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**Trendy Travel Trade with Food & Shop**  
Volume VI • Issue XII • January 2020 • Pages 80 • Rs.100/-

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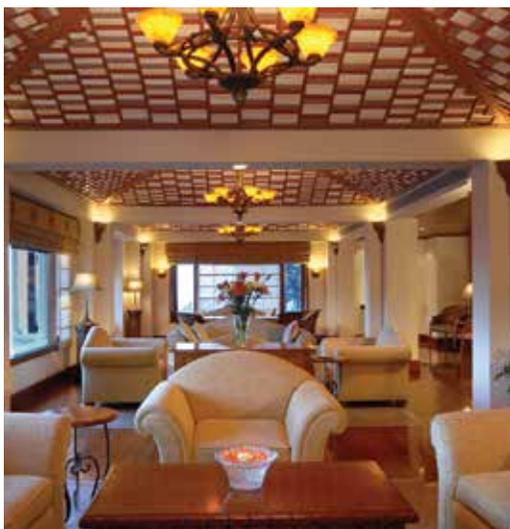
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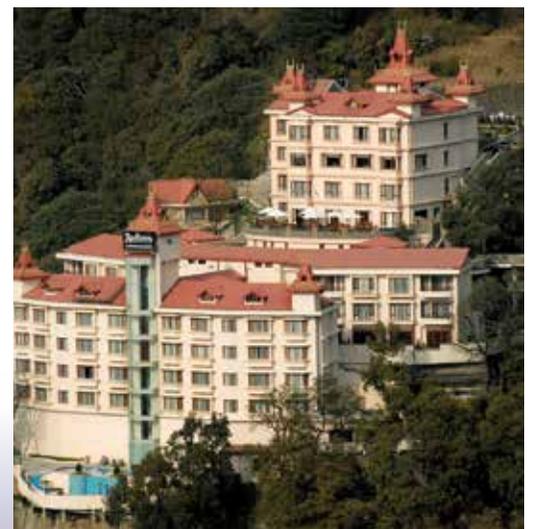
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# T3FS

Trendy Travel Trade with Food & Shop

Volume VI • Issue XII • January 2020 • Pages 80 • Rs.100/-

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Printed at: G.S. Basava Graphics Art Press, 35 DSIDC, Okhla Indl. Area, Phase - I, New Delhi - 110020

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Dear Reader,

We are delighted and proud to announce that, after being shortlisted in the International Awards 2019-2020 we have been chosen as “T3FS-Magazine of the Year 2019-20” which was awarded by Bollywood actress Malaika Arora.

This Award is an important token of appreciation for our commitment towards providing high end content and useful information to our audience.

With the time you pick the January issue of T3FS you will get to know a lot about the ground reality of the travel industry of India. To justify the ground reality of the Indian tourism market under the vision of Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India T3FS speak to the key professionals of the travel industry of India.

The World Travel and Tourism Council calculated that tourism generated Rs.16.91 lakh crore (US\$240 billion) or 9.2% of India's GDP in 2018 and supported 42.673 million jobs, 8.1% of its total employment. The sector is predicted to grow at an annual rate of 6.9% to Rs. 32.05 lakh crore (US\$460 billion) by 2028 (9.9% of GDP).

India is one of the nations to exhibit remarkable improvement. India was ranked 34th in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019 published by the World Economic Forum.

By keeping month of love in

mind T3FS covers the most romantic destinations to rekindle the passion of the romance. With the cosy, breathtaking beautiful feel of winter upon us and Valentine's Day around the corner, experience an everlasting romance between you and your partner and rekindle the romance amidst the serene surroundings with these perfect destinations for wooing your significant other.

Whether you're a couple that finds romance in relaxation or in adventure, there's an always way going to curl up in front of a roaring wood fire, gazing at the stars from a deck, secluded beaches which sets the mood. These retreats offer a mix of ambiance and amenities that will surely up the romance factor on your next vacation.

In lifestyle we covered Dhanvi Diamonds. Dhanvi Diamonds is an internationally recognized, esteemed and coveted diamond jewellery house that has been beautifying Indian women for over 60 years. For more than six decades, the Khandelwal house of Delhi has defied the boundaries of concept and craftsmanship creating jewellery that blends together in a unique style. The designs, borne out of experience and expertise, bring the skills together under one name in India called 'Dhanvi Diamonds'.

*Vedika Sharma*

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**Bali - Jogja**  
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2 Night at Bali + 2 Night at Jogja  
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Sand Island, Lombok

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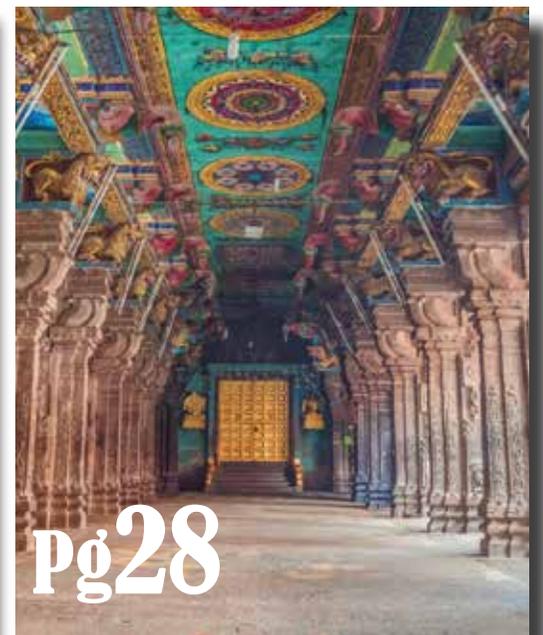
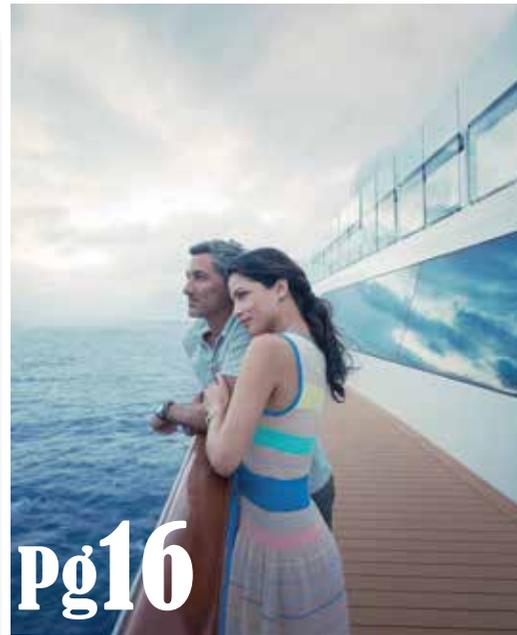
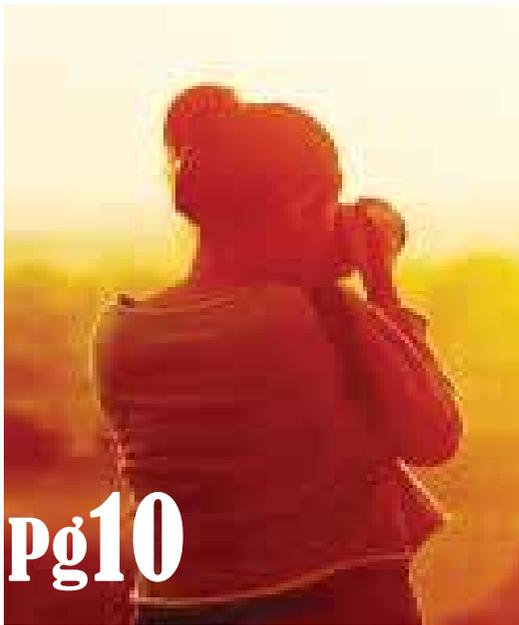
2 Night at Bali + 2 Night at Lombok  
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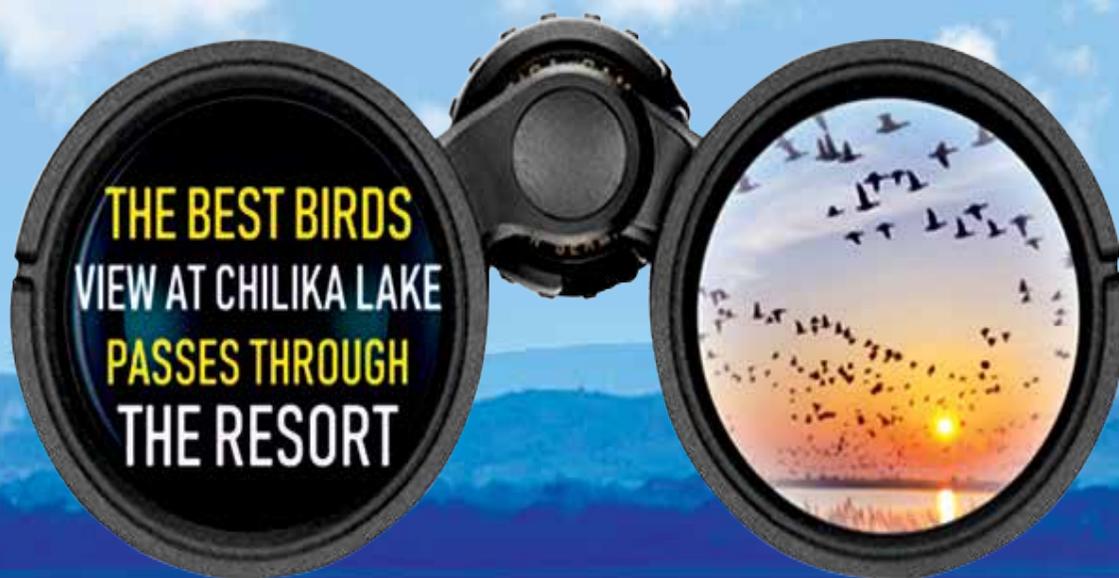
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## Project of Sri Anandpur Sahib

The Government has formulated special action-plan for the development of tourism in Sri Anandpur Sahib parliamentary constituency under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

The Ministry of Tourism under its Swadesh Darshan scheme has sanctioned a project Development of Heritage Circuit: Anandpur Sahib – Fatehgarh Sahib – Chamkaur Sahib – Ferozpur –Amritsar – Khatkar Kalan – Kalanour - Patiala in Punjab for Rs. 99.95 crore in the year 2018-19. The execution of project on ground has not started. Submission of project proposals by the

State Governments/ UT Administrations under the above scheme is a continuous process. The projects under the schemes are identified in consultation with the State Governments/UT Administrations and are sanctioned subject to their adherence to relevant scheme guidelines, submission of suitable Detailed Project Reports, availability of funds and utilization of funds released earlier.



## Iconic Tourist Sites of India

The Government has indentified some world class iconic tourist stations in India to attract foreign and domestic tourists.

Pursuant to the Budget Announcements of 2018-19, Ministry of Tourism has identified 17 sites in 12 clusters in the country for development as Iconic Tourist Sites namely Taj Mahal & Fatehpur Sikri (Uttar Pradesh), Ajanta & Ellora (Maharashtra), Humayun’s Tomb, Red Fort & Qutub Minar (Delhi), Colva (Goa),

Amer Fort (Rajasthan), Somnath & Dholavira (Gujarat), Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh), Hampi (Karnataka), Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu), Kaziranga (Assam), Kumarakom (Kerala) and Mahabodhi Temple (Bihar).

The Ministry shall be developing the above

sites in a holistic manner with focus on issues concerning connectivity to the destination, better facilities/experience for the tourists at the site, skill development, and involvement of local community, promotion & branding and by bringing private investment. The development of Iconic Tourist sites scheme is awaiting approval of the Ministry of Finance.

## ADB, India Sign \$ 490 Million Loan

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$490 million loan for public-private partnership (PPP) project to upgrade about 1,600 km of state highways and major district roads (MDRs) from single-lane to two-lane widths in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

An additional \$286 million investment will be mobilised through private sector participation under the PPP modality. The signatories to the loan agreement were Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Additional Secretary (Fund Bank and ADB), Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, and Mr Kenichi Yokoyama, Country Director of ADB’s

India Resident Mission.

After signing the loan agreement, Shri Khare said that state highways and major district roads provide a crucial link between rural roads and national highways. The upgradation of these roads under the project will improve rural and peri-urban connectivity in the state and improve access to markets and better services.

While Mr Yokoyama said that the project continues ADB’s engagement with the state’s road sector since 2002. This will open a new partnership by introducing PPP through the hybrid-annuity model (HAM), thereby leveraging government financing and improving sustainability of capital investments.

## Rural Circuit

The Ministry of Tourism has launched the Swadesh Darshan and PRASHAD Schemes for the development of tourism related infrastructure and facilities in the country.

Recognising the potential for the development of rural tourism in the country, the Ministry of Tourism has identified “Rural Circuit” as one of the 15 thematic circuits under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme. Following projects under the Rural Circuit theme of the Swadesh Darshan Scheme has been sanctioned till date.

it is seen that the tourism sector is an important source of employment in the country as it is a labour intensive activity. Ministry of Tourism develops tourism related infrastructure and promotes India as a Tourism destination to increase tourist arrivals which in turn creates employment opportunities in the country. The Swadesh Darshan Guidelines have a provision to create employment through active involvement of local communities.

The projects under the scheme are at various stages of implementation/completion. Further,



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# Is India safe for Women Travellers?

**Many countries recently issued a travel advisory for women travellers visiting India. By keeping this in mind T3FS shed light on India as a safe destination for women travellers.**

• **Vedika Sharma**

**W**ith a rich culture, ancient monuments and mesmerizing natural beauty, India is one of the leading tourist destinations in the world. This holds true not only for foreign tourists but also for the domestic tourists.

India continues to charm international tourists with its vast cultural and natural resources, and its price competitiveness advantage. The country continues to enrich its cultural resources, protecting more cultural sites and intangible expressions through UNESCO World Heritage lists, and via a greater digital presence. International openness, through stronger visa policies achieved by implementing both visas on arrival and e-visas, has enabled India to rise through the ranks.

India has been promoting tourism under the Incredible India 2.0 campaign and has been conducting roadshows and other marketing campaigns, while the

states have also been promoting tourism state-wise under separate campaigns similar to the Incredible India campaign.

The Government also plans to develop tourism infrastructure across the country to provide a better tourism experience for tourists. Schemes such as Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD, in order to project India as a 365-day tourist destination globally, the Ministry of Tourism is exploring newer destinations and also actively promoting under-developed tourism destinations through development of infrastructure and better connectivity.

Apart from all this fact, the image of India for the women's traveller is still blurred, to clarify and justify the real situation of India as a safe destination for women travellers T3FS speaks to higher authorities of the international travel association.



**Terry Dale**  
President and CEO of USTOA

Everybody should travel to India. It's a fascinating country; one that left me changed by the experience. Similar to several other destinations around the globe, travel to India requires some more precautions, heightened attention and a deeper understanding of the local customs to increase traveler safety but it is worth the journey for women and men alike. For those that find visiting India for the first time intimidating, traveling with a tour operator is highly recommended. USTOA tour operator members utilize trusted guides and experts in destination that help travelers get better acclimated. Plus, there is no better peace of mind than exploring a destination with a group of like-minded travelers.



**Isabelle Legros**  
President and CEO of Hotel Plaza Elysée

I think we see media always exaggerating a little bit. For whatever I have seen in India, it makes me sad to read the news but I understand that it's a huge country and there are many positive and negative events happening like everywhere else in the world. I feel we get concerned after reading such news. But India seems safe and one should be little careful while planning the travel and maybe go through some official travel agents to feel safe. I don't see any reason to call India unsafe.



**Adriana Miori**  
Board Director UFTAA, Vice President SKAL Rome

I think India is very safe. We see this type of problems happening in all corners of the world. India has also many positive things including its spirituality. People should not worry about travelling to India. We feel India is perfectly safe and people need to be little cautious while Travelling like in other parts of the world.



**Karine Coulanges**  
Président of Skal International Paris

I have been to India several times and I don't ever think I had any issues with my India trips. Regarding rapes, it's very unfortunate but unfortunately it's not restricted to India. I think India is still safe to travel. I still have many beautiful memories of India and I would love to travel again with my friends to India whenever I get time from my hectic schedule.

# Ground Reality of Indian Tourism Market

To justify the ground reality of the Indian tourism market under the vision of Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, T3FS speaks to the key professionals of the travel industry of India.

• **Vedika Sharma**

The World Travel and Tourism Council calculated that tourism generated Rs.16.91 lakh crore (US\$240 billion) or 9.2% of India's GDP in 2018 and supported 42.673 million jobs, 8.1% of its total employment. The sector is predicted to grow at an annual rate of 6.9% to Rs. 32.05 lakh crore (US\$460 billion) by 2028 (9.9% of GDP).

India is one of the nations to exhibit remarkable improvement. India was ranked 34th in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019 published by the World Economic Forum. India is a large market for travel and tourism. It offers a diverse portfolio of niche tourism products - cruises, adventure, medical, wellness, sports, MICE, eco-tourism, film, rural and religious tourism. India has been recognized as a destination for spiritual tourism for domestic and international tourists. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that India will account for 50 million outbound tourists by 2020. Despite the slowdown due to rupee fluctuations, the Indian outbound numbers have been growing at an average annual growth rate of 10-12 percent over the last seven years.

Beside the above statistics, to be more clear about the travel industry of India on ground realities T3FS speaks to the Key leader of the various travel association of India.

While highlighting the tourism market of India **Ms. Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI (Travel Agents Association of India)** said "India is a country of opportunities; we have abundant resources available for the growth of tourism. We are the only country which has the beauty of rivers, seas, lakes, beaches, mountains, valleys, heritage, diverse



culture, cuisine and are blessed with beautiful seasons of spring, summer, winter & autumn. There can be no land like ours but we are still not able to promote tourism to its utmost. We are at a static figure of FTA's of around 14 lakhs.

**We could have been the biggest hub between the east & west of the globe. Other countries have used this to their advantage & we lost out.** We as an Industry have ourselves to blame. We are the one who should have had the vision and the determination to make it happen. We should have been the industry to push the government to establish good policy's to develop Tourism & to make it Progressive & Sustainable. All the developments, e-visas, infrastructure should have been the focus many years ago. Now that Tourism is spoken about by our PM we need to triple the efforts for the time lost. We are still lagging behind in becoming a country attracting tourism.

Tourism should not be taxed till the time it doesn't start sustaining itself. Aviation, Railways, Cruises, and Transportation & Tourism should work collectively. The Police & Tourism ministry should work together. To develop safe tourism fast track law systems should be in place. More women should be encouraged to work in the tourism sector.

I still believe the center & states have different vision & deliverable measures. We need to be the conduit to put it in the right perspective. For this, the government has to hear us as one single voice & on priority deliver time-bound. We need to collaborate & work towards the betterment of the tourism industry.

There is so much we need to do. When our Prime Minister, **Mr. Modi started speaking**

**about tourism and giving it the importance which is certainly due, I personally thought we had good days coming but I am not very happy the way our tourism is growing as I think the focus is lost somewhere.** He spoke about domestic tourism & every citizen visiting destinations so that infrastructure is created but that also I feel is lost. Huge allocation of budgets are sanctioned for infrastructure & to promote tourism circuits but I do not see any classiness in the spend, nor do I see the smart cities as smart. Having roads, the internet is not smartness. There needs to be much more interaction between the Government & Associations for better brighter tourism growth. Just by reducing the visa fee & lowering of GST is not the end. The entire road map needs to be put in a direction & not in bits & parts."

Commenting on the subject **Mr. Pradip Lulla, Acting President, TAFI (The Travel Agents Federation of India)** said "Much more needs



**to be done by the Modi government for Incredible India:**

In India, Tourism is the largest service industry with a contribution of 6.23% to the country's GDP. India witnessed more than 5 million



annual foreign tourist arrivals and 562 million domestic tourism visits. As of 2017-18, 81.1 million people are employed in the tourism sector in India which was 12.38 percent of total employment in the country. This is the best accelerator to create jobs in the country but needs nurturing by the government.

**4 things the Government needs to work on to promote the Tourism Industry in India.**

- Allow increased corporate sponsorship for heritage buildings, and position them as tourist’s spots to be incentivized by the state governments.
- Create experiences, like the Khumb Mela, Buddhist circuits in conjunction with golfing and beach holidays, build infrastructure first to achieve scalability tie-up as a PPP option.
- Create infrastructure, identify hoteliers and travel associations to participate together to build events and new tourism areas and allow tax and tax-free opportunities, also provide funding.
- Aggressive tourism marketing strategies, Sale niche tourism areas separately, as a PPP opportunity, bring key Travel specialists from the Travel associations to manage the push under a special fund to be monitored based on results, as it has a gestation period.

From hyper-competitive markets, changing demography, over supply of hotel rooms and an untapped religious tourism market, the Indian hospitality sector is set to see a big change.

The hospitality industry got a shot in the arm when investments in the sector were booming between 2005 and 2010, with large private equity and bank funding, hotel and tourism infrastructure. Subsidies and schemes were introduced to push hotel construction and tourism in India, and were hopeful about the subsequent growth in this sector. However, the sector has advanced rather unpredictably since then.

Airbnb, Oyo Rooms and initiatives like Couch Surfing have changed the face of global hospitality. Pricing, location and convenience have converted many traditional hotel users to Airbnb clients, hotels need to realign strategies.

**The next frontier: Event-based Tourism**

Visiting holy places is a huge draw for a large number of Indians for domestic tourism. This domestic travel category is seeing steady growth as the burgeoning middle class continues to travel for religious and festive reasons, to cities with religious connections like Puri which is famous for its Jagannath Temple, Varanasi, Tirupati, Shirdi and special events like Khumb

Mela etc.

The Indian travel and tourism sector didn’t see any concrete provisions in the recent budget but with the Rs. 19,000 crore push under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, most rural and semi-rural locations will have better connectivity and easier access to popular spiritual destinations.

Millennials and specifically the Gen Z generation gravitate towards unique experiences and shared platforms, compared to baby boomers who are used to standardized and impersonal hotel rooms. This is an opportunity that needs to be taken advantage of.

**Even though India hit an all-time high in tourism numbers in 2016, the numbers are nowhere close to tourist-heavy destinations such as France, United States, Spain, China and Italy.** These are markets to be built on if this government needs to build numbers.”

**Mr. Pronab Sarkar, President, IATO (The Indian Association of Tour Operators)** added “India is a large market for travel and tourism. It offers a diverse portfolio of niche tourism



products - cruises, adventure, medical, wellness, sports, MICE, eco-tourism, film, rural and religious tourism. India has been recognized as a destination for spiritual tourism for domestic and international tourists. In Independence speech from Red Fort, Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi urged people to visit 15 domestic tourist destinations in India by 2022 to promote tourism. India was ranked 34th in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019 published by the World Economic Forum.

Reduction in GST and E Visa Fees are two key marked initiatives taken by the government that shall fructify in bringing more tourists to India. Many countries have expressed the happiness of this welcoming change and already started promoting Indian Tour Packages. Tourism is an Economic activity therefore, most of the investment is by the Private Sector and it is growing day by day. This is not only helping to generate new jobs but also earning valuable foreign exchange for the country.

As of 2017-18, 81.1 million people are employed in the tourism sector in India which was 12.38 percent of total employment in the country. The Government of India has set a target of 20 million foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) by 2024 and double the foreign exchange earnings as well.

**In October 2018, Statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, also known as ‘Statue of Unity’, was inaugurated as a tourist attraction. This statue is now attracting more tourists than the Statue of Liberty.**

The Government has also been making serious efforts to boost investments in the tourism sector. In the hotel and tourism sector, 100 percent FDI is allowed through the automatic route. A five-year tax holiday has been offered for 2, 3- and 4-star category hotels located around UNESCO World Heritage sites (except Delhi and Mumbai). Total FDI received by the Indian hotel & tourism sector was US\$ 12.35 billion between April 2000 and March 2019.

Some of the major infrastructural components under plans are:

- Development/up-gradation of passenger terminals
- Improvement of road connectivity leading to tourist sites/destinations
- Use of clean energy sources for street lighting
- Wayside amenities with an emergency vehicle breakdown, repair and refuel facilities
- External infrastructures such as water supply, sewerage, drainage, electricity and roads
- First-aid centres
- Helipads, heliports, airstrips, ropeways
- Communication system, Mobile Services, Internet Connectivity, Wi-Fi

**Under Union Budget 2019-20, the government introduced a Tax Refund for Tourists (TRT) scheme like in countries such as Singapore to encourage tourists to spend more in India and boost tourism.**

Major cleanliness campaign under the



Swachh Bharat movement for protecting and preserving the sanctity of monuments of national heritage.

