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SINGAPORE:

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR GREEN MICE EVENTS

Known worldwide as a “Garden City”, Singapore has always put sustainability at the heart of its development plans. Launched in early 2021, the Singapore Green Plan 2030 sets a vision across various aspects of sustainability: from urban development and renewables adoption to resource conservation and food security. All sectors have taken steps to support these national efforts, and the MICE industry is no exception.



Photo credit: Fairmont Singapore and Swissôtel The Stamford



Photo credit: Singapore Tourism Board

FACILITATING MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE ON SUSTAINABILITY

Events play an integral role in raising awareness and uncovering solutions to the world’s collective climate challenges, and Singapore takes pride in hosting platforms that inspire such necessary dialogue and action.

For example, Temasek’s Ecosperity Week gathers leaders from across sectors and geographies to share insights and best practices on sustainable development. Conversations are also being held at the industry level, including at the annual Asia Sustainability Reporting Summit and even at the Singapore FinTech Festival where green financing has become a central area for discussion.

A PLACE FOR GREEN EVENTS

Besides hosting various sustainability-related events, Singapore also has infrastructure for events to take place with minimal environmental impact. The country’s MICE venues have stepped up to the challenge of reducing their carbon footprints and waste.

The Sands Expo and Convention Centre is Singapore’s first carbon-neutral MICE venue and is supporting the nation’s green energy targets through investments in Renewable Energy Certificates. Resorts World Sentosa is home to one of the country’s largest solar panel installations which can produce enough electricity to power 108 four-room flats every year. Fairmont Singapore and Swissôtel The Stamford have an urban aquaponics farm that champions sustainable agriculture practices in the industry.

Despite its constraints in size and natural resources, Singapore is paving the way for a sustainable future for all. It will continue to blaze trails for a greener tomorrow, and the business events industry is taking up this mantle.

Plan your next business event at [VisitSingapore.com/MICE](https://www.visit-singapore.com/mice).



Singapore is set to become a “City of Green Possibilities” – with the MICE industry is doing its part.



Singapore
Passion Made Possible



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Editor's Letter

International Aviation Climate Ambition Reflects Airlines' Net-Zero Goal

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has welcomed the commitments towards strengthening climate action made at COP26, and called on the global efforts to decarbonize aviation to be supported with practical, effective government policies.

Management of international aviation's climate commitments sits outside of the COP process and is the responsibility of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Nevertheless, airlines at the 77th IATA AGM in Boston, October, agreed to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, in line with the stretch Paris agreement target to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees.

"Airlines are on the pathway to net-zero carbon emissions, in line with the Paris agreement. We all want the freedom to fly sustainably. Reaching net-zero emissions will be a huge task requiring the collective effort of industry and support from governments. The pledges made at COP26 show that many governments understand the key to rapid progress is to incentivize technological change and fund innovative solutions. This is particularly true of sustainable aviation fuels, which

will play a major role in addressing aviation's environmental impact—they need the right incentives from governments to ramp-up production," said **Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General.**

A notable outcome from COP26 was the move by 23 nations to sign the International Aviation Climate Ambition Declaration. The Declaration recognizes the need for aviation to **"grow sustainably"** and reiterates ICAO's role to implement short, medium and long-term climate goals for the industry. Ensuring the maximum effectiveness of the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), and the development and deployment of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) are key aims of the Declaration.

"We are grateful to those states who have signed the International Aviation Climate Ambition Declaration and we urge more countries to commit to this initiative. The robust and realistic plan to fly net zero by 2050 agreed by our member airlines can be of great use to ICAO member states as they move forward with a global framework and long-term goal for aviation carbon reductions," said **Walsh.**

We are on

DEVENDER GROVER

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Visit Maldives Kicks off Campaign with Yatra and Go First to increase Maldives' popularity in the Indian Market



Visit Maldives launches a campaign with India's Online Travel Agency, Yatra and Go First airline. The campaign will be held for a period of 3 months from 8th November onwards. This campaign is aligned with the India market strategy and would help to further boost arrivals from the Indian market and reach pre-pandemic targets. The campaign aims at creating buzz and destination awareness for potential travellers from India to the Maldives.

Speaking about the campaign, **Managing Director of Visit Maldives, Thoyyib Mohamed** stated that India is an important source market for the Maldives, which contributes significantly to the expansion of our tourism sector.

"India is already one of our top markets. This new campaign with Yatra and Go First will help in creating more momentum for the Maldives' brand within the Indian market, which would of course result in increased bookings and future arrival numbers. We have stringent measures in place, for the safety of visitors, at all our resorts, hotels, guesthouses and liveaboards. The unique geographical formations of our

islands also make us one of the safest destinations. Visit Maldives guarantees a memorable, safe, secure and private stay for all visitors. We look forward to welcoming more Indian travellers to the sunny side of life in the months ahead."

Senior Vice President and Business Head - Holidays at Yatra Mayur Oberoi also spoke about the importance of marketing the Maldives to Indian travellers following the border opening.

"The Maldives is one of the most important markets as far as Indian tourists are concerned. While footfall to the Maldives has always been high, at this hour, when the destination has re-opened for Indian travellers, it is very important to market the destination and revive interest in the Maldives. We are happy to join hands with Maldives Tourism Board and conduct this joint marketing campaign to promote tourism into the Maldives. We will be using all our communication channels to create buzz around the Maldives."

During the campaign, Maldives will be promoted as a top of the mind destination targeting the Indian market. Ads will be placed in Yatra and Go First's online platforms to promote

the Maldives as a safe and leading destination highlighting the stringent safety measures and the unique geographical formation of the islands which naturally allow tourists to social distance and unwind in peace and tranquillity.

Through the campaign Visit Maldives will work to leverage the follower base of Yatra and Go First to create destination awareness, generate leads and create conversions and increase arrivals from India.

This campaign is estimated to make 5,891,750 impressions through the ads. It will possibly assist in securing 7,383 bookings through the Indian market through various forms of advertising content posted on physical and virtual spaces of Yatra as well as Go First.

Yatra, based in Gurugram, India is one of the leading corporate travel services providers. They have 800 corporate customers and is one of India's leading online travel companies and operates the website yatra.com.

As of 31st October 2021, Maldives has welcomed a total of 1,011,122 travellers of which 228,297 travellers arrived from the Indian market making it the top source market.

INTERNATIONAL CUISINE / DUBAI

Hottest
new
Dubai
restaurants to try in
2021





From authentic street food to gourmet gems, check out the shortlist of the newest tasty spots in Dubai

Mimi Kakushi

Located in the Restaurant Village at Four Seasons Resort Dubai at Jumeirah Beach, Mimi Kakushi is in good company, counting celebrated restaurants such as Coya and Nusr-Et as neighbours. Step inside and you'll feel transported to another world



with generous use of wood, vintage paintings and pops of green foliage creating an almost homely vibe, while the jazz soundtrack treats you to nostalgic tunes and chefs work on artfully-plated dishes at the open kitchen.

ZETA Seventy Seven

Get ready to be impressed at ZETA Seventy Seven. Perched on the rooftop of the Address Beach Resort, located 310m above sea level, you'll be treated to incredible views of the city skyline as you dine on the finest contemporary Asian dishes. The *sky-high venue* presents two seafood-inspired menus – one for light snacks poolside with poke bowls, sandwiches and burgers, while the a la carte menu has signature flavours such as miso lobster, iced oysters and crispy prawns.

