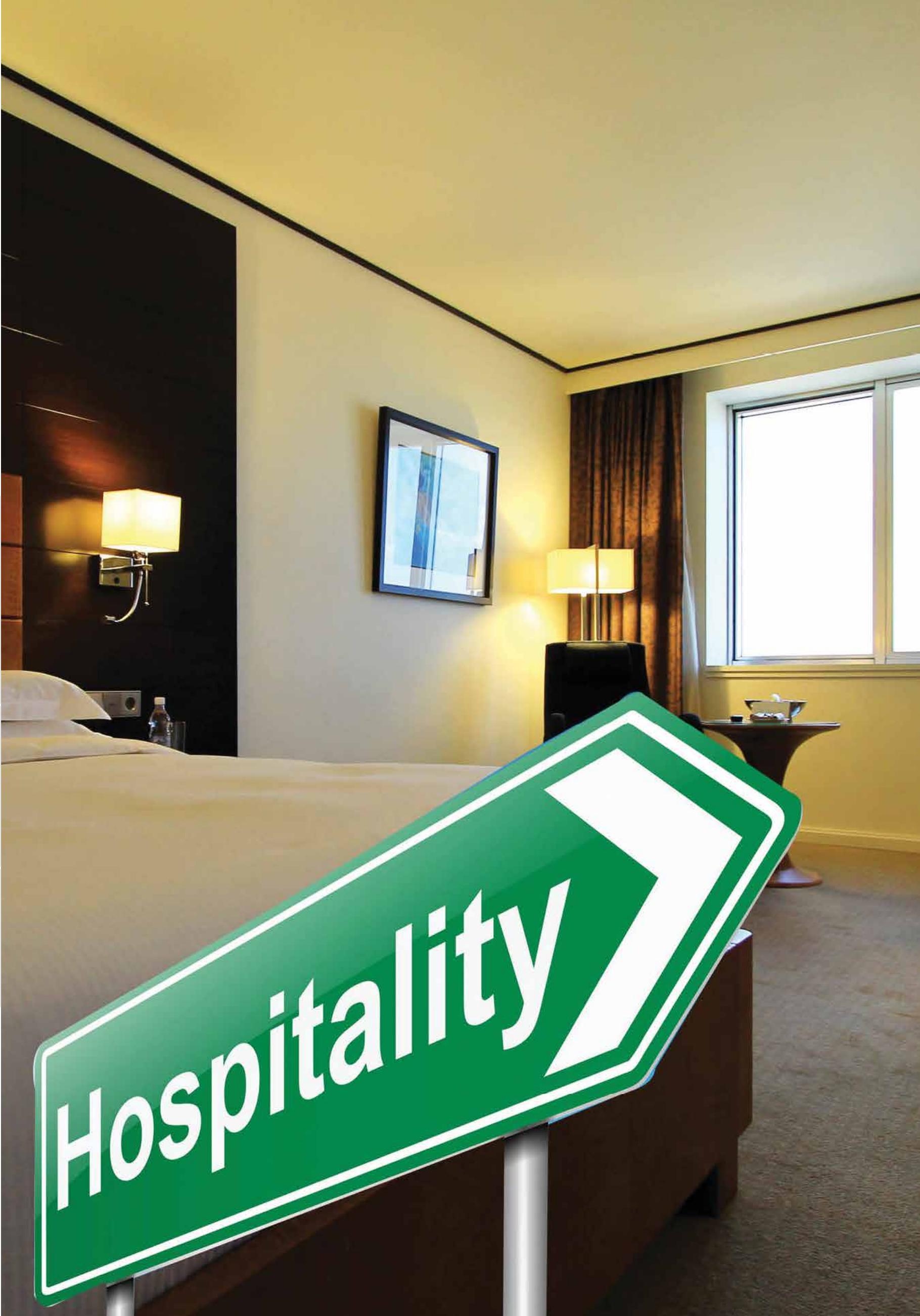
has the right partners, infrastructure and service ecosystem to ensure time and temperature sensitive transportation in a seamless cool chain operation.



*Dr. Noura Al Dhaheer, Head of Digital Cluster – Abu Dhabi Ports, CEO of Maqta Gateway*

Supporting the uninterrupted flow of critical cargo, such as medical and food supplies have been crucial in Abu Dhabi Ports’ story during 2020, but the distribution of vaccines will form the most significant success to date. Maqta Gateway is committed

towards creating innovative digital solutions to boost the transparency and integrity of the region’s supply chain.



Hospitality



# Hospitality: Accelerate Recovery

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the world's economy was shut down almost overnight. Hotels are still struggling to keep their doors open and are unable to rehire all their staff due to the historic drop in travel demand.

• **Vedika Sharma**

**C**OVID-19 outbreak has presented unprecedented circumstances before the fragile tourism and hospitality industry. The highly infectious novel coronavirus continues to thwart the sector and raises serious questions about the present and future survival of the sector.

One industry that is suffering the most immediate repercussions is the hospitality and leisure industry. Hospitality is among the hardest hit due to fears of community spread through travel and group environments.

The pandemic has confronted the hospitality industry with an unprecedented challenge.

India's hotels and restaurants are seeing just 20 to 30 percent business of what they used to get before COVID-19 hit. Hotel business hinges a lot on travel. Here we are focusing on bouncing back journey to move forward with new travel trends of the hospitality industry.

# Wyndham Hotels & Resorts



## Future Travel Trends

As the hospitality industry continues to shift and adapt, we are seeing an uptick in digitisation, contactless solutions and enhanced hygiene and safety protocols. We are also seeing positive momentum in leisure destination travel, as well as a gradual increase in business travel and bookings. At Wyndham Hotels & Resorts we launched our Wyndham Easy Book offering, which was created as part of our commitment to supporting small and mid-sized businesses globally. This offer gives eligible businesses access to competitive rates, stays across 9,000 Wyndham branded hotels around the world, with unlimited number of rooms and discounted rates for long stays.

We are continuing to adapt and develop Wyndham's wider offerings for business and MICE travel to meet consumer demand and provide our guests with safe and accessible options. We are also focused on providing guests with safe and memorable experiences and will continue to adapt our offerings to meet demands and exceed expectations.

## Expectations with the year 2021

Heading into 2021, our focus at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts will continue to be the health, safety and well-being of our guests, team members and partners. I believe domestic travel will maintain its stronghold on the market as we continue along the road to recovery. Government guidelines and regulations will continue to impact the industry and agility and adaptability will be key. As history has shown, the hospitality industry is notoriously resilient and we feel confident that it will eventually rebound.

## 2021: year of domestic tourism in India

Domestic tourism has been a strong focus in India and globally in 2020 and I believe will continue to dominate the market segment in 2021 as well. At Wyndham Hotels & Resorts we have offered a number of promotions via our award-winning Wyndham Rewards loyalty programme, to inspire and encourage domestic travel amongst our guests. Some of these promotions include our Travel Again offering, where guests can stay two nights or more, save 15% and earn 3,000 Wyndham Rewards points, as well as various other offerings aimed at inspiring guests to travel domestically.

## Upcoming new projects

Throughout these challenging times, our focus at Wyndham has been on the health, safety and well-being of our guests, team members and partners and we remain committed to this as we continue to navigate the new normal. We also remain steadfast in our commitment to continued global growth and expanding Wyndham across Europe, Middle East, Eurasia and Africa.



*Nikhil Sharma, Regional Director,  
Eurasia, Wyndham Hotels &  
Resorts, EMEA*





# Historic Resort Hotels

## Future Travel Trends

Being a die-hard optimist I do declare that 2021 will be a lot more safe, secure, healthier and productive than 2020 has been! There is no denying that the pandemic has turned our world of hospitality upside down, thrown up unforeseen challenges, but isn't that what life is all about? I am looking forward to 2021 seeing the opening up of the airlines once again, the travel advisories to slowly come back to the Pre-Covid era, and therefore the confidence of the people to travel for business and leisure, of course, with greater care and self-imposed safety measures.

## Expectations with the year 2021

As I said, '21 will be like a coming of age year. We have learnt to survive the pandemic. And live with it, however difficult it may be!

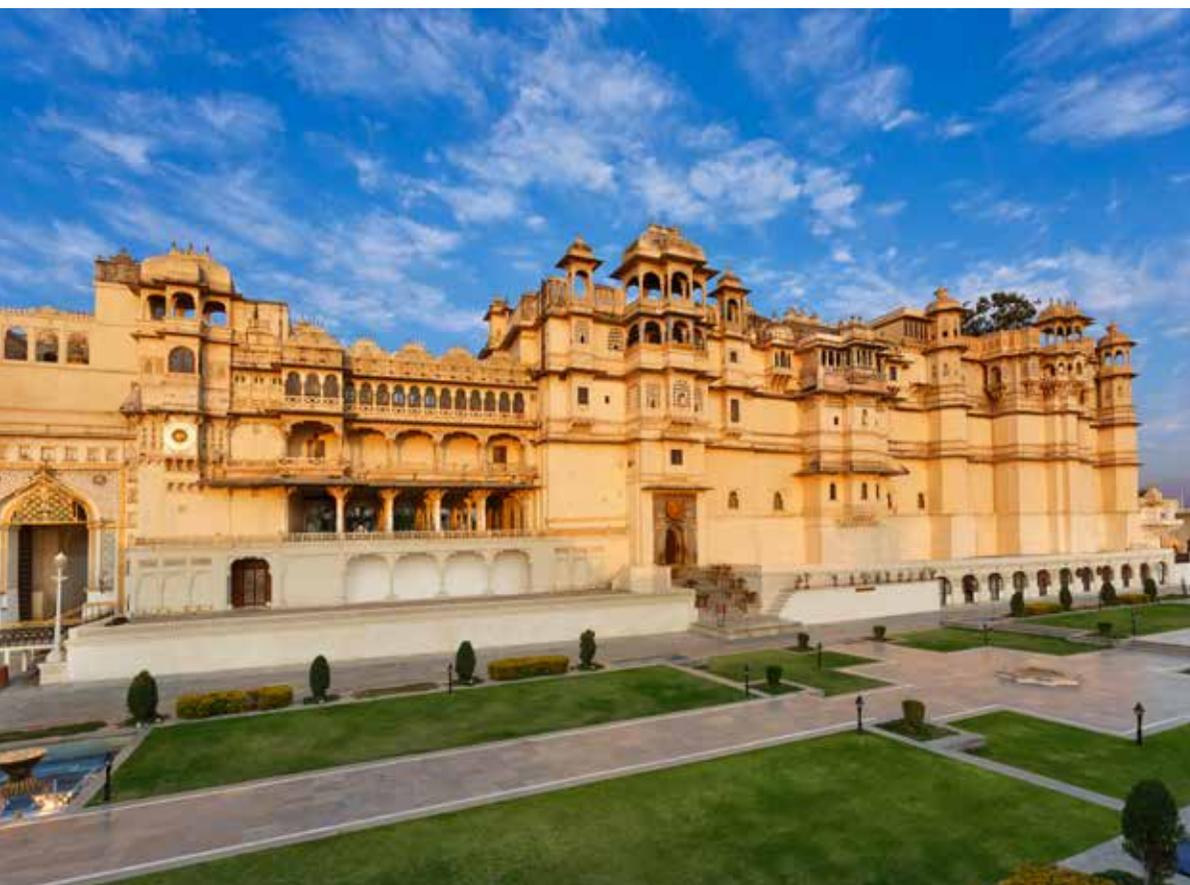
Now we have to take those lessons more seriously, consolidate with what we have, work together for a healthier and profitable year. It will be tough but very exciting, I am sure.

## 2021: year of domestic tourism in India

Why create these borders of domestic or foreign? Today's domestic traveller is as global in their choices and preferences; and the foreign visitor is as local as they want to be! Borders do not exist. Yes, I am convinced that we, in India, have a lot more reasons to travel, to share, to give and genuinely help every stakeholder in the hospitality industry. If we don't help each other, who will? If we don't go out of our way, who will? That's why I think, as we come to grips with the pandemic, we will slowly get back to normalcy, enjoy the company of our friends and dear ones, and



*Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar,  
Executive Director,  
Historic Resort Hotels Pvt Ltd*



continue the explorations that delight us! Let's say cheers to 2021!

## Upcoming New Projects

HRH Group of Hotels with its palace-hotels, island-palaces, sanctuary-resorts have been the preferred choice of visitors from all over. Heritage-holidays with us are unique simply because they are authentic and we give our guests the matchless opportunity to 'Experience the Original in the Abode of Kings'.

Our Palace-hotels and resorts are being renovated; our chefs are doing their best to roll out culinary delights for the guests making each day a festival! We look forward to welcoming your readers to HRH Hotels in Udaipur, Kumbhalgarh, Ranakpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Gajner. With us you discover Rajasthan like never before.

# Fairfield by Marriott Kolkata



*Abhishek Sachdev, Hotel Manager,  
Fairfield by Marriott Kolkata*

## Future Travel Trends

In a post-COVID-19 world, travellers will be much more cognizant while picking destinations and are likely to make those choices keeping in mind the safe distancing practices. The COVID-19 impact, however, is expected to gradually lessen through the various safety protocols undertaken by hotels and these will continue to be a key focal point for the hospitality industry. Domestic travel is already witnessing a rise and the trend will continue during the festive season and most part of next year wherein customers will not mind paying a premium for their peace of mind in a safe environment.

## Expectations with the year 2021

2021 is bound to bring about an uptick in domestic leisure travel and for travellers, safety and cleanliness will continue to be top priorities. Road trips will be the preferred mode of travel and any semblance of normalcy in international

travel is likely to take a few more months. Another trend that's catching up is get-together events of families and close-knit friends who will opt to travel safely in groups thereby minimising the risk of socialising outside of this circle. Open air spaces will also be the preferred venues for events in the coming year as they offer relatively safer environs for people to meet and greet with safe distancing.

## 2021: year of domestic tourism in India.

The statement is right on the money as we are already witnessing a considerable rise in domestic tourism which is going to continue throughout 2021. Weekends at our hotel have become busier with occupancies being higher than on weekdays indicative of locals driving out to enjoy their weekends with staycations at hotels and that is what is working for us since the ease of lockdown in West Bengal. Sunday Alfresco Brunches at Vertex have also become extremely popular

with the Kolkata food enthusiasts and we are seeing many guests who are staying with us over the weekends enjoy a leisurely brunch at Vertex.

## Upcoming new projects

Vertex – The Liquid Restaurant has grown popular among residents of Kolkata and adjoining areas since its launch in September this year. The USP being an enviable combination of indoor and alfresco seating, both with fantastic views. We have launched Sunday Brunches which follow a changing theme each month and December will see a wide selection of Dimsums paired with sparkling wine. We are also going to commence Winter Grills during evening hours wherein people can enjoy the wintery evenings along with some sumptuous grills with Vertex signature cocktails. Marriott International's global cleanliness program 'Commitment to Clean' with strict hygiene and cleanliness protocols, launched during the pandemic, remains a top focus for the hotel and is one of the major reasons why guests are choosing to stay with us over other properties.

# Concept Hospitality



### Future Travel Trends

The hospitality industry was doing well before the onslaught of this pandemic. The pandemic shook the entire world and the hospitality industry was left bleeding by it. However, the situation is beginning to change. We are already witnessing improved occupancies. With so many Pharma companies claiming to find the vaccine, I think things will move very rapidly from here on. The stock market is booming and within a few months more and more people will start travelling and this augurs well for the industry.

### Expectations with the year 2021

As I mentioned above the conditions are changing for the better. This year has been bad. But we are very optimistic about the coming year. We are hopeful that the industry should bounce back to its pre-covid levels by mid of 2021. The worst is over and next year will bring cheer to the industry.

### 2021: year of domestic tourism in India.

Surely domestic tourism will be the first one to pick up. There are few reasons behind it. It is more cost-effective to travel within the country as compared to going abroad. All hospitality companies are providing excellent deals. People are aware about the various brands and they can negotiate good bargains. And lastly, people are worried about going abroad as they do not want to get stuck up in any country if travel restrictions are suddenly introduced.