The ministry has also launched a special e-poster with Prime Minister's message requesting the tourists and the people of the nation to wholeheartedly engage themselves in the cleanliness of their surroundings and help create a SwachhBharat, SwachhSmarak. The focus on Kashmir, Ladakh and North Eastern Region are a priority area and the Ministry of Tourism is all set to take tourism to this region to a new level."



**Mr. P P Khanna, President, ADTOI (Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India)** stated "Domestic tourism is the backbone of the Tourism Industry. Over 1.65 Billion domestic travellers estimated to be travelling within the country on pilgrim, leisure, business, social activities etc. Domestic tourism keeps economic activities going on 24 x 7 basis and it never stops. It brings with it infrastructure development, economic prosperity in the region, employment opportunities to many besides strengthening national integration. ADTOI members promote interstate tourism on PAN India Basis. Domestic tourism also contributes to GDP.

**Domestic tourism is not affected by any socio-economic upheaval happening in the country.**

The key initiatives are undertaken by the Govt. covered areas such as the promotion of safe and honorable tourism, infrastructure development, publicity, promotion and marketing, skill development, simplification of procedures for the classification/ reclassification of hotels and restaurants, development of niche tourism products, use of technology for service delivery and market research.

Paryatan Parv is a celebration of tourism and it will be bringing tourism at the centre stage in those 21 days, The campaign will revolve around elements like tourism for all, which means not just for international tourists but also people within the country, making tourism everybody's business, and not just confining it to hotels and tour operators. Ministry will choose one iconic site in each state and will focus our activities there.

The ministry has also introduced another initiative, adopt a heritage site. Under this, companies can use funds under their corporate social responsibility programs to maintain monuments of national interest.

Launched Swadesh Darshan Scheme for developing theme-based circuits spanning the entire country. Launched 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive' (PRASHAD) Scheme for the holistic development of identified pilgrimage destinations. Ministry of Tourism is continuously doing tourism promotion and publicity both in India and abroad under the Incredible India Campaign. Promotion of NICHE Tourism like organising Wellness and Medical Tourism Promotion shows."

Whereas **Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice-Chairman, ICPB (India Convention Promotion Bureau)** said "There is no doubt that Mr. Prime Minister boosted the image of Brand "INDIA" in the global market.



Ease of visa, e-conference visa along with e-tourist visa, reduction of GST rates, Tourism Facilitator programme, are the welcome steps to engine the growth of Inbound tourism in India. However, **I see the MICE Tourism growth will increase because of the new and large infra projects are coming up and attract larger events for the country.**

Having said that, the slowdown in Indian Economy, Aggressive Media Negative Reporting, issues in the Aviation Industry will make a negative impact as well. We need to keep our house in order and **Mr. Prime Minister needs to focus on the Economy first to boost the morals, which is going to affect all the segments."**

**Mr. Gajesh Girdhar, National Coordinator, NIMA (Network of Indian MICE Agents)** mentioned "As far as MICE sector is concern we see a growth 5% -10% in the year 2020. As per vision on Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, tourism sector will play a major role in the growth of \$5 Trillion economy. **There is a huge scope of tourism in India but needs to be properly showcased.** The development of 17 tourism sites in India will give great boost to Inbound tourism. **Inbound MICE needs to be**



**paid attention which is still neglected as inbound MICE can get big revenue to the country.** Upcoming new convention centres, hotel rooms will invite more international conferences in India by 2022."

**Mr. Anil Kadavil, Co-founder, UTEN (Travel Event Company) LLP** revealed "Tourism is one of the core areas where the Indian economy also depends. Infrastructure is the most important factor which can speed up tourism and at present, it is on the right track with the govt introducing



speed trains like TEJAS EXPRESS etc with the latest technology and also many highway projects connecting all places taking place. **The one factor we feel we are lacking is the security of women when they travel.** Also, the various news about violence taking place especially the rape news that appears now and then in the media sends shiver's among foreigners who want to visit India. Though the govt is trying hard to safeguard it, it will take time to build confidence among the tourists.

**Beaches are the next important factor that can boost tourism.** It should be of international standards with more cleanliness which the govt is seriously working on and more safety standards should be introduced, there should be waterways created, the way it is in some European countries, which will boost tourism. Finally, the hill station is what the govt is trying desperately to get it de-congested as most of the hill stations are too crowded."

To walk the ancient streets that run  
across cultures, beliefs and ideas,  
to open wide the mind and watch  
the colours seep into each other and  
let the courtyard of the world  
make us human, all over again.

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# Rekindle the Romance



With the cosy, breathtaking beautiful feel of winter upon us and Valentine’s Day around the corner, experience an everlasting romance between you and your partner and rekindle the romance amidst the serene surroundings with these perfect destinations for wooing your significant other. Smack an impromptu getaway this valentine weekend.

• **Vedika Sharma**

The cards are in the shops. The adverts for champagne and chocolates are on the TV. Pink love hearts are popping up everywhere. We cannot fail to notice it is Valentine’s Day very soon. The annual celebration of love puts a high value on grand ideas and romance. Couples that have been together for a long time can naturally feel a bit removed from this. Life gets in the way and spontaneity can begin to decline. Grand gestures make way for a simple exchange of cards and little else.

Everyone has an opinion on 14th February. Some think it is romantic and a

date to be strictly observed and never missed. Couples can spend hundreds of pounds on gifts, a romantic meal or getaway. Whether you’re a couple that finds romance in relaxation or in adventure, there’s an always way going to curl up in front of a roaring wood fire, gazing at the stars from a deck, secluded beaches which sets the mood. These retreats offer a mix of ambiance and amenities that will surely up the romance factor on your next vacation. But dig a little deeper and you will find your personal paradise from our hit-list of spots that will have you lovestruck at first sight—whether you’re looking to propose, honeymoon or simply getaway.

## Thailand: An Exotic Location

Thailand is an ideal destination for those who would like to plan a romantic getaway in an exotic location. The most exotic beaches, picturesque landscapes, luxury resorts, warm weather, cuisine, culture and warm hospitality make it a dream destination for couples. From laid back luxury to beachside glamour, from outdoor adventure to city splendor or plain fun in the sun, Thailand can present you with your perfect romantic getaway on a platter.



**Isra Stapanaseth**  
Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand, New Delhi Office

A memorable holiday in Thailand can be enjoyed together trekking atop majestic elephants through the lush dense forest canopies in Thailand’s North, or bathing under radiant sunsets hand-in-hand on the beautiful beaches that line the country’s pristine shoreline. Enjoy a romantic dinner cruise under the stars, or be gently pampered within the relaxing setting of a spa. Often described as one of the world’s dream honeymoon destinations, couples here find extreme pleasure at discovering one another’s passions and endless possibilities of finding new bonding interests and experiences to embrace together in Thailand.



### VISA

There are three ways of getting a tourist visa to Thailand. Listed as below:

- Obtain visa from Royal Thai Embassy or Royal Thai Consulate-General
- Obtain Visa on Arrival
- E-Thailand Visa

Till April 2020 there is a visa waive for Indian passport holders who wish to visit Thailand.

# Israel: A Dynamic Country



Israel is an ideal romantic destination with an amalgamation of relaxation coupled with light-hearted adventure offering a perfect mix of both. Being a dynamic country, it is full of rich, illustrious history, tourist-friendly offerings like beautiful beaches, thriving nightlife, crystal clear waters, picturesque mountains, nature reserve oases and stunning coral reefs.

## VISA

Application for a tourist visa to Israel is a fairly simple process that takes around 4 to 5 working days while the turnaround time for express visa service is sooner. Those travellers who have completed travel to any Schengen countries, US, Canada, Australia or Israel, there is a relaxation in terms of documentation submission. The Ministry of Tourism along with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to facilitate additional visa changes for Indian travellers.



**Sammy Yahia**

Director, Israel Ministry of Tourism - India and Philippines

There are many activities for couples to enjoy in Israel; be it taking a dip in the mineral-packed waters of the Dead Sea, slathering therapeutic mud or opting in for a special Dead Sea couple spa treatment to enjoy one of the best wellness experiences in the world. Hop on a hot-air balloon for a romantic ride over the breathtaking views of the Negev Desert, fields of flowers, plantations and historical sites. Catch the sunrise followed by breakfast at a picturesque location or raise a toast to the sunset with champagne while you float through the desert scenery. Couples can camp beneath the stars at the world's largest natural crater, Ramon Crater in MitzpeRamon town in the Negev Desert and enjoy the best gastronomic experience in the Middle East. The desert region also offers a unique wine trail exploring wineries that also offer accommodation and winemaking classes. Situated along the turquoise waters of the Red Sea, the tax-free city of Eilat boasts sunny days all-year-round making it a popular honeymoon destination. Among the many romantic activities to do, the top choices would be kayaking, a Glass Boat Ride or a luxury yacht sailing tour. Go snorkeling and deep-sea diving with your partner in the Red Sea, rated as one of the best diving spots in the world or the brave-hearted can opt for couple tandem skydiving. A must visit here is the Dolphin Reef that offers a unique opportunity to swim and dive with a school of bottle-nosed dolphins in their natural habitat.



PC: Itamar Grinberg/IMOT

# Abu Dhabi: Classic Romantic Rendezvous

Abu Dhabi is a classic romantic rendezvous. With its unique cultural offerings, this city will mesmerize you with its sublime sea views, sandy beaches, luxurious resorts and the mystical allure of the boundless desert. From rambling along the Corniche soaking up the sun; kayaking along the Eastern mangroves; to hopping on to a sunset cruise, this magnificent city has something for every couple.



**Bejan Dinshaw**

Country Manager, Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi

For instance, the sporty couples who like to mix leisure with a few recreational activities can head to the Saadiyat Public Beach. For couples interested in exploring local culture and history, Desert Safari safari allows to journey back in time to the emirate before the development of skyscrapers and high-rise buildings. For a luxury couple retreat, check into one of Abu Dhabi's opulent hotel or resort and indulge in a spa session.



## VISA

Tourist visa for an Indian National, holding an ordinary passport, is arranged by a sponsor in UAE. It can also be obtained on booking a hotel in UAE or through the Emirates Airlines Office, Etihad Airways Office or the Air Arabia Office or through a Travel Agent in India.

Visa processing time is approximately 3 to 4 working days. All visas are valid to enter UAE for 60 days from the date of issue, except the 96-hour and 48-hour visas, which are valid for 30 days from the date of issue.

# Fiji: Romantic Escape

Nestled in the turquoise waters of the South Pacific, Fiji has always been synonymous with romance. Picture silky sandy beaches lined with coconut palms that give way to lush green hills. And maybe even a waterfall or two. From overwater bungalows in the middle of the ocean to luxurious 5-star resorts, scenic helicopter rides, exclusive sandbank picnics and a range of activities that make you fall in love again; every couple sees a different side of Fiji! It has everything that you can ask for when on a romantic escape.

## VISA

Visa for Indian passport holders is granted on arrival and free of cost. The only documents required are a passport valid for 6 months beyond the travel dates and a return or an onward ticket copy and confirmed hotel & activities itinerary.



**Sunil Menon**

Country Manager, Tourism Fiji

Go on a day trip to visit Monuriki island, part of the Mamanuca islands (this is where Tom Hanks filmed his poignant movie *Cast Away*) for a romantic retreat or if you are both adventure seekers then it is the Beqa Lagoon for you! Here you can enjoy some zip-lining or try a hand at dirt biking. You might also want to go for rafting or kayaking on the Navua River, before coming to the vibrant capital Suva for a luxuriant dinner. Let happiness find you at the Rainbow Reef, where you can explore the underwater world with scuba diving and make memories of a lifetime. Back on Viti Levu, you can experience an unforgettable taste of local culture by booking yourself onto the Navua River Village and Kava Ceremony Tour that includes a tranquil boat trip up the river to Nukusere Village, where you can take part in a traditional ceremony and then enjoy a delicious Fijian feast. The Fiji islands are a breath-taking destination – whether you are on a honeymoon, anniversary or just a romantic getaway, it is the perfect place for relationship milestones.



# Spain: Ideal places to live your love story



If you're a romantic, Spain is your place! When you think of travelling you fancy walking with your partner holding hands on scenarios that make you feel part of a romantic movie. If you have not been already, in your list of pending visit places, unquestionably, is the Buen Retiro Park in Madrid and the Maria Luisa Park of Sevilla. Ideal places to live your love story! If you want to surprise your spouse on your anniversary, you have to take her to contemplate the remarkable sunset views of the Alhambra from the Mirador San Nicolas in Granada.

## VISA

In order to visit Spain, an Indian National has to apply for a Spanish Schengen Visa via the BLS Visa Application Center in their respective city. Visa fees and documents required can be referred to on the BLS India website. All applications must be submitted at least 15 days prior to the proposed date of travel. You can apply for a Spanish Schengen visa up to 3 months before your planned trip. The processing time may take up to 15 days since the day of your application. The Embassy of Spain processes Schengen visa applications in up to 4 days. Real time may differ depending on the time of the year.



**Elisa Robles Fraga**  
Director, Tourism Office of Spain

We propose you many options! A short break in boat at the Balearic Islands can be your perfect romantic holiday in cliffs and coves. If your passion for love stories goes beyond, exceeding the distance between life and death, visit Teruel and soak up its legends. And if you are single, don't worry, Spain is full of magic places that give rise to all kinds of crushes, fleeting, passionate, at first sight.

Some destinations in Spain we suggest for a romantic getaway:

**Costa Brava** - surrounded by the blue waters of the sea, golden sands and intensely green landscapes. A beautiful environment bordered by the Mediterranean Sea and the Pyrenees mountains. A place you'll never forget.

**San Sebastian** - This city, also known as Donostia, lies along a white sandy bay between the Urgull and Igeldo hills. Fishermen's houses, a smart suburb and modern districts make it one of the most attractive cities on the Cantabrian coast. The Museum of San Telmo, the Peine del Viento (the Wind Comb) and the Kursaal are examples of how the city brings together modern and traditional features. Meanwhile, the province of Guipuzcoa, of which San Sebastián is the capital, blends sea and mountains, offering the traveller landscape, sports and cuisine, as well as interesting monuments. Basque cuisine has a recognised international prestige.





# Santa Monica: Creating Memories

In Santa Monica, you'll find a charming beach community, centrally located in Los Angeles county, offering year-round warm weather, a picturesque beachside setting, friendly locals and lively cultural scene, all within close proximity to Los Angeles International Airport. Whether you're trying to impress a new special someone, surprise your long-time love with something new or ask your beloved for their hand in marriage, you'll likely find an amazing way to fall in love or stay in love here in Santa Monica.



**Misti Kerns**  
President & CEO of Santa Monica  
Travel & Tourism

Santa Monica has exactly what couples look for. Talking about some of the most romantic places, The Santa Monica Pier is a great choice for first-loves, best friends, saying "I Do's" and creating memories. Whether you watch the sunset from the end of the pier or propose to the love of your life in the historic Carousel building, visitors from around the world have incredible love-on-the-Pier moments to share. Enjoy a classic California beach day in style with Perry's Beach Butler service curated for couples. End a day in the sun followed by a spa-date to experience one-of-a-kind farmers-market inspired spa treatments. Couples can also rekindle their love over drinks or dinner with the sunset as a backdrop. With more than 400 restaurants in Santa Monica, the city's collection of restaurants includes a plethora of romantic and elegant options including raw bars, fresh and seafood-centric menus, and floor-to-ceiling sunset views of the Pier and Malibu.

## VISA

Anyone travelling to the United States needs a visitor visa, which is B-1/B-2. A tourist visa is for people traveling to the country temporarily for business (B-1) or for pleasure or medical treatment (B-2). The B-2 visa is recreational in nature, including tourism, visits with friends or relatives, medical treatment and activities of a fraternal, social or service nature. One can apply for the tourist visa to the USA via online, fill the form and submit all the required documents.

Most visa applications are processed in 2-3 business days, however, in some cases, it may take up to 12 weeks. It is always good to plan before and apply for the visa as soon as possible, or around three months in advance.

# Romantic Road of Austria

Like a 380km-long string of pearls, the Romantic Road connects the most beautiful landscapes of Austria, passing fantastic lakes and mountain panoramas, as well as especially worthwhile villages. Starting from Salzburg, the road leads you through the provinces of Upper Austria and Lower Austria to the capital Vienna, lifting the lid on a world of palaces, monasteries, castles and museums along the way. In Bad Ischl, Emperor Franz Joseph got engaged to Empress Sisi and in the village of St. Wolfgang, directly on the shores of the popular Lake Wolfgang, you can find the backdrop of a famous Austrian operetta that also served as a setting for various film adaptations.

## VISA (Schengen)

Austria have 17 VFS application centers all over India. All applications will be assessed by the Embassy of Austria at New Delhi only. Applicants need to book a prior appointment for submitting their applications. Visa applications submitted at the Visa Application Centre (VAC) in Delhi will be forwarded to the Austrian Embassy the following working day. The forwarding of visa applications submitted at any other Visa Application Centre (VAC) than VAC Delhi will take approximately 2 to 3 working days; In general, decisions on complete and formally valid applications for visa C should be made within 15 days (excluding the day of submission application and forwarding to the Embassy). In exceptional cases, this period may be extended to 30 or even 60 days. All visa applications will be processed as quickly as possible, taking into consideration the regional circumstances and high seasons of the Austrian diplomatic authorities.



**Christine Mukharji**  
Director, ANTO India

Several bathing lakes along the road that winds through Salzkammergut radiate a unique romantic atmosphere. Lake Traunsee is popular for wedding celebrations, especially at Seeschloss Ort Castle, located on an idyllic island and hosting weddings that only be found in fairytales. The Salzkammergut, known as the Austrian Lake District, is in fact, said to be one of the most beautiful areas in Austria, with breathtaking mountain scenery and deep blue lakes. The charming village of Hallstatt located on Lake Hallstatt is even a member of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The final stop on your tour along Austria's Romantic Road, which should take you about 8 days in total, is Vienna. By the end of your trip, you will understand the saying from the Habsburg era: "Others may wage war, you lucky Austria get married!"



# Romantic Escapes in Australia

What better way to celebrate a milestone with your partner in life than to travel to the destination of a lifetime. Whether you like your romance served hot (dinner on a private tropical beach) or cold (snuggling in front of a cosy fire surrounded by misty mountains), Australia has all kinds of luxurious getaways for all types of couples.

**Nishant Kashikar**

Country Manager, Tourism Australia



Whether you like your romantic getaway to be a luxurious experience with your beau or spent amidst the scenic views of nature, here is a list of destinations that your significant other and you simply cannot miss!

**Sleep just metres from the Great Barrier Reef-** If you envisage your second honeymoon spent snorkelling in aquamarine waters and snoozing in a hammock under palm trees with a coconut in hand, then Tropical North Queensland is perfect for the two of you!

One of the best ways to get the reef all to yourself is to take part in the Reefsleeper Experience. In the afternoon guests can submerge in the reef again. Come evening, it is time for a barbecue, and possibly a night dive, before everybody on board tucks themselves into their designated swags (a low tent with an in-built mattress, designed for the Australian Outback) under the star-filled sky. Reefsleeper departs from Airlie Beach, Daydream Island or Hamilton Island.

**Visit heart Island-** In a world-first, Hamilton Island guests can now experience unprecedented access to the iconic Heart Reef lagoon with the launch of 'Heart Island'. After a decade of development and an investment of over \$2 million dollars, this is the first-time visitors will be able to see the intricacies of the iconic coral formation up close, with only scenic flights previously being offered to the area. Exclusive to guests of Hamilton Island and designed to look as if it was built for James Bond himself, Heart Island is only accessible via helicopter. Developed by Hamilton Island Air, the state-of-the-art split-level pontoon caters for only six guests at a time.

**Lady Musgrave Experience** in Southern Great Barrier Reef (off Bundaberg). Anticipated launch date of April 2020, of a new 36m floating platform, made from recycled materials. It will include a 3 metre underwater observatory with 360-degree view. It will accommodate 24 guests overnight.

## VISA

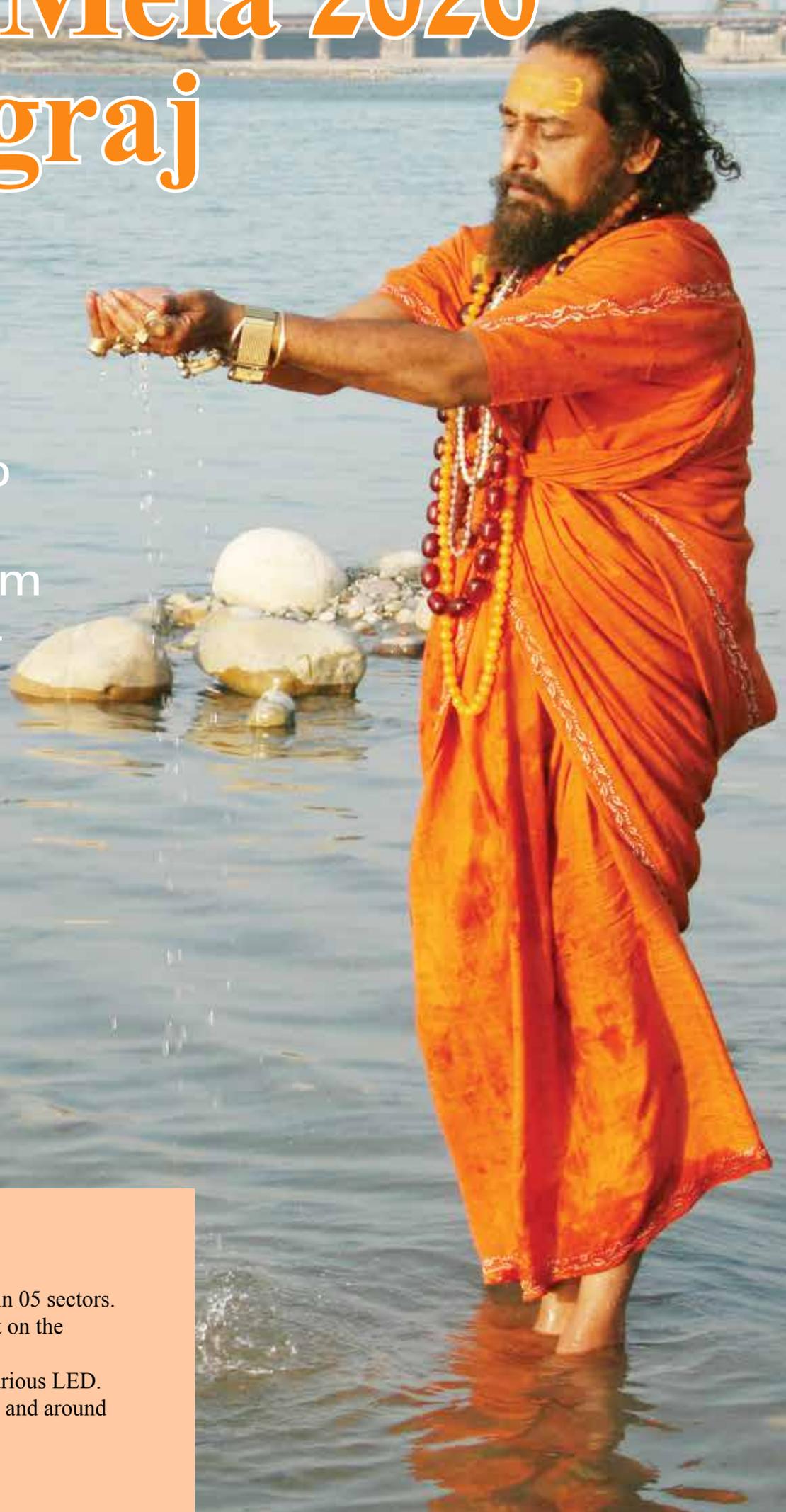
The Australian visa process has always been quite simple for travelers given that the entire process is online and seamless. Just create your own personal immi account at-<https://online.immi.gov.au/lusc/login>, lodge your application by scanning and uploading the relevant documents.

Regardless of what part of the country a potential visitor is in, they can apply for the Australian visa from the comfort of their home. The country has recently made its online visa processing simpler and more convenient with no personal visits or need for biometrics. The process does not demand one to stand in long queues for a personal interview and neither does one have to present physical copies of their passport and other financial documents. There is minimal wastage of one's time or resources as the visa is processed within 15 days of the online application.