Orfali Bros

Three brothers, one dream. At Orfali Bros 'bistronomy' the brothers are proud to serve up dishes that reflect their shared culinary passion. You'll want to factor in repeat visits to try everything on the menu, including favourites such as the *shish barak a la sgyoza* (beef dumplings with a Middle Eastern twist), salmon with miso and creamy *tahini*, and Umm Salah *torrijas* (Spanish-style French toast with a

touch of spice). They also support *local farming*, so look out for homegrown produce across the menu.

Hunter & Barrel

Straight from the lands of Australia to the shores of Dubai, Hunter & Barrel is an exciting addition to the city's culinary scene. Located in Vida Emirates Hills, the restaurant presents an array of signature charcoal-roasted meats and vegetables – think open fire prawns, smoky chicken wings and, of course, *prime steaks* that are a cut above. There's even a dedicated 'Steak Programme' menu, so you can choose



your dream dish across fillet, rump, sirloin and rib-eye options.

Kinoya

One of the city's most exciting ramen hotspots, Kinoya is a dream come true for resident Neha Mishra, fondly known as Dubai's very own 'ramen queen'. Having started out with sell-out *supper clubs* as the chef behind @storyoffood on Instagram to spearheading her very first restaurant in Dubai, loyal fans are flocking to Kinoya for a taste of Neha's take on *izakaya*. Taking the everyday ramen and transforming it into a foodie revelation, everything here – right down to the noodles – is handmade with love.



Just Vegan Jumeirah

The cosy spot reflects a back-to-nature theme that's evident as soon as you walk in. Promoted as a place where nature and veganism come together, the menu is filled with flavourful signatures, including the Thai yellow curry pizza, plant-based bunless burger, and truffle mac and cheese stacks. The café takes great pride in preparing all the food in-house too, which means that all the sauces are also produced by the expert chefs, ensuring everything is 100% vegan.

Ikigai

Located at Millennium Place Marina, Ikigai is a passion project of delicious

The Orangerie



Ikigai



Twiggy by La Cantine

proportions. Acclaimed *homegrown chef* Reif Othman is the restaurant's menu consultant while head chef Minh Ted Shin impresses with unbridled talent, so you can expect only the best flavours here. Taking its name from the Japanese concept, «Reason for Being», the laidback restaurant serves up an array of treats such as crispy tempura burgers, salmon with black pepper, and wagyu with truffle sauce.

The Orangerie

Reflecting a real sense of occasion, The Orangerie serves up inventive dishes amid stunning views overlooking the Montgomerie *golf course* and city skyline. The special «Around the World» menu sees Asian, Middle Eastern and

European flavours abound. Think miso salmon with *wasabi crème fraîche*, barbecued tiger prawns with Madras curry spice, zingy Thai seabass, and freshly-made pizzas. It's also wonderful to see a full vegan menu that's brimming with starters, mains, sides and desserts to choose from.

Twiggy by La Cantine

A sunshine-filled spot that will brighten your day, Twiggy by La Cantine is a refreshing beach club and restaurant at Park Hyatt Dubai. Dine by the 100m *infinity pool*, which has its own menu complete with small plates such as poke bowls, lobster rolls, sushi and caviar, or swap the sunbeds for a table on the terrace

because the a la carte menu is more than worth it, filled with celebratory Mediterranean dishes.

Rumba

With views overlooking the waters of *Palm Jumeirah*, tables on the sand and colourful vibes all around, Rumba promise an intriguing culinary journey across Cuba. Arrive early to watch the sunset before diving into a world of flavour with feel-good sharing favourites such as beef *empanadas*, smoked veal *croquetas*, perfectly-prepared guacamole, fish tacos and more. Vegetarians are well catered for too, with fresh salads, an inventive cauliflower and peanut *mole*, and lentil burgers.

WAWA Dining

You'd be forgiven for doing a double-take as your walk past WAWA Dining. Located on the ground floor of the Golden Tulip Hotel in Al Barsha, its entrance is straight out of Tokyo and designed to resemble a traditional storefront with lanterns, handwritten signs, and warm colours. The food is just as authentic with some of the best sushi, sashimi and ramen you'll have the pleasure to taste in Dubai.

Carna

The region's first dining concept by Dario Cecchini takes pride of place at SLS Hotels & Residences in *Business Bay*. The sleek address is a fitting new venue for the enigmatic, award-winning butcher with a dining area that's filled with welcoming tones, an open kitchen and stylish chandeliers. Visitors can expect prime cuts of the finest meats and *supreme steaks*, as well as a few signatures. As expected, red meat is the showstopper here, but there's also a selection of seafood to try.

La Casa del Tango

Bringing Argentinian flair to Dubai's *financial district*, La Casa del Tango is part restaurant, part dance studio and part boutique. The vision of famous dancer Enrique Macan, the venue celebrates the art of tango, complemented by deliciously fluid motions in the kitchen. Designed by master *asador* Jorge Rivero, the menu features bestsellers such as the *chorizo parrillero con provolone* (grilled sausage with provolone) and *huevos gramajo trufados* (truffle scrambled eggs).

Fi'lia Dubai

The name Fi'lia is derived from 'daughter' in Italian, and the restaurant is an ode to honest, family-style Italian food. Think housemade pastas, rustic breads and cheesy pizzas straight from a firewood oven, all served in a homely setting that delights. One bite of the classic Margherita pizza with buffalo mozzarella, and you'll know you're in the right place for fine flavours. Fi'lia also

stands out for its talented all-female team, led by chef Sara Aqel who trained under the legendary *Massimo Bottura*.

Lucky Fish

Located in Palm West Beach, Lucky Fish enjoys a dreamy shoreline setting that it shares with other dining hotspots such as the Bali-inspired *Koko Bay* and Mexican eatery *Señor Pico*. Lucky Fish stands out thanks to its coastal charm and complementary Mediterranean menu. As expected, the restaurant celebrates seafood but also works with local fisherman, showcasing the finest catches of the day on ice or as the star ingredient in enticing dishes. There's also a zero-plastic policy that we can all get behind.

CZNBurak Burger

If you're craving a *juicy burger* with all the trimmings, you're in luck as CZNBurak Burger is now open at The Dubai Mall. The Insta-famous chef Burak Özdemir is renowned for meaty creations in epic proportions and has already generated a buzz with his fine-dining namesake restaurant on Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Boulevard. At CZNBurak Burger, however, the

vibe is more laidback with a focus on perfectly-grilled, flavour-packed patties – and yes, there's also a 'giant' version.

Dishtrict

Inspired by food districts *around the world*, Dishtrict at Wasl 51 in Jumeirah presents a culinary adventure to savour. The emphasis is on fusion flavours, and it's all done brilliantly well. Think *shatta* crab salad – a Middle Eastern twist to a traditional dish elevated by a kick of hot sauce – Thai-inspired *arancini*, popcorn-style button mushrooms with truffle and parmesan, and lamb *galouti* tacos where a softshell base is topped with spiced lamb kebab and mint sauce. It's inventive and irresistible – come hungry!

Moon Slice

Moon Slice is a tasty tribute to the humble pie. Emirati restaurateur Mahmood Al Khamis consulted *chef Reif Othman* to create an experimental menu that is fun and irresistible. Expect extravagant toppings such as truffle and fresh octopus, alongside crowd favourites. The secret sauce however is in the dough – instead of just water, milk joins the fold and the dough is fermented for a full 48 hours before





Glo

being rolled out, generously topped, and fired in a custom Italian oven. *Molto bene!*

Glo

Get ready to 'glo' up at this new restaurant and lounge in the trendy Dubai International Financial Centre area. In keeping with its setting, Glo's interiors are sleek and sophisticated, while the open terrace is a popular choice thanks to sweeping views of the city's urban lights and sights. The international menu doesn't disappoint either with incredible *hand-rolled sushi*, wagyu sliders, chicken dumplings, grilled mains and more, including vegan pasta.