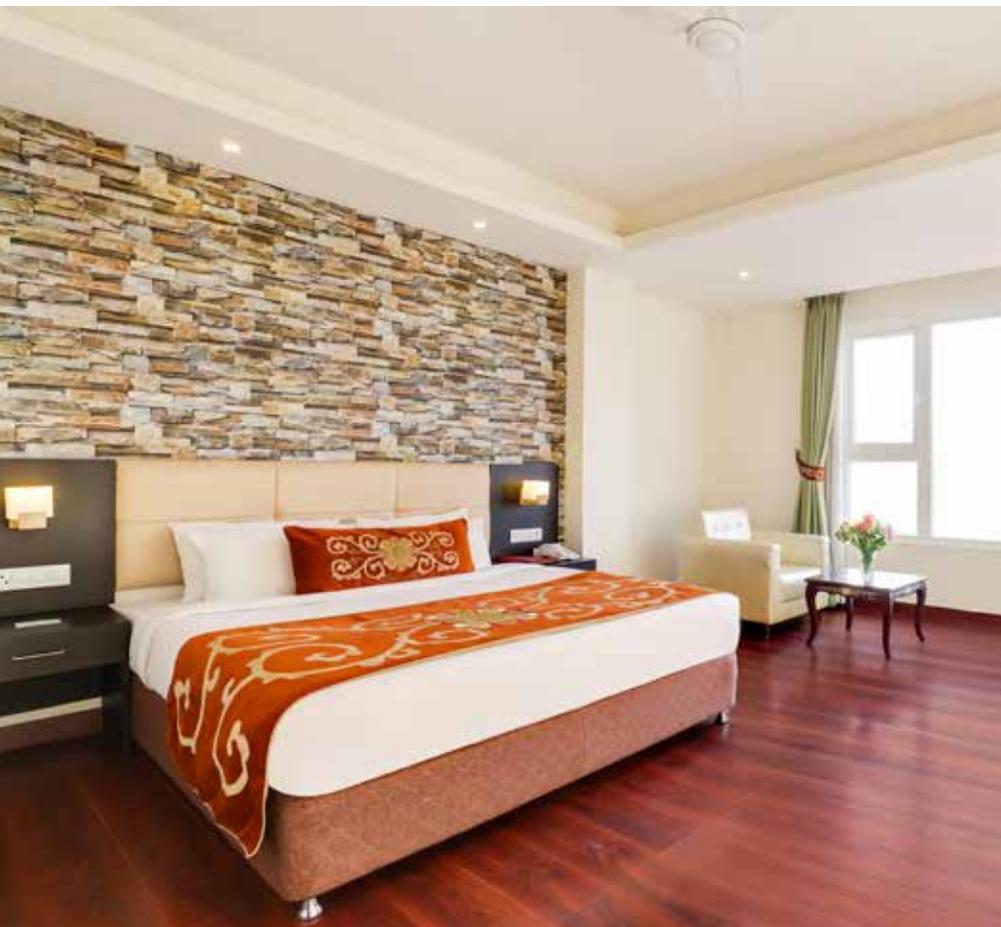
### Upcoming new projects

The Fern Hotels & Resorts is growing at a very rapid pace. Even during the last few months, we have opened new properties. The company will be opening 8 new Fern hotels over the next 4 months.

Of these, 3 new hotels are opening in the

*Param Kannampilly, Chairman & Managing Director, Concept Hospitality Pvt Ltd. The Fern Hotels & Resorts*

state of Gujarat, at Kevadia (Statue of Unity), Junagadh and Jamnagar. A sea-fronted tented resort is opening in the union territory of Daman. And another resort opens in the mountainous beauty of Gangtok in Sikkim. Other new openings are in Thane (Mumbai), Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh) and Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh).



# Ellbee Hospitality Worldwide



## Future Travel Trends

Well, there is still a lot of uncertainty in the hospitality sector.

While the coronavirus pandemic has severely wrecked almost every sector of the economy, the tourism sector is by far one of the worst affected.

One of the great privileges which we used to have in our lives not so long ago was our ability to travel and eat outside freely. The pandemic has dramatically affected the same.

The future trend of hospitality would be towards greater emphasis on sanitation and hygiene standards. Safety and sanitization have already become crucial for the survival of every hotel, and a new normal.

## Expectations with the year 2021

We re-opened our hotels in October after the lockdown, and with the influx of bookings and queries which we received in a short span of time, we are a bit optimistic for the year 2021.

We believe people would soon begin to travel like before (with the safety protocols).

Also, with the COVID vaccines expected to arrive in 2021, it is undoubtedly going to help the industry move forward.



*Sahib Gulati, Director, Ellbee Hospitality Worldwide Pvt Ltd*

## 2021: year of domestic tourism in India.

Yes, 2021 looks to be a year of domestic tourism in India.

With the increasing travel and visa restrictions related to COVID-19, it would only be convenient for Indians to travel locally instead of planning international trips.

The segment of tourists that used to travel abroad would add to the domestic tourism in India for the year 2021.

We expect a significant boost in domestic tourism for next year.

## Upcoming new projects

We are actively engaging in activities that can help promote safe tourism in Uttarakhand.

We recently partnered with a travel channel - Travel XP to promote tourism in the state. Also, we are actively working with various video bloggers, travel influencers to encourage travel.

It is not only about promoting one's property; we believe in these times, we as an industry should come together to promote safe and responsible travel.

It is only when a collective message is sent to the people that it is safe to travel then only we can expect things to be back to normal.





# #VivaahatNovotel

Weddings are considered as one of the most important day in one’s life. Marriages are a special time for celebrations, and these are the moments that become precious memories.

India is known for its grand wedding ceremonies and to make it more special and exclusive; Novotel has introduced Vivaahat Novotel. Leveraging its 20 properties across 15 gateway cities across India, Novotel is providing its guests an opportunity to connect with all their relatives and friends to join in for both physical and virtual celebrations, while maintaining social distancing norms.

With Vivaahat Novotel, guests get to select a host hotel in any city as their wedding venue. To bring the couple’s dear ones closer to them on their wedding, the host hotel extends the web telecast of the wedding to their relatives and friends present in different cities. The host family of the wedding gets a chance to share every moment of the wedding with their loved ones in real time- the joy of togetherness, the singing and dancing during the baraat, the rituals, the ceremonies, even from miles apart.

The two distinctive features of this initiative are Dawat by Novotel and Shagun by Novotel for food and gift hampers respectively which are the two integral parts of any Indian wedding.

With Dawat by Novotel, the

guests attending the virtual wedding based out of key cities with a Novotel property will have the same culinary experience delivered at their home, which is served at the host hotel. This way even if physically they are in different cities, they will be able to enjoy the same delicacies as served at the wedding. If a particular town other than the host city has a substantial number of guests, Novotel also provides an option to book a banquet in that particular city, which will also project the wedding on a big screen. The same food and beverage services will be provided at the hotel, which are being served at the host property.

Another aspect of this initiative is Shagun by Novotel, through which Novotel hotels in different cities help guests in delivering selected gift hampers to their relatives and friends. Guests can choose these hampers from plethora of options starting from Royale priced at INR 4000, Luxe package at INR 3000, Prestige hamper at INR 2000 and Premium at INR 1000.

Vivaah at Novotel bestows multiple packages, be it a grand luxurious wedding or an intimate wedding. In all these packages, the

*Puneet Dhawan, Senior VP Operations, Accor India and South Asia*



We are fuelling our resources with digital innovations and entering into this new segment of virtual weddings to make our guest’s day special in the current times. Novotel is one of our most popular brands in India with 20 properties across the nation. With ‘Vivaah at Novotel’ we strive to fulfil all our guests’ needs and demands with our dynamic hospitality services.

*Kerrie Hannaford, VP, Commercial, Accor India and South*



We understand emotions and expectations of our patrons from wedding celebrations. ‘Vivaah at Novotel’ provides guests an opportunity to choose from a range of options and design their dream wedding. Our teams are working continuously to help and assist them to make these celebrations more joyous. With our ALLSAFE label’s strict safety and hygiene protocols, guests can be rest assured and enjoy their moment.

host hotel will be hosting 50, 100 or 200 people (as per the local government guidelines) at the hotel. Each package also comes along with a special wedding gift from Novotel for the couple on a minimum spend.

# Chiva-Som Welcomes Zual Wellness Resort In Qatar

A pioneer in global wellness, Chiva-Som International Health Resort, is highly regarded for its world-class facilities and wellness team's unparalleled skill and depth of knowledge.

Chiva-Som's expansion, with the arrival of Zual Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som in Qatar, early next year, will mark the first management undertaking by the wellness leader since opening in Hua Hin in 1995 and will reflect the core philosophies that have ensured its reputation as a wellness pioneer.

Drawing on Chiva-Som's years of expertise and knowledge, Zual Wellness Resort will offer a holistic approach to health and wellness, whilst honouring wellbeing principles that are rooted in Arabic healing traditions. Zual Wellness Resort will be the first hub for Traditional Arabic and Islamic Medicine (TAIM), a 360-degree approach to healing sourced from Islamic medicinal historians and herbalists, and mind-body therapy.

Aiming to broaden accessibility to its unique wellness philosophies to all age groups, Zual Wellness Resort will encompass a bespoke Zual Discovery family resort which anticipates the needs of the modern family. An innovative and expertly tailored range of fun, interactive age-appropriate activities will encourage younger guests to engage with and explore good lifestyle habits, giving them the best possible wellness foundations on which to build. Facilities such as family activity zones and curated bonding activities aim to foster stronger connections between families and promote shared experiences. Zual Wellness Resort will also cater for individuals and couples seeking to indulge in Chiva-Som's world-class wellness programmes and state-of-the-art international treatments with an adjacent adults-only wellness resort, Zual Serenity.

Staying true to Chiva-Som's belief that



personal wellness needs to go hand-in-hand with the health of the planet, Zual Wellness Resort will operate sustainably and adhere to environmentally conscious practices. The resort was recently awarded LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver Certification. As a globally recognised symbol of conservation achievement and leadership, the certification embodies the resort's social responsibility commitment towards sustainability in Qatar. The use of single-use plastic and non-biodegradable products is strictly limited, and the resort draws on home-grown or locally sourced produce. Energy conservation technologies and waste-water treatment are also in place. As the environmental preservation steward

of Krailart Niwate, the last remaining mangrove ecosystem in Hua Hin, Thailand, Chiva-Som has been responsible for planting over 5,000 trees in the past decade. As part of its dedication to the preservation and afforestation of these mangrove environments, Zual Wellness Resort will utilise salt-tolerant and local plants such as the *Avicennia Marina*, one of the largest and oldest mangrove species, and engage with the local community to raise awareness of these unique ecosystems. Guests at Zual Wellness Resort will be encouraged to visit the resort's beach-front walkway and Mangrove Education Centre, a major environmental conservation project to promote scientific understanding and appreciation of nature.



*Krip Rojanastien, Chairman and CEO of Chiva-Som*

Over the past 25 years we have witnessed a rapid and continuous evolution in wellness and lifestyle habits, seen health trends come and go, and experienced a sea change in the way people travel for their health and wellness. We are excited to have developed a new offering with Zual Wellness Resort, whilst remaining committed to our principles of delivering holistic, sustainable wellness programmes which provide lasting transformation of mind, body and spirit. The ability to serve families in particular offers guests great flexibility, and we hope it will inspire wellness for a new generation.

*Daniele Vastolo, General Manager of Zual Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som*

We are excited to carry the renowned Chiva-Som wellness DNA and expertise to the Middle East, whilst still showcasing true Qatari culture. We have worked closely with Chiva-Som on all aspects of Zual Wellness Resort, from the wellness-inspired and harmonious design to offering enhanced levels of personal service to ensure we enrich our guest's overall wellness experience.



# Cheval Collection remains Safely Open for Business

As England entered a month-long lockdown from 5th November, luxury serviced apartment provider Cheval Collection remains open for business and continues to welcome guests.

Cheval Residences in London are open for those who reside at Cheval as their primary residence, key workers and those who cannot return home. Cheval has continued to operate throughout the global pandemic and has adapted procedures in line with government and health authority advice to maintain the highest level of cleanliness and hygiene, whilst offering the best service possible.

Cheval Collection's Residences offer fully equipped apartments. Any guest who chooses to, very easily, self-isolate in one of Cheval Collection's apartments can expect the full support of the residence and will be able to take advantage

of a number of services including housekeeping on request (or a cleaning pack for those who wish to service their own apartment), coordination of any contactless deliveries chosen to be received and virtual direct contact with the concierge teams using Cheval's App.

Cheval Collection includes eight serviced apartment residences across London and three serviced apartment residences in Edinburgh, offering a stylish, spacious and self-contained



alternative to hotels.

Cheval Collection continues to work with both staff and guests to ensure stays are safe, enjoyable and secure. Cheval Residences offers more than just a home and makes life blissfully easy for guests!



*George Westwell, CEO Cheval Collection*

We have extensive hygiene and safety measures in place to ensure the continued safety of our guests and our staff, from temperature checks and hands-free access to each building to installed Perspex screens at reception. Our team, as ever, are on hand to assist bespoke requests to ensure that our guests have the most comfortable stay, particularly in these new circumstances. Whilst England has entered into a one-month lockdown from 5 November, Edinburgh has moved into tier three status from 2 November. Our Residences in the Scottish capital also remain open for business, closely following government guidelines and implementing all precautionary measures necessary. At Cheval The Edinburgh Grand, The Register Club reopened from 2nd November with temporarily restricted opening hours. We look forward to continuing to look after our guests safely, securely and flexibly.

# Accor Expanded its Region

Accor, a world-leading augmented hospitality group, has added India and Turkey to its Middle East & Africa region. The newly expanded region will now comprise of a portfolio of more than 84,000 rooms across 400 hotels.



With the industry's most dynamic portfolio of brands, covering every market segment from economy to luxury and comprising innovative lifestyle concepts, branded residences and extended-stay models, the Group is taking a leading role in the hospitality landscape.

This regional expansion brings an increased

pipeline of over 112 properties, scheduled to open in the coming 24 months, bringing the overall number of keys close to 110,000 rooms, making it the largest international hospitality operator in the region. The group's portfolio in India features some of Accor's key mid and economy hotel brands, such as ibis and Novotel, but also the iconic Fairmont Jaipur and Sofitel

BKC in Mumbai from the luxury segment. In the beginning of 2021, the group will be introducing the Raffles brand into the country with the first Raffles in Udaipur. The property will be located in the western state of Rajasthan, also known as the "Venice of the East" and famous for its lakes, temples and palaces.



*Mark Willis, Chief Executive Officer, Turkey, India, Middle East & Africa for Accor*

Our expanded portfolio of more than 35 brands across the entire market spectrum – economy, midscale, upscale, and luxury – is a catalyst for growth in the region; it means we have a range of hospitality options for every project in every destination. The addition of Turkey and India to our already diverse region means that we will be able to consolidate the existing relationship and work that has been accomplished over the years and centralize it into a collective effort. It is in a strategic but natural move that we are integrating India and Turkey to our portfolio with long term plans in sight for the future of the region. The integration of India into our region is a great opportunity to contribute to the group's strategic development in the country, more specifically, with the expansion of our luxury portfolio. With the introduction of landmarks such as Raffles, Fairmont and Swissotel in the pipeline, combined with the rich cultural and historical heritage offered by the country, travelers will certainly find their fit whether traveling for leisure or business. We have seen Turkey becoming an increasingly popular destination for UAE residents and citizens, as well

as other Gulf nationals", said Mark Willis. The country's proximity combined with easy visa formalities makes it attractive for in and outbound travel in the region.



### Royal Journey of India 18 to 20 Nights

Delhi - Jaipur - Pushkar - Ranthambore  
Sawai Madhopur - Kota  
- Bundi - Chittorgarh - Bijaipur -  
Udaipur - Kumbalgarh - Jodhpur -  
Jaisalmer - Bikaner - Mandawa - Delhi



### Archaeological Tour of Rajasthan

21 to 23 Nights  
Delhi - Jaipur - Samode - Nawalgarh -  
Bikaner - Gajner - Jaisalmer - Osian  
- Khimsar - Manwar - Jodhpur - Rohet -  
Mount Abu - Udaipur - Dungarpur  
- Deogarh - Ajmer - Pushkar - Pachewar  
- Ranthambhore - Agra - Delhi



### Majestic Kerala

14 to 15 Nights  
Mumbai - Mangalore - Bekal - Wayanad  
- Kozhikode (Calicut)  
- Cochin - Thekkady - Kumarakom -  
Quilon - Varkala - Kovalam



### Enchanting Himalayas with Taj

13 to 15 Nights  
Delhi - Agra - Darjeeling - Gangtok -  
Phuntsholing - Thimphu - Punakha -  
Paro - Delhi



### Tribal Trail

15 to 17 Nights  
Bhubaneswar - Dangmal - Bhubaneswar  
- Balliguda  
- Rayagada - Jeypore - Rayagada -  
Gopalpur - Puri - Bhubaneswar



### Buddhist Temple with North East India Tour

14 to 16 Nights  
Delhi - Varanasi - Bodhgaya - Patna  
- Kolkata - Bagdogra - Darjeeling  
- Pelling (Pemayangtse) - Gangtok -  
Kalimpong - Bagdogra - Delhi

# Travok

*your journey is safe with us...*



# Choice Hotels India expanding its wings

Choice Hotels has added another property - Comfort Hotel Elite in Lucknow, the City of Nawabs, to its fast growing portfolio.

Comfort Hotel Elite in Lucknow is a modern newly built and aesthetically designed hotel near Lucknow-Agra Expressway. The hotel is about 20-minute drive from Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport and the railway station is 10 km away. Located on Kanpur HarDOI Bypass Road, the hotel is well-connected to the major business and commercial districts of the city. Popular shopping areas and places of tourist interest are nearby. It's convenient location and warm attentive services make it an ideal choice for both business and leisure travellers.