# Magh Mela 2020 Prayagraj

The annual religious event of Magh Mela to be held on the banks of Sangam during January-February 2020. The Magh Mela 2020 would be called as 'Mini-Kumbh'.



## Do you know?

- City of tents will be populated in 05 sectors.
- Pantoon Bridges are being built on the Ganges.
- Fair will be illuminated with various LED.
- Bathing ghats are being built in and around Sangam.

A world-class Kumbh was organised in the sangam city on the holy banks of the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati, which was a center of appreciation all over the world. At the same time, after the success of organising the kumbh mela, the yogi government of Uttar Pradesh has once again started preparations for the Magh Mela to be held in 2020.

It has been decided that the facilities provided by the Uttar Pradesh government during Kumbh 2019, there would be similar facilities for the pilgrims coming for Magh Mela 2020 too.

## Magh Mela 2020 Prayagraj Preparations

Money was sought from the Prayagraj Mela Authority for developing facilities like Permanent parking toilets, changing rooms, drinking water arrangements in the Sangam area, electricity and road arrangements.

The preparations for Magh Mela have gained momentum. The electricity department has started erecting poles. Along with this, the PWD has also accelerated the construction of pontoon bridges and the roads with checkered plates. The works of Jal Nigam, Health Department, Irrigation Department, Flood Block and Fair Administration have also started.

Tents are also being setting up at many places. The city of tents will be populated in five sectors this time. At the same time, there will be pantoon bridges for the convenience of pilgrims. Similarly, fair area will be illuminated with various LEDs. Apart from this, bathing ghats are being built in and around Sangam.

During the mela, a railway exhibition will be organised in the parade ground and PRS and UTS (unreserved ticket system) counters will also be opened for convenience of pilgrims. There would be passenger enclosures at the mela area equipped with all modern facilities like enquiry counter, UTS ticket counter, catering stall, drinking water facility, train timing display board, announcement facility, toilets etc.

## Lakhs of pilgrims to visit

Keeping in view, the possibility of lakhs of devotees coming from far away, the district administration is preparing to settle the city of tents at the Sangam city of Prayagraj, for the purpose tents are also being erected at many places.



## Magh Mela area to grow by 10 percent

This time too, Magh Mela area will be organised on the lines of the year 2018. However, the area is being increased by 10 percent. Official said that the leveling work in sectors one and two has almost been completed. Tents are also being erected there. Leveling has also started in sector three, four in Jhansi side and sector five in Arail region. The work related to electricity department, Jal Sansthan, health department and irrigation department has also started. For the security of the pilgrims coming to the confluence, the meetings are also going on with the police department for impenetrable security system.

## Army will not take action till Magh Mela

In the parade area, the army will not take any action regarding illegal occupation till Magh Mele. Army officials said that 400 acres of land has been given to Prayagraj Mela Authority for the fair. Now no action will be taken till 31 March. Action will be initiated against the encroachment after the fair. Government paved construction will then be taken over and private paved construction will be dismantled.

## History

The Magh Mela is one of the greatest annual religious affairs for Hindus. Hindu mythology considers the origin of the Magh Mela to be the beginning of the Universe. An important occasion, the Magh Mela is held every year on the banks of Triveni Sangam (the confluence of the three great rivers Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati) in Prayag, at Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. In accordance with the traditional Hindu calendar followed in North India, this holy fair is organised every year during the Hindu month of Magh (corresponding to mid January – mid February of the Gregorian calendar); hence the name. The Magh Mela is, however, not confined only to the month of Magh and the important bathing dates are spread over a period of 45 days. The Magh Mela is actually a smaller version of



## The important dates for bathing

[Paush Purnima - January 10](#)

[Makar Sankranti - January 15](#)

[Mauni Amavasya - January 24](#)

[Basant Panchami - January 30](#)

[Maghi Purnima - February 9](#)

[Mahashivratri - February 21](#)

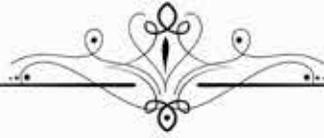


Kumbha Mela. Hence it is also known as mini Kumbha Mela.

Every year, the Magh Mela commences on the day of Makkar Sankranti in January, which is the first important bathing day according to the religious Hindu calendar. It begins with multitudes of pilgrims taking a holy dip at the Sangam on auspicious dates. A large number of people arrive here annually and stay in makeshift houses or tents at the Sangam, spending the entire month of Magh in prayers. This period is known as “Kalpvas”. Those who religiously observe the “Kalpvas” are known as “Kalpvasis”.

The ancient Hindu Vedas mention a “Kalp” to be the period equal to the total number of years in the four yugas – Satyug, Treta, Dwapar and Kalyug. This adds up to several millions of years. It is said that by piously observing a “Kalpavas”, a devotee overcomes the sins in his/her previous birth and escapes the cycle of Janma(birth) and Karma (actions). During each day of the Magh Mela, a Kalpvasi has to take a dip at the Ganges on sunrise praying to the rising sun. Majority of the Kalpvasis partake only a meal a day. After observing 12 Kalpavas, a Kalpvasi has to donate his/her bed and all his belongings (a ritual known as “Shayya Daan”).

Every twelfth year, the Magh Mela is transformed into the Kumbha Mela. Uttar Pradesh is flooded with millions of pilgrims who arrive here during this time to attend this grand event.



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# Enchanting Tamil Nadu

**Tamil Nadu is an enchanting place that is sure to leave you spellbound with its magnificent architecture, rich culture and exotic places. Be it the beautiful beaches, majestic temples or magnificent rock-cut architecture, you will find everything in Tamil Nadu to mesmerize you and make you travel a memorable one.**

## • Tarsh Sharma

**A**s Tamil Nadu has its unique culture and abundant tourism potential, tourists from upcountry and abroad flock the tourist spots throughout the year.

Tamil Nadu is a state with several distinguished tourism genres. The state is covered with breezy beaches of the Arabian Sea, enthralling peaks of Nilgiri Mountains, cascading waterfalls and densely coveted forest areas.

Tamil Nadu breaks all the clichés and has emerged as a state that has bounty and diversity. State undoubtedly blessed with both natural and cultural aspects. Hence, it is an ideal tourist haven for one and all.

Due to its culture, Tamil Nadu is a particularly hassle-free destination to visit, especially for women.

Here let us explore Tamil Nadu for your next travel plan to India.

## What to Explore: Tourist Hotspot

### Pondicherry

If peace and a break is the most sought after, then Pondicherry is surely one of the choicest holiday destinations in South India. The town offers a unique experience with its mix of modern heritage and spiritual culture. With a predominantly historical background, Pondicherry takes one century back in time.

### Kanyakumari

Situated at the tip of the Indian Peninsula, Kanyakumari is the southernmost point of mainland India. Kanyakumari is located near the Western Ghats and bordered by the Laccadive or the Lakshadweep Sea at the southwest, southeast and south of the city. Kanyakumari has been one of the major centers of arts, culture and religion since ancient times. The city's beaches are also the only beaches in the world where you can experience both the sunrise and the sunset. The various temples in this beautiful city of Tamil Nadu are frequented by thousands of pilgrims and the pristine beaches attract a huge no. of tourists to the city.

### Beaches

#### Marina Beach

It lies on the eastern side of the city, bordering the Bay of Bengal. It is one of the most renowned beaches of Tamil Nadu. It is the longest beach in India and also the second longest beach in the world. Here, one can experience the most captivating view of scenic beauty and the life of its marine locals.

#### Covelong Beach

It is situated at a distance of 40 km from the capital city. It is one of the most captivating and beautiful beaches. Here, one can engage in adventurous water sports like swimming and windsurfing. Don't forget to soak in the beach shacks beneath the cool shade of the palm trees.

### Elliot's Beach

Elliot's beach is located on the eastern coast of Tamil Nadu. It is one of the cleanest beaches in the capital city and is lined with several cafes and restaurants. This beach is also famous as the night beach, as it is the most preferred spot for youngsters to gather and enjoy in the evening.

## Hill Stations

### Yelagiri Hill

It is one of the most popular hill stations of Tamil Nadu. The Yelagiri village is surrounded by orchards, rose-gardens, and lush green valleys. Travel by the winding Ghat-road that has 14 hairpin bends to reach the Yelagiri hilltop. The ride offers panoramic breath-taking views of the hills and its surroundings. The seventh bend is significant since it offers a panoramic view of the slopes of the mountain and the luxuriant green forests. The highest point in Yelagiri is the Swamimalai Hill, standing tall at 4,338 ft and a popular destination for trekkers and tourists alike.

### Kodaikanal

The name 'Kodaikanal' literally translates 'Gift of the Forest', but more commonly known as a Princess of Hill stations. Its meadows, long stretch of forests, wood slopes, mighty rocks, bowers and creeks charm the tourists in a magical way. Kodaikanal is famous for the kurinji – flowers that blossom once in twelve years. It is a favourite among honeymooners. This charming place is one of the most visited tourist destinations which

offers its visitors an array of activities like boat rides, nature walks, hiking, trekking and rock-climbing.

### Ooty

It is truly referred to as 'The Queen of Hill Stations'. Picturesque and green, 'Udhagamandalam' better known, as Ooty is the most popular hill station in the South. 'Udhagamandalam' is the headquarters for the Nilgiri district, where the two ghat- ranges meet. Nature has been generous with this region, which is by far the most beautiful in the state. Apart from lush coffee and tea plantations, trees like conifers, eucalyptus, pine and wattle dot the hillside in Udhagamandalam and its environs. Ooty with smaller hill stations of Coonoor - 19 kms and Kothagiri- 31 kms are the two other scenic hill stations of this district. Nilgiri is India's first biosphere. It has been declared as one of the 14 'hotspots' of the world because of its unique biodiversity. Nilgiri truly presents itself as a kaleidoscope of visual treats and guarantees a soul-stirring experience.

## Heritage

### Chennai

Formerly known by the name Madras, Chennai is the Capital City of Tamil Nadu. The city has been surrounded by the South Indian Kingdoms since ages, thus it has always been the forefront of all cultural, economical, social, commercial and industrial development in the south of India. The city houses more than 20 heritage structures including railway stations, Museums, Book Shops, Cinema halls and many more. Chennai is also famous for its clean sandy beaches, parks, temples and cultural centers. There are various shopping attractions here and most sorts for Modern Day Activities one can name.

### Mahabalipuram

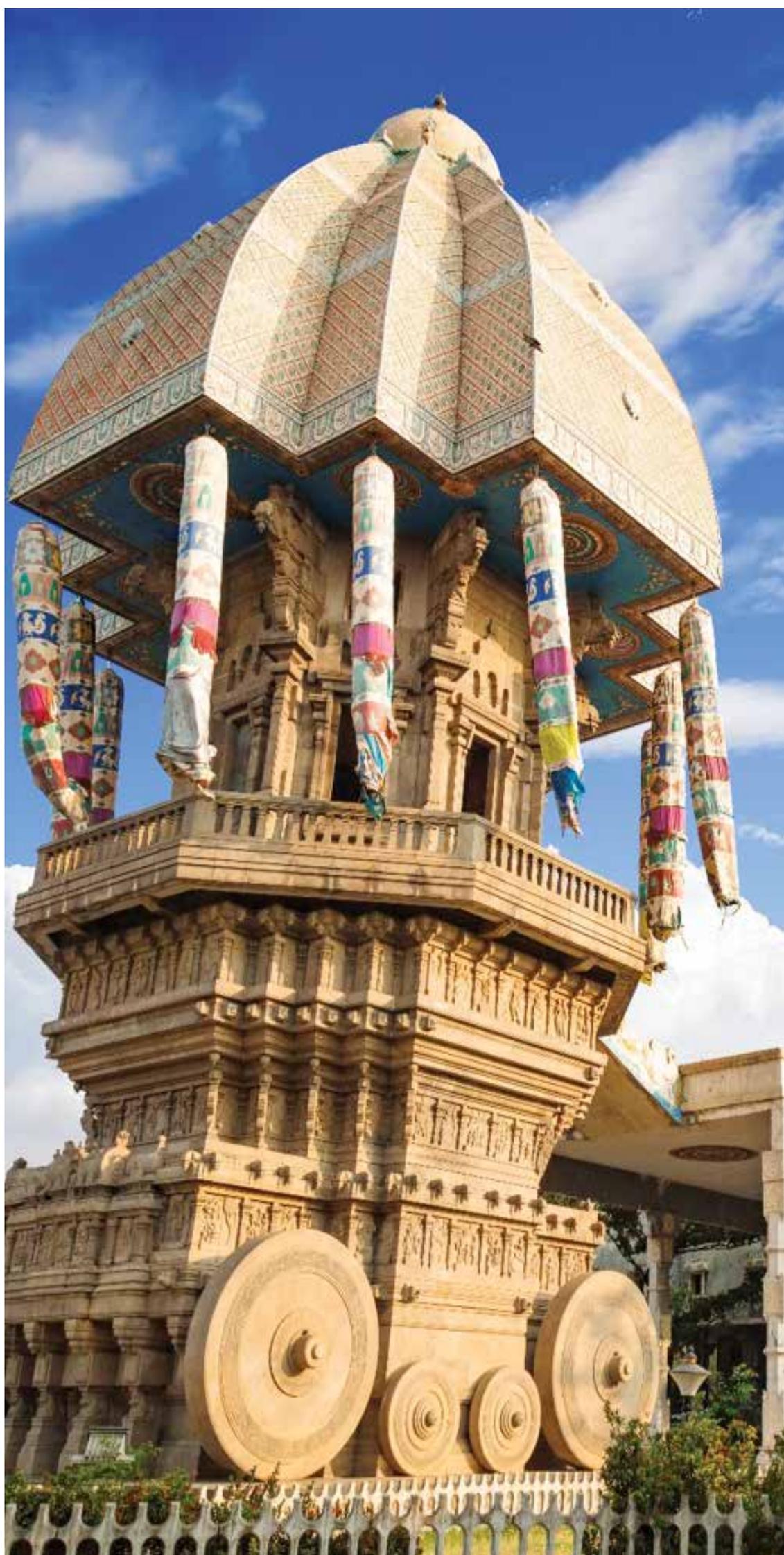
Also known as Mamallapuram, the city of Mahabalipuram is famous for its ancient and cultural heritage. The city of Mahabalipuram was a prominent seaport dating back to 7th century AD and was ruled by the Pallava Dynasty. The place is famous for its monuments and is classified among the UNESCO world heritage sites. Almost all of the monuments are carved out of Granite and display the brilliance of Dravidian style architecture. The city is bustling with tourists most times of the year except monsoons. The amazing location of this place adds to the charm of the monuments and the intricate carvings.

### Madurai

The 3rd largest city in Tamil Nadu, Madurai is also one of the oldest inhabited cities in the world. The place has been mentioned by many such as Kautilya and Megasthenes. The city has been ruled by both the Pandya and the Chola dynasties. The city houses many number of important and magnificent temples that it is built around. The majority of tourists who come to Madurai come to visit the various temples that enshrine this ancient city. The Meenakshi Ammam Temple is of prime importance here as it has been mentioned in almost all the ancient texts and is considered as the prime pilgrim spot for the Tamil people.

### Vellore

Also known as, the Fort city, Vellore is located at the banks of Palar River at the North-eastern part of Tamil Nadu. The place has a lot of historical relevance as well, as the fort of Vellore is said to have housed Tipu sultan's family during the British Rule. Apart from the fort, there are several other attractions that have made it an important





tourist destination. The various temples with a brilliant display of carvings and Dravidian Style architecture, the picturesque hill station of Yelagiri, the churches and mosques and various shopping hotspots have made it a must-visit place in Tamil Nadu.

### Kanchipuram

The city of Kanchipuram is located on the shores of the Vegavathy River. The city has seen many number of ruling dynasties and monarchies such as the Pandya, Cholas, the Vijaynagar Empire, the Carnatic kingdom and the British monarchy. Kanchipuram since medieval times has been significant as the educational center and was known as the place for learning. The city is also famous for its various temples that are built in the Dravidian style of architecture and display amazing stone carvings. Kanchipuram apart from its various temples is also known for its medicinal herbs, this fact has been vouched for by the ancient texts as well. One of the major products of Kanchipuram is its specialized silk and more than 5000 families residing here are involved in silk weaving and famous for the “Kanchipuram silk Saris”.

### Tirunelveli

Another ancient city in Tamil Nadu, Tirunelveli is famous for its temples. The city is a religious and agricultural hub and thrives on tourism. The place is abundant in natural resources and has a diverse range of physical features like mountain ranges, rivers, sea coasts and forests. The temples here are of special significance as they were created in medieval times by the ruling dynasties of that era and display some brilliant architecture and stone carvings. Apart from being a monumental hub of Tamil Nadu, the city holds numerous undiscovered spots which make it a tourist haven.

## Wildlife

### Annamalai (Indira Gandhi) Wildlife Sanctuary

Annamalai also popularly known as Indira Gandhi wildlife sanctuary was set up in the year 1976. Now the sanctuary covers up a massive land area of 108 sq. kms and has acquired the status of a National Park. This moist and deciduous wet park gives you the perfect ambience of being in the lap of nature and restraining you to go back to your hustle routine. The wildlife sanctuary experiences different patterns of rainfall which is the sole reason for its diverse variants.

In the sanctuary, there are a rich number of Elephant, Leopard, Gaur, Wild boar, species of birds like Grey jungle fowl, Malabar and Great pied hornbills, Ceylon frogmouth and Malabar trogon Chital, Sambar, Muntjac and Giant Squirrel.

### Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary

Mudumalai is edged by the Wynad Wildlife Sanctuary and Bandipura Tiger Reserve. Mudumalai holds a prestigious and heritage importance as it was once a part of the temple (the Raja of the Nilambur) property of Tamil Nadu. Mudumalai is abundant with vegetation types ranging from moist deciduous to dry deciduous and dry thorn forests. Being situated in the Nilgiri hills, the place will give you the perfect set up of escapade from city noise directly to nature's best.

It is commonly popular for Asiatic Elephants and herds of these can be commonly seen along the National Highway enrooting the park. While tigers and leopards are occasionally seen here along with the varied varieties of sloth bear, barasingha, chital, gaur, wild dog, Malabar squirrels, etc.

### Kanyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary

Situated close to the town of India's terminating point Kanyakumari, this wildlife sanctuary is a heavenly treat for those who are an ardent lover of nature. This sanctuary is widespread in a massive area of approximately 402 sq. kms. The enchanting and delightful views from Keeriparai and Maraimalai Hills are surely to hold your breath and let you have the most precious memoir for your lifetime. The scenic beauty of the landscape of sanctuary soothes soul and eye of one who is on the hunt of flee from his hectic life.

This virgin environment of sanctuary is affluent in the variants of blackbuck, Indian wild dog (dhole), Bonnet Macaque, small Indian civet wild boar, jackals, Slender Loris, Jungle Cat, Sloth Bear, mongoose, Indian fox, Flying Fox, pangolin, Common Langur or Hanuman Langur, Indian Porcupine, India Hare, Nilgiri Tahr and Sambar, Nilgiri Langur Otter, Large Brown Flying Squirrel, Indian Giant Squirrel. Feel yourself lucky enough to spot rock python enroute your expedition.

### Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park

The gulf of Mannar marine national park is a must-have a bucket list for the marine fervent, it is no less than a wonder comprising a group of 21 Islands covering almost 8 KMs length of coastal lines of Tamil Nadu state in the southern part of India. The marine park established in the year 1986 attained the status as of a national level biosphere reserve in the year 1989. This biosphere is a unique marine national park which covers more than 11 species of seagrass, 3600 variants of flora and fauna including more than 100 species of hard coral. The marine lives fondly inviting you to live their blue life are the





pearl oysters, dolphins, sea-horse and many of turtles, sea cucumbers, barracuda, sprats and herrings can be found enroute the diving or snorkeling. One who loves cuddling the turtles then you can find them on the seashores. These islands are also visited by migratory birds.

## Festivals

### Pongal

The most common festival in the southern part of the Indian continent is Pongal which is a symbol of celebration and happiness of harvesting crops. The joyous celebration is a four-day-long festival wherein the state is full of enthusiasm and festivity over crop cutting which they worship like god since they earn their livelihood out of it. Agriculture is the main source of income in a nation and every corner of nation, it is celebrated with a different styles but with uniform spirit; be it Bihu, Baisakhi or Pongal. In January or sometimes in February, peasants from the state harvest their staple crop rice and others like cereals, sugar-cane and turmeric (a prime spice of the state). It is celebrated of January.

### Puthuvarusham

India is a land of a diverse culture where festivity holds great value and New Year is one such celebration. Each of the demography has its variant of months and festivity dates, and in Tamil Nadu alike any other Hindu believer observes it New Year by of April. April month here is known as the month of Chittirai, and Puthandu which falls on 14 April is the date to celebrate Puthuvarusham, a day of new beginning and year of hopes to be in. As per the festival rituals, three major fruits namely mango, banana and jack fruit, betel leaves (which has pious values in Hindu rituals), flowers, gold/silver jewels with few coins/ money. One significant aspect of this festival is placing a mirror along with other articles, the mirror is placed considering the tray to be the first vista upon waking up the next day for the new beginning of another prosperous year.

### Natyanjali Dance Festival

Art and culture is an inseparable part of state heritage and lineage. Dance is one such form of art which is considered a symbol of homage and respect paid to almighty in the Tamil Nadu state. Natyanjali Dance Festival is a major festival of state wherein a huge number of people from all around the world solicits their presence. This dance festival takes place in February or March as per the calendar scheduling of India's greatest and auspicious festival "MAHA SHIVRATRI". As per the beliefs it is said that on the 13th/14th day of lunisolar month of the Hindu calendar, Lord Shiva performed the heavenly dance of creation, preservation and destruction to

overcome the darkness.

### Thaipusam

It is not only limited to celebrating birth and anniversaries of human but in Indian culture, the birth ceremonies of their Lord is even bigger and significant. Tamil Nadu state is no exception to that and Thaipusam is one such festival. This festival is observed on the full moon day in the month of Tai as per the Tamilian calendar which lies between January mid to February mid. It is the birthday of Lord Subramaniam, who is said to be the younger son of Lord Shiva. A perfect day marked to seek forgiveness from almighty for all the misdeeds and sins conducted the entire year considering his clemency being it their birthday. With the rooted faith and belief of people upon their Lord, they take vows to be true to their spirit and afresh the start of a new chapter of life.

### Thiruvaiyaru Festival

Music is the essence of life and an integral part of every person's feelings and emotions which let him connect the soul to that supreme power on earth. Music holds immense benefaction in the state of Tamil Nadu. The music which rooted in the state during the ancient period was Pann which was mistakenly named Carnatic and is now popular as the latter only. Thiruvaiyaru is one such festival which is themed on Music and is celebrated in the honor of Saint Thyagaraja celebrated on the Pushya Bahula Panchami (in January). It is said that Pushya Bahula Panchami, Saint Thyagaraja attained Samadhi in the thiruvaiyaru town of the district of Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu. The Samadhi of this famous saint is situated on the banks of river Cauvery. Being a major musical treat to watch and pay respect to the saint, ardent music lover not only from the southern part of the country but also a nation and international democrats also attend the festival. This is a two-day festival conducting many musical sessions along with worshipping Saint Thyagaraja.-

## What to eat?

Tamil Nadu is an important part of South India and home to a potpourri of vegetarian as well as non-vegetarian cuisines. It is famous for its exclusive food culture and traditional range of cuisine, which is more commonly referred to as the 'South Indian cuisine'. The common vegetarian cuisine is Idli, sambar, vada, dosa, upma, rasam, kottu, buttermilk, chutney and curry. The non-vegetarian meal comprises of curry-based dishes of chicken, mutton or fish. The South Indian cuisine culture also has a whole array of different dishes such as 'Parota'- made of maida with kothu, 'Puliyodarai'- also known as 'Puliyogare',



'Thayirsadam', 'Thogayal', 'Appam', 'Pongal', 'Aviyal' etc. The famous sweet dishes of Tamil Nadu are Payasam, Kesari, Sweet Pongal, etc. which form a major part of the South-Indian cuisine. Whereas, among the Non-Vegetarians- The famous 'Chettinadstyle -Pepper Chicken' is very popular and is one of the best dishes of the city.