Terra

More Mediterranean magic takes shape in the *Jumeirah neighbourhood*. With



Terra

a deep, intense colour palette, stone pillars and pops of green foliage, dining at Terra feels like an occasion. The down to earth approach is also felt on the menu with a strong sustainability focus. Starters such as the beef carpaccio roll, tuna *crudo*, sweet aubergine croquettes, and lentil salad with *zaatar dressing* give way to tasty pizzas, pastas and moreish mains. Just don't leave without trying the sticky, sweet date pudding.

The Name

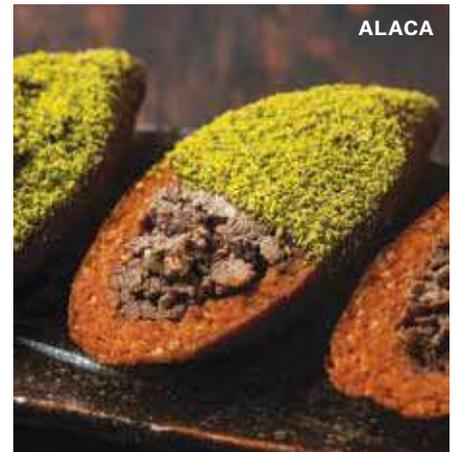
The Name at Dubai Design District is full of surprises. It combines restaurant and café offerings with co-working space and even a concept store filled with *trendy gifts*, many of which can be personalised. This is a place you'll want to linger, complemented by a magical menu of the Mediterranean and Levantine dishes – think flatbreads with spicy beef and *labneh*, smoked pastrami and cheddar sandwiches, and tasty potatoes with vegan cheese.



The Name

ALACA

ALACA impresses at The Pointe, a *fun-filled destination* that's home to an incredible array of restaurants. This new Mediterranean-inspired spot transports you to the ancient region of Anatolia for culinary discoveries filled with flavour. Try the *kalamar tava* (fried calamari with a special chef's sauce), *Alinazik* (featuring lamb, spices, smoked eggplant infused milk and yoghurt), and *karisik izgara* (butcher's selection



ALACA

of meat treats). There's also brilliant breakfast dishes and freshly-baked pastries.

Rhain Steakhouse

Combining entertainment, a chic setting and the finest cuts, Rhain



Rhain Steakhouse

Steakhouse at Conrad Hotel on Sheikh Zayed Road serves up a dining experience worth savouring. At Rhain – derived from Celtic language, meaning ‘spear’ – high-quality steaks are always the main act. There’s a huge selection of wet and dry aged meats, prime steaks and Wagyu to choose from but, for something out of the ordinary, try the Japanese-inspired meat sushi and steaks coated with gold.

Sedap Asian Street Kitchen

Enjoy the aromas and flavours of your favourite dishes from the streets of Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia at Sedap in Al Seef. Meaning ‘tasty’ in Malay, a few of the restaurant’s bestsellers include the BBQ *sambal* seabass, black pepper crab, beef *rendang* and seafood *laksa*. Thanks to the friendly service, inviting vibes and a dedicated *kids menu*, Sedap Asian Street Kitchen is fast becoming a hit with hungry families.

SUSHISAMBA

Bringing the best of Japanese, Brazilian and Peruvian culture and cuisine to Dubai’s shores, the first Middle East location of SushiSamba can be found on the 51st floor of the Palm Tower at *Palm Jumeirah*. Think sweeping

views of the city skyline and vibrant aesthetics, perfectly complementing a menu of distinction. Signature dishes to try to include the crispy Hokkaido scallop, Japanese wagyu beef *gyoza*, ceviche platter and the special Samba Dubai sushi roll.



Sushisamba

Sedap Asian Street Kitchen





ULA

ULA – which means ‘sea jewel’ – lives up to its name. Located next to DUKES The Palm, a Royal Hideaway Hotel, the beachside escape is a great outdoor spot to enjoy a lazy lunch or *sunset dinner*, effortlessly combining magical meals and beachside lounging. Discover a Mediterranean-inspired menu that celebrates the freshest ingredients – the clay pot slow-roasted lamb, Japanese wagyu beef tenderloin and delicious *mille-feuille* are highlights.

Garth

Garth’s location is part of its charm as it’s tucked away in The 9 Lounge, a private members club at Kempinski Mall of the Emirates. Thankfully, the neo-bistro is open to all and blends the best of Southern European cuisines for an elevated menu designed by celebrity chef Sergei Andreychenko and Mohammed Musthafa. Comprising a chic terrace, lounge and restaurant, there’s plenty to enjoy from seafood plates at the raw bar to flavourful vegan options. Reservations are essential.