Comfort Hotel Elite is built on an acre of land with 44 spacious rooms, including 4 suites. The hotel features comfortable accommodation with upscale amenities and superior facilities. The hotel offers a range of tastefully furnished



rooms with round the clock in-room dining and free high-speed wireless internet. Guests can savor an array of vegetarian delicacies at our all-day dining restaurant Sapphire. A well-equipped fitness centre is located on-site for a refreshing work out. Creatively designed banquets and beautiful lawns makes it a perfect venue for hosting destination weddings, conferences, and meetings. The multiple indoor and outdoor venues can host up to 2000 guests.

*Vilas Pawar, Chief Executive Officer, Choice Hotels India*



We are committed to offer international experience with world class services at best value proposition to our guests. The hotel is designed to offer everything a guests needs for a comfortable stay. Versatile indoor and outdoor banqueting venues complimented with outstanding catering services makes it an ideal choice for weddings, other social and business events. The city is known for its food and Comfort Hotel Elite boasts of the finest spread of Indian and global vegetarian delicacies.

# Marriott International Announces Its Debut in The Wine Capital Of India

Marriott International announced the opening of Courtyard by Marriott Nashik, the first property to open in the wine capital of India, Nashik. The new 113-room Courtyard by Marriott Nashik is set to provide the best hotel experience to keep guests moving forward, no matter the purpose of their trip.

Situated in the northern part of Maharashtra state in India, Nashik is an ancient city with rich history and temples for cultural seekers. The city is also known for hosting one of the largest religious gatherings in the world, the Maha Kumbh. The festival hosts millions of people each year who gather to bath in the Ganges and Yamuna rivers. Nashik has also become a popular destination for wine lovers and is now known as the Wine Capital of India with half of the country's wineries.

The new hotel features rooms and suites designed to be smart and spacious with a timeless, classic style. Every design element and amenity in the guest room is geared toward comfort, convenience and relaxation, including comfortable bedding, 49-inch TVs and complimentary high-speed Wi-Fi. The public

spaces are inviting and flexible, providing a space for creative thinking. The 24-hour Fitness Centre and outdoor swimming pool enable guests to stay fit while they are on the road.

Drawing inspirations from global cuisines, the hotel's four restaurants and bar showcase a variety of gourmet offerings. House of Gourmet, an all-day dining venue, offers local and international flavours featuring the largest buffet spread in the city. Bakes and Brews is a 24/7 bistro that offers a casual dining experience where one can enjoy freshly baked products. The hotel's Escape Lounge is the perfect place to unwind over cocktails and light bites with a comfortable ambience. For music lovers looking for a fun night out in the city, Club Strato offers the modern club culture experience and celebrates the best in fashion and music.

*Neeraj Govil, Senior Vice President, South Asia, Marriott International*



We are thrilled to open our first Courtyard by Marriott in Nashik and it also marks the 19th Courtyard hotel in South Asia, which reflects our commitment to expand our footprint in the region. With an unprecedented wave of domestic travel and an increased demand for upscale hotels, the opening of our first Courtyard in yet another new city marks a great milestone for Marriott International in the region.

# Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd. debuts in Jhansi

Lemon Tree Hotels Limited, through its management subsidiary Carnation Hotels Pvt. Ltd., announced the opening of the 61 key hotel - Lemon Tree Hotel, Jhansi. This marks the entrance of the brand in this historic city of Uttar Pradesh. The city, which lies on the banks of the Pahuj River, in southern Uttar Pradesh, is a symbol of bravery, courage and self-respect.

Located in the heart of the city, overlooking the historical Jhansi Fort, Lemon Tree Hotel, Jhansi, is an aesthetically designed hotel easily accessible

from the railway station.

The hotel features 61 well-appointed rooms and suites, which combine understated elegance with modern amenities and facilities. The innovative interiors and the inspiring artwork of this hotel make for a setting that is refreshing, contemporary and stylish, while still reflecting a touch of the city's heritage in the artefacts.

Complementing the stay are a multi-cuisine coffee shop - Citrus Café\*, with an alfresco dining area - Citrus Patio\*, and a hip recreation bar -

Slounge\*. There is also a business center\*, and banqueting\* and conferencing\* facilities to meet discerning guests' business needs. Recreational facilities at the hotel include a rejuvenating spa - Fresco\*, a well-equipped fitness center\* and a refreshing swimming pool\* and deck where guests can easily spend a few languid hours for utmost relaxation. Lemon Tree Hotel, Jhansi is a refreshing option for both business and leisure travelers, as well as city dwellers with a host of facilities, amenities and hospitable service.



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# Grand Mercure Gandhinagar GIFT City: Gold Certificate

Grand Mercure Gandhinagar GIFT City is proud to announce that the hotel has won the ‘Gold level of certificate’ under the Indian Green Building Council’s (IGBC) Green New Building Rating System for being a sustainable and environment friendly building. certification is valid for a period of three years.

**G**rand Mercure Gandhinagar GIFT City is a green building and is recognised for its sustainable practices by IGBC. Green building of the hotel helps in minimising the overall impact on the environment through the efficient use of energy and water and the use of environmentally friendly practices during construction of the structure.

Accor group has always believed in adapting environment friendly practices in all its activities. As a part of Accor group’s Planet 21 programme, we are deeply committed to sustainable value creation, and focusing on implementations through which we can give back to planet and community. Under this programme, 21 commitments have been made that involve customers, partners

and employees to act together in order to improve and reinvent sustainability for the well-being of the world.

In 2001, the CII– Indian Green Building Council launched the IGBC Green Service Buildings Rating System and formed a council with the aim of enabling an environmentally cohesive ecosystem. IGBC recognised buildings for their green features under seven categories including sustainable architecture and design, site selection and planning, water conservation, energy efficiency, building materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, innovation and development.



*Vineet Verma, Executive Director & CEO of Brigade Hospitality*

It is a matter of pride to have our hotel at GIFT City – Gujarat, certified by IGBC. This certification stands testament to Brigade Group’s commitment to sustainable development which is in tune with IGBC’s goal of putting India on the map of global leaders in sustainable built environment. I would like to thank GIFT City Authority for their enviable support infrastructure that helped us achieve Gold level of certification under the IGBC Green New Building Rating System.



# Sahara Star partners with PREFME

Sahara Star is all geared-up to serve its guests again and has resumed operations with all the safety measures in place by partnering with the leading-edge hospitality technology innovator, PREFME.

**T**his alliance with PREFME has increased the safety meter a notch above the regular safety measures with a contactless and personalized experience for the guests at the Hotel.

Recognized by the industry thought-leaders to provide seamless hospitality to guests, PREFME is the state-of-the-art hospitality solution that comes with industry-first features to make stays completely contactless and personalized. The Hotel has taken a leap towards adapting a shift to adopting newer technology. PREFME provides contactless check-in/out, offers guests the to personalize their stays, it also has a multilingual chat. The application also presents the users with in-app service booking, in-app food menu & ordering, food ingredients scanner, along with many other benefits. Using



the Prefme app, the guests can pre-check-in from any corner of the world, whereas, on arrival, they can get their identities verified through a quick & secure digital ID verification and avoid check-in queues. Guests can also enjoy a completely

contactless and hassle-free checkout by viewing their services and making payments from the app. The PREFME technology will not only be a great tool for the current Covid times for the guests and the hospitality industry but it is a great solution for Post-Covid times too. It enriches the hospitality and staying experience through the power of personalization.

*Manish Sodhi, CEO, Hotel Sahara Star*

By keeping in terms with the Covid-19 situation in the country, we are ecstatic associating with PREFME giving the best and safest experience to our guests and team members. At Sahara Star, we make sure that our guests experience a completely relaxed stay, and easily access our hotel in a contactless way right from their smartphone.





# Ell Bee



ELLBEE GANGA VIEW, RISHIKESH  
355 Haridwar Road, Rishikesh – 249201 (Uttarakhand)  
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# Hurrem's marks a successful first year



**Hurrem's, India's first-ever authentic Turkish baklava brand, is celebrating a year since its launch in India.**

To express their gratitude for the guests' continued appreciation and support, Hurrem's marked the occasion by offering its entire range of baklava at a limited period half price on Monday, 23rd November, 2020.

In the past year, Hurrem's has received immense love and appreciation from its patrons, enabling the brand to foster a strategic partnership with Foodhall, significantly growing Hurrem's presence in the country and widening its reach. Hurrem's has, in a short span of time, become synonymous with gifting and has set a new trend in luxe gifting, that of authentic Turkish baklava.

Handcrafted to perfection by their Turkish chef trained in Gaziantep, Hurrem's range of baklava is 100% vegetarian and freshly prepared everyday with utmost passion and care. Hurrem's offers over ten types of Turkish baklava, including classic varieties such as Pistachio baklava and Walnut baklava, as well as exquisite varieties including HavucDilimi, Midiye, Chocolate and Hazelnut baklava. All of these varieties are now available for guests to enjoy at a limited period exclusive price. In order to celebrate the support that they have received, Hurrem's is conveying their thanks by also treating their guests to special surprises at the store in Fort.

Hurrem's offerings truly take you through a culinary journey through the lanes of Turkey from the comfort of your own home.





# L'Opéra launches magical selection for Christmas and New Year

L'Opéra is excited to welcome the magical season by indulging in the Christmas spirit at its outlets, across Delhi NCR and Dehradun, decorated for the occasion and offering an impressive array of seasonal festive products.

L'Opéra is bringing back its classic selection of products encompassing Bûches (Yule log), Chocolates, Panettone, Christmas Pudding, Biscuits, Plum Cake, Alpine Nut Cake, Galette des Rois as well as a signature Toffee Sauce to relish with the Christmas Pudding and other festive specialities.

“Crafting these delightful in taste and enticing looking Christmas range has always been a real pleasure for me as it ushers in a season of togetherness which I always look forward to” says Chef Amit Kumar of L'Opéra. The collection complements the classic L'Opéra gift boxes and hampers which are presented in their Christmas sleeves and the popular pastel coloured leather-like basket which is widely appreciated.

Bûche (Yule log) is a traditional dessert served during the pre-Christmas dinners and luncheons and on Christmas Eve in France and in neighbouring countries. It is made of a delicate sponge-type cake and rolled up, looking like a log. L'Opéra offers the Bûche (Yule log) in four variants: the traditional Coffee Bûche the much-loved Black Forest, the indispensable Passion Fruit & Chocolate and the youthful Red Velvet variant.

L'Opéra's unique Alpine Nut Cake is a must try this year. It combines a crunchy biscuit with nuts enrobed in caramel, making it the perfect delicacy to enjoy in the chilly winter weather along with a warm cup of tea, coffee or L'Opéra's signature hot chocolate.

But Christmas would be a miss without traditional biscuits. Adding to L'Opéra's famous all-year line of biscuits, this season Gingerbread, Shortbread and extra nutty Hazelnut Crunch

especially crafted for Christmas are to be enjoyed.

L'Opéra's Christmas Pudding and Plum Cake are among the most sought-after Christmas specialities which are widely anticipated during the whole year.

Christmas and New Year are the most important celebrations of the year in France and many other European countries. They symbolize a period specially dedicated to family, unity, a time for solidarity and friendship and, of course, a time to savour succulent, festively baked and decorated desserts.

“I have many great memories of my childhood during Christmas,” remembers Laurent Samandari, co-founder and Managing Director of L'Opéra. “I particularly remember how I used to love the warm smell of baking Alpine Nut Cake when I entered a shop with my family, it was nice and comforting” and he continues “I wished to offer the same feeling to L'Opéra's guests and patrons”.



“Christmas and New-Year celebrations are also an occasion for us to remember those in the society who are less fortunate and to show our solidarity by supporting them” says, Kazem Samandari, Laurent's father and Executive Chairman of L'Opéra. “This year, we have decided to dedicate 5% of the revenue generated from our hamper sales to Main Tendue ([www.maintenduedelhi.org](http://www.maintenduedelhi.org)), the charity which supports 10 Indian NGOs” he adds.

L'Opéra's festive delicacies will be available in all its outlets and online from late November onwards. They are available for take-away and in-store consumption as well as for web orders.



# Festive Season with TIME Hotels

It's the most wonderful TIME of the year and TIME Hotels will be celebrating with a host of seasonal activities and special festive offers for the whole family across its TIME Oak Hotel & Suites and TIME Grand Plaza Hotel properties.

### Christmas Turkey

Host a special festive feast at home this Christmas and impress your guests with a perfectly cooked turkey, prepared by the TIME culinary team. Simply place your order at TIME Oak Hotel & Suites or TIME Grand Plaza Hotel at least 48 hours in advance and collect a 5-6kg turkey with all the trimmings.

### Gingerbread House

Nothing will get you in the Christmas spirit more than TIME Hotels' Gingerbread House, where you can get hold of all your festive favourites. Pass by The Courtyard Café at TIME Grand Plaza Hotel or Mugs & Munch Café at TIME Oak Hotel & Suites throughout the month of December and enjoy an array of seasonal pastries, Yule logs and much more.

### Tree lighting

Start the season in twinkling style and join us for an evening of Christmas carols at our official Christmas tree lighting ceremony on 8 December at TIME Oak Hotel & Suites or TIME Grand Plaza Hotel at 4pm. Light snacks and a selection of fresh juices will be served to guests afterwards.

### Christmas Eve Dinner

Spend the night before Christmas with your nearest and dearest, complete with traditional festive delights from around the world and a visit from Santa. The merriment will also be complemented with a special Christmas sack, filled with holiday sweets and treats for all in-house guests on the 24th and 25th December.

### Christmas Day Brunch by the Pool

What better way to celebrate than with a special festive feast at our Christmas Day Brunch by the pool? Taking place from 12.30-4pm at Waves

Lounge, TIME Oak Hotel & Suites and at Splash Pool Lounge at TIME Grand Plaza Hotel, with soft drinks, juices and sparkling mimosa. There will be complimentary pool access for those who feel the need to cool off afterwards. Reservations required.

### New Year's Eve Dinner

The joyous celebrations continue right through to New Year. Get set to mark the start of 2021 with a spectacular New Year's Eve party complete with a sumptuous dinner and music from our resident DJ.

Party the night away at Pranzo Eatery and Al Bal Lounge at TIME Oak Hotel & Suites from 7pm to 2am with soft drinks, juices and sparkling beverages. Alternatively, head to Brio Restaurant at TIME Grand Plaza Hotel which is hosting a sumptuous New Year's Eve dinner from 7pm to 1am, as well, with soft drinks, juices and sparkling beverages. New Year's Day Breakfast and Brunch Start the New Year in style with a breakfast at Pranzo and Al Bal Lounge, TIME Oak Hotel & Suites from 6.30am to 1pm, and enjoy a special buffet, which includes soft drinks, juices and sparkling mimosa.

The Splash Pool Lounge at TIME Grand Plaza Hotel is also offering a fabulous New Year's Day brunch priced at AED99 per person inclusive of soft drinks, juices and sparkling beverages, with complimentary pool access.



**Lifestyle**



# 11 Startup Incubators Every Founder Should Know

**Does your startup need a headstart to get off the ground? Ecosystems like startup incubators provide closed support mechanisms for founders to build their ventures rapidly with support from expert mentors and advisors.**

**T** rue to their name, such programs are built to insulate early-stage founders from market forces, while providing essential resources that typically include office space, mentorship, starting capital, legal guidance, etc. Most importantly, incubation programs offer networking and knowledge-sharing so that founders know what they are getting into and how they can engineer their startups for success.

India, as a rapidly emerging startup ecosystem, is home to several such startup incubators that each offers their own set of resources, network connections, and infrastructure. One of the major parts of an incubator's offerings is effective mentorship; a guiding hand that nudges you and keeps you on the right track.

Most incubators in India too are characterized by strong mentor pools, and programs to support founders in navigating the slopes of forming and running a modern day startup. Some cater to multiple domains, others are focused on specific industries to help drive growth in niche groups, and all incubators are united with the objective of turning seed-stage startups into effective businesses. We've put together a list of some of the top incubators in India that every early-stage founder should be aware of:

- **Electropreneur Park:** Inaugurated and launched in 2016, the incubator Electropreneur Park (EP), Delhi, is managed by Software Technology Parks of India (STPI). Its partners are Delhi University and India Electronics & Semiconductor Association (IESA), to nurture ESDM (Electronics System Development and Maintenance) startups in India. EP has completed six batches of incubation, with 32 graduated startups, and an additional eight startups mentored in other programs.
- **Techstars:** Having invested in more than 2,300 companies, Techstars is one of North America's largest investors, with a track record of providing market leaders such as Sendgrid, PillPack, Classpass, Digital Ocean, and Salesloft with the tools to build hyper-scale businesses. In their upcoming 2021 program, Techstars Bangalore is going to provide 10 outstanding companies from South Asia with the tools and network to become market leaders in North America.
- **Supreme Incubator:** Supreme Incubator has been active in the entrepreneurial ecosystem for the past 2 years - organizing regular events and mentorship meetups. With their Summer cohort, the program has transitioned to a fully digital model where the

30 selected founders now get together on regular video calls to share progress, meet mentors or join workshops. With a virtual program, they have expanded the scope of support offered and startups incubated. The mission is to make India the hub for entrepreneurial support, and for founders in Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities to get the same level of networking and support opportunities as their counterparts in metro cities. The program of SI has received great reach with over 100 applications in the first cohort (Winter 2020) and 350+ applications in the second cohort (Summer 2020), currently, more than 700 entrepreneurs have applied to the program.