## What to shop?

Tamil Nadu is a storehouse of exuberant and famous hand-embroidered sarees of various materials and patterns. Almost each district in Tamil Nadu has its own distinctive style of sarees, which can range from cotton to the most glamorous silks. Chennai is known worldwide for its silk, embroidered sarees, hand-woven garments and other handicraft items. 'Poompuhar', the Tamil Nadu Emporium and the 'Khadi Gramodyog Bhawan' have their shops in all major cities of the state and the country as well. These two agencies extensively promote the handicraft items of Tamil Nadu. They sell exquisite handicrafts of the state and make it available to a wider berth of buyers. Mahabalipuram is quite popular with people who are fond of collecting fine pieces of sculptures. It is also known for its ancient arts and crafts including carved sculptures of Hindu deities, exquisite woodcarvings and jewellery.

## How to go?

### By Air

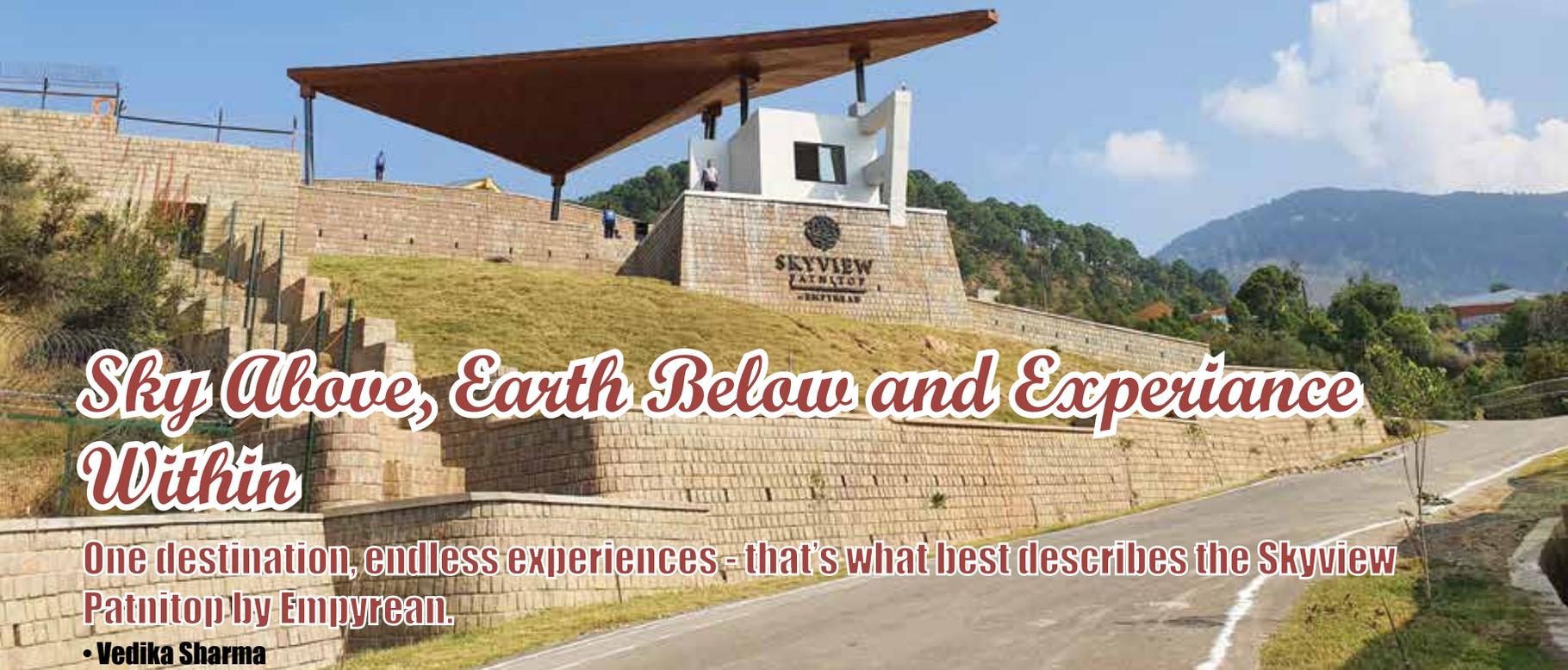
The most convenient way of reaching Tamil Nadu is by air and the most important airport is located in the capital city Chennai. The airport serves domestic as well as international airlines with ample number of flights in and out of the state on a regular basis.

### By Rail

Tamil Nadu is easily accessible by railways and the two important railway stations of the state are 'Chennai Central' and the 'Egmore Station.'

### By Road

Tamil Nadu flaunts an excellent road network and is well-connected by the services of private and government buses.



# *Sky Above, Earth Below and Experience Within*

**One destination, endless experiences - that's what best describes the Skyview Patnitop by Empyrean.**

**• Vedika Sharma**

It was my first visit to the Skyview Patnitop which was started from Jammu Airport. It took us two hours to reach the destination but I must say those two hours were too relaxing and peaceful with the awe-struck picturesque views. A journey which leaves beautiful memories forever. When we reached The Skyview Patnitop by Empyrean I found the location so magnetising from all the four corners that it can win anyone's heart. It was so welcoming.

After reaching there when we move for lunch, the food was great, freshly cooked very tasty and well presented. I love the flavors and the staff is really friendly and helpful. Being Indian, I like the fact that the food is authentic and healthy.

After lunch, we moved to experience Gondola (Cable Car/ Ropeway). The Gondola is having its two terminals, one is Sanget – the lower terminal which offers mesmerising views and second is Patnitop – the upper terminal which offers easy access to this charming town known to be the exotic epitome of natural beauty with magical meadows revealing refreshing bursts of deodar and kail trees. The first gondola ride in India that soars over treetops, the ropeway, the ride was too excited, which amaze your eyes with its splendid views, you would want to pinch yourself just to ensure it's not a dream.

Here I would like to add it's a unique destination that sprawls between Sanget and Patnitop, donning the best of sights, serenity, adventure, thrill, culture and tastes.

When we came back from Gondola we encounter with the most enthralling adventurous activities:-

### **Adrenaline Rush**

The adventure activities at Skyview Patnitop will give you a unique perspective of the majestic

Patnitop hills.

### **Magic Carpet**

Experience of going up the mountain as on escalator. It was staggeringly beautiful views of the surroundings as the magic carpet – first in India, takes you up the mountain peak.

### **Tubing Sledge**

An exhilarated ride down the mountain on a sledge.

### **Zip Line**

Asia's first largest zig zag zip line. A must-do activity when in Skyview Patnitop. The feel of a wind on the face and those beautiful views are just once in a lifetime experience.

### **In both the terminal there are so many nearby attractions to explore:**

#### **Upper Terminal Patnitop**

Soak in the ethereal beauty of the untouched and sublime surrounding lands of Patnitop.

#### **Madhatop**

Situated at an elevation of 2000 m, take a stroll through the misty Madhatop. A popular 5 km trekking experience from Patnitop, this little hill station is nestled between fog clad mountains, cedar woods and dazzling ice sheets, attracting trekkers and adventure seekers from all over the world.

#### **Sanasar**

Well known for a variety of adventure activities like ziplining, trekking, rock climbing, boating and more, Sanasar's open grounds and the mesmerising

lake offers more than just a serene escape.

### **Nathatop**

Surrounded by extensive cedar forests and snow-capped mountains, Nathatop offers a phenomenal view of the Himalayas from its pinnacle – it is a must-visit for nature lovers. Situated at a height





of 2711 m, one can indulge in activities like paragliding and skiing.

### **Baglihar Dam**

Baglihar Hydroelectric Power Plant is a river water venture on the Chenab river. Encompassed by a stunning landscape, it offers various water activities like boating and rafting. This man-made wonder draws a great deal of visitors.

### **Bhaderwah**

Often called ‘Mini Kashmir’, this scenic destination is situated at a distance of 80 km from Patnitop. From immense open grounds and feisty streams to captivating meadows and treetop houses, Bhaderwah is a resplendent retreat for all.

### **Lower Terminal Mantalai**

Fabled to be the place where Lord Shiva married Goddess Parvati, Mantalai holds profound value amongst locals and visitors alike. Set in the midst of a lofty mountain range and virgin forest, it is the perfect place for soulful enlightenment.

### **Gouri Kund**

43 km from Patnitop lies Gouri Kund, a sacred place that attracts many pilgrims every year in June to celebrate a 3-day festival. A holy dip in the ice-cold Dewaki Nadi is taken to pay homage to the gods.

### **Sudh Mahadev**

With immense religious significance and located only 5 km away from Gouri Kund, Sudh Mahadev lies on the banks of Dewaki Nadi. This place is a center for adrena-holics, as it offers exciting adventure activities like – trekking, parasailing,

paragliding, skiing and more.

### **Shiv Khori**

This famous cave is popular for its natural formation of the Shiva Lingam. Surrounded by lush green mountains, it takes a 3 km trek up to reach the main cave. It is a developing tourism destination, engulfed by majestic mountains, waterfalls and lakes.

### **Katra**

Katra is globally renowned for the holy shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi. Visited by millions of pilgrims every year, it is a thriving tourism destination with abundant restaurants, resorts and hotels.

### **Jammu**

The winter capital of J&K, also known as



**Syed Owais Altaf,**  
**Head – Strategic Alliances – Emyprean Skyview Projects Private Limited**

From relaxing in the splendour of scenic beauty to relishing the best of Indian and international cuisines and the adventure activity thrills that exist in its centre, Patnitop has it all. The pleasant summer winds, stark snow-clad mountains and a view of the Shivalik Range of the Himalayas make Patnitop a surreal experience in any season.



# Bhairabkund Tourism Festival



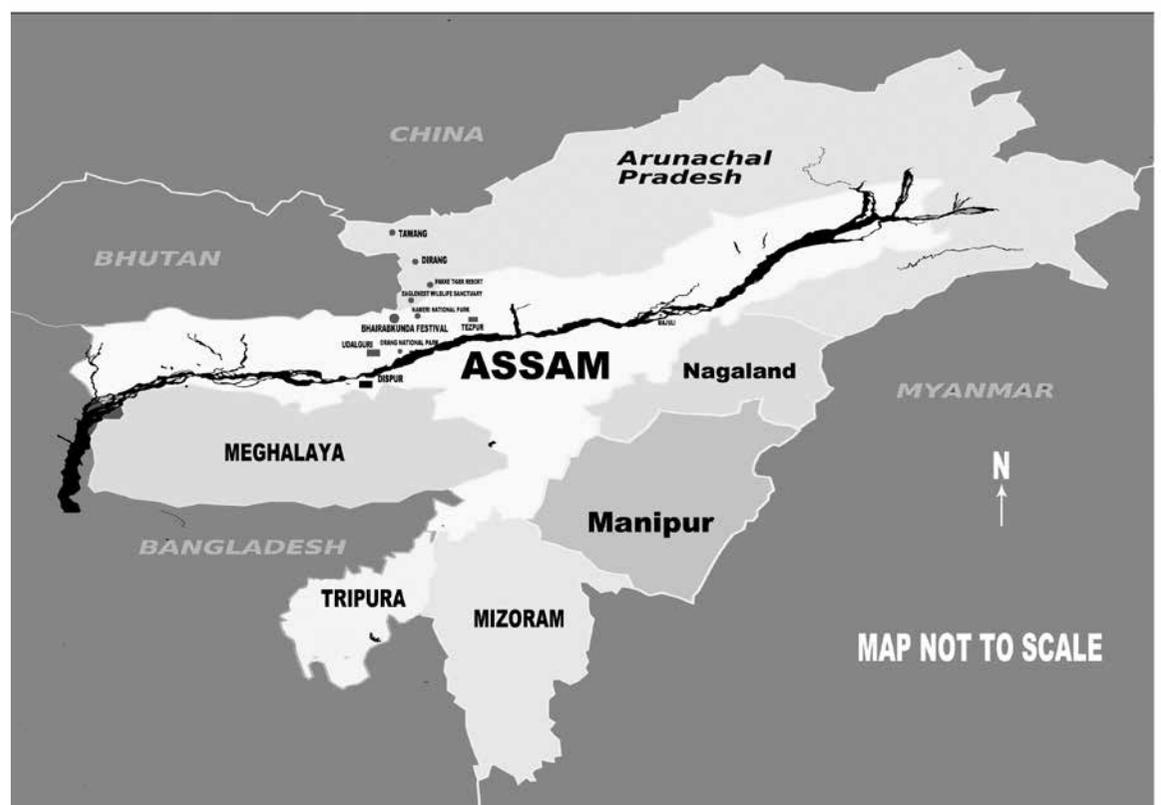
## North East India Travel believes in creating “Experience a Never Experienced Tour with NorthEastIndiaTravel.”

**N**orth East India Travel is a business unit of Pratishtha Export Private Limited based at Udalguri, Assam, India. It offers Customized Tour, Conduct Adventure Activity, Promote Tourism and Agro-Tourism in the region. North East India Travel promotes the Bhairabkund Tourism Festival. Bhairabkunda festival is going to be celebrated with a five day extravaganza which is schedule to held from 16th January 2020 to 20th January 2020 at Bhairabkunda, in the district of Udalguri, Assam to the other parts of the Country and Internationally.

The festival is aimed to tap the tourism potential of Bhairabkunda – a picturesque tri-junction located in the Himalayan foothills of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Bhutan and register its unmatched natural beauty on the tourism map of the country. Apart from North Eastern states of India people from Bhutan will also be witnessed during the festival. This is a sign of great bond of friendship between the two nations. There will be a State-level bodybuilding competition followed by fashion show, kabbadi and inter-club volleyball competition, seminar on deforestation and Agro Tourism in the region. The Seminar of Agro Tourism will be conducted on 17th January 2020 in association with North East India Travel company and the workshop will be attended by one of well known

personality Mr. Pandurang Taware. The cultural nites will begin from January 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, where local artistes and invited celebrity singers from Assam will enthrall the public. Some of the adventure activity of this festival are Elephant Safari, Jeep safari, Helicopter Ride , ATV

Ride, Para Motoring, Shooting, Hot Air Balloon, Night Camping/Bonfire etc. Nearest Tourism spot from Udalguri are Orang National Park, Tezpur, Singori, Nameri National Park, Pakke Tiger Reserve, EagleNest Wildlife Sanctuary, Dirang, Tawang, Majuli etc.





Contact : \_

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# Namastey Europe

“Joining hands always increase the strength of the participants.” - By Naveen Manchanda, Founder & CEO, Tour Passion.

• **Tarsh Sharma**

Your client base of travel agents is growing and for many travel agents Europe means Tour Passion. You have been attending so many travel shows in Europe for the last few years and we will have the opportunity to meet you at SATTE and OTM 2020 as well. What makes you so successful in your opinion?

**NM:** We are happy with our B2B journey as a European DMC. We feel that honesty with good service is the best policy. We believe in honest service and we try our best to make our travel agents happy. It's an advantage to be a European company but being Indian origin helps a lot for the B2B European market. We have the advantage of Indian origin and European exposure makes it a perfect combination for B2B Europe DMC.

Why did you choose Europe? We know that you speak 8 languages including French German Italian. And it's not very common to find multilingual people like you. We heard that due to your Swiss German language skills you managed to save the life of an Indian passenger in Switzerland and got him urgent medical help. Did your love for European languages made you choose Europe as your main Destination?

**NM:** Helping someone is to receive blessings. Anyone would have done so at my place. I presume that love for (European) languages keeps me closer to Europe. I was always and I am still in love with Europe. I speak a few European languages and I feel connected to Europe by heart.

I think your book *Namastey Europe* is getting published this month only. What is the message that you want to

convey through "Namastey Europe"?

**NM:** I think that Travellers are always ambassadors of their own country. I feel that Indian travellers need to be better informed via travel agents and on their own about the fact that their behaviour will make them "good" or "not so good" ambassadors for India. The book is a message to travellers about how to better represent their country in a foreign land. At the same time, it highlights the beauty of our emotional family culture in India towards the end. It's the beginning of a love story between an Indian woman and a French man. I would be glad to see a movie on this story someday as it has been taken from a real incident.

Do you work as a DMC for other continents or only for Europe?

**NM:** Right now we are focused on Europe and maybe soon we will expand to other continents.

We want to congratulate you on the beginning of your new venture Incredible India Reps (IIR). What are your plans for IIR?

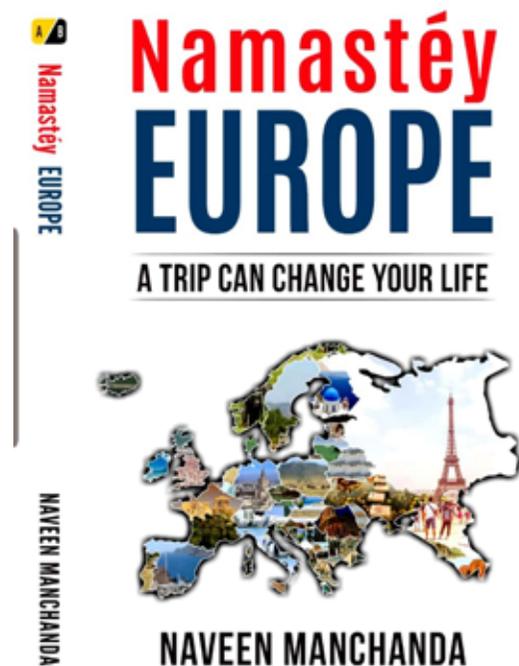
**NM:** Thanks a lot. We feel that more and more tourism entities and hotels are keen on exploring the fast- growing Indian outbound tourism market and they need guidance and support from the local specialists. This is where Incredible India reps come into the picture. We represent the foreign companies in India and we guide them about the right methodology to enter into the Indian market. We propose them marketing and sales solutions. Since we speak so many European languages, it's an easy connection and relatively seamless experience for foreign firms to have a



representative company like us.

Do you feel that you will be continuing this journey on your own or would be looking for connecting with other established tourism players for some joint ventures?

**NM:** We are open for options where the forte of different players can be combined together for mutual benefits. It can be with Indian or foreign firms as well. Joining hands always increase the strength of the participants.



## SLICE

*of life*

You believe in taking risk or plan beforehand.  
**NM:** I believe in taking risk.

Your high points.  
**NM:** My ease to learn languages and to travel solo last minute without any bookings.

Favorite industry leader  
**NM:** David Babai - founder of Gulliver's and G2

A Novel you are inspired with.  
**NM:** The five people you meet in heaven

A movie that motivates you.  
**NM:** 3 idiots

How you spend your day on day off.  
**NM:** Watching French Television

# Incredible !ndia



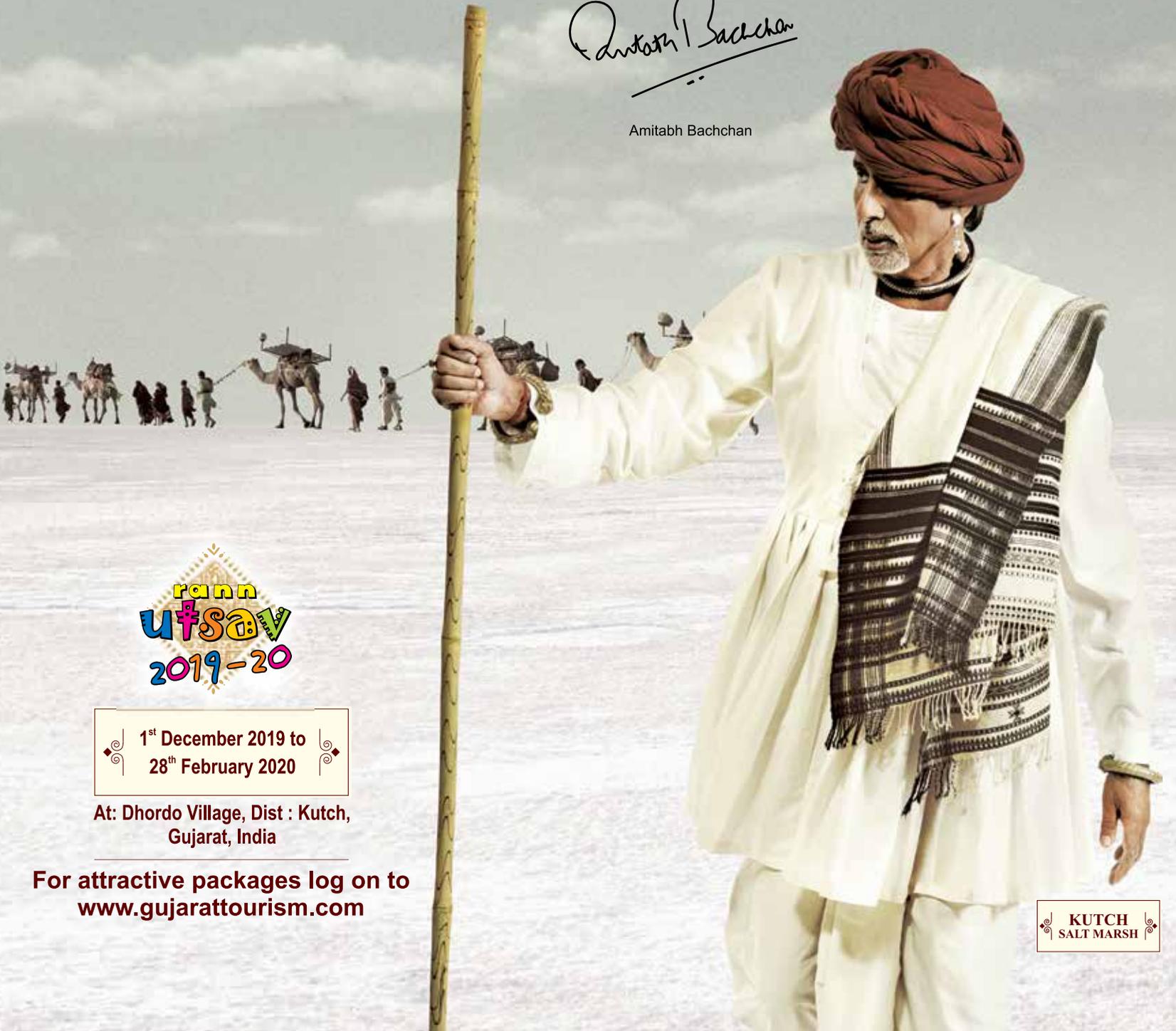
Khushboo Gujarat Ki

The sand is exactly as white as shown in this picture.  
The ocean of white sand stands out stark and pristine in its  
colourlessness, interrupted only by passing hoards of camels.  
On moonlit nights, the desert reveals another colour.  
Something that can hardly be described in words.

Which colour of Kutch will catch your eye?  
Maybe one that I couldn't find!

*Amitabh Bachchan*

Amitabh Bachchan



**rann  
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2019-20**

1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 to  
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**KUTCH  
SALT MARSH**

## Doorstep service for Italian visa

VFS Global has launched the Mobile Biometrics service for Italian visa customers across India, enabling them to submit applications, documents, and enrol biometrics from the comfort of their office or any location of their choice, making it more convenient than ever before.

This 'doorstep' service can be delivered to individuals and groups living in all cities in India. A team of trained VFS Global staff will visit the customer at the location of their choice to collect their visa application and enrol biometric data. They will also be available to assist with any visa application queries, ensuring the application process is fast, convenient and stress-free. Submissions from large tour groups, business delegates and school trips wishing to travel to Italy, will especially benefit from this new service, as the applicants will not be required to visit a Visa Application Centre to

submit their applications.

The documents, once processed with the visa decision will be returned by courier to the customer's desired location. The Mobile Biometrics service is optional and applicants will have to pay an additional fee.

### Rise in travel to Italy

The service has been introduced in view of the rise in travel to Italy from India. According to the Embassy of Italy in India, around 555,000 travellers from India visited Italy in 2019, an increase of 15% over the previous year.



Vincenzo de Luca, the Ambassador of Italy

The launch of this new service completes the rich offer of Visa services for the Indian public. It will allow companies and individuals to submit their visa applications for Italy literally 'in house'.

In just one year, the Italian visa offer in India has been thoroughly updated. The mobile collection of biometric data is in fact added to the widest VAC network for collecting visa applications in India, the option of presenting the applications via dropboxes pan-India, the free VFS Global Italy app to monitor in real time the status of the application, and three exclusive Casa Italia Visa lounges in New Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata.

## Maldives: 105.1% increase of Indian travellers

Latest figures from the Ministry of Tourism, Maldives showed a 105.1% increase in the number of travellers from India who visited the island nation in the first nine months of 2019 when compared with the same period in 2018.