Garth

Singapore and Sustainability

how the city-state is raising the bar for green events in Asia

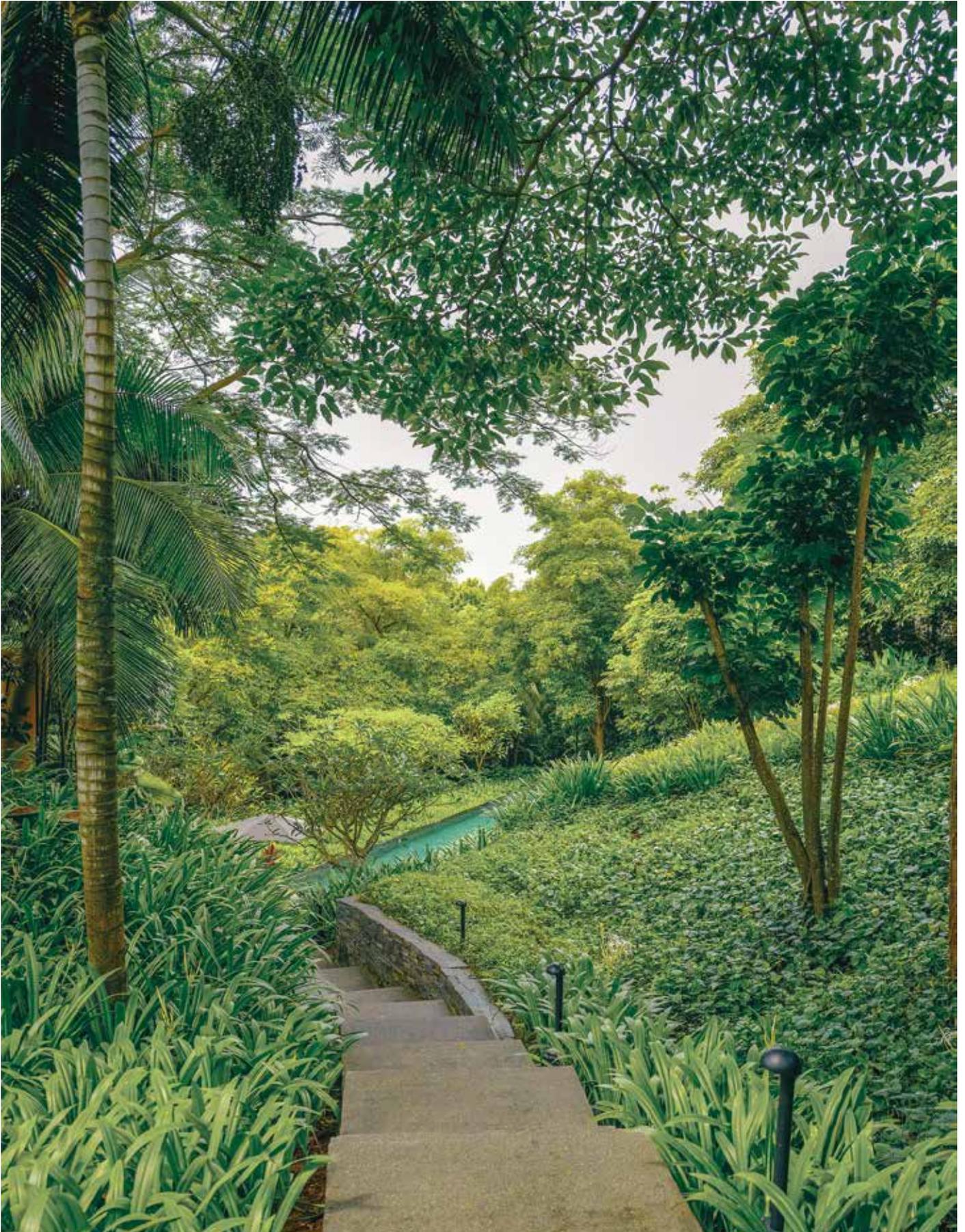


When the world recovers from the impact of Covid-19, the focus will be on building back better, which means taking a more sustainable approach to all areas of business including meetings and events – something Singapore has long been preparing for, even before the pandemic.

Implementing smart and sustainable practices can help to minimise cost, conserve energy and reduce waste. Beyond that, a green event enhances your brand's reputation and commitment to sustainability.

A successful event relies on numerous partners, from destinations to DMCs, hotels, conference centres, caterers, production companies and more, so it's crucial to align yourself with sustainable partners.

If you're looking for the right destination to deliver world-class conferences and events while meeting your organisation's green goals, Singapore has been channelling its considerable resources and MICE expertise into setting new standards for sustainability.



Green guidelines for MICE

Leading by example, the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) has created comprehensive sustainability guidelines, which serve as a reference guide for MICE industry players who are keen to adopt responsible practices.

Intended as a tool to help both planners and suppliers integrate sustainable practices within their operations and regular event plans, the guidelines are a great place to start your sustainable events journey and make planning a responsible event in Singapore a painless experience.

There are Basic and Advanced-level guidelines for seven MICE industry categories across the supply chain: Events and Activity Organiser; Exhibition, Conference and Convention Organiser; Audio-Visual; Food and Beverage; Hotel; Transport; and Venue.

These include a broad range of

practical ideas for improving event sustainability, from recyclable badges, lanyards made of sustainable materials, on-site recycling bins and use of mobile platforms instead of printed materials, to sourcing products or services from fair-trade suppliers or organisations that actively recruit from socially disadvantaged groups.

Eco-friendly venues in Singapore

Naturally, for a destination that takes sustainability so seriously, you don't have to look very hard to find a green venue in Singapore, with the upcoming Pan Pacific Orchard slated to be a showcase of environmental sustainability when it opens in 2022.

Located on the famed Orchard Road, the luxury group's first zero-waste hotel will feature four levels of soaring gardens that will redefine vertical sky-rise typology. Amongst

other innovative elements, Pan Pacific Orchard will feature a rainwater harvesting system, a recyclable water system, and a compactor that turns food waste into compost – which will then be channelled into fertiliser for its sky gardens.

Another impressive green development, Parkroyal Collection Pickering boasts a hotel-in-a-garden design concept, with 15,000 square metres of lofty four-storey sky gardens, reflecting pools, waterfalls, planter terraces and cascading vertical greenery – an unprecedented amount of green space for this built-up city centre.

The iconic Marina Bay Sands and Gardens by the Bay are further examples of venues that are pioneering environmentally friendly practices and technologies. Marina Bay Sands was the first ISO 20121-certified property





in Southeast Asia and the single largest building in Singapore to be conferred the Green Mark Gold Award by the Building and Construction Authority (BCA). Dedicated staff are available to help clients create sustainable meetings, offering post event reporting on energy and water consumption, providing sustainable food and helping to manage waste.

The Green Plan

It's not just Singapore's MICE sector that is focused on reducing its impact on the environment. The destination's devotion to the cause runs much deeper – it is committed to becoming a world leader in sustainability.

From fostering cutting-edge innovations in sustainable food production and encouraging environmentally friendly building design to transforming water bodies into naturalised rivers and lakes to help conserve local biodiversity,

sustainability is at the heart of the government's policies and practices.

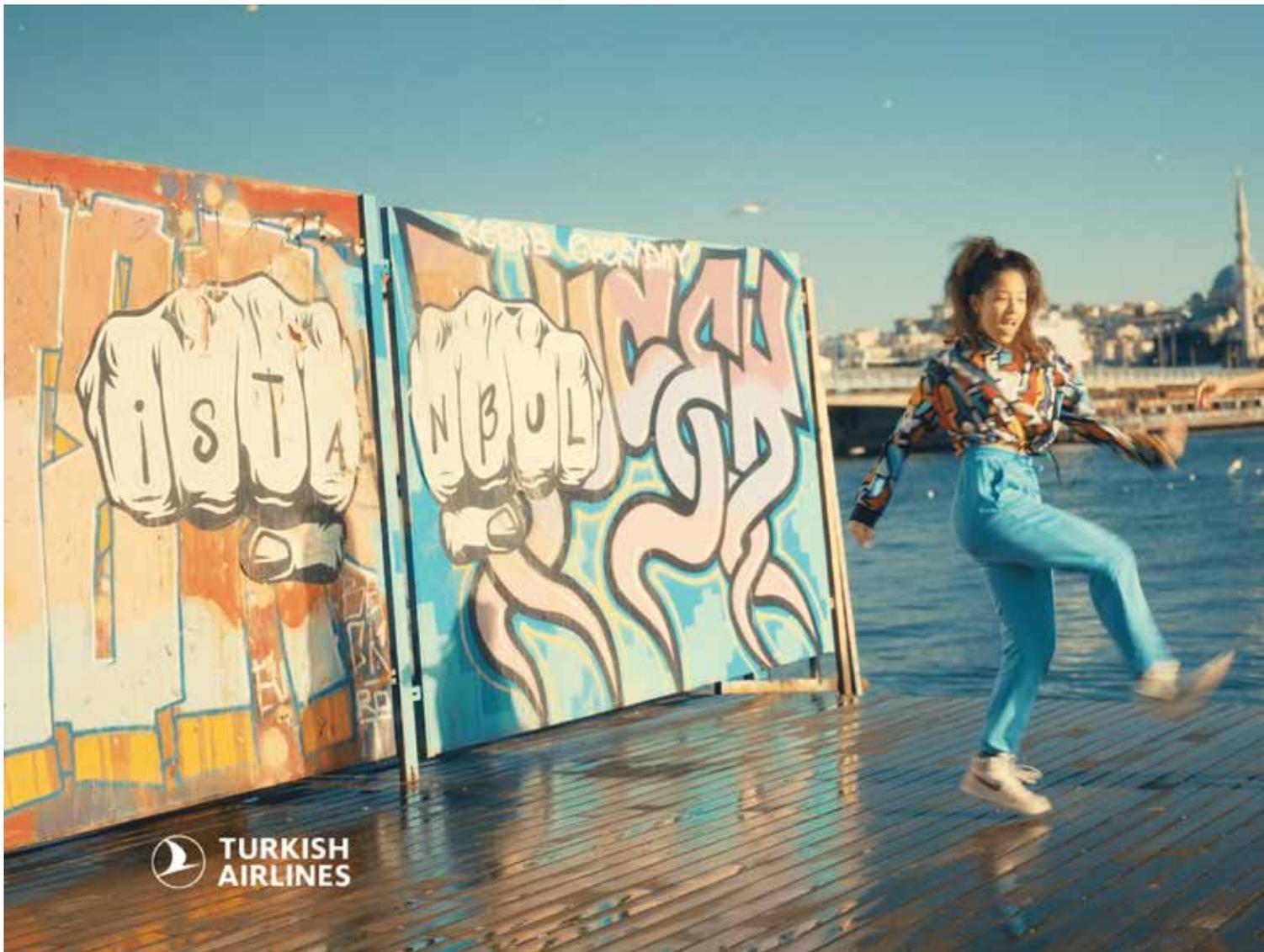
The Jurong Lake District, currently in development, is a statement of Singapore's green ambition. A new 360-hectare commercial centre and public space, this district of gardens and water will connect the existing lakeside area with the city-state's wider park and cycle network. It will be a model for