- **Brigade REAP:** Since its inception in 2016, Brigade REAP has been at the forefront of articulating the industry's pressing problems and bridging the solutions gap by connecting with startups addressing those issues. The accelerator has so far mentored 30 startups, of which 12 have received external funding. This includes startups like QwikSpec, Snaptrude, WEGoT, AKP, PParke, Renewate, Clairco, CREMatrix, PropsAMC, Exprs, Nanorama and PropVR. The startups have won the confidence of top investors such as Accel Partners, HDFC Capital, GoFrugal, Pidilite, Better Capital, Angel List, Brigade Enterprises, besides Architects, Developers, and Angel Investors such as Mohandas Pai.
- **Hubli Sandbox:** The Hubli Sandbox in Hubballi, India is an ecosystem launched by Deshpande Foundation that supports mission-driven individuals to come up with sustainable and scalable enterprises having a social and economic impact. It's a co-creation of Dr. Gururaj "Desh" Deshpande, Indian American venture capitalist and entrepreneur, and his wife. Hubli Sandbox runs many programs in the areas of education, student leadership, agriculture, micro-entrepreneurship, and maternal health.
- **NetApp Excellerator:** NetApp Excellerator is NetApp's global start-up program that aims to fuel innovation by partnering with deep-tech start-ups. Founded in 1992, NetApp specializes in helping its customers get the most out of their data with industry-leading cloud data services, storage systems, and software.
- **Indigram Labs Foundation (ILF):** One of the Key USPs of Indigram Labs is its host institution: Indian Society of Agribusiness Professionals (ISAP) which has set-up more than 1,800 agritech ventures through its ACABC program and is currently promoting 250 FPOs. The years of experience that ISAP brings with it helps shape the journey of agri-



entrepreneurs through Indigram Labs even further. At present, the company is incubating 15 companies and accelerating three more. The duration of the incubation period ranges from three to five years.

- **Catalyst by Societe Generale:** Offering global exposure and mentorship, Catalyst, a 12-week innovation program from Societe Generale's global solution centre in India (SG GSC), is an incubation centre for enterprise-relevant fintech startups to co-create solutions along with business leaders for the future-ready and customer-focused bank. Having completed six editions, the seventh edition of the challenge has identified 396 challenges from across Societe Generale's units in India, Europe, and Africa.
- **NSRCEL by IIMB:** With programs specifically catering to entrepreneurs with profit ventures and social ventures, also student and women entrepreneurs, NSRCEL offers its support to various players of the startup ecosystem. NSRCEL brings together startups, industry mentors, eminent academicians from its parent institution Indian Institute of Management Bangalore and researchers who thrive on continuous interaction of theory and practice. NSRCEL is also the first incubator with a program tailored for social entrepreneurs and their unique challenges.
- **INVENT:** Innovative Ventures and Technologies for Development (INVENT) is a joint collaboration of the Technology Development Board (TDB), Government of India and the Department of International Development (DFID), Government of the United Kingdom. INVENT aims to make a positive social impact by providing incubation support to technology-oriented start-ups.
- **IAMAI:** Industry body IAMAI has launched the country's first virtual incubator for short and mid-term needs of technology-related startups arising amid the global pandemic situation. The primary function of the virtual incubator is to address the needs of the start-ups located outside the major cities of Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi, and Kolkata, the Internet and Mobile Association of India stated. The program will be virtually accessible and will provide state-of-the-art incubation services to every Indian startup and enable them to charter their success stories. It will entail close supervision by the dedicated mentors from the relevant industry for multiple cohorts that would be created based on the domain, sectors, and the progress of the startups.

# Bridal Elegance

From simplicity to royalty, Dolly Jain, the celebrity drape expert has it all to her credit. She has developed a unique style of her own, reflecting the ancient traditions of India in a contemporary vocabulary.



She is credited to revolutionize the world of saree lovers. With an immense expertise to play with the '6-yard long fabric', she has brought smiles on the faces of brides all over the world. While so much importance is being given to support local craftsmen and weavers, the wedding season is the perfect occasion to support such small businesses, by purchasing beautiful hand-woven sarees from them. The Bride-to-be can also make a selection, from

traditional heirloom pieces like sarees or simple benarasi lehengas, that have been in the family for generations – coupled with simple D'Coats. Donning such pieces, not only represents the bride and the Indian culture, but also denotes the emotions attached to it.

A few important tips for every bride this season-

- Avoid Overdressing the Saree
- For a low-key Wedding, ladies can go for toned down sarees In Benarasi Silk materials with hues of red and yellow, as they are considered auspicious colours in Indian tradition
- For a more versatile look, a 6-yard Kanjeevaram or Chikankari saree, will make the bride look most beautiful and elegant, when draped well.
- This wedding season, Dolly recommends
  - Draping Sarees Over A Lehenga
  - Combining Two Sarees Together
  - Incorporating A Dupatta With The Saree

She also shares some Pro tips and tricks for every wedding function, to make your Bridal outfits look trendy, stylish and unique:



**Mehendi:** Wear a light lehenga with a simple dupatta, which can be draped in a sideways fashion avoiding disturbance while the bride puts her mehendi but also adds some fun while she dances and enjoys her day.

**Mayra:** A fusion outfit using a brocade blouse with a brocade pencil pant, and a saree draped on it.

**Sangeet:** An elegant lehenga draped with a saree.

**Wedding:** A beautiful Kanchivaram saree, draped with a dupatta to add an X-factor and oomph to the outfit.

The grand wedding ceremony gives the perfect occasion to stick to your traditional sartorial instincts while flaunting the glittering embellished ethnics in multiple vibrant shades. Don't hesitate to experiment with your looks and express your personal statement with a variety of draping styles by the ace celebrity drape artiste Dolly Jain.

# Luxury Love

'Fashion designers are from those human species that have the capability to convert the romanticism in a tangible form that leaves beyond one's thought'

Vividly portrays Dina Udupa, owner and designer of the UK based luxury women's wear brand providing a one stop solution to the quest for Indian elegance with a contemporary twist. Her goal was always to create what would surpass the limits of time and would add to the uniqueness of one's aesthetics.

Being a woman of valor and intelligence with a global exposure and vast understanding of the luxury fashion market, she started her own business; Dina Udupa, which has been the watershed moment of her life. She is actively associated with a platform called EEL which supports small businesses in London and helpsto organize online pop up events whereby they can showcase their products/ service wider audience.



## Audi India: Price increase across model range

Audi, the German luxury car manufacturer, announced a price increase of up to 2 percent across its entire model range owing to weakening of the rupee and rising input costs.

Mr. Balbir Singh Dhillon, Head of Audi India, said, "At Audi

India we strive to give our customers the best, but the rising inputs costs and currency fluctuations have put a strain on our cost structures and we are forced to make amends to prices. Starting January 01, 2021 our model range will see a price revision of up to 2%. While we have tried to absorb the impact at various levels, the current situation necessitates an increase in price for sustainable growth."

Mr. Dhillon further added, "Continuing our focus on Customer-centricity, we have ensured that the impact is as minimal as possible. We are offering several service related packages that will ensure ease of ownership for our customers."

To kick start the festive celebrations, Audi India introduced the Audi Q8 Celebration model priced at INR 98.98 Lakhs Ex-Showroom. For the newly launched Audi Q2, the brand is offering a 'Peace of Mind' package that comes bundled with a 5 year Service Package with 2+3 years Extended Warranty and 2+3 years Road Side Assistance. In addition, Celebration Programs on certain products including the Audi A6 are currently on offer for the festive season.



## Hyundai: Elantra N

Hyundai Motor Company revealed its sensational new Elantra N model through a collection of photos and video. As a high-performance model of the seventh-generation



compact sedan, Elantra N will complete the Elantra lineup, offering high-performance N-specific features.

"Elantra N is an outstanding addition to the N brand lineup in that it offers pulse-pounding performance in a practical four-door package," said Thomas Schemera, Executive Vice President and Head of Product Division at Hyundai Motor Group. "Elantra N is now undergoing final developments, including validation at Nürburgring, so we can deliver a car that enthusiasts will love in 2021. Once launched, it will be the forerunner of the completed Elantra lineup."

"Words hardly do justice when it comes to this incredible car, which sets a new benchmark for Hyundai N. Keep an eye on our social channels for more info and images of the Elantra N," said Till Wartenberg, Vice President and Head of N Brand Management and Motorsports Sub-division at Hyundai Motor Company. In addition to Elantra N, Hyundai plans to expand its N lineup with i20 N and Kona N in 2021.

## India's best-selling MPV crosses 5.5 lakh sales

Designed to captivate the urban and stylish India, Maruti Suzuki's Next-Gen Ertiga is a blend of style, comfort and host of technologies that has won the hearts of customers to become country's No.1 selling MPV. It has maintained the market leadership over the last 2 years with over 5.5 Lakh customers. Ertiga is a proof of Maruti Suzuki's evolutionary design sensibilities and technology capabilities. It finds its customers in people, who are aspiring, driven by brand value, seek comfort and love togetherness. It strongly connects with family as well as business needs. Speaking on the success, Mr. Shashank Srivastava, Executive Director (Marketing & Sales), Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Over the years, brand Ertiga has redefined the notion of utilitarian MPVs with its sharp style, space, comfort, safety and host of technology features. As India's first compact MPV, Ertiga continues to build a legacy of innovation. The remarkable milestone of 5.5 Lakh sales is a testimony of its success. While making a purchase decision, customers often cross-consider MPVs with UVs. Despite being cross-considered with top selling UVs in the country, Ertiga has dominated the market and increased its market share in the segment."

Launched in April 2012, Ertiga has created an all-new multi-utility segment. Powered by the powerful 1.5L K-series engine, Smart Hybrid and AT technology, it ensures a pleasurable drive experience. Further adding to its winning proposition, Maruti Suzuki Ertiga is the only MPV that comes with factory-fitted S-CNG technology.



## Nissan India expands with 50 new sales & service touchpoints

In the run-up to the launch of the all-new Nissan Magnite next month, Nissan India has further strengthened customer-centric services with highly-trained channel partners, an end-to-end digital ecosystem and virtual showroom with vehicle configurator:



Furthermore, Nissan India is enhancing its customer connectivity with 30 new service stations and 20 new showrooms across the country. This is in line with the Nissan NEXT strategy to prioritize and invest in the Indian market for sustainable growth. "Nissan India's focus is onto improving customers connectivity by providing a seamless journey through these company-owned platforms. We are adapting and adopting the changes in the marketplace to strengthen Nissan's commitment to the Indian customer on product and service assurances," said Sinan Ozkok, President, Nissan Motor India.

Nissan India has also introduced 'Nissan Express Service' to deliver a quick and comprehensive service experience in just 90-minutes. Nissan will extend the service reach to its customers by conducting "Nissan Service Clinics" in 100+ upcountry locations. Nissan customers may book services and even check costs online through the Nissan Service Cost Calculator via Nissan Service Hub (website) or Nissan Connect, bringing utmost transparency to the process supported by Nissan's 24/7 Roadside Assistance available in over 1500 cities.\*



# Kia Unveils Two Rugged X-Line Sorento

Since the arrival of the award-winning Telluride last year and the head-turning Seltos in early 2020, Kia Motors America (KMA) has had its sights on building a robust and reimagined SUV line-up.

## • T3FS Desk

As the next step in this capability-focused product strategy, the all-new 2021 Sorento is poised to bring customers a new level of trail-ready toughness not yet seen from the brand. To celebrate this rugged personality, KMA unveiled a pair of custom-built Sorento SUVs - the Yosemite Edition and the Zion Edition - during the brand's virtual national dealer meeting this week. The two wilderness-themed SUVs build upon the production Sorento X-Line model, a variant that highlights off-road prowess with unique 20-inch wheels, increased ride height to 8.3-in., improved approach/departure angles, more advanced AWD with snow-mode, and a more robust roof rack than the outgoing Sorento.

Customized by LGE-CTE Motorsports of San Dimas, CA, each vehicle receives its namesake and inspiration from the outdoor environments found in America's great national parks. The Sorento Yosemite Edition is a dream build for high elevation adventuring and mountain living, painted in "Pine Green" in a matte finish with gloss and matte black accents. The Sorento Zion Edition is a desert escape vehicle made for stomping dunes, painted in "Desert

Sand" in a gloss finish with gloss black accents.

Both feature custom fender flares that sit atop 20-inch wheels and 32-inch all-terrain tires. Body armor includes custom skid plates and brush guards in a satin chrome finish. For packing gear, the Yosemite edition dons a brawny roof rack, while the Zion Edition comes equipped with a full-length cargo top. The duo will be making special appearances around the country to capture the imagination of adventurers and enthusiasts, alike.

While most customers will not take their Sorento to the level of customization seen on the Yosemite and Zion Editions, many have shown a penchant for personalizing their Kia SUVs. To satisfy that desire, Kia will offer an exciting range of port-installed and dealer-installed accessories. Customers can tailor their Sorento to their lifestyle and needs with attachments such as roof rack crossbars, tow hitches for trailers, and side steps for easier load-in of toys.

The 2021 Kia Sorento will arrive in showrooms beginning in November

## DO YOU KNOW?

- *Aggressive Custom SUVs Signal Brand's Focus on Adventure, Capability and Trail Readiness*

- *Sorento Yosemite Edition aims at exploring high-elevation locales and mountain living*

- *Sorento Zion Edition is a dune-defeating desert escape vehicle*



# Essential components for Volkswagen's ID.402

**Volkswagen Group Components is the central supplier for the first models of the new Volkswagen ID. family and numerous other Group brand models based on the modular electric drive matrix (MEB).**

• **Tarsh Sharma**

Volkswagen Group Components contributes around 40% of the overall added value of the first fully electric SUV by the Volkswagen brand, the world e-car ID.4. That's around 10 percentage points more than a comparable model with conventional drive.

#### Competitiveness indicator

The independent corporate business unit is responsible for the development and manufacturing of strategic components for the Group's brands. Volkswagen Group Components acts as a pioneer of the sector's transformation: since 2015, it has had a firm focus on innovative, competitive and scalable products for the mobility of tomorrow. Today, Components manufactures central components at international sites for the e-SUV – the Volkswagen ID.4 – for the German, Chinese, and in future, US-American markets.

The current and future models based on the MEB are the most significant drivers of the transformation to e-mobility in Volkswagen Group Components' factories. Thomas Schmall, CEO of the independent unit, believes his team is well prepared for the major upheavals: "The considerable share of added value that our components contribute to the vehicles of the Group brands is an indicator of our competitiveness. It underpins the Group's electric offensive and shows that

we have taken the right product decisions regarding our future focus. This means that Volkswagen Group Components is on the way to becoming one of the largest manufacturers of automotive e-components worldwide."

#### KASSEL: Lead plant for electric drives

The Components factory in Kassel delivers the electric drives and platform parts for the ID.4 and other MEB vehicles for Europe and North America. As part of the transformation, the Group's largest site for the manufacture of gearboxes now also specialises in building electric drives. The core elements – rotor and stator – are delivered by the components factory in Salzgitter. Motors, gearboxes and intermediate housings are cast at the sites in Hannover, Poznań and Kassel. All of the components belonging to an electric drive, including the 1-gear transmission from Kassel, are assembled on-site.

The electric drives for the Chinese market are produced at the Tianjin factory. This makes Volkswagen Group Components one of the largest global producers of these essential electric vehicle components.

#### BRAUNSCHWEIG: New centre for battery system expertise

The battery system for the MEB is manufactured at the Braunschweig site. A further skill has been added to the construction

and assembly of chassis components: the development of high-voltage battery systems and software for the respective control units has been pooled here for the whole Group. The battery system is also manufactured at the Foshan site in China.

#### SALZGITTER: Blueprint for the future

Nowhere does the topic of transformation have a stronger presence than in Salzgitter. Firstly, the elementary components – rotor and stator – are produced here for the drive of the ID.4 and other MEB models. Secondly, Volkswagen Group Components pools expertise and competence for battery technology from across the Group in the Center of Excellence for Battery Cells (CoE) at the site. The pilot production line and analysis laboratories are drivers of the further development of battery cell and manufacturing technology. In collaboration with the Swedish battery manufacturer Northvolt AB, the first battery cell plant for the NorthvoltZwei joint venture will be built right next door, to be completed by 2024.

A pilot plant for recycling used high-voltage batteries will also start operations in Salzgitter in the next few weeks, recovering metal and valuable raw materials from batteries that cannot be recycled or re-used. The aim is to re-use more than 90% of the batteries in the future.

# SITIS Connected Safety-Bus platform

**The SITIS collaboration arrived at a key milestone when it completed an 8-month pilot run of the SITIS Connected Safety-Bus platform, which will now be adapted into real-time operations in partnership with KSRTC.**

## • T3FS Desk

This project is envisioned to be conducted over a year in real-life operations, thus collecting valuable data that can define Indian traffic conditions & transport eco-system, as well as driver behavior.