Maldives welcomed a total of 115,507 Indian visitors from January to September 2019 and this represents an increase of 105.1% when compared with 2018, which welcomed 56,319 visitors. In September 2019, an increase of 114.8% was recorded with 11,265 visitors as compared with September 2018, which welcomed 5,244 visitors.

The Indian market has been one of the fastest-growing markets to the Maldives, climbing 9.2% in share and ranked second in arrivals in the month of September 2019.

Commenting on the increase of tourist arrivals, Managing Director of MMPRC, Mr. Thooyib Mohamed said, "We are very pleased to see a notable increase in the number of Indian arrivals. Various marketing campaigns such as Radio, Cinema, OOH campaigns, and partnerships with Make My Trip are being done to make an explosive marketing push in 2019. Additionally, regular webinars are also being conducted to educate the travel agents regarding Maldives exclusive one island-one resort policy,

Free Visa-on-Arrival for all nationalities, Hotel/Resorts, attractions, etc. We are sure that these will help us attract more visitors in the last month of 2019. With a new direct flight also commencing from Dec 1, between India and Maldives -- we have a very positive outlook for the year-end."



## Abu Dhabi Music Week

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) has unveiled the first edition of Abu Dhabi Music Week, a pioneering platform for music fans and professionals set to launch in March 2020 in the UAE Capital.

The first edition of the Music Week will focus on electronic dance music, also known as EDM, featuring global electronic music festival Ultra. The week will also include city-wide international and local music events and activations at some of Abu Dhabi's key attractions, including the inaugural DJ Mag Middle East conference.

Commenting on the hosting of the landmark music platform in the UAE capital, Saeed Al Saeed, Destination Marketing Director at the Department of Culture and Tourism, said: "Abu Dhabi Music Week is a lively celebration of music that is set to be the first of its kind in the Middle East. We believe in the power of music to unite people of all backgrounds. Therefore, we created Abu Dhabi Music Week to demonstrate our



commitment to providing our residents and visitors alike with unforgettable experiences. We are proud to be hosting the first Middle East editions of the globally acclaimed Ultra Music Festival and the prestigious DJ Mag Middle East conference and we look forward to announcing several more exciting additions to the Week in the future."

One of the world's top electronic music festivals, Ultra was founded in 1999 in Miami, Florida, and has attracted over 170,000 attendees in its 2019 edition. Having taken place across the world in locations such as South Africa, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Mexico, Brazil, Croatia, Australia and others, Abu Dhabi will host the first ever Ultra Music Festival in the Middle East.



# Airline Demise of the year 2019

In the year 2019, a number of well-known airline brands have disappeared from the aviation landscape.

• **Tarsh Sharma**

## California Pacific

Shut down its operations on 16th January of 2019.

California Pacific Airlines was an American regional airline that was headquartered on the grounds of McClellan-Palomar Airport in Carlsbad, California.

In December 2018, California Pacific Airlines announced that it was temporarily suspending its West Coast flight operations. The carrier's EAS operations were not affected. In January 2019, the EAS operations were shut down as well, leaving South Dakota cities Pierre (the capital) and Watertown without any commercial air service. Employees were all put on indefinite furlough January 18; anonymous employees said that they were not paid for the last half of December or for January and that their health insurance premiums had not been paid for three months.



## Germania

Shut down its operations on 5th February of 2019.

Germania is a privately owned German airline that serves scheduled flights to Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Germania flies to 63 domestic and international destinations in 20 countries and owns the low-cost carrier Germania Express. It blamed rising fuel prices and currency fluctuations as two factors.

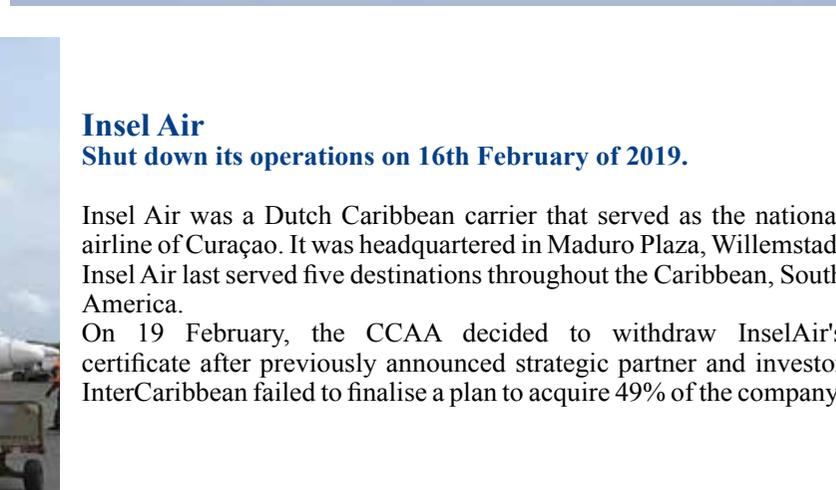
In December 2018, it was reported that the airline had suffered heavy losses in recent years, especially during 2018 and that its owners were seeking potential buyers for the airline. Germania eventually ceased flight operations without previous notice in the night from 4 to 5 February 2019 and declared bankruptcy for itself and its technical and service divisions.



## Flybmi

Shut down its operations on 16th February of 2019.

Flybmi, styled as flybmi, legally British Midland Regional Limited and formerly branded as bmi Regional, was a British regional airline that operated scheduled passenger services across the UK and Europe. UK regional airline flybmi has gone into administration, blaming "insurmountable" challenges caused by Brexit and dealing another blow to the UK's aviation sector.



## Insel Air

Shut down its operations on 16th February of 2019.

Insel Air was a Dutch Caribbean carrier that served as the national airline of Curaçao. It was headquartered in Maduro Plaza, Willemstad. Insel Air last served five destinations throughout the Caribbean, South America.

On 19 February, the CCAA decided to withdraw InselAir's certificate after previously announced strategic partner and investor InterCaribbean failed to finalise a plan to acquire 49% of the company.

**Wow Air**  
**Shut down its operations on 28th March of 2019.**

WOW air was a low-cost carrier based in Reykjavík, Iceland. The airline flies to more than 30 destinations in Europe, North America and Asia. Due to the market share of WOW air on the Icelandic air travel market, the airline's bankruptcy caused some disruption in the travel plans of multiple expected visitors. The loss of flights harmed Iceland's tourism and fishing-dependent economy and caused an increase in unemployment; the airline previously delivered over one-fourth of all visitors to Iceland, and its failure caused tourist visits to drop 16 percent overall and 20 percent from the United States, prompting a decline in a vacation home and hotel construction.



**Aerolíneas de Antioquía**  
**Shut down its operations on 29th March of 2019.**

Aerolínea de Antioquia was a regional airline headquartered at the Olaya Herrera Airport in Medellín, Colombia. At its peak, the airline operated scheduled domestic services from Medellín to over 20 destinations. The airline ceased operating in Mar-2019 citing financial issues. It was founded in 1987.



**Fly Jamaica Airways**  
**Shut down its operations on 31st March of 2019.**

Fly Jamaica Airways was a Jamaican airline headquartered in Kingston, Jamaica. On March 31, 2019, Fly Jamaica Airways suspended operations and made all employee positions redundant due to the lack of aircraft. The airline had been trying to recover after one of its aircraft crash-landed at Guyana's Cheddi Jagan International Airport in November 2018. The airline operated scheduled services on a domestic network using Embraer ERJ 145 aircraft. It ceased its operations due to financial crises.



**Al Naser Wings Airlines**  
**Shut down its operations on 16th April of 2019.**

Al Naser Wings Airlines formerly known as Al-Naser Airlines was a small Iraqi airline based in Karrada, Baghdad, Iraq. The airline operated scheduled domestic flights to places in the Middle East, mostly to Damascus, Syria. On February 24th, Al Naser Wings filed for bankruptcy, and on 16 April 2019, the airline ceased all flight operations.



**Jet Airways**  
**Shut down its operations on 17th April of 2019.**

Jet Airways was the second-largest airline by passengers till January this year in the domestic market and was also flying more passengers than national carrier Air India to overseas destinations from India. The shutting down of the company affected their 20,000 employees and more than 60,000 people indirectly. The company is reportedly in debt of default of Rs 8,000 crores.



**Aigle Azur**  
**Shut down its operations on 6th September of 2019.**

Aigle Azur was a French airline based and headquartered at Paris Orly Airport. The airline operated scheduled flights from France to 21 destinations across Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, with a fleet of Airbus A320 family and A330 aircraft. The airline filed for bankruptcy and was placed in receivership on 2 September 2019. Takeover bids were received, but none proved viable and the airline was liquidated by the court on 27 September 2019.

**Thomas Cook Airline**  
**Shut down its operations on 23rd September of 2019.**

Thomas Cook Airlines Limited was a British charter and scheduled airline headquartered in Manchester, England. It was founded in 2007 from the merger of Thomas Cook Group and MyTravel Group and was part of the Thomas Cook Group Airlines. Thomas Cook Group plc and all UK entities including Thomas Cook Airlines entered compulsory liquidation on 23 September 2019.



**XL Airways**  
**Shut down its operations on 23rd September of 2019.**

XL Airways France, formerly Star Airlines, was a French airline with its head offices on the grounds of Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport. It operated scheduled flights mainly to long-haul destinations in Africa, the Middle East, the United States and the Caribbean as well as charter flights to medium-haul destinations in the Mediterranean, mostly out of Charles de Gaulle Airport. On 19 September 2019, XL Airways announced the suspension of all flights as of 23 September; ticket sales ceased immediately and the company was placed under legal receivership and subsequently wound up.



**TAM**  
**Shut down its operations on 23rd September of 2019.**

TAM – Transporte Aéreo Militar (Military Air Transport) was an airline based in La Paz, Bolivia. It was owned by the Bolivian Air Force and was established to offer flights to rural communities where commercial airlines could not operate profitably. It also operated in competition with commercial airlines on many of Bolivia's trunk domestic routes. TAM has provided invaluable passenger and cargo services to remote destinations within the country since 1953. Transporte Aéreo Militar was deemed by the Telecommunications and Transportation Regulation and Control Authority (ATT) not to have obtained sufficient flight certifications.



**Peruvian Airlines**  
**Shut down its operations on 2nd October of 2019.**

Peruvian Airlines was a Peruvian airline based in Lima. Peruvian Airlines suspended all flights and closed offices due to a “lack of liquidity”. The airline says that the bank's action caused a liquidity shortage that affected all operations. It adds it could not recover from the situation and was forced to suspend all flights until further notice.



**Far Eastern Air Transport**  
**Shut down its operations on 13th December of 2019.**

Established in 1957, it operated domestic services from Taipei and Kaohsiung to five regional cities and international services to Southeast Asia, South Korea and Palau. Its main base was Taipei Songshan Airport. After a succession of financial crises in early 2008, the airline publicly announced its bankruptcy and stopped all flights with effect from 13 May 2008. The airline recommenced operations on 18 April 2011. The airline emerged from bankruptcy restructuring on 16 October 2015. The airline continued to face financial problems, and operations were halted from 13 December 2019.



### 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  
- Baliguda  
- Rayagada - Jypore - Rayagada -  
Gopalpur - Puri - Bhubaneswar



### Buddhist Temple with North East India Tour

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

# Travok

*your journey is safe with us...*





## Success of UDAN – RCS

### Booming success of Aviation industry under UDAN-RCS.

#### Air Traffic Flow Management Control and Command Center (ATFM-CCC)

New Air Traffic Flow Management Control and Command Center (ATFM-CCC) with state of art displays has been operationalized at Vasant Kunj, New Delhi in June, 2019. ATFM Implementation - Nationwide Central Air Traffic Flow Management [ATFM] system operational since 2017. The Central Command Center (CCC) has become operational from Vasant Kunj premises from 22nd June 2019. The CCC is supported by Flow Management Positions (FMPs) at all major airports (36 in number) which include 8 defence airports. The ATFM system monitors the air traffic flow at all major airports and across all airspace sectors. Whenever any air traffic overload conditions are predicted at any airports / airspace sectors, the ATFM managers, proactively implement ATFM regulations (by delaying the aircraft on ground at departure airports) so that the traffic overloads are “managed”. Thus, ATFM helps in maintaining safety while ensuring optimal use of airports and airspace. India also has hosted the ICAO APAC ATFM Steering group meeting in Delhi in May 2018 wherein 13 APAC countries participated.

#### CNS/ATM modernization roadmap for India

In May 2019, Boeing and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) have signed a technical assistance agreement for developing a comprehensive 10- year Communication, Navigation and Surveillance/Air Traffic Management (CNS/ATM) modernization roadmap for India. The objective of the agreement is to develop a roadmap for AAI to use as guidance in the modernization of the Indian National Airspace System (NAS) based on global and local best practices to optimally utilize airspace capacity, enhance communications and invest in navigation, surveillance and air traffic management. This

18- month project will be undertaken with a grant from the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA). AAI has formed a Technical Working Group (TWG) comprising of nominated members from Airlines, Airport Operators, DGCA, IAF, IMD and AAI officers to jointly work with Boeing experts during the project. The first kick-off meeting took place at Delhi from 22nd to 25th July 2019.

#### Airports - AAI airports awarded ‘in principle’ on PPP

'In principle' approval for leasing out of 6 airports of AAI i.e. Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram, Lucknow and Mangaluru through Public Private Partnership (PPP). Letter of Award has been issued on 15.07.2019 in respect of three airports viz. Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Mangaluru to the highest bidder for a period of 50 years. Thiruvananthapuram, Guwahati and Jaipur airports are yet to be awarded. The proposal for leasing of next round of airports viz. Bhubaneswar, Varanasi, Indore, Amritsar, Raipur and Trichy Airports through PPP got recommended by AAI Board for which Transaction Advisor is being finalized.

#### AAI's Futuristic Telecommunications Infrastructure initiative

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has awarded M/s Harris, USA, a 15-year, Rs. 945 Crores contract on Build Own Operate (BOO) Model to serve as the prime contractor and systems integrator for AAI's Futuristic Telecommunications Infrastructure initiative. The initiative will upgrade Communication network operations, enhance security and improve the performance, reliability and quality of India's air traffic management (ATM) telecommunications network. This communication backbone infrastructure will also play a pivotal role in deployment of Remote Towers for managing air

traffic services at RCS airports

#### Digital Initiatives

##### • eGCA

The function & process of DGCA is being moved to an online platform to provide faster delivery of services & regulation oversight. The first module on pilot licensing shall be launched in December 2019.

##### • DigiSky

DigiSky online portal has been launched for flying Civil Drones. The Beta version of DigiSky is available and captures the entire gamut of activities relating to drones viz. registration of drones and pilots, approval of flight path, post flight analysis etc. based on the distinctive features of No Permission No Take off (NPNT).

##### • E-sahaj

100% security clearances pertaining to the Ministry have been made online on E-sahaj online portal launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The portal is operational for granting clearances in respect of 24 categories.

##### • DigiYatra

Trial for rollout of DigiYatra has been started at Bengaluru and Hyderabad airports. It envisages seamless and hassle free passenger travel using biometric technologies to improve passenger experience, reduce queue waiting time as passengers can walk through e-gates. It will remove redundancies at check points and enhance resource utilization.

##### • Dashboard of MoCA

The Dashboard of Ministry of Civil Aviation was developed on 17 August 2019. It provides real-time data across a number of parameters on air transportation, including RCS-UDAN.

• **Aviation Job Portal (<https://aviationjobs.co.in>)**

A unique web-based portal, which seeks to bring together job seekers and prospective employers in the Indian civil aviation sector.

• **Air Sewa**

An initiative by MoCA to bring all aviation stakeholders to a common platform so as to address the grievances of the air travellers. The status of the issues raised can be tracked online. The platform also provides updated flight status and is linked to social media.

• **Lost & Found online portal (<https://www.aai.aero/en/lost-found/item-list>)**

Lost & Found online portal has been commissioned in June 2019 to ease out the passenger claiming process for Lost & found Property.

**Tallest ATC tower**

Delhi Air Traffic Service Complex (DATS-Complex) - country's tallest Air Traffic Control tower has been inaugurated on 02.09.2019 at the Indira Gandhi International Airport. This iconic infrastructure will ensure up-scaled services and systems for efficient, smooth and uninterrupted air traffic management.

**Construction of Hindon and Kalaburagi Airport**

New airports built at Hindon, Ghaziabad (U.P.) and Kalaburagi, Karnataka and made operational.

**Robust growth in Aviation Fleet**

Aviation sector has seen a robust growth despite grounding of Jet Airways. After discontinuance of operations of Jet Airways, major scheduled airlines were operating 529 aircrafts. The total number of operational aircraft of major scheduled airlines is 624 which is more than the aircraft operational at the time of when Jet was functional.

**Amendments in the AERA ACT, 2008**

Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India Act, 2008 has been amended, now the threshold annual passenger traffic criteria

for classifying 'major airport' is 'three and half million'. The Authority shall adopt the tariff in respect of an airport if such tariff has been notified by the central Government as a part of the bidding document or has been determined through transparent process of bidding in accordance with the guidelines issued by the central Government.

**Security component of ASF rationalized**

Aviation Security Fee (ASF), charged as a part of passenger fare, has been rationalized and a National Trust has been created to pool all the ASF collections across airports. The trust is to be managed by AAI. The collection of ASF in a single pool account will serve the purpose of cross subsidizing the smaller airports of AAI.

**Inflight WiFi Connectivity**

Inflight WiFi connectivity standards have been established and necessary security requirements worked out.

**Ban of Single use Plastic**

Airports Authority of India has declared 85 airports as Single Use Plastic Free airports. Air India is in process of procuring items made of alternate material as a substitute for various plastic inflight catering items.

The CAP Directorate of AAI, which was established in 2017, has been nominated as Nodal Point for coordination with DGCA on licencing issues and implementation of licencing of controllers of AAI. Since examination and assessment tasks in respect of controllers are complex and require a high level of experience and expertise in the area of air traffic control. These tasks have been delegated to AAI under the oversight of DGCA. These high level specialized tasks are being done by the Directorate of CAP in AAI.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation, after ICAO audit under Universal Safety Audit Oversight Program (USOAP) and **Coordinated Validation Mission (ICVM)**, decided to licence air traffic controllers in India. The Aircraft Rules 1937 was amended on

5th November, 2018 enabling licensing of controllers by the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

**UDAN-RCS**

- 134 routes commenced from 1.1.2019 to 10.12.2019
- 10 Airports operationalized in 2019 (till 07.12.2019) out of which 4 airports are underserved and 6 airports are unserved.
- **Underserved** – Lilabari, Belgaum, Pantnagar & Durgapur.
- **Unserved** – Kullu, Kalaburgi, Kannar, Dimapur, Hindon & Pithoragarh.
- 335 routes awarded during the year 2019 covering 33 airports (20 unserved, 3 underserved, 10 water aerodromes).
- 34,74,000 approx. numbers of passengers were flown under RCS-UDAN Scheme till date. It has a direct bearing on major Airports since the smaller airports have been connected to various big cities. The travelling time has reduced drastically and public at large is benefitted for the purpose of tourism, medical emergencies and religious shrines, etc.
- Rs. 304.49 crores has been spent for upgradation of existing and new airports from April to November, 2019.
- Belgaum, Prayagraj, Kishangarh, Hubli & Jharsuguda are the busiest airports commenced under UDAN.



## Agreement between SriLankan Airlines and Gulf Air

SriLankan Airlines, the national carrier of Sri Lanka, and Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, have entered into a codeshare partnership with effect from 18th December 2019, significantly enhancing the travel options of their respective valued customers.

Under this agreement, SriLankan Airlines will place its 'UL' code on Gulf Air's flights from Bahrain to Colombo, the Greek capital Athens and Larnaca in Cyprus. Gulf Air will in turn place its 'GF' code on SriLankan Airlines' flights from Colombo to Bahrain. Mr. Vipula Gunatilleka, SriLankan Airlines' Group Chief Executive Officer added: "We are pleased to enter into this codeshare agreement with Gulf Air. It is part of our strategy to create and strengthen partnerships with airlines of global reputation in terms of quality, service and reliability and we have no doubt that our valued passengers will enjoy their travel with Gulf Air." Mr. Krešimir Kučko, Gulf Air's Chief Executive Officer said: "We are happy to sign with SriLankan Airlines and increase number of direct flights between the Kingdom of Bahrain and Sri Lanka". He also added: "With our strong network in the Europe and North Africa, SriLankan Airlines can now

offer more destinations to their passengers through our flights with one stop in our fast and efficient hub, Bahrain International Airport".

The codeshare agreement followed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two airlines and is also intended to further strengthen the longstanding friendship between the two nations of Sri Lanka and Bahrain.

SriLankan is a member of the oneworld global airline partnership, which connects travellers to over 1,000 cities in 160 countries through its oneworld world-class airlines. It is firmly established as one of the leading airlines in the Indian Ocean region, being the largest carriers to both Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and the largest foreign airline in India, with its hub in Colombo.

## Airport Journey Research

Happy travellers are more likely to spend their hard-earned money at the airport, according to new research from Collinson.

The international findings show that in order to increase passenger dwell time and spend, airports and their ecosystem of travel-related businesses and brands must make traveller satisfaction – across the entire journey – a paramount concern.

Collinson's 'Airport Journey' global report surveyed 6,667 people across 11 countries in the Americas, EMEA, and APAC to track evolving traveller preferences and behaviours, and learn more about travellers' satisfaction with the airport experience.

The research found that overall, traveller satisfaction with the airport experience is on the rise. In 2019, 63% of global travellers say they enjoy the airport experience, a jump of 13 percentage points from 2018 when

only 50% of travellers said the same\*. However, there is a significant gulf between traveller satisfaction in Asia and the Middle East, compared to the US and Europe. On average, three in four travellers (74%) across markets like India, China and the UAE enjoy the airport experience, compared to less than half (48%) across markets like the US, the UK and Germany.

The polarisation in airport experience should concern airports and their ecosystem of businesses, because the research also found that happy travellers spend more. Nearly nine in 10 (88%) travellers who routinely spend over US\$200 at the airport say the airport experience is an enjoyable part of the journey. On the other hand, the least satisfied travellers are also the ones who spend less than US\$28, amongst whom only 40% say they enjoy the airport experience.

## Avianca Airlines partners with FirstHive

FirstHive announced that it will begin deployment of its Intelligent Customer Data Platform as part of a pilot program aimed to help Avianca Airlines improve customer behavior understanding.