The iconic Marina Bay Sands and Gardens by the Bay are further examples of venues that are pioneering environmentally friendly practices and technologies.

sustainable urban planning, with residents and businesses enjoying reduced energy use thanks to district-wide cooling systems, buildings that meet the highest Green Mark standard and smart, data-driven design of everything from waste collection to public transport.

The Singapore Green Plan 2030 is a whole-of-nation movement to advance the national agenda on sustainable development. It charts ambitious, concrete targets for the next 10 years, strengthening Singapore's commitments under the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Paris Agreement, and positioning the destination to achieve its long-term net-zero emissions aspiration as soon as viable.

By selecting Singapore to host your next event, you are guaranteed a partner that is taking sustainability every bit as seriously as you are – and is determined to do its bit to safeguard the future of our planet.



Istanbul is the new

COOL

Istanbul defines the word cool. Being home to a very diverse crowd, and holding two continents together, being cool is inevitable.

A Combination of Modern and Traditional

It is Istanbul's endless variety that fascinates its visitors. The museums, churches, palaces, grand mosques, bazaars, and sites of natural beauty are countless. While you're relaxing on the western shores of the Bosphorus at sunset and watching the crimson evening light reflected on the other continent, it'll become clear why so many centuries ago settlers chose to build a city on this remarkable site. In such moments, you can understand why Istanbul is truly one of world's most magnificent cities.

Istanbul is Turkey's most developed and largest city, with the



For more than 1,500 years İstanbul was the capital of the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires.

With one arm reaching out to **Asia** and the other to **Europe**, İstanbul is the only city in the world built on two continents. The Bosphorus courses the waters of the Black Sea, the Sea of Marmara, and the Golden Horn through the city's heart.

İstanbul's fate has been sealed by its strategic location and its enchanting natural beauty. For more than 1,500 years it was the capital of three empires: The **Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires**. It was adorned as befitted its importance with magnificent monuments and became a metropolis where diverse cultures, nations, and religions mingled. These cultures, nations, and religions are the small colored stones that form the mosaic of İstanbul.

Striking Multireligious Identity

İstanbul's identity began to take shape with the Byzantines and gained momentum during the period of the Ottoman Empire. **Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror** declared İstanbul the capital of Ottoman Empire after he conquered the city in 1453. Over the next 450 years the city was adorned with superb Ottoman monuments. Building works after the conquest

gathered apace during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II, with the finest works built by **Mimar Sinan**, the Chief Royal Architect. This world-famous architect put his signature on the silhouette of İstanbul with a number of masterpieces.

The Ottomans were tolerant towards all religions and dedicated many places of worship to the Christian and Jewish communities so that they could practice their religion undisturbed. Thus, in İstanbul mosques, churches, and synagogues stood and still stand side by side as the physical evidence of İstanbul as a center and symbol of tolerance and the fraternity of religions.

Glorious Treasures

As an imperial capital of 1,500 years, İstanbul is rich in architectural monuments reflecting its past splendour.

At every turn in the city one can happen upon Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman palaces, mosques, churches, monasteries, monuments, walls, and ruins. The old city centre, with its places of worship, government, trade and entertainment, was where the citizens mingled, enjoying the benefits of the security and bounty of the state while maintaining their culture and way of life.

The most magnificent of İstanbul's

latest discoveries indicating that the history of human habitation here goes back some 400,000 years. The purple years of İstanbul started in 330 when Emperor Constantine declared the city the capital of his empire – royal purple was the colour of the Byzantine imperial family. Until 1453, when it was conquered by the Ottomans, the city served as the capital of the **Byzantine Empire**. During the reign of the Byzantines, İstanbul known at the time as Constantinople, was adorned with a number of great monuments, which made it the most magnificent city in the world – this was true even during the declining years of the empire.





monuments are clustered on the Historical Peninsula, the triangular piece of land surrounded by the Sea of Marmara to the east and south, by the Golden Horn to the north, and by the city walls to the west. This group of sites, known as the **Historic Areas of İstanbul**, were included on the **UNESCO World Heritage List** in 1985, and continue to this day to impress visitors with their history and importance. **Sultanahmet Square** is the heart of the Historical Peninsula and in its vicinity one can find the most prominent examples of Byzantine and Ottoman architecture.

Living Heritage of the Byzantines

During the Byzantine period the centre of the city was the **Hippodrome** and its environs. The **palace** was the centre of power and **Ayasofya-i Kebîr Cami-i Şerîfi (Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque)** was the most spectacular religious building.

The hippodrome served as an entertainment centre for the people and the **Yerebatan Sarnıcı (Basilica Cistern)** supplied most of the city's water. All these structures can be found in the centre of the city. During Ottoman times, the square where the hippodrome once stood became the site for the circumcision ceremonies of the sultans' sons.

Great Mystic Symbols

The most glorious architectural heritage of the Byzantine Empire is **Ayasofya-i Kebîr Cami-i Şerîfi (Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque)** which is referred to as the "**8th Wonder of the World.**" With a history of more than 1,500 years, it is one of the great symbols of İstanbul. The mosaics of **Ayasofya-i Kebîr Cami-i Şerîfi (Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque)**, which were uncovered after it became a museum, are the foremost examples of Byzantine art of the 9th to 12th centuries. **The Kariye Mosque (former Chora Church)** is another Byzantine monument famous for its fine mosaics and frescoes. **The Neve Shalom, Ahrida, and Aşkenazi Synagogues** are three of the most important sacred places for Judaism in İstanbul.

The **Topkapı Palace** is particularly important for the Mukaddes Emanetler Dairesi (Chamber of Holy Relics) where Prophet Muhammed's *Hırka-i Saadet* (Blessed Mantle) and *Sancak-ı Şerif* (Holy Banner) are kept in their golden chests. The Sultan Ahmet Mosque, also known as the Blue Mosque, was built between 1609 and 1616, and houses the tomb of its founder, Sultan Ahmed I, a madrasah, and a hospice.