Robust and relevant data is going to be a key factor behind future safety initiatives that would be deployed to reduce fatalities on Indian roads. Evidence-based approach and actions will help in bringing down the more than 150,000 road fatalities in India each year. The bus in operation is equipped with various cameras, sensors, logging equipment which will capture the entire eco-system outside the bus as well as the in-vehicle environment. This data will be processed in real-time as well as offline to analyze and build insights in order to characterize the Indian traffic conditions as well as driver behavior. In phase 2 of this project, the bus will be further equipped with radar systems and equipment that monitors weather, air quality and various other parameters, as well as be installed in multiple vehicles.

This initiative will also link data, learnings and insights with research activities targeted at various user groups, including drivers, fleet managers, fleet operators and other stakeholders.

The entire activity of collecting real-time

data, transmission of data, post processing of data and building insights requires collaboration across a many scientific disciplines and technologies – Sensors, data logging & management systems, traffic and vehicle simulations, driver behavior studies, analytic tools such as AI and Machine Learning as well as transport management systems & robust connectivity

This is where the 15 stakeholders who make up the SITIS collaboration – each leading in the safety arena in their respective domains – are of immense value. The SITIS Collaboration includes the following partners: Autoliv, Ericsson, Manipal Hospitals, Altair, Saab, Tech Mahindra and Volvo Group, as well as universities and research institutes; India Institute of Science (IISc), Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (IIT Delhi), Chalmers University of Technology, RISE Research Institutes of Sweden; and the technical authorities ARAI, and the Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI). The platform engages also with the Vision Zero Academy at the Swedish Transport Administration, the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (Govt of India) and NITI Aayog. Sweden-India Business Council (SIBC) is the secretariat for the partnership.



*Kamal Bali, Chairman, SITIS Board, and President Volvo Group India*

At SITIS, we aim to become a prominent centre for applied research that stakeholders can rely upon, while taking actions to improve road safety. Behind this trust will lie robust data and evidence-based work. The trust we place in data shall have multiplier effect on the speed with which we finally turn research into real-life solutions – guiding us to focus our precious resources to areas that have high potential in saving lives. The SITIS Connected Safety-Bus platform is a commitment by 15 partners from India and Sweden in that very direction.

## DO YOU KNOW?

- *SITIS [Sweden-India Transport Innovation & Safety Collaboration] is one of the largest collaborations in the road safety arena - involving 15 Swedish & Indian companies and institutes.*
- *The 'SITIS Connected Safety- Bus platform' is a key first step in its ambition to build a robust India data-set as the basis for impactful safety solutions and policy.*
- *On 19th November, 2020, the SITIS Safety-Bus platform has completed an 8-month long pilot operation and will now operate on real-time basis in partnership with KSRTC [Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation]*
- *Data & evidence-based solutions are keys to create safety solutions & policies that address the 150,000 road fatalities in India every year.*
- *SITIS aims to become a prominent platform for applied research and innovation in the area of safe & sustainable transport.*

## Amazon.in Launches STEP

Amazon.in announced the launch of STEP, a performance-based benefits program designed to help sellers accelerate their growth on Amazon.in. STEP simplifies the seller experience by providing customized and actionable recommendations which help sellers improve key customer experience metrics and in turn, their growth. By improving performance, sellers can unlock benefits across multiple levels like 'Basic', 'Standard', 'Advanced', 'Premium' & more. These benefits include fee waivers, faster disbursement cycles, priority seller support and world-class free account management. STEP puts sellers in charge of their success on Amazon.in by helping them track their performance, benefits and growth in real-time through the STEP Dashboard on Seller Central.



Using customized and actionable recommendations, STEP enables sellers to improve key seller controllable metrics like cancellation rate, late dispatch rate, return rate, among others. Based on their performance, sellers can access benefits like online and offline training, fee waivers, faster disbursement cycles, and free account management. Starting 1 December 2020, all sellers on Amazon.in will enjoy 'Standard' benefits up to 31 March 2021, and effective 1 April 2021 will be eligible for 'Basic', 'Advanced', 'Premium' and more based on their performance from 1 January to 31 March 2021. All sellers will get an opportunity to upgrade their level and corresponding benefits based on their performance every quarter.

## ABB Selects Google Cloud to Expand its Cloud Footprint

Google Cloud announced it has been selected by ABB to further expand the cloud footprint of its Information System (IS) services. The Swiss-headquartered global technology leader has chosen Google Cloud as part of the organization's 'Rationalizing IT Operations' (code named: Program RIO) initiative, which seeks to further increase the scalability and resilience of its infrastructure services to all ABB businesses.

Google Cloud will collaborate with ABB's hosting services team to layout an optimized cloud migration that is tailored to meet the IS needs of ABB businesses. This will be rolled out in a structured way and in-line with ABB's new operating model. The migration signals ABB's increased focus on cloud adoption, and optimizing its data centers' capacity.

Google Cloud's data science, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) capabilities will be leveraged to simplify and improve the IS quality assurance via automation and consolidation of identified services housed in ABB's strategic data centers and remote sites, with a cloud-first approach.

### Dominik Wee, Managing Director Global Manufacturing and Industrial at Google Cloud

ABB is a global technology leader that has been a Fortune 500 company for many years. We're thrilled about the opportunity for Google Cloud to help ABB in its journey toward powering its information systems services in the cloud, as the company heads towards a more digitized future.

## Government of India blocks 43 mobile apps

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India today issued an order under section 69A of the Information Technology Act blocking access to 43 mobile apps. This action was taken based on the inputs regarding these apps for engaging in activities which are prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has issued the order for blocking the access of these apps by users in India based on the comprehensive reports received from Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Center, Ministry of Home Affairs. Earlier on 29th June, 2020 the Government of India had blocked access to 59 mobile apps and on 2nd September, 2020 118 more apps were banned under section 69A of the Information Technology Act. Government is committed to protect the interests of citizens and sovereignty and integrity of India on all fronts and it shall take all possible steps to ensure that. List of apps that have been blocked for access in India today's order are given as per the annexure attached are AliSuppliers Mobile App; Alibaba Workbench; AliExpress - Smarter Shopping, Better Living; Alipay Cashier; Lalamove India - Delivery App; Drive with Lalamove India; Snack Video; CamCard - Business Card Reader; CamCard - BCR (Western); Soul- Follow the soul to find you; Chinese Social - Free Online Dating Video App & Chat; Date in Asia - Dating & Chat For Asian Singles; WeDate-Dating App; Free dating app-Singol, start your date!; Adore App; TrulyChinese - Chinese Dating App; TrulyAsian - Asian Dating App; ChinaLove: dating app for Chinese singles; DateMyAge: Chat, Meet, Date Mature Singles Online; AsianDate: find Asian singles; FlirtWish: chat with singles; Guys Only Dating: Gay Chat; Tubit: Live Streams; WeWorkChina; First Love Live- super hot live beauties live online; Rela - Lesbian Social Network; Cashier Wallet; MangoTV; MGTV-HunanTV official TV APP; WeTV - TV version; WeTV - Cdrama, Kdrama&More; WeTV Lite; Lucky Live-Live Video Streaming App; Taobao Live; DingTalk; Identity V; Island 2: Ashes of Time; BoxStar (Early Access); Heroes Evolved; Happy Fish; Jellipop Match-Decorate your dream island; Munchkin Match: magic home building and Conquista Online II.

## Samsung and SK Telecom Complete Next-Generation 5G Core Development

Samsung Electronics and SK Telecom (Hereinafter referred to as "SKT") announced that the two companies successfully developed and trialed the next-generation 5G core network. The next-generation core network enables operators to instantaneously install and swiftly deploy customized solutions and services. With this core network solution, operators will be able to utilize network resources more effectively. For instance, when the data traffic spikes, the operators will be able to move capacity to flexibly adapt to the sudden changes in their networks. In addition, the two companies plan to discover new 5G use cases through the enhanced capabilities to efficiently deploy, provision and activate the new applications. From AR/VR and cloud gaming to autonomous driving and smart factory use cases, Samsung and SKT are building advanced network capabilities to enable the delivery of these new immersive capabilities to consumers, and increase the accessibility and deployment ease of 5G for enterprises, with private 5G networks. "The next-generation cloud core network applied with SCP will increase customer benefits through accelerated adoption of 5G-based products and services," said Jong-kwan Park, Vice President and Head of 5GX Technology Group of SKT. "We will continue to work closely with Samsung to develop breakthrough next-generation network technologies to realize innovative 5G use cases."

# Apple expands partnership with (RED)

**Apple's 14-year partnership with (RED) has raised almost \$250 million to fund HIV/AIDS programmes**

• **Tarsh Sharma**

Through June 30, 2021, Apple will direct 100 percent of eligible proceeds from (PRODUCT)RED purchases to the Global Fund's COVID-19 Response to help provide services and treatment to some of the world's most vulnerable communities.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Apple is offering more ways than ever for customers to support (RED)'s fight against HIV/AIDS in Africa while simultaneously protecting those communities from COVID-19.

In 2006, Apple joined (RED)'s mission to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa. Over the last 14 years, Apple's partnership with (RED) has led to almost \$250 million in donations for the Global Fund's HIV/AIDS programmes that offer prevention, testing, and counselling services. Since 2006, Apple-supported grants have provided over 10.8 million people with care and support services, helped with distribution of more than 167 million HIV tests, and provided 13.8 million people with ongoing access to life-saving antiretroviral (ARV) treatment.

This year, communities around the world are grappling with HIV/AIDS as they also work to respond and protect against COVID-19, particularly for vulnerable populations. COVID-19 has created challenges in accessing care, diagnostics, and supplies, often disrupting crucial HIV/AIDS programmes. To alleviate these challenges and ensure continuity in life-saving HIV/AIDS services, Apple's contributions were redirected to the Global Fund's COVID-19 Response at the onset of the pandemic earlier this year. Thanks in part to support from Apple and Apple customers, the Global Fund's COVID-19 Response has been able to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 on the communities most affected by HIV/AIDS and provide critical support in health systems threatened by the COVID-19 outbreak. Over the last 14 years, Apple's partnership with (RED) has led to almost \$250 million in donations for the Global Fund's HIV/AIDS programmes that offer prevention, testing, and counselling services. These funds have allowed for additional contact tracing in South Africa, helped secure critical personal protective equipment (PPE) for health workers and emergency medical equipment in Ghana, and enabled the purchase of motorbikes to deliver HIV treatment to local communities that have been unable to seek in-person health services due to COVID-19. Apple also donated millions of

units of PPE to the Ministry of Health in Zambia, including both surgical masks sourced from its supply chain as well as face shields designed and produced by Apple.

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Apple's (PRODUCT)RED contributions were redirected to the Global Fund's COVID-19 Response, providing support for critical PPE, medical equipment, and contact tracing.

## Supporting the Fight Against HIV/AIDS

Over the years, Apple customers across the world have played a critical part in the fight to end AIDS, raising hundreds of millions of dollars for the cause. This year, it is easier than ever to support (RED) and its HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment efforts. Proceeds from the purchase of an iPhone 12 (PRODUCT)RED will support the Global Fund's efforts to combat HIV/AIDS and COVID-19. Apple has a wide range of new (PRODUCT)RED devices and accessories available this holiday season, including iPhone 12 (PRODUCT)RED, iPhone 12 mini (PRODUCT)RED, and Apple Watch Series 6 (PRODUCT)RED. Through June 30, 2021, Apple will direct 100 percent of eligible proceeds from (PRODUCT)RED purchases to the Global Fund's COVID-19 Response to help provide services and treatment to some of the world's most vulnerable communities. Through December 7, Apple is donating \$1 for every purchase made with Apple Pay on apple.com/in, in the Apple Store app, or at an Apple Store to the Global Fund's COVID-19 Response.

## Raising Awareness

To raise visibility for World AIDS Day and the ongoing effort to eradicate HIV/AIDS, hundreds of Apple stores are marking the day with red logos or window displays.

On Apple Music, listeners can tune into the debut of "Jaiye" ("Time of Our Lives") by Nigerian musician LADIPOE, remixed by DJ Sigag and Aluna — the first single off "DANCE (RED) SAVE LIVES Vol. III." Users can also listen to the interview with LADIPOE, Aluna, and Don Jazzy on The Ebro Show on Apple Music 1, or check out curated music and more in a special Apple Music



feature.

In the App Store, customers can learn more about the challenges of fighting HIV/AIDS and COVID-19 concurrently, and how (RED) is handling two pandemics.

In the App Store, customers can learn more about Apple's (PRODUCT)RED products and the challenges of fighting HIV/AIDS and COVID-19 concurrently. The App Store is also highlighting Medisafe (MediSafe), an app that helps users manage their medications, and OkaySo (Tincan Labs), which provides an anonymous place for people to ask sensitive health questions and get expert answers.

In the Apple TV app, customers will find a World AIDS Day collection in the Watch Now tab that explores stories that reveal the human cost of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The World AIDS Day collection in the Apple TV app lets viewers explore stories that reveal the human cost of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.



# Sony introduces Alpha 7C

**Sony India announced an impressive addition to their imaging line-up, the Alpha 7C full-frame camera (model ILCE-7C), the FE 28-60mm F4-5.6 (model SEL2860) zoom lens.**



• **Tarsh Sharma**

The Alpha 7C is the world's smallest and lightest full-frame body with uncompromising performance, featuring advanced AF (autofocus), high-resolution 4K video capabilities and more. When paired with the world's smallest and lightest FE 28-60mm F4-5.6 standard zoom lens, this versatile combination delivers an experience unlike any other, maximising portability and versatility without sacrificing any of the power of full-frame imaging.

“With the commitment to offer best and most advanced tools based on the needs of our customers, we introduce the Alpha 7C, where “C” stands for compact,” said Mukesh Srivastava, Digital Imaging Head at Sony India “The new Alpha 7C camera and FE 28-60mm F4-5.6 zoom lens packs most advanced imaging technologies in a brand new design that is the smallest and lightest full-frame camera and lens system in the world. We are opening up a new world of possibilities for content creators by give them the uncompromised power of a full-frame system in the palm of their hand.”

Uncompromised Full-frame Performance in a Compact Design for stunning image quality The new Alpha 7C combines Sony's full-frame image quality, advanced AF capabilities and versatile video shooting functions in a stunningly light and compact design. The new camera features a 24.2MP (approx. effective) 35mm full-frame back-illuminated Exmor R™ CMOS sensor and BIONZ X™ image processing engine, offering high sensitivity, outstanding resolution, 15-stop wide dynamic range and high-speed image data processing.

Measuring only 124.0mm x 71.1mm x 59.7mm and weighing just 509g, the Alpha 7C is a similar size and weight to an APS-C camera, with only 1% more weight than the Alpha 6600. The Alpha 7C achieves the world's smallest and lightest compact body<sup>2</sup> through upgraded 5-axis in-body stabilisation and shutter units, and the utilisation of monocoque construction, which

is often used in the bodies of cars and aircrafts. Even in this compact body, the Alpha 7C features a 5-step stabilisation effect that allows shooting snaps without a tripod. Moreover, despite the compact body, the high-capacity NP-FZ100 battery provides enough power to shoot for long durations in comfort, allowing you to capture up to an industry-leading 740 images when using the LCD monitor, or 680 images<sup>11</sup> when using the viewfinder.

Exceptional 4K Video recording capabilities for high quality footage

Sony's new Alpha 7C combines high resolution with low noise for excellent image quality at all sensitivities, offering the user stunning image quality for shooting everyday photography and movies such as nature, portraits, sports, street photography and more. Standard ISO extends up to 51,200 and is expandable to ISO 50-204,800 for low-light environment captures with low noise. The Alpha 7C also supports 16-bit processing and 14-bit RAW output for natural gradations.

Full-frame full-pixel readout without the need for pixel binning makes it possible to capture more than twice the amount of data required for 4K video (QFHD: 3840 x 2160)<sup>3</sup>, which is then oversampled to produce high quality 4K footage with exceptional detail and depth. In addition, the Alpha 7C supports HDR (HLG) and S-Log/S-Gamut profiles, Slow & Quick motion, high-speed full HD recording at 120 fps<sup>3</sup> and other advanced video features which offer exceptional video capabilities to capture high quality video footage.