Under this initiative, Avianca Airlines bets on strengthening its competitive edge by enhancing their customer's experience throughout every stage of their journey. During the first phase of the project, FirstHive will showcase its customer identity creation using a range of Avianca's online and offline Customer Data Streams to create Unified Customer Personas. FirstHive's proprietary AI/ML-powered

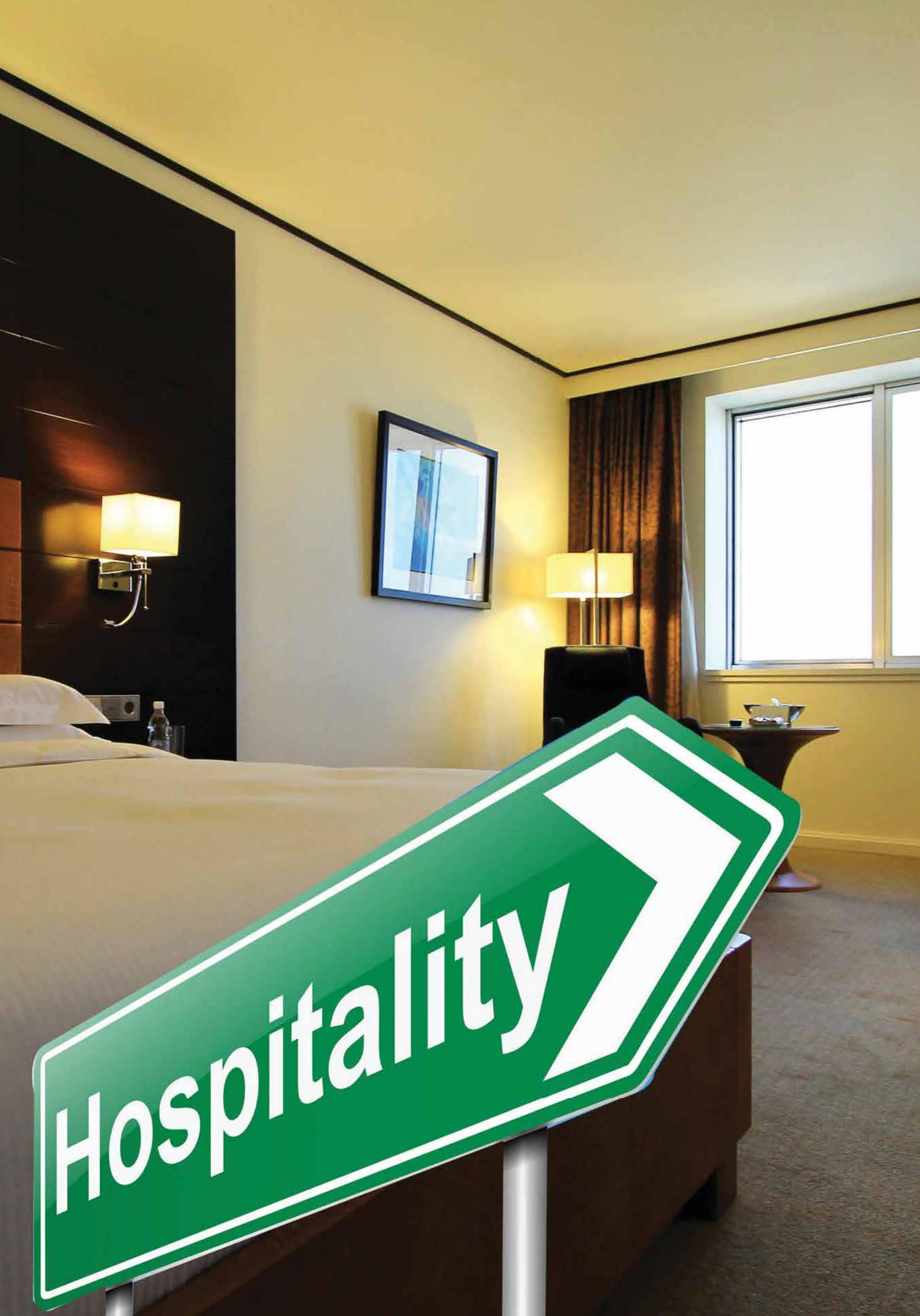
prediction and recommendation engine will also help Avianca surprise and delight its customers by providing hyper-personalized user experiences. Banking on FirstHive's 'identity engineering approach', the disruptive organisation is eyeing a 30-fold growth in the next 30 months. Optimizing the personalized journey of millions of consumers simultaneously at the same time to magnificently amplify ROI is what FirstHive delivers.

### Andres Waldraff, Avianca's Director of Analytics

We are excited to partner with FirstHive in this project. FirstHive will help us map customer behavior and correlate it to their circumstance, to deliver enhanced and personalized travel experiences throughout our journey.

### Aditya Bhamidipaty, CEO, FirstHive's

Enhancing customer delight has been the cornerstone of FirstHive. We are honored to partner with Avianca Airlines and showcase our award-winning AI/ML technology combined with our expert customer success team to help Avianca achieve its high levels of customer experience objectives.



Hospitality



# Fusion of Rajasthani Culture and Hospitality

A lifetime experience awaits the guests at this exclusive Luxury Resort & Spa nestled in the deep dunes at Kanoi Village in Sam.

• Tarsh Sharma



**D**esert Springs Resort in Jaisalmer is like an oasis amidst the flawless sand dunes. The resort is a luxury desert camp, located near Kanoi Village, where you can experience the nomadic spirit, albeit with some style and pomp.

Desert Springs is “the” place in Sam Dunes to experience the colourful and valiant history of the Thar Deserts amidst luxury and comfort.

This traditional Rajasthani tented camp welcomes you with all the modern amenities to ensure a comfortable and a “Maharaja-like” stay. You can relax at the Spa with a variety of services to choose from or indulge in capturing the desert in your cameras or simply enjoy in your air conditioned tents with every amenity inside.

Embark on a Rajasthani journey with the Camel safari upto the sunset point where you get to watch the Sun immerse in the golden sands of the desert. You can also opt for the SUV/Jeep safari and get into dune bashing to dig into spectacular deep deserts.

As the night winds down, a bonfire lits up the vast skies, Desert Springs Resort is the only place to experience exhilarating cultural performances and live Rajasthani music with celebrated dancers and expert musicians. There is a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks to choose from while BBQ and snacks are served. A ready feast is spread out with Rajasthani delicacies and a lavish buffet right under the

moonlight and millions of stars.

Retire to the well decked up tents and tuck yourselves into the bed to start a fresh new day to proceed to the next destination. We assure you that the experience of the Golden Deserts would have never been this luxurious and memorable ever before.

### **Jhankaar - Fun & Food Zone at Desert Springs Resort, Jaisalmer**

The highlight of your stay with Desert Spring is their cultural program combined with dine-in experience called "Jhankaar -Fun & Food Zone" embraces your senses with mesmerising calmness.

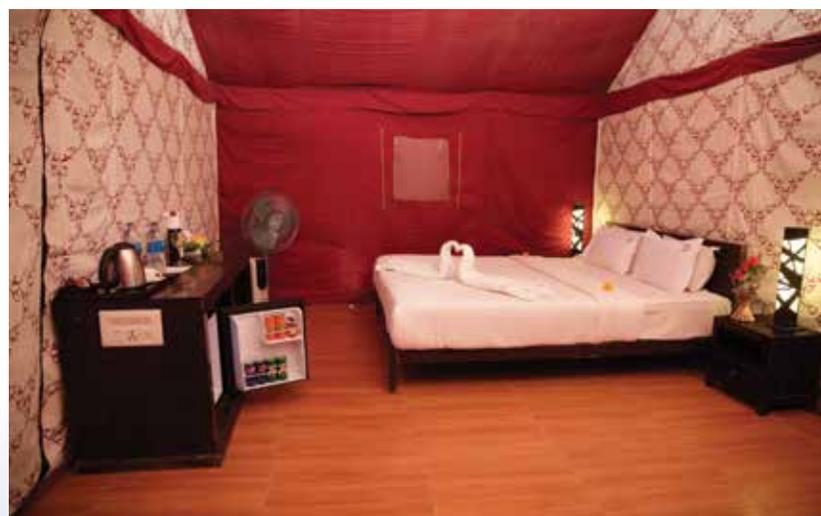
Feel the romance of a starlit sky in the desert with colourful folk performances from local artists while they serve you with the best of Rajasthani and global cuisines straight from the chef's oven!

### **MICE**

Who says you cannot do business in the middle of a desert?

Desert Spring also have a Conference Hall for those offsite professional sit outs. Desert Spring conference Hall ‘Baithak’ gives you the right environment for group discussions and meetings.

The hall comes with all amenities and services to aid and assist your business. Audio visual equipment and internet connectivity are also facilitated on request.



# Indian legacy and culture

A joint venture between ITC Ltd and Jodhana Heritage, established in the year 1997, "WelcomHeritage" represents the finest traditions of heritage hospitality and tourism in India.

Today, WelcomHeritage offers unique properties, ranging from Grand Palaces to traditional Havelis to Magnificent Forts and quiet Nature Resorts, spread across exclusive destinations in 16 States and Union Territories. Sitting in regal poise all over the country, all of these destinations are gateways to the finest of "Indian legacy and culture". One of the latest additions which is flagged to its profile is WH Mount Valley Resort, a premium resort in the serene land of Ranthambore.

Situated in Sawai Madhopur district of south-eastern Rajasthan, about 110 km northeast of Kota and 140 km southeast of Jaipur; Ranthambore is a national park in northern India, covering 282 sq. km. Known for its picturesque landscape and offcourse Bengal tigers, it's a popular place in India to see the majestic animal in its natural jungle habitat. Ranthambore is also counted as the famous heritage site because of the pictorial ruins that dot the wildlife park. All in all it's a perfect destination for wildlife lovers and caters to a number of tourists round the year.

To cater this influx, WelcomHeritage has flagged a property in the periphery of Ranthambore National Park with the name of WelcomHeritage Mount Valley Resort. A property that is cozily nuzzled amidst the enchanting surroundings of breathtaking hilly terrain beside the dense forest of the famous Ranthambore National Park, the beautiful

WelcomHeritage Mount Valley Resort offers a tranquil holiday away from the hustle and bustle of the city life. Built in a traditional Rajput Heritage Haveli style; it is a resort that not only has spectacular view of mount trails but gives an experience of the Indian heritage. The basic idea behind the resort is combining comfort with nature.

The resort comprises of 28 tastefully designed rooms divided into 2 categories – Super Deluxe and Deluxe. The rooms are spacious and are equipped with all basic amenities including mini bar, safe, LED television with satellite channels, tea/coffee maker etc. Each room has a connected bathroom, equipped with all amenities. The USP of these rooms is the view from them. Each room gives a brilliant view of beautifully landscaped garden overlooking the Aravalli range; and have a sitting area where one can relax and enjoy the mesmerizing view of the sunset.

Mount Valley Resort enhances the experience of one's stay with its lip smacking flavours. The hotel has an F&B outlet, Jharokha - with a seating capacity of 75 people, the restaurant serves North Indian, South Indian, Chinese & continental cuisines.

The resort features a swimming pool. Guest can also enjoy a relaxing time in the Spa at the vicinity. One can do all sorts of activities in the

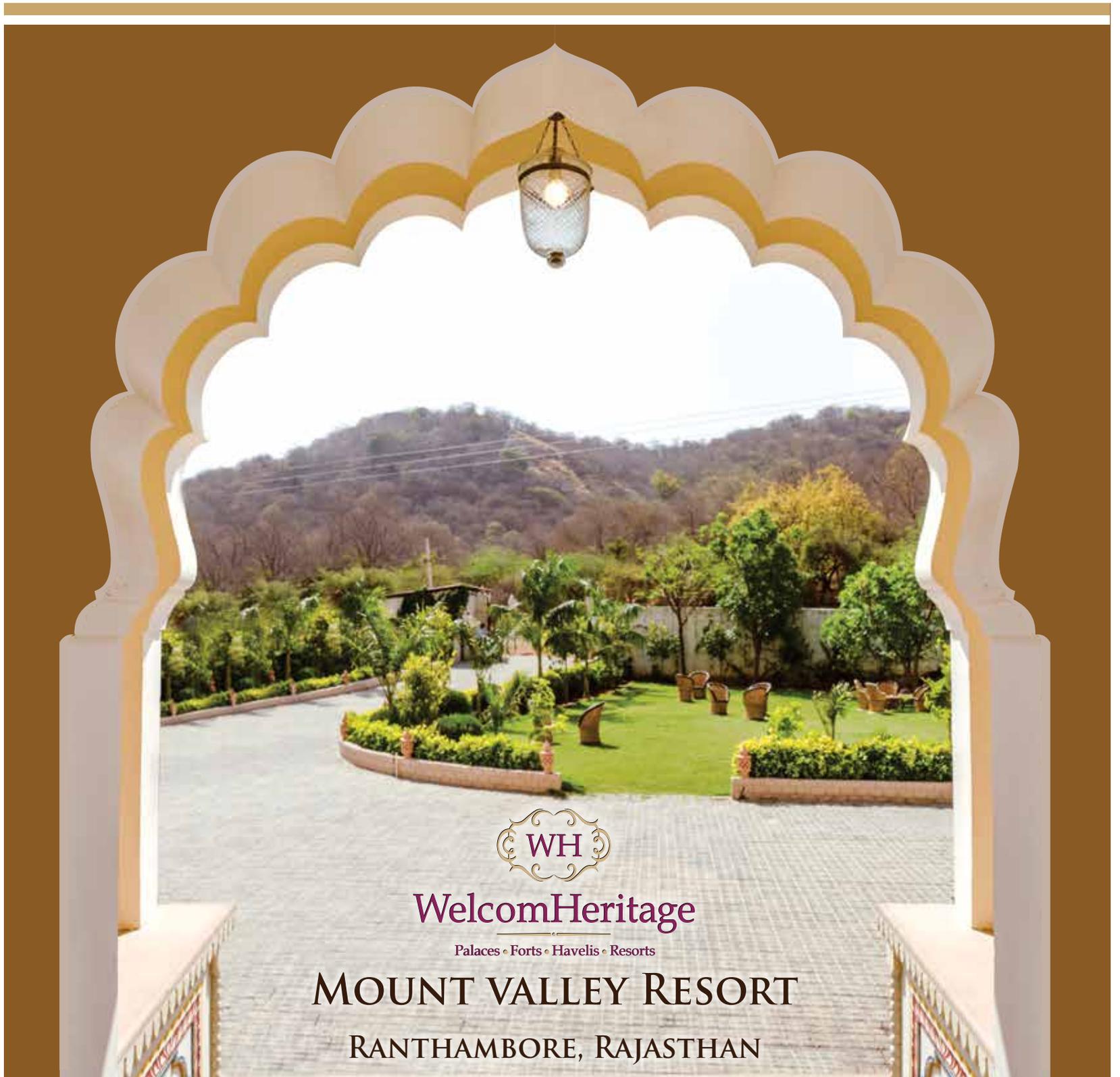
resort, right from playing indoor games like carom or ludo to having fun outdoors like going for a nature walk, flying kites, bird watching and so on. The resort also organizes special folk dance performance. In all terms the resort is perfect for a family stay.

Mount Valley Resort has a conference/ banquet hall that can accommodate 200 people in floating style. Apart from that, the resort also features 2 landscaped gardens – Mountain View Garden and Pool View Garden with a capacity of 350 and 200 people respectively. All these make Mount Valley Resort a great destination for any corporate event or a "small and intimate" themed destination wedding.

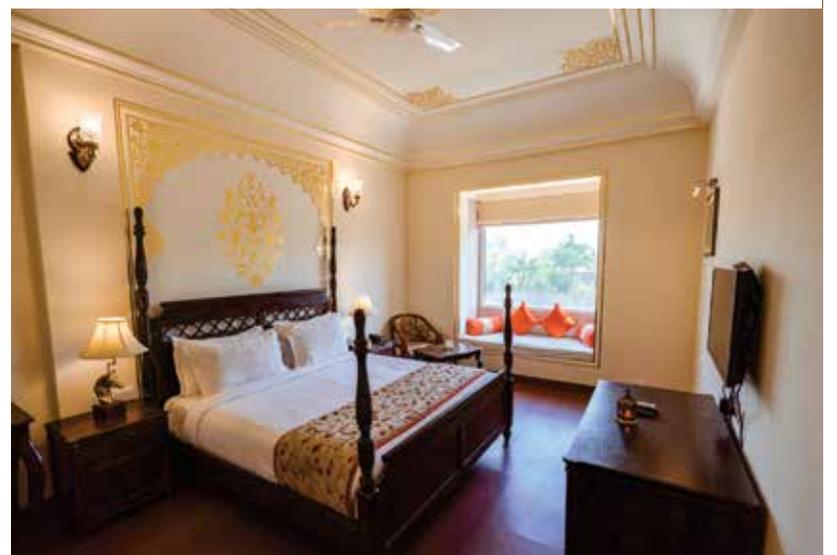
Things are not only fun in the resort, but around it also. Guests can take a safari to the Ranthambore National Park and experience the view of the royal Bengal tiger for real, as the forest has a high probability of spotting a tiger in round the year. Guests can also visit the Ranthambore Fort, Mansarovar Dam and Kundal Sanctuary.

WelcomHeritage Mount Valley Resort gives a new meaning to the word comfort. Cosy rooms in the lap of nature and romantic sunset invite you to indulge yourself to a welcome break. So curl up with a book in your room or unwind on a lounge in the garden and just let Mount Valley Resort weave its magic on you.





*Unwind at the foothills of Aravallis*



Contact Us : 011 46035500 | Email : [holidays@welcomheritagehotels.in](mailto:holidays@welcomheritagehotels.in) | Website : [www.welcomheritagehotels.in](http://www.welcomheritagehotels.in)



# Desire for Authenticity

Chomu Palace: It revives the gracious lifestyles of the princes of Rajasthan and the heritage of India.

• Tarsh Sharma



Chomu Palace, a reflection of the Royal Palaces of India, is a 300 year old elegant fortified palace hotel and one of the places to visit in Rajasthan. It revives the gracious lifestyles of the princes of Rajasthan and the heritage of India. It is an authentic and historic palace that discreetly blends with the modern amenities and facilities. This historic monument is designed according to the Indian Vastushastra philosophy. An integral part of the Rajasthan Tourism, this palace hotel in Rajasthan reverberates with regal and aristocratic memories.

**Accommodation**

58 Suites characterize the aristocratic background of Chomu Palace Hotel. Guests will discover a suitable blend of tradition of old-world hospitality and of contemporary style.

A night in this romantic, aristocratic ambience surrounded by antique furniture and grandeur with marble bathrooms and luxurious furnishings makes an experience as memorable as it is inspiring. Each suite is unique, but reflects love of quiet comfort and understated elegance.

**Food Zone**

The Palace's fine dining Restaurant offers a delightful gastronomic experience. They create something special, blending aromatic Indian spices with modern cooking techniques to produce an eating experience that is recognized as exceptional.

**MICE**

The Banquet halls reflect a fine blend of aesthetics and shape, practicality and flexibility. Banquet halls have different variations, each one versatile



in its own way, to cater to varied needs. The halls ensure uninterrupted free movement.

“Heritage Hotels represent a unique holiday staying experience.” By commenting on this C P Rathore, General Manager, Chomu Palace said “Travel is a profoundly meaningful experience, and are increasingly looking for immersive, authentic travel experiences. As travellers they don’t just want to see a place, they want to feel it. Hotel stays are not just about tightly tucked beds, mini fridges and room service anymore;

they are about memorable moments that complement and enhance the travel adventure.

It’s clear; for hotels to appeal to the modern traveller’s desire for authenticity, and to stand out from other hotels offering all the same features and amenities, they should focus on selling an experience, not just a pretty room. In other words, a hotel should be a destination in itself. This is where boutique and other independent properties have the upper hand and position to provide memorable stay experiences that reflect their local destination, the unique character of their property, and the desires of their target demographic. All it takes is a little passion and creativity.”

“Be it a board strategy meet or a social function and business share your thought and let us show the realization. From intimate to extravagant, traditional to unexpected Ramada Jaipur is dedicated to create an unforgettable experience that is uniquely yours. With our 7 specifically designed banquets we have the most to offer.” Mr. Rathore mentioned while focusing on MICE.

Commenting on Chomu Palace as a “perfect destination weddings venue” Mr. Rathore stated “Chomu Palace truly reflects the splendor and charms of Royal Palaces of India. The historical palace hotel has become a favorite choice of accommodation for discerning travelers to the city. This heritage hotel in Jaipur hotel reboots the royal lifestyle of erstwhile rulers of Rajasthan and stands might and proud as a fine example of the country’s heritage. The architecture of this hotel is thought-out as per the styles of Vastushastra philosophy of India.”



## 2020: Year of Authentic Experiences

“The Hospitality and Tourism Industry undoubtedly has been a formidable pillar as an unfailing and reliable source of revenue and capital for many nations.” – By Roop Pratap Choudhary, Managing Director, Noor Mahal and Jewel Group of Hotels

### • Vedika Sharma

**What are the key trends which are going to rule in the year 2020?**

The year 2020 is certainly going to be the year of authentic experiences. Driven by Millennial choices, the independent hotel brands of the 21st century is going to put a strong winning proposition in 2020 by shaping the future of Luxury Hospitality. By influencing hotel design, cuisine experimentation, in-room experiences, social spaces, insta-friendly moments, services and modern amenities, Independent Hospitality brands in India are going to become game-changers of the industry.

Millennials are unique and the fastest emerging consumer segment in the hospitality industry. With a heavy influence on the emergence of new concepts, trends, and market patterns, they are proudly entering into their prime spending years. They love to travel, enjoy cuisine experiments, are impulsive and embrace personalization over standardization. The tech and travel savvy millennial generation is infusing a new sense of social, cultural and environmental responsibility and impact in Hospitality. And a young brigade of Independent Hotel brands is on job to disrupt the disruption in this space. These brands have truly unleashed the full potential of much-required disruption to attract and retain their millennial guests.

**What are the USPs of your property? How Noor Mahal is different from other heritage hotels?**

Noor Mahal has earned a reputation as one of the most preferred Leisure, Wedding and MICE destinations in the country because of our palatial – royal experience which has been incorporated in every aspect of our hotel, ambiance, and service. People are getting tired of the contemporary hotels and properties, now they wish to enjoy the royalty of traditional design and architecture under the roof of modern amenities, ethnicity, and opulence for authentic experiences.

The palace endorses the opulent royalty of the era of Indian maharajas, flaunting an enchanting fusion of elements inspired by traditional Mughal and Rajputana schools of architecture. Set amid culturally rich land of Karnal, this palace hotel enjoys

proximity to Delhi and Chandigarh. Apart from Presidential suites and heritage suites, Noor Mahal boasts special royal the sleeping chamber called the "Khwabgah" which includes two bedrooms, a living room, a dining room, a separate bar, office chamber with a private terrace that gives an overview of Karnal city. This royal chamber has an original window from the time of Mughals and the in-room bar area has the jangla from the time of blue star operation that took place in Amritsar.

**Which are the prevailing trends in India's hotel industry?**

The Hospitality and Tourism Industry, undoubtedly has been a formidable pillar as an unfailing and reliable source of revenue and capital for many nations. Many countries have been elevated from poor to appreciable economic statuses as a result of the invaluable contributions their tourism sectors have succeeded in adding to their overall economic growth. Tourism is a major contributor to the Indian economy. There have been significant improvements in the spheres of increasing air seat capacity, trains and railway connectivity to important tourist destinations, as well as connecting roads. Accommodation facilities have been redefined for the convenience of the visitors. key drivers such as new business concepts, advanced technologies, and disruptive hotel marketing trends etc., are set to take root and impact the industry as a whole in the near future.

Some of the latest trends prevailing in the tourism industry are as follows:

- Growing Options for Low Budget Travellers
- Visa on Arrival Boosting Tourism
- Rise of Boutique Hotels
- Affordable Luxury staycations
- Exploration of new and offbeat destination
- Popularity of destination weddings
- Increasing demand for a boutique of MICE destinations
- Travel Tradeshows Promoting Tourism

**What are the key challenges you faced in positioning Noor Mahal as the preferred destination?**

Karnal has not been a very popular destination for tourists and experience



seekers, so there are not many hospitality players in this area. But we have seen this as an opportunity more than a challenge. We are the only 5-star hotel in a 100 km radius in a very culturally rich and vibrant belt of India. Karnal is conveniently connected with all major cities in the north and provides an opportunity to get away from the chaos of big cities. We are also at a very convenient distance from Indira Gandhi International Airport. This has been a plus point for us in appealing to our guests.

Initially, the challenge we faced was in hiring talented hospitality professionals, but when we changed our approach we saw it as an opportunity to work with the local talent. The local youngsters may not be professionally qualified but with the right training and their natural knack for Indian hospitality, they become perfect hosts. No professional training can teach the warmth essential for hosting.

**What are your future plans and new initiatives for the coming years?**

Noor Mahal has earned a reputation as one of the most preferred wedding and MICE destinations in the country because of our palatial – royal experience which has been incorporated in every aspect of our hotel, ambiance, and service.

We are in the process of expanding our offerings, taking the heritage concept to the next level. Noor Mahal will soon have three more royal and awe-inspiring conventions as well as wedding spaces adding grandeur to its existing royalty, luxury and scalability.

The year 2020 is going to be a turning point in our expansion story. The group has aggressive expansion plans, and it aims to expand its footprints in other parts of the country including prominent foreign destinations in the years to come. We aim to become the royal abode and an ideal getaway option for every millennial traveler of the world.



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## Launch of Lemon Tree Hotel, Dubai

Lemon Tree Hotels Limited, through its management subsidiary Carnation Hotels Pvt. Ltd., announced the international debut of the company, with the launch of the first Lemon Tree Hotel in Dubai.