Historic Areas of İstanbul

The Historic Areas of İstanbul, inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985, cover four main areas: The **Archaeological Park**, the **Süleymaniye Mosque** and its associated conservation area, **Zeyrek Mosque** and its associated conservation area, and the **City Walls of İstanbul**. In its evaluation report, the International Council on Monuments and Sites has stated that one cannot conceive of the UNESCO World Heritage List without İstanbul, which has been associated with the world's major political, religious, and artistic events for over 2,000 years. The cultural property in this area includes unique monuments and masterpieces of universal architecture. Two of these monuments are **Ayasofya-i Kebîr Cami-i Şerîfi (Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque)**, built by **Anthemius of Tralles** and **Isidore of Miletus** in AD 532-537, and the **Süleymaniye Mosque**, a masterpiece of Mimar Sinan ("Architect Sinan") or Mimar Koca Sinan ("Great Architect Sinan"). The 6,650-meter-long city walls of Theodosius II, with its second line of defences created in AD 447, has been one of the world's leading references in military architecture.

The Other Shore

Another historical area of İstanbul, on the opposite shore of the **Golden Horn**, is the former district of **Pera**, meaning "the other shore." Settled by Genoese and Venetians in the 12th century, this quarter was inhabited mostly by Levantines and represented the city's Western face. The cosmopolitan character of ancient İstanbul is reflected in the following buildings in **Pera**: the **Galata Tower** built by the Genoese, stately consulates which were embassies before the capital was moved to Ankara, and the Art Nouveau buildings of **İstiklal Avenue**. **Church of St. Anthony of Padua**, a silent and tranquil spot on this avenue, is visited frequently by devout visitors of every religion. Palaces, summer palaces, castles, and large mansions built by the Ottomans





continue to adorn İstanbul. After Topkapı Palace, **Yıldız Palace** and **Dolmabahçe Palace** on the shores of the Bosphorus became the residences of the Ottoman sultans. İstanbul is also famous for the elegant wooden houses, known as *yalis*, built along the shores of the strait.

Haliç, The Golden Horn

This horn-shaped estuary known as the **Golden Horn** divides European İstanbul in two. As one of the world's best natural harbours, the Byzantine and Ottoman navies and their commercial shipping interests were centered here. Today, lovely parks and promenades line the shores where the setting sun casts a golden hue on the water. At **Fener** and **Balat**, neighbourhoods midway up the Golden Horn, whole streets full of old wooden houses, churches, and synagogues date from Byzantine and Ottoman times, while the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople resides at Fener. Eyüp, a little further up, is full of Ottoman architecture, much of it restored, and

cemeteries dotted with dark cypress trees covering the hillsides. Many believers come to the **Tomb of Eyüp** in the hope that their prayers will be granted. The **Pierre Loti Café**, atop the hill overlooking the shrine, is a wonderful place to enjoy an alternative view of İstanbul.

The Bosphorus

A stay in İstanbul is not complete without a traditional and unforgettable boat excursion up the Bosphorus, the strait that separates Europe and Asia. Its shores offer a delightful mixture of past and present, grand splendours and simple beauty.

Modern hotels stand next to *yalis* (waterfront wooden villas), marble palaces abut on rustic stone fortresses, and elegant compounds neighbour small fishing villages.

The best way to see the **Bosphorus** is to board one of the passenger boats that regularly zigzag along the shores. Embark at **Eminönü** and stop alternately on the Asian and European

sides of the strait! The round-trip excursion, very reasonably priced, takes about six hours. For those who want a private voyage, there are agencies that specialize in organizing daytime or night-time mini-cruises.

During the trip you will go past the magnificent **Dolmabahçe Palace**, while further along you will encounter the green parks and imperial pavilions of **Yıldız Palace**. Built on the waterfront with parks extending behind it, **Çırağan Palace** was refurbished in 1874 by Sultan Abdülaziz, and is now restored as a grand hotel. For 300 meters along the Bosphorus shore, its ornate marble facades reflect the swiftly moving water. At **Ortaköy**, the next stop, every Sunday artists gather to exhibit their work in a street-side gallery where the variety of people create a lively scene. While in Ortaköy, you should sample a tasty *kumpir* (baked potato) from one of the street vendors. And also note its church, mosque, and synagogue that have existed side by side for hundreds of years – a tribute to Türkiye's tolerance

at grassroots level. Overshadowing İstanbul's traditional architecture at Ortaköy is one of the world's largest suspension bridges, the **Boğaziçi Bridge**, linking Europe and Asia.

Shore Excursion

The beautiful **Beylerbeyi Palace** lies just past the bridge on the Asian side and behind the palace rises **Çamlıca Hill**, the highest point in İstanbul. You can drive here to admire the

magnificent panorama of İstanbul and the beautiful, landscaped gardens. On the opposite shore, the wooden Ottoman villas of **Arnavutköy** create a contrast with the luxurious modern apartments of neighbouring **Bebek**. A few kilometres further along the Bosphorus stand the fortresses of **Rumeli Hisarı (Rumeli Fortress)** and **Anadolu Hisarı (Anatolian Fortress)** facing each other across the strait like watchful protectors.

Göksu Palace, sometimes known as Küçüksu Palace, graces the Asian shore next to **Anadolu Hisarı**. As the second link between the two continents, the **Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge** straddles the waterway just past these two fortresses.

From Duatepe Hill on the European side you can admire the magnificent panorama of the bridge and the Bosphorus. Below Duatepe, beautiful **Emirgan Park** bursts with color when its tulips bloom in the spring. On the Asian shore is **Kanlıca**, a fishing village that is now a favored suburb for affluent İstanbul residents. Crowds gather in the restaurants and cafés along its shores to sample its famous yogurt.

Shortly after Kanlıca and Çubuklu is **Beykoz Korusu** (İbrahim Paşa Woods), a popular retreat. In its cafés and restaurants, you can enjoy the delightful scenery and clean, fresh air. Back on the European side, at **Tarabya Bay**, yachts seem to dance at the moorings. The coastal road then bustles with taverns and fish restaurants from Tarabya to the charming suburbs of **Sarıyer** and **Büyükdere**. Sarıyer has one of the largest fish markets in İstanbul and is also famous for its delicious varieties of milk puddings and *börek* (pastries). After Sarıyer, the narrow strait widens and opens into the Black Sea.

Around İstanbul?

The **Princes' Islands**, an archipelago of nine islands in the Sea of Marmara, were places of exile for Byzantine princes. Today, during the summer months, İstanbul residents escape to the islands' cool sea breeze and elegant 19th-century houses.

Büyükdada is the largest of the islands. Here you can enjoy a ride e-cart among the pine trees or relax on a beach in one of the numerous coves that ring the island. The other popular islands are **Kınalı**, **Sedef**, **Burgaz**, and **Heybeliada**. Regular ferryboats connect the islands with both the European and Asian shores, and a faster sea bus service operates from **Kabataş** in the summer.



Winter at Tantora returns to AlUla

along with 3 momentous
new events in December

- Under the banner of “AlUla Moments,” Winter at Tantora and three other distinct festivals will commence in December 21 and run through to March 30, 2022, against the backdrop of AlUla’s many timeless wonders.
- AlUla’s events calendar highlights four festivals, such as Winter at Tantora, which is back by popular demand and celebrates **Heritage, AlUla Skies, AlUla Arts and AlUla’s Wellness Festival.**
- A stunning Candlelit Symphonic Concert at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Hegra will set the tone for the festival season as the opening event.
- Winter at Tantora, the very first music and arts festival in the Kingdom return – now in a six-week format, and it will run from **Dec.21 to Feb.12.** From Feb. 2021, the AlUla Arts festival will bring together exhibitions and encounters created by a diverse array of artistic talents, in celebration of AlUla’s legacy as a cultural crossroad.







AlUla, The World’s Masterpiece, is one of the oldest cities in the Arabian Peninsula and home to Hegra, a UNESCO World Heritage site. A land rich in historical, geological and geographical significance, this ancient city, once at the crossroads of The Silk Road and The Incense Route, has only recently been re-discovered by the world.