Advanced Real-time Eye Autofocus with extremely high tracking precision Using AI-driven functions, the Alpha 7C's Real-time Tracking maintains accurate focus automatically while the shutter button is half-pressed. In addition, “Tracking On + AF-On” now is assignable to a custom key and can now be activated at once while the AF-ON button is pressed. Moreover, the intended subject can be specified just by touching it on the monitor when “Touch Tracking” has been turned ON via the

## DO YOU KNOW?

- *Uncompromised Full-frame performance in a compact design*
- *Exceptional 4K Video recording capabilities for high quality footage*
- *Advanced Real-time Eye Autofocus with extremely high tracking precision*
- *Designed for vloggers and video creators with advanced imaging technology and easy-to-use functionality*
- *Simplified and customizable operations designed for enhanced experience & flexibility*
- *Industry leading battery Life for longer movie recording*
- *Alpha 7C accompanies world's smallest and lightest Full-frame Zoom Lens FE28-60mm F4-5.6 for excellent image quality area of safe & sustainable transport.*

menu and is available for both stills and movies. The Alpha 7C's AF functions also feature Real-time Eye AF for both humans and animals to achieve fast and accurate focus. When using Real-time Tracking while "Face/Eye Priority in AF" is ON with a human subject, the subject's eye and face is detected and locked on in real-time with extremely high tracking precision. The eye is automatically tracked with high precision and reliability so that the operator can concentrate on the content rather than focus operation. Users can also customise AF Transition Speed in seven settings, and AF Subject Shift Sensitivity in five settings, in their preferences. Touch Tracking functionality is also available for movie shooting.

The Alpha 7C provides wide, fast, reliable AF that locks onto the intended subject instantly without losing focus, thanks to its 693-point focal-plane phase-detection AF system covering approximately 93% of the image area, with an additional 425 contrast-detection points to ensure reliable focus, even in busy environments.

The Alpha 7C also features continuous shooting at up to 10 fps with AF/AE (auto exposure) by using a newly developed shutter unit and refined image processing system. It is also possible to shoot continuously at up to 8 fps in live view mode, with minimal viewfinder/monitor display lag for easy, stable framing, even with intense subject motion. The Alpha 7C allows up to approximately 223 JPEG (Fine L) images, 115 compressed RAW images, or 45 uncompressed RAW images to be captured in one continuous burst and achieves highly accurate and reliable AF precision in light down to EV-4. These features make it easier to capture fast-moving subjects.

Designed for vloggers and video creators with advanced imaging technology and easy-to-use functionality

The Alpha 7C is designed for vloggers and video creators. Its features a side-opening vari-angle LCD monitor, making it easy to record selfies, overhead shots, low ground-level shots or whatever the user requires. The MOVIE button has been placed on the top of the camera making it easier to operate while recording in selfie mode. Additionally, the Alpha 7C provides high quality video recordings, not just for images, but also for audio. A digital audio interface has been added to the camera's Multi Interface (MI) Shoe, allowing the ECM-B1M Shotgun Microphone or XLR-K3M XLR Adaptor Kit (available separately) to be connected to input digital audio signals directly to the MI shoe for cleaner, clearer audio recordings. Like other MI shoe accessories, no cables or batteries are required, providing unrestrained freedom for Alpha system moviemaking. Headphone and microphone jacks are also provided to accurately monitor recorded sound, and metadata attached to movie footage shot vertically on the camera allows the footage after transfer to the smartphone or similar device, to also be replayed and edited in the vertical position.

Simplified and customizable operations designed for enhanced experience & flexibility

The Alpha 7C is designed with the user in mind.

The touch panel LCD monitor is a large touch-sensitive 3.0 type with approximately 921 thousand dots, providing optimal visibility even in bright outdoor conditions, and supporting touch operations. The Alpha 7C also features a high-quality view mode for finer, more natural detail in addition to a 2.35 megapixel (approx.) XGA OLED Tru-Finder™ EVF. The Alpha 7C offers functions that simplify operation during and after shooting, such as Fn button customisations and more. It is also dust and moisture resistant to support shooting needs in challenging environments.

To simplify workflow needs, Wi-Fi compatible wireless-communication functions allows images and movies to be directly transferred to a smartphone or tablet for convenient sharing, viewing or saving. In addition to the conventional 2.4GHz band, support for the 11ac standard allows transfer via 5GHz band (IEEE 802.11a/b/g/n/ac) so that users can select that stable and high-speed transfer with low interference. A USB Type-C® connector that supports SuperSpeed USB 5Gbps (USB 3.2) is also provided, allowing fast transfer of images during PC remote shooting and power supply from external mobile batteries.

Industry leading battery Life for longer movie recording

Despite the compact body, the high-capacity NP-FZ100 battery provides power to capture up to an industry-leading 740 images on a full charge when using the LCD monitor, or 680 when using the viewfinder. This also allows up to 215 minutes of movie recording without a break, when using the LCD monitor. In addition, the USB Type-C connector allows recharging from an AC adaptor or power bank while continuing to shoot, for limitless shooting potential.

Alpha 7C accompanies world's smallest and lightest Full-frame Zoom Lens FE28-60mm F4-5.6 for excellent image quality

The new FE 28-60mm F4-5.6 offers the world's smallest and lightest form factor in a standard zoom lens, delivering high optical performance that achieves the high-resolution depiction of full-frame everywhere in the image. Optimal arrangement of the 3 aspherical lens elements effectively suppresses aberrations throughout the zoom range and realises high resolution from corner to corner. A minimum

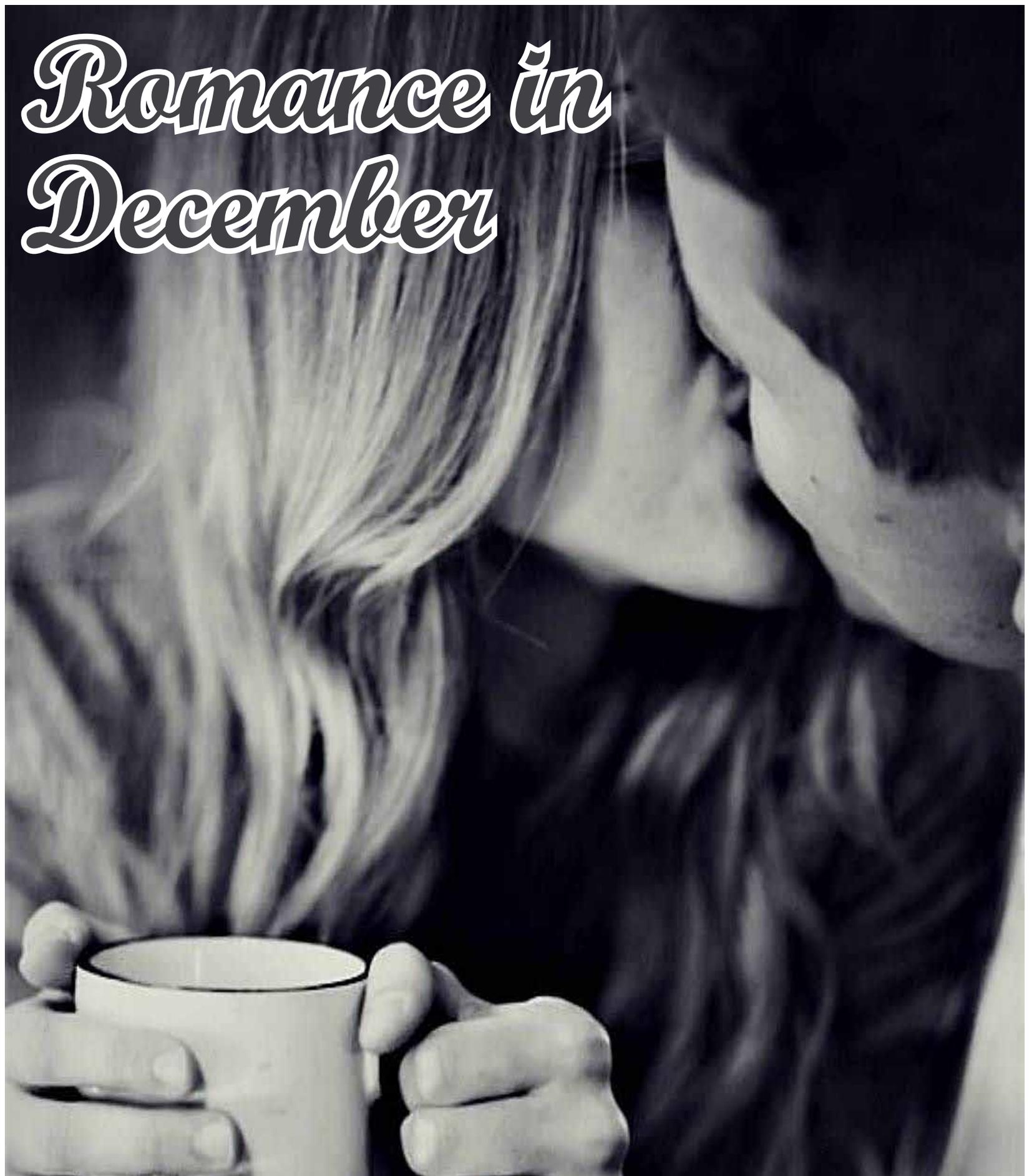


focus distance of 0.99 foot (0.3m) (wide-angle) to 1.48 feet (0.45m) (telephoto) delivers close-up capability, making it perfect for everyday use or vlogging with a gimbal or grip.

At 167g and 66.6 mm dia. x 45 mm, along with its mechanical and optimal optical design that features a retracting structure, the FE 28-60mm F4-5.6 achieves unrivalled compactness and lightness, allowing users to easily carry it all the times. From everyday shooting to scenery, portraits and travel, it's the ideal lens for any type of on-the-go shooting in a wide variety of environments. When combined with the Alpha 7C, the combination achieves uncompromising full-frame performance with the world's smallest and lightest full-frame camera and lens system<sup>1</sup>. Even with its compact size and light weight, the FE 28-60mm F4-5.6 is dust and moisture resistant<sup>22</sup> and accepts a variety of 40.5mm filters.

The FE 28-60mm F4-5.6 delivers high-speed, high-accuracy AF allowing for Real-time Tracking and Real-time Eye AF, using a linear motor. In addition to Sony's advanced AF capabilities, the FE 28-60mm F4-5.6 features an internal focus design which leaves the lens length unchanged with focus motion and close-up shots, enabling users to easily capture a wide variety of content from regular movie shooting to comfortable vlogging.





December is the best month for lovemaking and building a good bond of relationship. It is the time when you are free and you get holidays from the busy schedule of life. So why not make your vacation romantic, passionate and beautiful?

• **Abhishek Mukhia**



When the cool breeze settles on your face and the vapor spiracles up from a cup of coffee amidst a date in December, the feeling is worthwhile. Your beloved looks at you smiles and kisses you fiercely with a big hope that one day the two would settle down and live together. Don't you want to experience this essence? The weather is well suited for young couples to spend quality time with and old ones to recall the bygone days and feel nostalgic. If you want to express your feelings, you can always write a poem or quotation on a piece of paper for your partner. This is the best thing that you could ever give. Suppose your loved one is romantic, then you ought to sing classic songs of love just to make him or her feel special. Songs bring out joy and calmness to the mind. It so happens that you may have a beloved who wants to spend time alone with you. In such a case, you should take him or her to a lover's point or a resort just to engage in privacy.

The most wonderful and striking location is the countryside where you can take shelter in a pine tree and look at the stars at night asserting to your partner that "Love is graceful, meaningful and picturesque." While you are in countryside, you must walk up the hill just to shout loudly that you would never leave him or her and the bond of togetherness would be meant for eternity. The mountains will echo and greet you with kindness. Another important place is snow clapped house where you can see the snowfall, make a snowman and throw snowballs at each other. This would forge a love so strong that no force can shake. Whilst the snowfall, you must prepare warm food for your lover after which both

can become cozy and intimate. Intimacy integrates a man and a woman and the two fleshes become one.

If you are a movie fanatic, then a multiplex awaits you. All you need is to watch a romantic drama film either from the Indian or American cinema. The film would teach you to improve one's relationship and ways to overcome trials that come your way.

As far as an artistic lover is concerned, you may always paint a picture of his or her on canvas inviting the person to your December lunch and gift it as a token of love and concern. You can take him or her to a beautiful location either in Jammu & Kashmir or Kanyakumari just to escape into the beauty of nature from harsh realities of

life. By doing this, your relationship would be more intact.

Lastly, you may also see the sunset from the rooftop of your house along with your lover just to realize that some endings can be beautiful. During the wintry season, sunsets are the best and appealing in the eyes of the onlookers.

In order to make your December romantic and interesting, make a promise to live in every heartbeat of your lover and vow to always remain faithful. For this moment may not be there tomorrow. This time may not come tomorrow. So, enjoy with your partner in the coming December and make your story the best in the book of your life.



# The Big Neutral Theory!

**Neutrals shades can be personified as best companions that can adjust with your most vibrant colour moods and subtly blend in to balance the look of the space.**

## • T3FS Desk

This relaxing yet stunning palette has colours with low saturation of mostly – black, white, grey and brown. Trust us, you can paint a whole new canvas by experimenting with neutral shades, here is how...

## Lolo Dyed Ember



Magic happens when you splash boldness of dark shade with the coolness of light grey. For instance, this Lolo Dyed Ember by Decowood Veneers from the house of Greenlam Industries Ltd. not only weaves in finesse but its rich texture also accentuates the grey color. Since, these veneers are easy to maintain and durable, you don't have to worry about the wear and tear of your walls. When it comes to your dining table crockery, we suggest playing around with undertones of electric blue and white. This combination will complement your neutral palette and exude sophistication to the table setting. Lastly, keep the lighting white to amplify the sheen of your décor.

## Pink + Light Red + Munich Acacia



Happy and warm interiors have its own allure and warmth. Now, with the onset of winters, you can stack-up your cosy mufflers

and socks neatly in light grey cabinets like this Munich Acacia by GreenlamLaminates from the house of Greenlam Industries Ltd. Its natural wooden texture will work as a calming visual appeal for your eyes. This laminate also offers a safeguard plus technology with health & hygiene features – antivirus, antibacterial, antifungal that retard and kill up to 99.99%\* of viruses and bacteria which come in contact with the surface. Greenlam Laminates are the world's first COVID-19 resistant laminates proven effective against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19 virus) with 99%\* efficacy in 30 minutes of exposure to the laminate surface, so that you and your family can stay stress-free and healthy. Lastly, complete this look by showcasing your luxurious winter accessories inboxes made from Pink and Light Red from GreenlamLaminates to double the elegance and warmth of your earthy tones.

## Oak Slate



A timeless neutral palette always freshens up your living area while leaving room for some distinct tweaks without entirely transforming your space. This year embrace your white walls by layering them with net white curtains to invite the natural day light which feels like a blessing during winters. To make your crisp white sofa set stand out, go for light brown wooden floor like this Oak Slate by Mikasa Floors from the house of Greenlam Industries Ltd. It will seamlessly weave calming vibes around all around your living room which is perfect for every occasion. Since, Mikasa Floors are composed of three stability providing layers - real hard wood, a stabilizing core and a balancing layer, you don't have to worry about the climate change. For the days when you feel like adding a little colour drama, pastel shades of green and orange will instantly enliven the character of your living room without disrupting the neutral effect!

# Global Choice Awards

**Xel Research giveaway Global Choice Awards 2020 (Virtual Edition) New Delhi- December 2020 powered by Asian fresh & PKC Advisors .**



Xel Research culminated its second edition of virtual Global Choice Awards 2020 held from New Delhi virtually to facilitate prominent best education professionals (schools, colleges & preschool etc) / healthcare professionals (doctors, clinics, hospitals etc) Manufacturers/ Astrologers/ Dieticians, service providers. Congratulate to all for their achievements, their hardwork & determination in their prospective fields which is appreciable.



*Dr. Rupesh Kumar Namdev, Deputy Head, Radiology Division, Univabs Solutions Pvt Ltd*

*Ankita Chatterjee, Astrologer & Numerologist*



*Sadanand Chavadi, CMD, Feron Healthcare*

*Sadhana Singh, Founder, Swan International Preschool*

*Kazi M. Rahaman, Director, SICGM*

# Ed-a-Mamma

Celebrated actor, philanthropist and investor Alia Bhatt launched her own conscious clothing apparel brand for children, Ed-a-Mamma.

The self-funded start-up brand, caters to children in the age group of 2-14 years. Ed-a-Mamma is a completely homegrown brand, which resonates with the 'Vocal for Local' ethos.

The maiden run of the brand comes in three collections - Veggie Squad, Friends of the Ocean and Candyland, with apparel for little girls and boys ranging from tops, tees and shirts, skirts, dresses, jumpsuits and bottoms. Each collection features unique, signature prints. The clothes are environment friendly, made from natural fibres with plastic free buttons and trims, echoing Alia's vision of nurturing a love for nature among children. The brand goes one step further and uses the leftover fabric to make hair ties and little potlis. Currently available on firstcry.com, the brand has sold nearly 70% of its first season's collection within six weeks of launch.

Ed-a-Mamma is pegged on storytelling and engaging with children at multiple levels. It

seeks to create conversation with its core target audience, inculcate good habits and encourage children to adopt environment first practices, kindness towards animals and make better choices.

Alia Bhatt's passion for conservation is a well known fact. She started Coexist, an online platform that highlights ecological and animal welfare issues, to learn more about what impacts the environment and share her learnings with others. She also started Mi Wardrobe is Su Wardrobe (MiSu), a closet sharing initiative, roping in industry friends and colleagues to expand the scope of conversation around conservation.