The hotel, owned by Al Waleed Real Estate LLC, is located on Al Wasl Road, less than a kilometre from Sheikh Zayed Road and Jumeirah Open Beach, and is the first branded midscale hotel in the area. The hotel features 114 well-appointed rooms, complemented by a multi-cuisine restaurant, Lemon Tree Café, with a beautiful al fresco extension, a conference room, a swimming pool, a well-equipped fitness center and more.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Rattan Keswani, Deputy Managing Director – Lemon Tree Hotels and Director – Carnation Hotels, said, “We are delighted to enter Dubai with our partners Al Waleed Real Estate. This is our first hotel in the UAE, and we feel that it holds immense business potential. We have a locational advantage, with the hotel strategically situated close to famous destinations like Burj Al Arab, Kite beach and the Mall of Emirates, and are equidistant from Business Bay and JLT, the two major business districts of Dubai. Such is our proximity to the Burj Al Arab, that our guests can enjoy unhindered views of the iconic building from the pool deck, and even some of the rooms.”

He further added, “The addition of this hotel opens a new location for the brand, thereby increasing our appeal to our existing and potential customers. We are confident that our partnership will enjoy mutually beneficial results within a reasonable stabilization period after the launch. The UAE and GCC is a resilient market in the long term and we could foresee the need for a recognized mid-market hotel in the branded space. We hope to have many more hotels in the region in the future.”



## Sarovar Hotels second hotel in Jammu & Kashmir

Sarovar Hotels Pvt. Ltd. announces the opening of second hotel in Jammu & Kashmir with Viraj Sarovar Portico, marking the group’s footprint in Jammu and its growing presence in the state.

Viraj Sarovar Portico will complement Sarovar’s existing hotel RK Sarovar Portico, Srinagar.

Viraj Sarovar Portico is an upscale contemporary hotel strategically located in Bari Brahmana which is one of the biggest industrial hubs of Jammu. This will be Sarovar’s 84th hotel in operation.

Designed to welcome the modern and savvy traveller, Viraj Sarovar Portico offers rooms and suites with modern amenities, a well-appointed retreat for corporate and leisure travellers.

The hotel features flexible banqueting options from 2300 sq. ft. to 31000 sq. ft., ideal venues for weddings to private parties, exhibitions, corporate events / conferences. Banquet functions capacity goes up to 2500 guests.

For dining and entertainment, the hotel offers “Flavours” - an all-day dining multi-cuisine restaurant, “Zing” - a lounge bar offering choice of premium beverages with flavorful finger food. Terrace Grill, rooftop restaurant, where guests can lounge by the pool as they sip innovative cocktails and delectable nibbles.

To reinforce that feeling of relaxation, Viraj Sarovar Portico offers Nirvana Spa, at which trained therapists ease and relax guests with a wide variety of treatments. In addition, the hotel has a well-equipped gym, swimming pool, and complimentary Wi-Fi. The hotel is about 6 km away from Jammu city and railway station and 10 km from Jammu airport.





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## Tahiliani Homes

**A fusion of contemporary and local architecture, Salvador Villas are nestled in the quite serene village of Socorro in North Goa.**

The villa is developed by Tahiliani Homes, a boutique interior and architectural firm from the design house of Tarun Tahiliani. In the spirit of overarching ideology of 'India Modern', Salvador Villas are surrounded by evergreen bamboos amidst the sprawling lush green hills and valleys. The contemporary Salvador Villas are a perfect getaway for any holiday makers looking for a dream vacation home in a quaint village. Apart from being located in a quite beautiful village, the villas are in close proximity with Mapusa, Porvorim and Panjim, also to Goa's most happening beaches of Baga and Calangute which serve as an ideal holiday spot for the discerning.

The Villas are designed by incorporating true Indian craftsmanship with the use of con-temporary technology to give a comfortable home with rich aesthetics. The key design sensibility has been to create an outstanding amalgamation of indoor-outdoor living, to bring the essence of natural outdoor into the indoor living space through the luminous wa-ter body in the central courtyard of the villas accentuated by high glazing ceilings, ample space and textured walls. One of the key highlights is the use of wrought iron railings which lends to our design with touches of extravagance through layering and details.

The Architectural style of the Villa is governed by the popular vernacular style of the region - a combination of Indian and Portuguese architecture. The designs of the villas boast the use of interesting mixture of tiles, Indian stones and patterned floors to capture the true vernacular architecture of Goa. The vernacular theme is carried even into the exterior ar-chitecture of the villas creating a harmonious balance of design. The external walls have an earthy finish along with Mangalore tiles roof that beautifully illustrates the vernacular ar-chitecture. The highlight of the villa is it's living room adorned by double heightened paned mosaic glass panels which shows great flair in the use of glazings.

The overall color scheme of the villa is neutral with subtle shades of furnishings in shades of beige, brown & taupe. Distinctive tiles are used in different spaces to give uniqueness in each space. Stylish rust color tile flooring dominates the living, dining and lounge area. The bedrooms are in soothing grey tiles except for the master bedroom and the family room which is laid with classic castle oak laminate flooring. All the bathrooms are adorned in shades of green and white marbles with louvered shutter vanity in natural teak color. The master bathroom has light emperador and white marble which gives an elegant touch.

## The Westin Hyderabad 10th Anniversary

**The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace recently celebrated its 10th anniversary with a series of festivities to commemorate the occasion.**

The hotel hosted an array of exciting events and activities, celebrations included a themed gala night which resembled the ambience of a rainforest, coupled with euphonious music to offer an immersive experience. The curated evening witnessed the city's well known socialites, HNIs and MDs/CEOs of corporates. The occasion was also graced by the presence of Mr Sanjay Sethi – CEO and Managing Director of Chalet Hotels and Rajneesh Malhotra – Vice President – Operations & Asset Management.

Guests were welcomed with a mellifluous performance by the Russian musical duo by Eventsyug playing Violin and Cajon followed by a four-piece live band by K19. The talented culinarians at the property tailored specially curated dishes from each restaurant at the hotel in celebration of the momentous occasion. Delicacies like Salmon, avocado roll with ponzu aioli, live stations of dim sums offering Shrimp hargow, wasabi and edamame crystal dim sums & chicken dim sums; pecking duck and thukpa stations, Chicken Olivetti's, activated charcoal macaroons with avocado and wasabi aioli, amongst others we offered. Casbah offered a widespread Mediterranean station, live stations of Chicken souvlaki, and Shawarma rolls with a selection of falafels. Kangan's signature dishes included, Lamb Galotti, Bharta counter with Warki Paratha, Dumba biryani, lamb bharta, and much more. The Banquets set up live stations for Barbeque Grills & local delicacies while the digitalized dessert counter was filled with decadent delights like Chocolate whiskey bundt cake with whiskey caramel sauce, Whiskey croissant pudding, Browned Butter & Bourbon Blondie, and much more.

Ringling in the celebrations, Parag Sawhney, General Manager, The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace said, "We are extremely proud and excited to

celebrate ten iconic years of Westin. The hotel has performed exceptionally in the past decade and ensured impeccable hospitality standards. True to the brand's philosophy, the hotel is the ultimate wellness destination in the city and lays emphasis on its six pillars of wellness. The hotel has witnessed changing trends and impactfully stood the test of time and being associated with such a remarkable brand is truly an honor and the entire team is looking forward to the new decade with newly curated initiatives, concepts, and unique offerings to delight our guests."





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# The Golden Peacock Wins Michelin Star

The Venetian Macao's outstanding The Golden Peacock Indian restaurant has again been awarded a one-star rating in the Michelin Guide Hong Kong & Macau 2020—making it the seventh year in a row it has received the accolade.

The first Indian restaurant in Asia to be awarded a Michelin star, The Golden Peacock is led by Kerala native and Senior Chef Justin Paul, who has headed a team of 15 chefs since it opened in 2013.

Chef Justin commented, "From the beginning we set out to provide a totally authentic experience, cooking from the heart and trying to instil a sense of joy and beauty in everything we do. This commitment is reflected not only in our food but in the service and ambience. It is incredibly rewarding to have been consistently recognised by Michelin for this, now for the seventh year."

One of the highest-rated Indian restaurants outside India itself, The Golden Peacock prides itself on authenticity throughout, from its chefs, recipes and techniques to its ingredients and kitchenware, all of which are imported directly from India. Accompanying its stunning Indian cuisine is a variety of breads including roti, naan and paratha, cooked on the restaurant's huge copper centrepiece tandoori oven, and The Golden Peacock also offers a selection of classic Jain dishes.





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## Nori - The Pan Asian Speciality Restaurant

The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat is proud to present its one-of-a-kind Pan Asian restaurant Nori. Boasting of an eye-catching décor, extraordinary panoramic view of the cityscape, an alluring upscale ambience, an expat master chef and specially-curated Pan Asian and Japanese signature recipes – this specialty dining newbie has all the ingredients to be the first word for food connoisseurs and expats in the city.

Thanks to its convenient location on the 31st floor of the hotel, Nori with a seating capacity for 60, catches the fancy of its discerning guests with an unmatched view of the city skyline with large floor to ceiling windows, and feel of this specialty restaurant is tastefully inspired with Japanese elements—a display wall featuring Japanese artifacts, laser-cut wooden screen dividing the dining areas and sensuous swirling bamboo mats creating a warm ceiling effect against the decorative screens.

Shoji screen doors lead to a private Tatami dining room which is easily accessed with Western-style Japanese seating on a raised platform. A VIP dining room offers privacy with a casual ambience of simplified laser cut wall panels. A communal dining table and a semi-private dining area provide more individual dining choices.

The food, the heart of the restaurant, is curated by expat Chef Franquilino P. Padua, a specialist in Japanese and Asian cuisine with over a decade of experience under his belt. Offering a wide array of Asian flavors, Franquilino's menu features fresh seasonal ingredients in imaginative and mouth-watering creations. His passion for quality is sure to tantalize your taste buds vis-a-vis the food texture that emanates from an elegant marriage of flavours: "Fresh, minimalistic, exquisite flavor and visual beauty are the philosophy behind the food at Nori. Our focus is on the natural simplicity of chosen fresh ingredients handpicked from local and international markets and presenting them in a refined manner in a bid to retain the original flavor of the Asian classics," explains the master chef.

Some of the signature items in the expansive food spread dished out by Franquilino and his culinary team includes a selection of small plates menu, Maki, Dim Sums, mains and desserts. The live Teppanyaki and Sushi stations allow the guests to enjoy an interactive dining experience. A few noteworthy

items in the menu are 'Sakura Salad', 'Crispy Lotus Fritters', 'Tod Man Khao Pod', 'Scallion Pancake', 'Po Pia Je', 'Eoi Tempura', 'Twice Cooked Pork Ribs', 'Fragrant Chili Prawn', 'Cho Tam', 'Chongqing Mala Chicken', 'Truffle Scented Edamame', 'Spicy Crystal Chicken Coriander', 'Sastsumaimo Roll', 'Aburi Shake', 'Crunchy Maguro', 'Dragon Roll', 'Steamed Kolkata Betki', 'Kambing Masak Kurma', 'Hunan Spinach and Morning Glory' and more.

Relish some desserts like "Chilled Lemongrass Jelly with Dragon Fruit", 'Matcha Cheese Cake', 'Baked Coconut Custard'.

To complement the delicacies, Nori will be serving traditional Japanese drink 'Sake' with a twist. The options include 'Koji Haiku', 'Tokyo Mule', 'Tom Yum Siam', 'Sake Sling' and more.





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### Tourism Fiji

Tourism Fiji is pleased to announce the appointment of its new Country Manager for India. In his previous role, Mr. Menon championed strategic planning, sales, marketing and enhancements across Tourism Boards, DMC's in Greece, Jordan, Vietnam, Kenya, Australia and New Zealand, Hotel chains like Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts – Sri Lanka and Maldives and Jumeirah Group of Hotels. Mr. Menon initially started his career more than two decades ago in the airline industry and possesses a competent handle in elevating destination Fiji's presence in India. His track record speaks for itself and enables him to strengthen and grow destination Fiji's presence within India and travel trade circles.

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### The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat

The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat appointed Subhash Sinha as the General Manager. A veteran in the business of hospitality, he has enjoyed exponential success in all the top-notch properties he has served in an illustrious career spanning more than two decades now. He is reputed for his appetite for the culinary arts which he has married with his nifty managerial skills to successfully lead and inspire highly performing teams. At The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat, the astute and perceptive Subhash brings to the table a dynamic energy in all the areas of operational activities in accordance to his pivotal designation. Prior to joining The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat, Subhash has achieved outstanding results in his role as General Manager of Marriott Suites Pune.



### Sheraton Grand Danang Resort

Sheraton Grand Danang Resort, Vietnam, announce the appointment of Carl Volschenk as General Manager. A veteran of the Marriott family for nearly 20 years, Volschenk brings an ideal mix of both sales and operations expertise to ensure the property continues to grow from strength to strength. Earlier assignments include the opening of the Four Points by Sheraton Complex in Dubai, the renovation of the Sheraton Oman, remodelling of the Plaza Athenee Bangkok, A Royal Meridien as well as Hotel Manager in Le Meridien Bangkok.

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### Seaside Finolhu Maldives

The Baa Atoll-situated Seaside Finolhu has appointed Edyta Peszko as its Director of Sales and Marketing. She will be responsible for leading and further improving all aspects of commercial, marketing and brand positioning of Seaside Finolhu. Edyta has been working in Asia for 18 years and she brings an extensive experience from the international hospitality and travel sectors. Prior to relocating to Maldives, Edyta held senior managerial sales and marketing roles with Diethelm Travel Group, Accor Hotels and Hotelbeds while based in Bangkok, Thailand.



### Fairfield by Marriott, Kolkata

Abhishek Sachdev has been appointed as the Hotel Manager of Fairfield by Marriott Kolkata. With over 13 years of enriching hospitality experience across multiple hotel companies & varied roles at ITC Limited, Starwood Hotels & Resorts and Indian Hotels Company Limited, he is a recognized individual within the hospitality industry. He will play an integral role in the positioning of the hotel by performing diverse responsibilities which include strategic initiatives to boost market profile, align cost heads, staff engagement and overall management of the hotel to secure its leadership position.

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### Le Méridien Gurgaon

Dr. Saanvi Chaturvedi has been appointed as the Spa Manager of Senses Spa, at Le Méridien Gurgaon. With a team of the finest therapists and fitness trainers at Le Méridien Gurgaon, Dr. Saanvi is completely dedicated towards helping people beat their stress the right way and rejuvenate themselves. This will be done through the right environment created and curated treatments at the spa and fitness facility. She has previously held the position of Assistant Manager of Health Club, Spa & Salon at the Hyatt.



### Courtyard by Marriott Amritsar

Rahul Sharma has been appointed as the Hotel Manager at Courtyard by Marriott Amritsar. He comes with an illustrious 19 years of experience in the hospitality industry. With his approachable persona and extensive knowledge of the sector, he is set to lead his team to superlative success. With sharp industry acumen, Rahul has been duly acknowledged for his leadership skills, innovative strategies, and pursuit to persistently achieve goals for the organization's developments. He will also be responsible for positioning the property as a market leader in the city of Amritsar.

**Lifestyle**



# 2020: Starting Point for Market Leadership Commitment

**Hyundai Motor Group held its 2020 New Year ceremony at its headquarters in Seoul, outlining its innovation priorities and strategic direction to engineer sustainable growth as a “game changer” in diverse industries.**

Hyundai Motor Group enters 2020 as the inaugural year for securing its future industrial leadership,” said Euisun Chung, Executive Vice Chairman (EVC) of Hyundai Motor Group.

In the 2019 New Year’s address, Chung highlighted the Group’s key objective as “taking a leap as a game changer capable of setting the rules of the market.” The objective has served as a guiding principle for the Group’s comprehensive transformation covering everything from large-scale investments and partnerships to micro-level operations, as effectively carried out throughout 2019.

Building on these improvements, Chung indicated Hyundai’s strong desire to produce tangible results in future business areas starting from 2020.

The EVC’s message in this year’s speech is clear. It contains the Group’s strong resolve to draw up a concrete mid- to long-term plan for tomorrow’s material results, as well as a timeline for its implementation in collaboration with all employees.

“If we all work together in unison and continue to innovate our technological, business and organizational capabilities, I am confident we will become the Hyundai Motor Group capable of overcoming its challenging environment, and is even more trusted by our customers,” underscored Chung.

In particular, Chung expounded the Group’s objectives for this year and beyond as achieving innovations in technology, business, corporate culture and customer prioritization.

He shed light on the Group’s commitment to continuing its leadership in future industries such as electrification, autonomous driving and mobility services, as well as its efforts to enhance the quality of its business operations in all sectors. To realize that, he urged all employees to adopt a “creative mindset” and “enterprising will” like that of a startup entrepreneur.

“I want to re-emphasize that the ultimate beneficiaries of all our efforts at transforming and innovating Hyundai Motor Group should be our customers. Their satisfaction and happiness in using our products and services remain the core value and true asset of our Group,” he noted. Chung shared his thoughts on the essential meaning of Hyundai Motor Group’s business operations. “The evolution of mobility has offered people quality time, as well as happiness and joy.” Also included in the 2020 New Year’s message was the plan to actively pursue new technologies and projects that can provide human-centered smart mobility solutions in a wide range of areas,



including robotics, Urban Air Mobility (UAM) based on the use Personal Air Vehicles (PAV) and smart city solutions, all of which would progress alongside automobile-based innovations.

With regard to Hyundai Motor Group’s open innovation strategy that embraces collaboration and partnership with global players in diverse industries worldwide, the EVC said, “We will push for open innovation that accommodates diverse capabilities outside the company. We will go anywhere there are the new technology, vision and talent to support our innovation drive.”

Hyundai Motor Group’s New Year’s meeting was broadcast online and via a mobile channel in real time, allowing all employees to participate in an open, communicable manner.

Securing future industrial leadership “In recent years, due to the rapid development in technology and networks, what had only been imagined is becoming an everyday reality, and this trend is accelerating in the automotive industry,” Chung said of the direction of the Group’s technological innovation.

The plan focuses on securing Hyundai’s leadership in the vehicle electrification, expansion of hydrogen industry ecosystem and self-driving commercialization, as well as the progressive expansion of its mobility services businesses.

“To consolidate our leadership in vehicle

electrification, we plan to operate 44 electrified models by 2025, including 11 dedicated BEV models, by bolstering the development of EV platforms and core components,” he explained. The Group’s electrified lineup, which comprised 24 models in 2019, will be expanded to 44 models by 2025, including 13 hybrids, six plug-in hybrids, 23 battery electric vehicles and two fuel-cell electric vehicles.

In particular, the BEV lineup will increase to 23 models by 2025 from last year’s nine models, with the first dedicated BEV model to be launched in 2021. A new EV architecture development system will be introduced and applied to models slated for launch in 2024.

This year, the Group will further bolster the sales of electrified models, adding hybrid and plug-in hybrid variants to its best-selling SUV models, including Kia Sorento, Hyundai Tucson and Hyundai Santa Fe.

“In particular, in our fuel-cell electric vehicle business, where we boast the world’s top technological competitiveness, we will hit our stride by providing fuel-cell systems to customers not only in the automotive industry but also in other sectors,” he pointed out. “Furthermore, we will add momentum to expanding the hydrogen ecosystem and its infrastructure by cooperating with partners around the world.”

# Nexon EV

## Interesting Facts

First EV to be powered by the state-of-the-art Ziptron technology  
Promises zippy performance, acceleration from 0 to 100 kmph in just 9.9 seconds  
Delivers an anxiety free long range of more than 300 kms on a single full-charge  
Comes with 35 Mobile App based connected features



## Tata Motors unveiled India's Own Electric SUV – the Nexon EV, an aspirational SUV for personal car buyers looking for a thrilling, connected drive experience with zero emissions.

Powered by the cutting-edge Ziptron technology, this vehicle promises an efficient high voltage system, zippy performance, long-range, fast charging capability, extended battery life and class leading safety features. Scheduled to be launched in January 2020, the Nexon EV is expected to be priced between INR 15 to 17 Lakhs.

Available in three variants – XZ+ LUX, XZ+ (both in 2 tone) and XM (in single tone), the NEXON EV will come in three exciting colour options – Signature Teal Blue colour, Moonlit Silver and Glacier White. The car will additionally come with a warranty of 8 years or 1,60,000 kms (whichever is earlier) on battery & motor.

### FUTURISTIC DESIGN INSPIRED BY INDIA'S SAFEST CAR – NEXON

The new Nexon EV sports a bold and confident design that brings into play the IMPACT DESIGN 2.0 language. The new design further accentuates the already strong and purposeful stance of the Nexon, resulting in a road presence that makes it stand out & apart. The slim, wide grille-cum-lamp entity is underscored by the Tata Motors Humanity Line running from lamp to lamp, adding a touch of premiumness through its chrome treatment and more three-dimensional form. Completing the new design of the front end is the bumper with its sporty central grille, detailed with the Tata Motors signature Tri-Arrows.

On the inside, the Nexon EV cabin comes with modern design, spacious interiors, and premium sound management to deliver a comfortable tranquil drive. The vehicle also comes with a 7 inch Harman infotainment system offering top-notch connectivity and unmatched acoustics. It also supports Android Auto and Apple CarPlay.

### DELIVERING A ZIPPY PERFORMANCE

Nexon EV is equipped with a powerful and high-efficiency 129 PS permanent-magnet AC motor powered by a high capacity 30.2 kWh lithium-ion battery. The motor produces 245 Nm of instant torque from a standstill, enabling Nexon EV to accelerate from 0 to 100 kmph in just 9.9 seconds. The EV comes with a best-in-industry dust and water proof battery pack which meets IP67 standards. This high-density battery pack is liquid-cooled to excel in Indian conditions. The battery pack is placed underneath the vehicle body, giving the SUV a center of gravity more akin to that of a sedan or a hatchback, ensuring maximum stability and excellent dynamic performance on winding roads.

The vehicle comes with two drive mode options – DRIVE & SPORT. It utilizes smart drive tech features – Regenerative Braking to charge the battery while coasting, Hill Ascent & Descent Assist to make driving on slopes more convenient and Smart Regen with Creep feature allows user to tackle congested city traffic without fatigue.

### ADDRESSING RANGE & CHARGING BARRIERS

Nexon EV delivers an anxiety free long range of more than 300 kms on a single charge with zero emissions. When plugged into a Fast DC Charger, the Nexon EV will replenish 80% battery capacity within 60 minutes. In addition, the Nexon EV can be charged from any 15 amp plug point.

### ZCONNECT

Nexon EV offers 35 Mobile App based connected features, ranging from remote commands, vehicle tracking, driving behavior analytics, navigation and remote diagnostics. The ZConnect App enables owners to locate the nearby charging points, TML service stations, set-up speed alerts, track vehicle location and many more features.

### LEVERAGING THE 'INDIA'S SAFEST CAR' PROMISE

The Nexon EV retains all its learnings from the Nexon Global NCAP rating and comes with class leading safety features. Proving its reliability, the car has been rigorously tested across 1 million kms across the toughest terrains in India, covering high altitudes, unpaved roads, steep gradients and under extreme weather conditions.

The all new Nexon EV can be pre-booked for an amount of Rs 21,000 starting December 20, 2019, either through company's official website or through select authorized dealers.



Mr. Guenter Butschek  
CEO & MD, Tata Motors

After introducing our cutting-edge EV technology, Ziptron, we are thrilled to unveil the first EV featuring this technology – The Nexon EV. This is a high performance, connected vehicle that is uniquely suited to address the aspirations of Indian customers and break all barriers for EV adoption. We are confident that this development will mark an important milestone in India's electrification journey, and further reinforce our commitment towards developing sustainable and responsible mobility solutions for India.



Chris Reinke  
Head of Audi Sport customer racing

With the Audi R8 LMS GT2 we're opening up a new chapter in our history. Starting in 2020, the GT2 class will enhance the world of GT racing by another valuable new category that immediately got a foothold on three continents. In addition, the race car is ideally suited for track days. In spite of its very specific concept design there are many things it has in common with the production model. They allow us to closely integrate the manufacturing process, which we are very proud of.

## Audi R8 LMS GT2

**Green light for the fourth model range: Following the start of production, Audi Sport customer racing began deliveries of the first Audi R8 LMS GT2 cars shortly before Christmas.**

The race car will be assembled at Böllinger Höfe site – in the same factory as the road-approved models. It is directly derived from the Audi R8 Spyder V10 performance quattro (combined fuel consumption l/100 km\*: 13.3; combined CO2 emissions g/km: 301).