Under the banner of **AlUla Moments**, AlUla’s events calendar published today highlights four festivals including **Winter at Tantora** which is back by popular demand and celebrates heritage, **AlUla Skies**, **AlUla Arts** and **AlUla’s Wellness Festival**. The festivals will offer curated experiences of art, culture, music, nature, wellness, equestrian, gastronomy and astronomy. The events will include free and ticketed experiences, with tickets and information available at experiencealula.com.

The four distinct festivals will commence on 21 December and run through to 30 March against the

backdrop of AlUla’s many timeless wonders. Musical performances will also be back in AlUla with Maraya taking centre stage again as the venue for regional and international acts starting from this October.

Winter at Tantora, the very first music and arts festival in the Kingdom return – now in a six-week format. A stunning **Candlelit Symphonic Concert** at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Hegra will set the tone for the festival season as the opening event. Equestrian events will include the eagerly awaited new haute couture horse fashion event, **Ikamah Fashion Calvary**, the return of the competitive **Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Endurance Race** and the oh-so-chic **AlUla Desert Polo**. A new **Citrus Festival** will celebrate AlUla produce and the **Harrat Observation Deck** with Back to Black restaurant will offer stunning sunrise and sunset views of AlUla from the top of the Harrat Uwayrid. Archaeology and



cultural workshops will be introduced at the heritage sites, there will be live immersion shows at AlUla Old Town and in the oasis. Winter at Tantora will run from 21 December to 12 February.

From February 2021, the **AlUla Arts** festival will bring together exhibitions and encounters created by a diverse array of artistic talents, in celebration of AlUla's legacy as a cultural crossroads. Championing the 'art of our time', an exhibition representing the cutting edge of contemporary art by some of the leading artists in the Kingdom will be hosted at the award-winning Maraya.

Al Jedidiah will be a vibrant hub of art activity and performances, with the outdoor **Cinema El Housh** presenting arthouse Saudi filmmakers and curated art experiences populating the Oasis, and other landscapes within AlUla. The AlUla Arts festival can be experienced from February 13, with headline exhibitions running to the end of March.

It's no secret that the fascinating geological landscapes of AlUla, from

the volcanic plains to the ancient heritage sites, are best seen from the air - introducing **AlUla Skies**. Whether it's floating serenely over Hegra in a hot air balloon, zooming the length of the oasis in a **vintage plane** or taking a **helicopter** over the rock formations of Madakheel, the sky will be alive with action. The new sight and sound experience, **Constellations**, is a high-tech take on AlUla's popular star-gazing tour, and **Symphony Under the Stars** will be a spine-tingling musical performance set under a million twinkling stars. It is all bookable from 27 February to 12 March.

Leaning into AlUla's history as a place for respite and relaxation, AlUla's cultural oasis will become a focal point for wellness from this December. A stunning new **Garden of Moments** experience will use the elements of the environment interacting with space, light and sound in thought-provoking installations. And as part of the new **AlUla Wellness Festival** in March

2022, a **Five Senses Sanctuary** will offer a full range of mind, body and soul experiences from expert yoga, meditation and mindfulness practitioners. For something more energetic, the **Eco-Trail** returns to AlUla and **AlUla Oasis Fitness Infusion** will offer daily doses of endorphins in the form of expert-led group classes. **AlUla Wellness Festival** will run from 17 March to 27 March.

Also coming back this year will be the popular sunken seating and fire pits around **Elephant Rock**. New adventure experiences such as **mountain biking**, the **Via Ferrata** suspension bridge, extended **zip line** and some challenging new **hikes and canyon experiences at Madakheel**.

Dining options will be extended across AlUla from new heritage site restaurants, the return of **Annabel's** and the Michelin starred chef restaurant, **Maraya Social**, on the rooftop of Maraya.

TAT Introduces 'Visit Thailand Year 2022' at WTM 2021



Offering tourists 'Amazing New Chapters' to discover in Thailand as the Kingdom reopens its borders, quarantine free, to international travellers from 1 November 2021.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) introduced the latest tourism marketing campaign, the 'Visit Thailand Year 2022' with a number of strategic activities to promote the reopening of the kingdom's 'Amazing New Chapters' of new normal tourism at one of the world's leading travel trade shows, the World Travel Market (WTM), from 1-3 November 2021.

TAT at WTM 2021

This year marks the 40th year of TAT's

participation in the WTM, which is being held in the form of a live event at Excel London from 1-3 November, and a virtual event from 8-9 November.

Thailand's participation at the WTM 2021 was graciously supported by **Princess Ubolratana** who took time to grace Amazing Thailand: The Royal Dinner on 1 November 2021, and offered words of encouragement for Thai tourism professionals to recognise opportunities in times of crisis and join together in being a good host to ensure Thailand remains a sustainably

Preferred Destination. The Princess also extended an invitation to travellers from around the world to once again visit Thailand, the Land of Smiles, and experience the renowned Thai hospitality.

Also on 1 November 2021, **H.E. Mr Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn, Minister of Tourism and Sports**, presided over the opening of the Thai pavilion at the WTM 2021, which comprises a number of exhibitors including Thai hotels such as Centara Hotels and Resorts, Dusit Hotels & Resorts, Minor Hotels, The Standard Hotels, and Wattana Hotel Marketing Consultant; tour operators such as Asia Thailand, Diethelm Travel Thailand, Discova, and Easia Travel, and tourism representatives such as SALT Representation, Red Elephant Reps, and The MC Collection.

Mr Yuthasak Supasorn, TAT Governor, said, "TAT is using the WTM 2021 as a platform to launch our new marketing campaign, the Visit Thailand Year 2022, to the world. Leveraging the Royal Thai Government's Bio-Circular-Green or BCG economy model and our ongoing promotion of responsible and sustainable tourism, our new marketing activities for next year will emphasise Thailand's strengths in biological diversity and cultural richness under the "Amazing New Chapters" concept. This will reiterate the good image of the kingdom as a top tourist destination with all health and safety measures in place as the world exits the COVID-19 era."

During the WTM 2021, TAT also signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) with British Airways and TUI to form a strategic partnership to promote Thailand as a preferred destination for travellers from the UK and around the world.

Visit Thailand Year 2022

The "Visit Thailand Year 2022" will offer 3 'Amazing New Chapters' in which the world's travellers are welcome to experience in Thailand.

CHAPTER 1, or The First Chapter, will see TAT highlight tourism products and services that will awaken travellers' five

senses; such as, delicious Thai cuisine and the picturesque natural scenery that can be discovered all throughout the kingdom.

IN CHAPTER 2, titled The One You Love, TAT will focus on specific segments like families, couples, and friends and invite them to create wonderful memories together in Thailand. Bangkok, Phuket, and Chiang Mai in particular will be promoted as popular destinations for weddings and honeymooners, with their beautiful beaches, mountain resorts, and vibrant city appeals.

CHAPTER 3, The Earth We Care, will highlight how nature's chance to revitalise due to the COVID-19 situation has increased ecotourism awareness among the world's travellers and how their behaviour has impacted the environment. The emergence of travel segments like Wilderness tourism (Escapers) and Cult-Vacation

(Conscious) will also show that travellers' behaviour has changed towards spending more time in nature and being increasingly conscious of their impact on natural resources.

In addition, other segments to highlight include gastronomy, health and wellness, as well as, workation, which has become a growing trend when the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic will allow people to work remotely and enjoy a vacation.