**Speaking about the brand, founder Alia Bhatt said,** ' This is a time of great uncertainty for the whole world. The universe is sending us a message: that if we mess with nature, there is a price we all have to pay. If there is a



way when we can coexist with nature, include a way to care for nature in everything we do, it would go a long, long way. I've tried doing this with a universe of products for children. Every detail does its bit for mother nature. Be it non-synthetic garments, buttons that don't use plastic, seed bombs that help you grow a garden. Why children's products? To catch them young and create a love for nature at an early age. '

# MYGLAMM

MyGlamm launches India's largest beauty experience store in Mumbai.

Taking a contrarian view of physical retail in a post-COVID World, the company scales up and crafts a flagship experience where co-creation and digital community intersect

MyGlamm launches a 3000 sq ft flagship store designed & brought to life by School House, a leading beauty creative agency in New York City. The MyGlamm beauty experience store blurs the lines between the physical and digital retail by offering consumers spaces for private, autonomous physical experiences with publicly shareable community and co-creation digital experiences. The MyGlamm store is designed

to empower the next generation of beauty creators, makeup artists and tastemakers to celebrate personal expression and communal creativity.

In a time when brands are cutting back on physical retail, MyGlamm is launching India's largest beauty destination, opening at six times the average size of other beauty stores in India, and located in Mumbai's Juhu neighborhood, home to India's notable Bollywood stars.

The space is designed as a contrarian view and redefinition of physical retail in a post-Covid world, bringing several first of its kind elements that are socially distant, privately



experiential & digitally communal, redefining new world policies and physical retail.

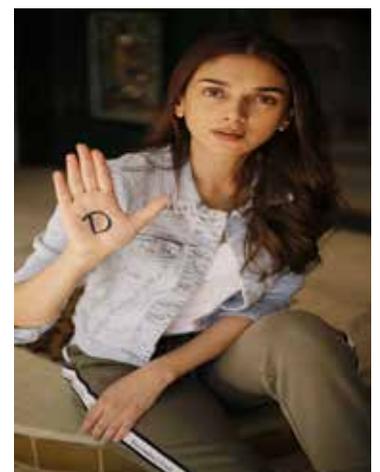
# Stand Up Against Street Harassment

On United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women 2020, L'Oréal Paris announces the launch of Stand Up, its International bystander intervention training program against street harassment. From colleges to public transport to markets to online spaces, Stand Up will grow a community of 1 million upstanders, trained in the 5D's: Direct, Delegate, Document, Distract, Delay, the expert-approved bystander intervention training program pioneered by NGO Hollaback! Bystander intervention is the term for witness action to defuse situations and make public spaces safer. To take the

training into the heart of local communities in India, L'Oréal Paris has partnered with NGO Breakthrough to deliver on ground trainings. With Stand Up, L'Oréal Paris aims to impart 1 million trainings in India, conducted online and on ground by 2022.

Stand Up against Street Harassment Stand Up will create a community of upstanders, on ground with Breakthrough, through a dedicated training website and across social media. This community will be trained in the 5D's: Direct, Distract, Delegate, Document, Delay, beginning with Distraction, the simple act of interrupting an incident by asking the time or

pretending to be lost. By opening the public eye to the scale of harassment women in particular, experience, Stand Up aims to simultaneously discourage harassers, support victims and encourage bystanders to intervene in a safe manner.



**Majestic**  
**EUROPE**  
12 Night/13 Days

*Arrive & Revive with*  
**TRAVOK**  
*Your Journey is safe with us...*



# One stop solution for virus free life

The COVID-19 outbreak has changed the way we live and operate.

We all probably knew that most of the fruits and vegetables that we purchase from the market come coated with harmful contaminants like residual pesticides, and other infectious agents, Sanitising the fruits, vegetables, meat and seafood products have been crucial even before the spread of COVID-19 but the pandemic has forced us to get more serious about sanitising what we are bringing home to consume.

Solving the problem, Indian brand AQUOX has introduced a natural, food-safe and chemical-free all-in-one fruit and vegetable purifier + surface disinfectant + sanitizer + sterilizer + deodorizer + degreaser, which is easy to make at home using Tap Water + Table Salt + Vinegar + Electricity in just 5 minutes.

The AQUOX AQ-DG 2000 effectively cleans and sterilizes fruits, vegetables, meat & seafood. Kills 99.99% bacteria, virus, pesticides and antibiotics from the surface of the food items and keeps them fresh for a longer period, thereby increasing their shelf life and making their consumption safe and healthy.

Tested in Indian NABL Certified Lab for Biocode Efficacy that has been proven to effectively eliminating 99.99% of all pathogens as well as removing residual pesticides, microbes, fungi, yeast and molds.

Being 80 times stronger than conventional bleach based disinfection & cleaning products, AQUOX is clearly the multi-purpose solution that we need during these current times and for the future. It can be used across wide range of application to disinfect and sanitize food items, all kind of surfaces, floor, furniture, metal, glass, bathrooms, kitchenware, appliances, baby & pet products, toys, clothes, gadgets, personal care items, cars & more. Use AQUOX as a Hand Sanitizer, Deodorizer and air purifier to remove bad odour

from bathrooms, cars, pet smell etc. AQUOX also acts as fast sterilizer and strong Degreaser to remove hard oil stains, grease and dirt from stoves, oven car engine & more.

Being 100% natural, non-toxic, chemical-free & alcohol-free, AQUOX is completely human-friendly, food-safe, kid-friendly, pet-friendly, non-corrosive and environment-friendly in nature.

AQUOX Generator runs on the globally popular HOCl technology used in healthcare, food processing, water treatment, baby products, sanitisation & industrial spaces. The 2-litre generator powers through an electrochemical activation process by converting normal tap water + salt + vinegar into electrolyzed water using electricity, which during the process changes the chemical compound of the solution to produce HYPOCHLOROUS ACID,



**Rating: 08/10**  
**Comment: One stop solution for virus free and healthy life.**

# Blessing for the non alcoholic party lovers

Svami launched a range of non-alcoholic ready to drink products. Svami is all set to infiltrate the ready-to-drink alcoholic sector with their new launch just in for the festive season.

The first three products in this line are Non-alcoholic Rum & Cola, Non-alcoholic Gin & Tonic and Non-alcoholic Pink Gin & Tonic.

Created with impeccable flavors and botanicals, these products offer complexity and great taste but are entirely alcohol-free. In true Svami fashion, complete R&D was done in house, and it took months to arrive at these products. Its interesting to know Svami is the first company to introduce RTD non-alcoholic Zero proof drinks with herb infusion and Rum and Cola, The changes and the first wave in innovative non-



**Rating: 08/10**  
**Comment: Perfect drink for your perfect non alcoholic party**

alcoholic drinks in India and More & more people are choosing not to drink and the opportunity for a zero proof RTD drink in the market.

No doubt, in most of the group we found one friend who doesn't drink alcoholic drinks so here's the blessing for you. One can order it online on [www.svamidrinks.com](http://www.svamidrinks.com).

# Care for your Loved One with TBOF

Two brothers organic farm comes up with Christmas special hampers to care for your loved one. The hamper consists of Two brothers organic farm products Amlaprash, Mustard Honey, Raw Honey and Almond Butter.

TBOF Amlaprash is a limited edition version of the traditional Chyawanprash recipe, made especially for the fall and winter months, with added amlas for an extra boost of Vitamin C and immunity. There are various benefits of Amlaprash Great for digestion, Anti-ageing features, Boosts the immune system and Helps boost Haemoglobin levels. Mustard Honey is a Monofloral (Single Origin) Honey and the bees swim in an ocean of Mustard farms all around them, farms that are carefully selected, for chemical-free practices in regions that are far away from



urban areas and extensive commercial farming. Raw Honey a pure extracted honey. Protein rich and nutrient dense, TBOF Almond nut butter will make for a great breakfast with fruits, or with toast, rotis or dosa. Simply add to your smoothies for rich flavour and a nutrition boost. A great choice for all vegans and keto diet lovers alike and anyone allergic to other types of nuts!

**Rating: 07/10**  
**Comment: Perfect gift for your loved one.**

# Gift your loved ones health and immunity

In present days, during COVID time the only thing which you can gift to someone is the blessing for their long life and immunity.

When we talk about immunity how the first thing that strikes my mind is the food of Everything Organik. Everything Organik is a non-commercial venture of mine which aims to facilitate an organic lifestyle across daily essentials and larger consumer categories. The brand which began in 2015, with a mission to offer affordable organic produce, grown fresh on farms directly to homes, now offers vegetables, fruits, grocery items, dairy, breads, coffee and honey.

The festive season is around the corner and I would like to recommend you to gift your loved ones health and immunity this festive season with hampers from Everything Organik!

The festive season brings with it a fresh wave of energy, harmony and excitement. Gift your loved ones the healthiest hamper this year: farm-fresh organic produces from Everything Organik. Being sensitive to the prevailing situation, the team has customized a wide range of healthy immunity hampers and they even personalize hampers according to preference to keep the ones close to us safe and healthy.

**Immunity-Boosting Concoction** - A unique blend of certified organic spices and herbs to help in building strong immunity and fighting viral and bacterial infections and pollution.

**Jaggery (Whole)** - Our fastest-selling item of the season and the best known natural and healthy alternative to processed sugar, our jaggery is made by the fire through an exclusive process rather than being cooked on the fire.

**Thyme & Tulsi Honey** - Deemed as the most popular and widely used

sweetener with enormous health benefits, our Thyme & Tulsi honey is 100% raw, unprocessed and ethically sourced.

**Seed Calendar** - Our bio-degradable calendars are carefully embedded with live seeds that can be planted into the ground, making it living paper. After each month, the paper leaf can be planted into the soil.

**Dark Roast Coffee** - Our dark roast coffee comes from the Coorg region and has an apt density, aroma and flavours for a rich blend.

**Tea Cake** - Our special tea cake is made with organic ingredients. Raw honey is used as a healthy alternative to sugar which makes it the perfect guilt-free indulgence.



*Rating: 08/10*  
*Comment: Healthiest Hamper of the year.*

# Let your House feel like Christmas

Festive makeover of your house is very important to add the Meaning and charm to your festivities.

With Christmas Eve around the corner, Lets decorate our house to recreate the Christmas Magic in your home . Entrepreneur Suruchi Khanna, Founder- Sana Furnishings by Suruchi Khanna ) Gives

you the tips to give your home a Christmas Makeover

**THEMED FURNISHINGS:** Christmas Decorations becomes super fun when you place cushions around with Red / sparkles / personalized messages around. You can also add red and white color socks to your decor filled with candies.

**ADD SPARKLE:** Christmas and some glitter go hand in hand. You can get glitter from candleholders, pinecones, swine glasses or using sparkly ribbon as decor elements around the Christmas trees

**JINGLE BELLS:** How about adding Wind chimes with Music of Jingle Bells, It just adds lot of meaning to celebrate your festival the right way.

**WRAP SOME GIFTS:** Presence of wrapped presents around makes your house feel like Christmas. Simple boxes packed nicely with oversized ribbon and plain paper is classic look for Christmas Decorations

**CHRISTMAS COLOR:** It's super important to play with Colour for your Right Christmas Decor. Let the color code be red and white for your Furnishings, Crockery or little more fun elements spread around.

**SANTA CLAUS:** If you have not placed Santa Claus at your house, the entire fun goes away. Place the Hero of the Day as Decor element fo sure.

**CHRISTMAS TREE:** Right from trimming the branches, to adding the trail of light around which keeps blinking to adding the Snow on the tree with gifts

packed placed under the tree to topping it up with Bow, Christmas Tree decoration is the most important element.

**PERSONALISE:** Everyone has different preferences and enjoy different things, but christmas is all about Bright colors especially Red and White. some may enjoy glitter and shimmer in their textiles. Depending on what catches your eye, you can match all textiles according to your taste. colour combinations in the Christmas is the key this season.

**FLOWERS AND FRAGRANCES:**

Fragrances can be decided depending on the textiles in your room and what helps lift and bring up the mood and flowers can really help amp up the place and add some life to it, giving your home a great makeover for the season.

**TABLE LINEN:** Feasting is a big part of the festive season and using table linen to decorate can really boost the mood of your environment and bring great vibes to your home, being of great use during the festive season. Don't forget to place Buche cakes, Chocolate pudding and Pannetone in your Festive Tier platter.



*Rating: 08/10*  
*Comment: Healthiest Hamper of the year.*

# # Nothing is permanent

**“Millions of people in India are silently suffering with emotional and psychological problems and challenges with not much help available to them.” – By Anupam Srivastava, Director, Insight Life Coaching Services Pvt Ltd.**

**Tell us about your journey so far?**

**AS:** I am considered the UK-based Life-Coaching Facilitator, a Development Management and Counselling Professional and a Social Worker with extensive experience of over 34 years, with a master's degree in Social Work from the prestigious Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi. I started my career in 1987 as a social work practitioner in NGO Sector in India.

After 30+ years of personal and professional experience of life, I have acquired various adjectives to my professional self. Now I am considered a Cognitive Coach, Growth Guru, Leadership Mentor, Transformation Coach, Social Worker, Counsellor, Thinker and Spiritual Seeker. Having said that I have been fortunate enough to have gained insight into the science of transforming people into fully functional individuals and integrating them into the full scope of life, including professional activities. My conviction in the inherent capacities of people, depth of professional & spiritual knowledge, practice and experience in transformational work, my insight into modern psychology and the wealth of old Indian wisdom ensures that the human capital benefits the society as well as secure their fuller engagement in personal, professional and economic activities.

Though I specialised in personnel and human resource management during my university education, it seemed that my mental bend and a keen interest in human psychology made me study the subject for over five years in my undergrad and post-grad programmes. This led me to work with individuals and families who were facing social, emotional, and psychological problems.

My professional career commenced from working with poor and marginalised children, families and communities of Delhi slums, followed by a brief stint with United Nations High Commission for Refugees and later with the De-addiction and Rehabilitation Unit run by the Department of Psychiatry of All India Institute of Medical Sciences. These initial opportunities helped me gain valuable experience here and undertook a Mental State Examination of OPD patients and conducted



various socio-psychological interventions with them. I believe my keen interest in psychology laid a firm foundation before I migrated to the United Kingdom in 1990.

After migrating to UK, I got the opportunities to work extensively and dedicatedly in child and young people protection, counselling, and practice teaching. At the turn of the century, I also acquired an additional post-graduate diploma qualification in Development Management. I have had a good fortune to have trained several students and volunteers under me in the capacity as practice educator. Amidst my various stints at learning, discovering and honing my talents, I associated himself with a network marketing business in the early 1990s and achieved an unmatched feat of generating wealth without selling a single product, by the grace of God, all through my sheer ability to enhance and train people under me for better performance. With a vast body of related work experience under my belt, I decided to expand

my area of impact and founded my own private Foster Care Agency – Acorn Fostering Pvt Ltd - in Leicester, UK, in the year 2003-4, which again is thriving business to date.

My professional career has been blessed with an innate talent of ‘conceiving, building and succeeding’ on business ideas. My journey of transforming ideas into success stories commenced way back in 1992 when I associated myself with a network marketing business and achieved an unmatched feat of generating a huge turnover without selling a single product while still working a full time job. Remarkably, this success was propelled by the sheer blessing of God almighty which manifested in my ability to enhance and train people for better performance.

As Founding Director of Acorn Fostering Services in the UK and Enabling World in India, my mission of transformational work with people has now translated into Insight Life Coaching Services in India.

**What makes you start with Insight Counselling Services? And why you started in India only?**

**AS:** There were a few streams of thoughts, which began to converge during 2015 and helped me to

turn my attention towards India. I had a long-standing and strongly held view that I must retire from ‘Having to Work’ life at the age of 50. Both me and my wife have been toying with the idea of spending more time with family and friends in India for the past few years. The intensity of these thoughts, I suppose, was strong enough that the opportunity presented itself. The positive turn of events in my business at this time offered me opportunities to step out of the operations of my business. My staff team felt confident enough to manage the business without my involvement.

In 2016, I came to participate in a 45 days’ Vedanta study programme at Chinmaya Gardens, Chinmaya Mission International at Coimbatore. Following which my exploration into my next engagement in India commenced. An activity in the field of

Social Work practice was not an option for me in India. The next best thing that captured my imagination was in the field of Counselling. I learnt that millions of people in India are silently suffering with emotional and psychological problems and challenges with not much help available to them. In addition the field of counselling practice appeared to have been extremely unstructured, unorganised without a professional framework around it to support its development. I did not come across any professional framework for its regulation and no professional training programme neither required nor available to train counsellors. This is where I saw an opportunity, despite knowing it well enough that this assignment would be a swim against the current, to take the challenge of doing some work in the field of developing counselling practice in India. This is how the formation of Insight Life Coaching Services (ILCS) in India was established in 2017.