Delivering output of 470 kW (640 hp), it is the most powerful model ever to have been offered by Audi Sport customer racing. In manufacturing, there are significant synergies

between it and the Audi R8 Spyder V10 performance quattro production model (combined fuel consumption l/100 km\*: 13.3; combined CO2 emissions: 301): The race car is largely produced at Böllinger Höfe at the Neckarsulm location. Only the operational pre-delivery preparation is performed by Audi Sport customer racing at the Heilbronn district of Biberach. Customers receive the race car in Suzuka-Gray including the tapered black glossy roof that is characteristic of the GT2 version. The car, which is available ready to race

from 338,000 euros (excluding VAT), can be fielded in the GT2 Sports Club America, the GT2 Sports Club Europe and the GT2 Sports Club Asia starting in 2020. These racing series specifically address gentleman drivers who appreciate the race car's high longitudinal dynamics. Additional fielding opportunities are opening up in the growing segment of track days and race resorts, which are attractive particularly for the owners of high-performance sports cars.

## Dakar Rally 2020

**When the Rally Dakar visits the Arabian Peninsula for the first time, from 5th to 17th January 2020, it will feature two Dakar legends in the MINI JCW Buggy and a total of nine MINI race cars.**



Record Dakar winner Stéphane Peterhansel (FRA) – alongside co-driver Paulo Fiuza (POR) – is looking for his 14th success in total at the Dakar. Two-time winner and former world rally champion Carlos Sainz (ESP) and his co-driver Lucas Cruz (ESP) are also counting on the further-developed MINI JCW Buggy and the support of MINI Motorsport partner X-raid. Among those tackling the iconic event in the four-wheel drive MINI JCW Rally are Jakub 'Kuba' Przygonski (POL) and his co-driver Timo Gottschalk (GER), as well as Orlando Terranova (ARG) and Bernardo 'Ronnie' Graue (ARG). The Dakar Rally 2020 consists of twelve stages, with the route following roughly 7,500 kilometres from Jeddah (KSA) to Al-Quiddia (KSA) via the Saudi Arabian capital Riyadh, where the competitors will have a rest day. About 5,000 kilometres of the route through the

country's deserts will be against the clock. Peterhansel has won the Dakar 13 times in the past – six times on a motorcycle and seven times on four wheels. His successes include the first joint victory for MINI and X-raid in a MINI ALL4 Racing in 2012, and the successful defence of his title the following year. He had originally planned to contest the Dakar Rally 2020 with his wife Andrea Peterhansel (GER) in the co-driver seat. She herself was a successful rally driver in the past, under her maiden name Mayer, and navigated for her husband when the pair won the FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies in 2019. However, she has been forced to sit this rally out on health grounds. Taking her place in the MINI JCW Buggy cockpit is Portugal's Fiuza. Sainz, who twice won the World Rally Championship before switching to off-road racing, took victory at the Dakar in 2010 and 2018.

For Przygonski, winner of the 2018 FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies, this will be the first Dakar Rally alongside German co-driver Gottschalk, who tasted victory in this event in 2011. Przygonski and Gottschalk have been competing together since spring 2019 and finished runner-up in the MINI JCW Rally behind their team-mates Terranova and Graue in last season's FIA World Cup for Cross Country Bajas. Another two MINI JCW Rallies run by the X-raid team will be driven by Vladimir Vasilyev (RUS) / Vitaly Yevtyekhov (UKR) and local favourite Yasir Seidan (KSA) with his co-driver Alexey Kuzmich (RUS). Aleksandr Dorosinsky (RUS) / Oleg Uperenko (LAT) will drive a MINI ALL4 Racing. Outside the X-raid team, Denis Krotov (RUS) / Dmitry Tsyro (UKR) and Vaidotas Zala (LTU) / Saulius Jurgelenas (LTU) will also put their faith in the MINI JCW Rally at the Dakar Rally 2020.

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# OSOAA-A Journey of Wellness

“As compared to men, women usually consume less protein. However, for women protein is very critical to maintain their bone health and density since as we age degenerative changes cause our body to lose bone density.” – By Sanchita Jindal, Founder, OSOAA.



• **Tarsh Sharma**

To begin with, I would like you to shed light on the importance of protein in everyone’s life.

**SJ:** Protein is the most vital nutrient of every cell in our body and helps our bodies carry the day to day biological processes. Protein is essential for everyone from babies to older people, from men to women, to develop and maintain both physical and cognitive health. Our bones, muscles, organs, skin, hair, immune system and everything else that you can think of are mostly made of protein and hence it’s the next most important nutrient after water.

Can protein powder be an immunity booster?

**SJ:** Absolutely, Whey Protein powders have a unique blend of 13 essential amino acids and are easier to digest over other proteins which give it the highest PDCAA of 1. Protein plays a critical role in building and repairing body tissues and fighting viral and bacterial infections. The Immune system is strengthened by antibodies that rely on protein. Too little protein in the diet may lead to symptoms of weakness, fatigue, apathy, and poor immunity. If a person has it regularly in a daily

routine. Will there be any side effects of that and what should be the routine to have protein as in general.

**SJ:** Excess of anything is bad. There is a recommended daily dose of protein-based on your body weight and activity level which one must adhere to. Ideally, on average we should be consuming 1gm of protein for each kg of body weight but that may vary from 0.6 to 1.8 gms depending on how active or sedentary our life is. Each meal should consist of certain amount of protein to balance the nutrition intake.

How important is it for working as well as fitness proactive women’s.

**SJ:** As compared to men, women usually consume less protein. However, for women protein is very critical to maintain their bone health and density since as we age degenerative changes cause our body to lose bone density. Protein helps women minimize these changes. It also plays a critical role in maintaining a good hormone balance from menstruation to menopause. And if that is not enough, it helps them stay lean, manage weight, build muscle mass, maintain shiny hair, glowing skin, and beautiful nail.

Research proven’ or ‘Laboratory tested’ what all do the protein powder manufacturers do to make their sale?

**SJ:** To save costs and to claim quicker results often companies add low quality or banned ingredients such as steroids etc. or mix protein with creamers etc that are cheaper and give quicker results but are detrimental to our health in the long term. We blindly run after imported proteins without realising some of these international brands provide their lowest quality whey in India.

Please give your closing comment/ Message to audience

**SJ:** In today’s world, where we see life taking diseases on a constant rise, we need to keep a healthy body to keep a healthy mind. We should not blindly run after international brands. As consumers, it is our responsibility to research the products we are buying without blindly following the product claims. We need to focus on holistic lifestyle change which includes not just good nutrition but also daily exercise, sufficient sleep and good emotional health.

## SLICE

*of life*

You believe in taking risk or plan beforehand.

**SJ:** I usually take calculated risks because without risks it’s difficult to grow and develop and also there are so many unknown factors when you make decisions that risk is inevitable. But I do like to have my Plan B ready in case A doesn’t work.

Your high points.

**SJ:** My high point is what I am experiencing right now. Turning my dream into a reality by becoming an entrepreneur, the most beautiful, loving and supportive family and friends and of course my boys that make me a proud mother every single moment.

Your low points.

**SJ:** I have always been a go-getter and a blessed soul. I can’t think of

a moment where I felt that I can’t bounce back from the situation. I strongly believe in the world being the manifestation of our thoughts. Full of gratitude for being blessed.

Favorite industry leader

**SJ:** My favourite has always been my father. I have seen him grow from rags to riches with his hard work, perseverance, commitment to what he is doing and amidst that his strong inclination towards giving back to society is a rare combination.

Novel you are inspired with.

**JM:** The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin

A movie that motivates you.

**SJ:** The Secret. Ever since I have watched that movie, my thought

process, positivity and attitude has tremendously changed. Whenever I fail, feel low or disappointed – I watch that movie an instant mood lifter and a constant reminder of basics of how we should live our life.

How you spend your day on day off.

**SJ:** Usually, I like to spend time with family especially kids. Being a working mother makes you constantly guilty about not spending enough time with your babies and try to make up for it when off.

Source of Inspiration.

**SJ:** Without a doubt Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam. The way he reacted and adapted to failure is unfathomable. Despite being so successful he was a kind-hearted man with a beautiful soul.

# Plight of Honest Journalist

The play Chauthi Awaaz was staged on 29th December 2019 at Sant Gadge ji Auditorium of Sangeet Natak Academy Lucknow.

Written by Pawan Singh and directed by Naveen Srivastava, the play portrays the plight of cotton farmers and the struggle of an honest journalist. How political and corporate media together eliminate the purity of journalism was staged in a very beautiful way. According to the plot of the play, the owner of the newspaper in which Vinod Tyagi is employed, has cotton mills. Knowing this Vinod Tyagi does a story on cotton farmers. Later he learns that the Chief Minister and Cotton Minister along with the leader of the Cotton Mill Owners Association, Gopal Ganna come to the Chief Minister's residence to reduce the price of cotton. One thousand crore deal is final.

Vinod Tyagi tried to attract one of the chief minister's peons to perform a sting operation but he fails to do so. Under the pressure of the Chief Minister, the order to close the mills of the cotton mill owner of the newspaper is issued. In this Vinod Tyagi lost his job. Now no newspaper is willing to give him a job. There are situations like starvation in the house. The pen drive of the sting operation is still with Vinod Tyagi. Tyagi uploads it on social media. The ruction arises. Later Vinod Tyagi opens his own news portal with the support of the people. His fight for honest journalism continues.

Anupam Bisaria played the role of Cotton Minister among the lead actors of the play, Arjun Kumar as Chief Minister, Sumit Srivastava as Journalist, Editor-Aparna Tripathi, Prasad Sinha as news editor, Tanya Suri played the role of journalist's wife, Ashutosh Jaiswal in the role of a peon, Anupam Mishra as the crossing wall and Gaurav Tiwari played the role of cotton mill owner. The roles of actors Gaurav Sharma, Tanvi, Abhishek Yadav, PD Sawant were also influenced. Music Rahul Sharma, Prakash-Tamal Bose, Home decor-Dinesh Awasthi, Stage Director - Shalini Dwivedi, Dressed by Aparna, Tanvi, Tanya, while the rehearsal was in-charge of Abhishek Yadav.



Kutch Safari Resort, Bhuj (Gujarat)



Mani Mansion, Ahmedabad (Gujarat)



Darbagadh Poshina (Gujarat)



Royal Safari Camp, Bajana (Gujarat)



Jhadol Safari Resort, Jhadol (Rajasthan)



Jhalamand Garh, Jodhpur (Rajasthan)



Jungle Vilas Ranthambhore (Rajasthan)



Dhulagarh, Jaipur (Rajasthan)



Sunset Desert Camp - Luxury Mobile Camping



Aranyawas, Ranakpur (Rajasthan)



Dhula Garh, Jaipur (Rajasthan)



Godwad Leopard Safari Camp, Jawai (Rajasthan)



Golden Dune Camp Jaisalmer



The Lavitra, Udaipur (Rajasthan)



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# Exquisite Jewellery

Om Jewellery specialising in Gold and Uncut diamond jewellery with almost 80 years of history backing them.



With a foray in the fashion and glamour world with a range of fine Diamond Jewellery and a special collaboration with Forevermark, they are set to create unmatched designs.

OM has been part of Lakme Fashion Week 2019, Luxury Lifestyle Weekend and was recently worn by actress Amandla Stenberg on the Oscar red carpet.

### **Bhavin Jakhia, CEO, Om Jewellers**

Bhavin Jakhia, joined the family business and has been the helm of affairs at Om Jewellers since 2001. As the CEO, he looks after logistics, financial operations and marketing strategies for the growth of the brand. He bridges the gap between OM's traditions and new age practices through technology, to create a constantly evolving enterprise. He believes, "Protecting one's family and legacy is a man's greatest achievement," and constantly strive to uphold the family values while taking the business to newer heights.





## Beauty of Precious Stones and Designs

“Dhanvi is synonymous to excellence, purity and class.” – By Saurabh A Khandelwal, Director Dhanvi Diamonds. • Tarsh Sharma



### Tell us about the journey of Dhanvi Diamonds.

Dhanvi Diamonds is an internationally recognized, esteemed and coveted diamond jewellery house that has been beautifying Indian women for over 60 years. For more than six decades, the Khandelwal house of Delhi has defied the boundaries of concept and craftsmanship creating jewellery that blends together in a unique style. The designs, borne out of experience and expertise, bring the skills together under one name in India called ‘Dhanvi Diamonds’. It all started with Late Lala Banarasi Dass, who was in the silver and gold bars in Kucha Mahajani. Following the tradition, his son Mr. Ashok Khandelwal blessed with great wisdom and vision expanded the family business to wholesale of silver jewellery in Kucha Mahajani and retailing of gold and silver jewellery through 2 stores in East Delhi. It was in 2000 when his son Saurabh Khandelwal joined him and took the business altogether to a new turning point by adding manufacturing and wholesale of diamond and diamond jewellery under the flagship

7 states, we have different distributors, in every location and through the distributors we access our dealers who run retail jewellery stores. It’s all channeled through the distributorship system and very soon we are going to launch our new products under a flagship name too. Under this, we will be launching ultra lightweight jewellery certified by the International Gemological Institute and will be hallmarked too.



### What is the USP of the brand?

Today, Dhanvi is synonymous to excellence, purity and class. We are known by our name because of the highest possible standards in the diamond jewellery. From impeccable designing to accuracy in purity, we provide everything certified and our after-sales service adds as an icing on the cake.

### Tell us about the best-selling pieces of Dhanvi Diamonds?

Today, the major challenge in our industry is changing trends, shrinking spending of customers and ever-changing designs, so we keep on hiring new designers because in every 3 months we change our designing patterns, usually we don’t repeat our designs. If you go to any other diamond jewellery brand, you will see the repeated design but here we completely change our designing in every 3 months.

### Dhanvi products are best suited for weddings or gifting?

Our products start from approx. Rs. 2500, which makes it perfect for gifting purpose. On the other hand, we have intricate pieces that are no less than a treat to eyes, which makes them perfect for celebrations like wedding, anniversary and even Indian festivals when women need a reason to celebrate traditional Indian pieces of perfection.



brand name of Dhanvi. Till date, the brand has successfully created its niche and presence at more than 150 jewellery stores across North India.

### All the pieces by Dhanvi Diamonds are manufactured by CAD and CAM. What do CAD and CAM stand for?

CAD refers to Computer-aided Design and CAM is Computer-aided Manufacturing. You can learn to design on CAD and then with the help of designing you can direct CAM machines these days which uses wax or rubber and makes exact model what you have done with your designing. The change in technology has resulted in faster production and flawless pieces that people are ready to buy without a second thought.

### What is the brand’s presence currently?

Today, our business is diversified and since we are present in

### As a jeweller house, what trends do you see in the market?

Today, women are more into lightweight low-maintenance jewellery and keeping that in mind we are in the process of launching new product range in the name of premium, where we will be targeting high-quality diamond and hallmark gold and the price range will be between 5k- 25k and we also tend to bring these pieces online via eBay and probably Flipkart.

### Any advice for those venturing in the same segment.

With time, I have found that most of the retailer stores are selling diamond jewellery but they don’t know how to identify the diamond, and if they don’t know about diamond, how they can be sure that what they are selling are diamonds. So, for those who wish to venture in this glittery world of the diamond, I would suggest them to gain proper knowledge and certification and then jump into the market.

# International Awards 2019-20

Xel Research-  
A unit of Xel  
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Pvt Ltd presents  
International  
Awards 2019-  
20 which was  
presented by the  
Bollywood actress  
Malaika Arora.





## Prediction for January 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

You will try to put off work for a while or schedule business appointments for a later date or you will want to work in a human potential profession that motivates others through self-actualization or creative

interaction. Get in touch with your feelings. Expect a postponement or delay in affairs concerning finances, but the money is forthcoming. You are going to be surprised by a sudden flirtation or romantic possibility. Your upper back could bother you.

Lucky color: Purple  
Lucky number: 8



### TAURUS

You will soon be receiving money from something that was held up or that you should have gotten in the past more than anticipated. You will be unfulfilled with your present partner and will want to come together with someone else. If

already involved you will wish your partner would be more loving or responsive. If you've been ailing, you'll be on the road to recovery.

Lucky color: Grey  
Lucky number: 3



### GEMINI

You will come together with someone to discuss a business idea or venture that could improve or market your work. You will feel uplifted, renewed and in a sociable mood. Someone will help you collect money that is owed to you, or

you'll soon begin a new enterprise (or retrieve a past one) that will bring in more money or supplement your income. Do not over indulge in food or drink.

Lucky color: Orange  
Lucky number: 5



### CANCER

You're going to be over worked and over tired but will complete the project (s) you set out to do successfully. There could also be a change of residence.

You will be apprehensive about your financial condition due to a setback, loss of income, or something you counted on falling through. Watch out for some nasty headaches. Be determined to get what you want; the goal is within reach.

Lucky color: Turquoise  
Lucky number: 1

**LEO**

You won't feel capable of mastering the steps it takes to succeed, but someone or something will come along that will help you or make your work easier. There will be small gains in your finances. Be cautious because you are going to be rescued from a life or death situation, a very traumatic experience. You may have problems with your legs but avoid surgery; a little rest will do wonders.

Lucky color: White  
Lucky number: 7

**VIRGO**

A sudden surge in your business or career and a call from a lover will come as a much-welcomed surprise. Expect to hear some good news soon. A relationship, marriage or love affair is going to end but you can expect the advances of an intriguing foreigner. You will have good luck in metaphysical pursuits, mending hurt feelings and attracting romance. You will suddenly become very health conscious and interested in New Age therapies.

Lucky color: Yellow  
Lucky number: 9

**LIBRA**

A business proposal or the possibility of a new avenue to pursue or follow up on will soon be presented. A letter or package you've been waiting for will arrive. Financial gain will come through time investments, speculations or a well thought out plan of action. You need a vacation from tension, work and worry and will soon take one.

Lucky color: Red  
Lucky number: 4

**SCORPIO**

The work that you ordinarily love to do will become an unbearable chore and you will be frustrated. You will suddenly come into more money but you will have to be more assertive or you'll lose out. Wait a while before you invest your money in property.

Lucky color: Silver  
Lucky number: 2

**SAGITTARIUS**

New ideas or avenues will come to the fore. Your financial situation will be especially good because you will acquire money through a new project, business deal or settlement. You will have bouts with inconsolable depression or nostalgia over a lover who is gone. New avenues will spring from old, in both your business and your personal affairs.

Lucky color: Black  
Lucky number: 9

**CAPRICORN**

A fixed attitude, unworkable environment, or unpleasant experience will come to an end and in its place will come a new perspective, sudden insight or an uplifting turn of events. You will want to share your deepest feelings but will keep them to yourself because you can't find an 'outlet'.

Lucky color: Blue  
Lucky number: 1

**AQUARIUS**

You will have to deal with very unpleasant people or circumstances in your work and will feel that you are wasting your time and effort. A lover will call and a sweetheart will arrive or many admirers will pursue you. You will experience a lack of energy and will be subject to clumsiness.

Lucky color: Green  
Lucky number: 6

**PISCES**

Some areas will be at a standstill while you wait for things to develop. You may also be considering a new line of work or money making venture. The entry of a third person could mess up your relationship but don't make any hasty decisions. A sudden travel overseas will come up. You will get relief from legal problems.

Lucky color: Beige  
Lucky number: 5

# Smart Travel Solutions

“The travel and tourism market is expected to witness a huge growth in the coming years, thanks to the technological advancements shaping the new market dynamics in India.” Said Mr. Dev Karvat – Founder & CEO, India & Emerging Markets, TrawellTag Cover-More.

**Tell us about your journey so far?**

**DK:** My journey so far has been like a thrilling rollercoaster ride, with excitement and challenges trying to get the better of me at every point of my career. However, I am glad that I could take lessons from the drawbacks and emerged with flying colours each time. I’ve had my share of hitches while setting up TrawellTag Cover-More. Our zeal for innovation & customer delight led to the introduction of a unique metallic tag ‘TrawellTag’, the first online luggage tracking system in India. In 2010, we started providing our customers with medical assistance services. We entered into a partnership with Cover-More in 2012, which provided further impetus to our aspirations. TrawellTag Cover-More today is a part of the third-largest travel insurance providers in the world after Cover-More Group’s acquisition by the Zurich Insurance Group, in 2017. 20 years of customer-centric innovation coupled with local expertise and our vision to bridge the gap between static trip protection and the traveller’s true needs helped us gain leverage in the travel protection sector. We right now have 43 offices pan India with nearly 450 employees and an active client base of 11,000, which includes tour operators, TMC’s, OTA’s and airlines in India. Today, our offering bouquet also involves other ancillary services such as concierge services, family protection, emergency medical assistance abroad and protect over 3.8 million travellers as a group every year.

**What potential you see in the Indian travel market.**

**DK:** The travel and tourism market is expected to witness a huge growth in the coming years, thanks to the technological advancements shaping the new market dynamics in India. The upsurge in smartphone accessibility and other travel-related apps and websites have made travelling more convenient than ever. Be it checking out new locations, applying for visas, hotel or travel bookings, your smartphone can do it all. Using technology in the right direction will help boost the travel and tourism sector to new heights. **Q:** What new trends you found in the travel industry in the last five years. **The travel industry and the way people travel have changed significantly. Today’s travellers are**

largely young millennials with disposable income, looking for smart travel solutions. They mix work and leisure while offshore and turn their trips into Bleisure trips. Traveling to achieve gratification through social media is another growing trend amongst the millennials, which has given rise to new professions such as travel influencers and vloggers. The ease of traveling today has also resulted in increase in the number of baby boomers and women solo travellers. Today, customisation is the need of the hour for the travel and tourism industry and travellers are urging for more products and services, which provides them with a sense of personalised attention.

**“Trawell Tag” how and why it is important for the consumers.**

**DK:** The Indian travel market saw a huge spike in the number of millennials travelling abroad for business and leisure trips but lacked travel protection options that suited all kind of travellers. We managed to fill this void by designing flexible products that offered choices in travel assistance benefits to our customers. Perhaps TrawellTag Cover-More is the only brand in the country that focusses on providing holistic, real-time travel protection products. With the advent of globalisation, the number of business travellers increased, and so did uncertainties while travelling. Keeping this in mind, we developed innovative travel assistance products for frequent travellers, which provides 24/7 emergency medical assistance to lifestyle assistance to roadside assistance, etc. and also ensures family protection back home for the traveller. These factors make TrawellTag Cover-More one of the most preferred travel assistance providers in India today.

**Please shed some light on your new upcoming projects.**

**DK:** We at TrawellTag Cover-More are constantly striving to come up with products and services that suit the travellers’ needs. We are planning to integrate Artificial Intelligence into our customer service to reduce the margin of error and improve efficiency. AI will analyse and structure huge amounts of data into valuable insights and projections, which will help us to strategize and



design immaculate products for our customers. TrawellTag Cover-More recently launched Crisis Assistance Plus (CAPTM), one of the most comprehensive travel protection program available in the market today for Individuals, families and organisations. CAPTM provides constant advice and coordinated assistance for travel security-related issues that affects or has the potential to affect a member during the period of travel.

**What are the major challenges you are facing in the present scenario.**

**DK:** The number of people opting for travel protection services while travelling is still growing and about 20% of outbound Indian travellers opt for such services. We look at this as an opportunity to offer innovative and customised services for fulfilling the need of the evolving traveller and create awareness about the services so that travellers increasingly make informed choices.

**What message you would like to convey to the audience.**

**DK:** With a surge in outbound travel, the need for robust travel protection has become all the more important to ensure a seamless experience. Choosing the right plan is of utmost importance and the new-age travel protection plans cater to specific requirements of the journey. Customization is the name of the game. However, customers should choose the right plan by identifying the most important protection for their trip and relevant add-on benefits. Travel service providers play a pivotal role in helping the customer choose the right plan, ultimately affecting the kind of travel experience the customer would go through.

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**You believe in taking risk or plan before hand.**

**DK:** I think, to be an effective leader, you need to strike a balance between planning and risk-taking.

**Your high points.**

**DK:** Partnership with Cover-More and being a part of the Zurich Insurance Group.

**Your low points.**

**DK:** We have faced very tough situations at the beginning, but we have taken them in our stride and transformed them into opportunities to learn and grow.

**Favorite industry leader.**

**DK:** I have been deeply inspired by Ms. VeenaPatil & Mr. SudhirPatil from Veena World

**Novel you are inspired with.**

**DK:** 7 Habits of Highly Influential People by Stephen Covey and Sam Walton: Made in America

**A movie that motivates you.**

**DK:** Pursuit of Happiness. .

**How you spend your day on day off.**

**DK:** I love spending time with my family and as I am, an ardent cricketer and I spend my day off playing or watching cricket with my kids.

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