**Please shed some light on the various types of Counselling you provide?**

**AS:** As I said before there are hundreds of millions of people in India with mental health difficulties. According to ASSOCHAM, 42.5% of corporate employees are depressed, WHO identified that 4.5% of Indians are depressed, and the Government of India has identified that 20% of Indians are in need of some form of counselling, in addition to these numbers, thousands of brilliant students in India are committing suicide increasingly every year. This is just the tip of the iceberg. Our apathy and ignorance of this dimension of life is already costing India \$20 billion every year through workdays lost, absenteeism and various other associated in-activities. This situation is compounded when you learn that there is no systematic support available to these sufferers in India with only less than 4000 psychiatrists and allied professionals to take care of the

demand in this area of work. The Insight Life Coaching Services has three main verticals (1) Given the stigma associated with mental health, to provide an online confidential counselling platform for people to access professional service in a discrete manner; (2) Skill Building through a professionally structured Counselling Skill Learning Programme and (3) To work towards stigma alleviation and creating a friendly and supportive social environment to encourage sufferers to come out and seek help.

In this direction, ILCS has already started on this path by developing four path-breaking wellness programmes that cater to every strata of the society. With our Employee Wellbeing programme, we aim to counter employee related challenges faced by India Inc, by looking after the mental and emotional health of working professionals. The Academic Wellbeing programme is a collaborative proposal to work in partnership with academic institutions in India to help young people of all ages by providing an opportunity to express their concerns and challenges in a safe environment and build their self-worth. With our Ayush Wellbeing programme, we propose to work in partnership with health professionals, organisations, and institutions to make a range of non pharmacological interventions available to patients and their families. The Emotional Wellbeing programme aims to increase the acceptability of counselling as an important therapy among Indian population and to make confidential, culturally sensitive, and affordable services available to the citizens.

**Why it is important for people to go for counselling and how it can transform an individual?**

**AS:** Most of the problems, dealt with by counsellors, are emotional and psychological in nature. More than two thirds, almost 90%+ of these problems are assumed and caused by errors in logic and faulty thinking, that is, illogical cognition and faulty perception. Good news is that these issues and problems can be easily resolved with not much time and money. In simple words, if you miscomprehend a rope for a snake, thereafter, all your reactions and responses will be directed at Snake. Consequently, you will be frightened and would never enter the room so long the snake exists. In the same way, emotional and psychological problem caused social and occupational disabilities and has rendered millions of people

redundant in India, who remain excluded from participating fully in family, social and professional life.

One fifth population of our country can be brought back to life of enjoyment, engagement, participation, performance, and productivity. That is why it is high time that counselling services, as a helping intervention, must be strengthened and organised and systematised in India. Failing which, experts have already predicted that India is cruising fast toward losing \$1.03 Trillion by the year 2030.

**Please share the benefits and the institution of counselling where it can be used.**

**AS:** I think I have already stated the benefits of counselling above. All walks of life can benefit from counselling. If I have to pick categories of people, then in the main, in my view, employees in India both in private and public sectors and student population of India should a priority for all concerned.

**I would like you to share a small part of your knowledge and counsel our audience in such a hard time of COVID 19 crises with your valuable words.**

**AS:** I don't think I am in a position to advise or counsel your audiences. Your audiences are already very intelligent, and they have all the skills and abilities to sail through COVID19. All I can say with a little experience of life is that there is nothing permanent or static in Life. What starts must end, what begins must finish. So, must COVID 19. Unflinching faith in God almighty and trust in oneself, will take us across safely. All I can say that fears caused by uncertainty must have breaded a lot of negativity in us. All that is in our command is to remain focused on the positive aspects in our life. As they say look up to the sunny side. Like all adversities in life, COVID 19 too could be a blessing in disguise. We have been blessed with a lot of time in hand to think and reflect on ourselves. We must use this opportunity to think hard and explore if there are any course corrections? Have I used all my potentials and strength to get the best out of life, what more can I contribute to my family, society, my nation, and the world at large? When I devote all my thinking to the bigger and higher purposes in life, the pins & pricks caused by the lower and flitting disappear.

SLICE

of life

**You believe in taking risk or plan before hand.**  
**AS:** Yes, I do believe in taking calculated risks intelligently both in personal and professional life. Risk-taking reflects self-confidence and conviction in one's qualities and strengths. I have been blessed with this ability to anticipate risks and challenges in time and always prepare and keep an exit route in the form of a Plan B.

**Your high points.**  
**AS:** When I realised myself, my real nature and true potential.

**Your low points.**  
**AS:** My first thirty years of life were spent with low self-esteem.

**Favorite industry leader.**  
**AS:** Leaders like Mr Ratan Tata

**Novel you are inspired with.**  
**AS:** I do not read fiction, however, as a young man, I have taken a lot of inspiration from the writers like Munshi Premchand and his contemporary writers.

**A movie that motivates you.**  
**AS:** Devanand's 1965 film Guide

**How you spend your day on day off.**  
**DK:** I do not have off days in the week. All days are working days in my life.

**Source of Inspiration.**  
**AS:** There are many. Starting from Adi Shankaracharya, Swami Vivekanand, Story of Ramayana and Mahabharat, Shrimad Bhagwat Gita, and of late Swami Sivananda and Swami Chinmayananda Sarasvati founder of Chinmaya Mission International.

## Prediction for December 2020 by Poonam Sethi

“The more you give, the more you receive” is the motto of renowned Tarot card reader and holistic healer, Poonam Sethi, lives by. She has studied Feng Shui and Tarot card reading at several institutions across the globe and has, through extensive self-study, practice and perseverance, mastered the art of guiding people from the present into the future to precision.



### ARIES

What seemed like a lost cause will suddenly work out in your favor due to a “preordained” sequence of events, which add up, and force a resolution. There will also be unexpected growth and assistance in your work or trade. You are going to experience tension related to finances, but difficulties will be overcome and a payment or settlement is in the offing. You will be extremely edgy or irritable because you will feel locked into a situation you want to get out of. You will finally take a much-needed rest, and will be nursing yourself or a loved one back to good health. Lucky

Lucky color: Green  
Lucky number: 6



### TAURUS

A payment is going to be late or will not arrive at all and it will really aggravate you, but money will come in from a new undertaking or different source. Listen to your intuition, dreams, or psychic impressions. They are right and will prove to be accurate. You could also have prophetic dreams. You are going to be spending time with one who will awaken your romantic heart and inspire thoughts of love or marriage, and the depth of your feelings for that person will astonish you. You will experience a lack of energy (could be due to emotional tensions), and will be subject to clumsiness or small accidents.

Lucky color: Grey  
Lucky number: 2



### GEMINI

You will start a new project or venture, something that you can do out of your home, and you will have discussions about moving into a new home. Your success will come through new concepts, innovative ideas, and the rejuvenation of a declining business or decadent property investment. Money will soon be received for artistic, creative, or inspired ventures. Dwelling on the past when it doesn't serve you and blocks to productivity or romantic endeavors are going to end. You will begin a new treatment, purification, or cleansing program. You could also see a new doctor.

Lucky color: Black  
Lucky number: 5



### CANCER

You'll have repeat clients, and some financial increase or profit, but will be waiting for something to happen or turn up, and will fear the work you're doing has little value or that you won't be able to sustain yourself in the future. You will hold off on an idea because you won't be ready to commit, or will feel the time isn't right or that there's too much hard work involved. You are going to have a complete reversal in your thinking. You will experience remorse or sadness brought about by a lover or family member. You need to get more rest, and to get rid of those who “zap” your energy or take all and give nothing in return.

Lucky color: Orange  
Lucky number: 9



**LEO**

You will be concerned about your financial condition and will make an effort to straighten out your affairs in that area, but they still won't get resolved. You will be trying to maintain a "cool" or detached attitude when confronted with upsetting circumstances or people who

oppose you, and you will succeed. You will lose your temper first, however. A call from, or arrival of, an admirer will change many things. You will be more sexually active or stimulated than usual and could also experience problems with your teeth, gums, or muscles.

Lucky color: Pink  
Lucky number: 8



**VIRGO**

New elements will come to the fore in your work environment, but you will still be unsettled because you have not yet established yourself or landed in the position in which you want to be. Your preoccupation with money or security will cease to be a problem because money will begin to flow

in from many sources. You will be wishing or hoping a lover will call or come by. You will experience an undercurrent tension or discomfort with your friends or business partners because something will be unsettled in your mind that will need to be discussed and resolved.

Lucky color: Purple  
Lucky number: 7



**LIBRA**

You will be successful in bridging estrangements, beginning a new business, or making good money through metaphysical or commercial enterprises. An old flame or romantic interest will reenter your life, but you may still be strangers. There will be checkups, tests, or health-related problems on the horizon, but all will end well. Don't strive to overcome a situation

or force a resolution. Take a modest or reticent approach with dignity and unassuming grace.

Lucky color: White  
Lucky number: 9



**SCORPIO**

Your work environment will take a distressing turn due to disturbing influences, unforeseen obstacles, or the attitudes of others, but this is only a temporary condition, and you will soon expand into even greater areas. You'll be grateful for money received from your work, and that you can afford to buy whatever you

want or need (within reason of course). You will be driven by a need for love and companionship-the great love-because without it you'll feel like you're just going through the motions, and that is a very empty feeling. Problems with your feet, knees or legs could be indicated.

Lucky color: Yellow  
Lucky number: 3



**SAGITTARIUS**

A business partnership, labor dispute, or conflict with employees, partners, or associates will be resolved amicably. You're going to have unexpected financial gains, and your good judgment and ability to establish correct priorities will prove to be successful. An admirer will want to see you and will phone

or come to call. You could be experiencing problems with your breasts, and trying to accomplish too much will result in tension aches and pains. Stop, or head problems could result. A rest and/or muscle relaxer would greatly help.

Lucky color: Red  
Lucky number: 1



**CAPRICORN**

You will be completely burned out and will want to quit or give up. You've done enough and won't want to do anymore. You will be sick and tired of problems, obstacles, or delays, and the mere thought of having to do more or putting any more effort into anything will be more than you can bear. Your emotional

attachment to a situation is going to end. You will "inherit" a valuable lesson. You are going to feel very tired or run down and may also suffer from constipation or hemorrhoids.

Lucky color: Royal blue  
Lucky number: 6



**AQUARIUS**

The completion of a project will bring unexpected gain. You will have enough money to pay your bills or meet your needs and if involved in a litigation, fight, or debate over finances, you will come out victorious. Someone or something is going to cause you to take a very serious look at where you are

in your life, or where you hope to go. There are three words to describe your health situation: improvement, sex and sensuality.

Lucky color: Turquoise  
Lucky number: 4



**PISCES**

You'll be feeling stuck or strapped and will want to make more money, because even though you've got it to spend, the supply is decreasing. Don't worry; it will be made up, even if you've had problems getting it in the past. Trouble in personal relationships will end, followed by a change of heart. Someone will find that when given the

freedom he or she wanted; he or she won't want it after all. Watch your health, be very careful of accidents.

Lucky color: Sky blue  
Lucky number: 1

# RAPZ: Best quality best Price

**“Irrespective of the challenges in life in the current times, I believe that if you are focused, and have a strong manifestation you will achieve what you aim in life!!” said Rohit Aggarwal, CEO, Rapz.**

**• Vedika Sharma**

**Share about the journey of Rapz and Fitgo so far?**

**RA:** We launched these brands with an objective to provide the Indian consumer the best quality product at a very competitive price. This strategy has worked for us and we have been able to make a mark in the market and have established ourselves as a reputed brand.

**What makes your brand stand apart from other competitive organisations?**

**RA:** Our price, quality, technology and after sales service make us stand apart from other competitive brands.

**What is your success mantra?**

**RA:** Work hard and never lower your standards. And provide customers with a

memorable buying experience.

**What’s your next upcoming project after X5?**

**RA:** We have a range of products coming up in various categories. These would be the best amongst the best in innovation and at an affordable price.

**Do you see new trends coming up with the year 2021?**



**RA:** There has been a major shift in the buying patterns of consumers, who have moved from buying offline to online.

**According to you what industry will look like in 2021.**

**RA:** The industry is set to grow specially for our kind of products as they have become a necessity from fashion in the new normal.

**Convey your message to our readers.**

**RA:** Irrespective of the challenges in life in the current times, I believe that if you are focused, and have a strong manifestation you will achieve what you aim in life!!



**RA:** Yes. The change in the market after COVID has made people to do work from home. Our products have become both a fashion and necessity.

**Which major challenges you are facing during this COVID time.**



## SLICE

*of life*

**You believe in taking risk or plan before hand.**

**RA:** I believe in taking calculated risks.. and follow a saying by Mr. Ratan Tata “I don’t believe in taking right decision. I take decisions and then make them right”. This is the mantra of my life.

**Your high points.**

**RA:** I am very passionate about my work and life. I believe the key to success is hard work, integrity and self-discipline.

**Your low points.**

**RA:** I am a perfectionist and can’t tolerate incompetency.

**Favorite industry leader.**

**AS:** I am inspired by Mr. Dhirubhai Ambani and Mr. Ratan Tata.

**Novel you are inspired with.**

**RA:** I am an avid reader. My favourite author is Mr. Tony Anthony Robins. I have read his books multiple times..” Awaken the giant within” and one of my favourite books that inspires me.

**A movie that motivates you.**

**RA:** “Guru” and “Chak de India” are 2 movies which inspire me.

**How you spend your day on day off.**

**RA:** I love lazing around, reading books, spending time with family and close friends.

**How you spend your day on day off.**

**RA:** My father has been my source of inspiration, his struggles and hard work and passion for life have made me what I am today.

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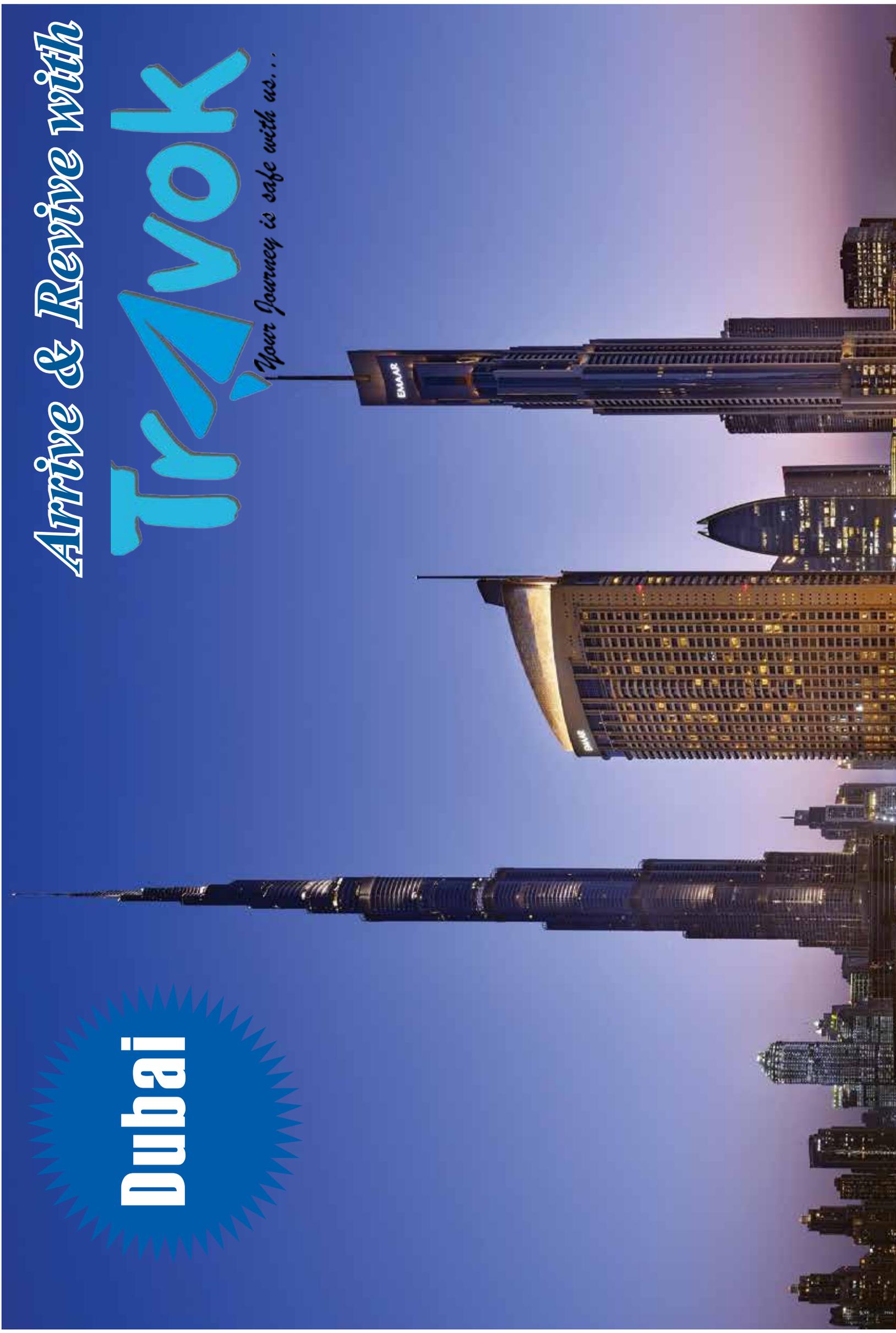
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