Thailand Tourism Situation

From January to September 2021, Thailand welcomed a total of 85,845 visitors from overseas through various entry schemes, including the Sandbox Programme, Special Tourist Visa (STV), Thailand Privilege Card, and Medical Tourism. The Phuket Sandbox programme in particular recorded a total of 60,649 visitors from 1 July-31 October 2021, with the top five markets being the USA, Israel, UK,

Germany, and France.

Meanwhile, from 1 November 2021, "Thailand Reopening" is welcoming fully vaccinated visitors from 63 countries and territories via the **Exemption from Quarantine (TEST & GO)** entry scheme, and from around the world under the **Living in The "Blue Zone" (17 Sandbox Destinations)** programme. Partially or unvaccinated visitors from any countries and territories are also much welcomed via the **Happy Quarantine** requirements.

This year's various entry scheme is expected to bring at least 700,000 visitors to Thailand.

For 2022, TAT expects Thailand's tourism to generate 1.58 trillion Baht, which includes 818 billion Baht from international tourists and 771 billion Baht from domestic tourists. The forecast is based on the base scenario and can result in different outcomes depending on the COVID-19 pandemic and global and local economic situation.

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Candle-lit krathongs and fireworks feature in November 2021 festivals

Loi Krathong and Yi Peng Festivals, and the Pattaya International Fireworks Festival 2021 all take place in November.

Loi Krathong

The traditional festival of Loi Krathong – also known as the ‘Festival of Lights’ and the floating lantern festival – is one of the most charming and visually stunning of all Thailand’s annual festivals, and is celebrated during the

full moon of the 12th month of the Thai lunar calendar. In 2021 it will be held on Friday, 19 November.

All around Thailand, people gather in the evening at lakes, rivers, canals, and beaches to participate in Loi Krathong and pay respect to the goddess of water. In Thai, the word Loi means ‘float’ and Krathong means ‘container, boat or vessel’, and the festival entails the floating of a Krathong decorated with candles and flowers onto the water. The Thais believe this is a way to rid oneself of bad luck and negative feelings and to bring good luck and positive feelings.

Celebrated in Northern Thailand in conjunction with Loi Krathong is the Yi Peng Festival, which sees illuminated lanterns released into the nighttime sky. During Loi Krathong, the magical sight of hundreds of candle-lit krathongs floating on the water is an enchanting sight to behold, as is the equally beautiful scene during Yi Peng of the lanterns rising upward. However,



sky lanterns are normally banned during certain hours at night for passenger flight safety reasons.

While Loi Krathong is celebrated nationwide, some of the best places for tourists to experience the festival are Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Sukhothai. Once the first capital of Siam and today a World Heritage Site, Sukhothai offers the chance to enjoy Loi Krathong with the backdrop of majestic ancient ruins and is said to be where the festival began some 600 years ago.

Pattaya International Fireworks Festival 2021

The event is scheduled to take place from 26-27 November 2021. More details will be updated soon.

Surin Elephant Round-Up

The world-famous Surin Elephant Round-up in the Northeastern province of Surin – around 430 km from Bangkok – pays homage to the way of life, culture, and

traditions of the local Kui people and their longstanding relationship with Thailand's majestic elephants. While the festival is normally held in November, this year the plan is to stage it from 15-26 December 2021 although these dates are yet to be confirmed.

The event's programme for the Surin Elephant Round-up typically features a magnificent parade of elephants, an enormous buffet meal for the mighty beasts, and a show starring them.

River Kwai Bridge Week

Usually held from late November through into early December, the River Kwai Bridge Week in Kanchanaburi province has this year been postponed for a couple of weeks and is scheduled for 17-26 December 2021. This event, of which the highlight is a spectacular sound and light show, honours the PoWs and Asian labourers who were forced to build the infamous Death Railway in World War II.





10 Day Southern California Road Trip

There's nothing like packing your bags, hopping in the car and turning the radio dial-up as miles of pavement pass beneath your wheels. In Southern California, where warm, sunny days make for perfect drives with the window down, the best road trip includes three amazing and unique regions all within a few hours of each other: Santa Monica, Greater Palm Springs and San Diego. Whether you're a beach bum or a culture connoisseur,

you'll appreciate the variety of experiences that await in each place—and can be enjoyed in just 10 days.

Ready to hit the road? Let this ultimate Southern California road trip itinerary be your guide.

DAYS 1-3: SANTA MONICA

DAY 1: Santa Monica, your starting point, is Los Angeles' beach city—a charming seaside town with all of the culture, *events* and urban amenities of



a bustling metropolis. Kick off your trip with a bike ride along the 35-kilometre beach bicycle trail or a guided tour with *Santa Monica Bike Center*. Then spend a few hours at the Pacific Park amusement park, located on the world-famous *Santa Monica Pier*, and catch the sunset from the Ferris wheel. Finish your first day with dinner on the patio at one of *Main Street's* neighbourhood restaurants.

DAY 2: Begin your day by grabbing



some fresh fruit from the *Santa Monica Farmers Market*, then getting a coffee-to-go and strolling toward the 26-acre *Palisades Park*, known for its beautiful ocean views. Want to get your feet wet? Catch a wave during a surf session with the pros at *Aqua Surf School* before exploring the *Annenberg Community Beach House*, a unique community destination with spectacular views, a splash pad, a playground, a gallery, beach courts,

cultural events and more. Afterwards, hit up *Santa Monica Place* for outdoor luxury shopping and dining.

DAY 3: Greet the dawn with a sunrise hike in historic Will Rogers State Park through *Malibu Discovery Tours*, then grab your sunscreen and shades and find a sunny spot in the sand. *Perry's Café and Beach Rentals* is a must, offering "Beach Butler" service with a private beach area, as well as chairs, an umbrella, towels, and food

and beverages delivered right to you. Once you've worked on your tan, find your artsy side at *Bergamot Station*, Southern California's largest art gallery complex and cultural centre with over 20 contemporary galleries, or head to Pico Blvd for a *self-guide street art mural tour*.

Looking to stay somewhere truly unique while in Santa Monica? Check out these hotels which feature *amazing architecture and design elements*.



DAYS 4-7: GREATER PALM SPRINGS

DAY 4: It's time to head to *Greater Palm Springs* for a little relaxation and rejuvenation. This storied resort oasis, home to nine distinct cities,

serves as the gateway to Joshua Tree National Park and boasts hundreds of miles of hiking, biking and horseback riding trails, as well as an incomparable collection of seductive luxury hotels, resorts and spas.

After the 2.5-hour drive, climb aboard the *Palm Springs Aerial Tramway*, the world's largest rotating tramcar, and ascend over 9,000 feet to the top of Mount San Jacinto. Need to stretch your legs? Set out on a desert hike or go rock climbing among colossal boulders at *Joshua Tree National Park*. Afterwards, be sure to visit Pioneertown, an Old West movie set, or stop by the world-renowned saloon and restaurant *Pappy & Harriet's* for a barbecue dinner and live music.

DAY 5: Rise and shine with an outdoor adventure that's sure to get your adrenaline pumping. With *Big Wheel Tours*, you'll get a guided bike tour as you join the signature "Earthquake Canyon Express" through the San Andreas Fault Zone. At America's first carbon-neutral resort, *Two Bunch Palms*, treat yourself to a full range of spa-induced wellness treatments, including mud baths, chakra massages and reiki. And as



the sun dips behind the mountains, embark on a San Andreas Fault Sunset and Stargazing Jeep Tour with *Desert Adventures Red Jeep Tours & Events*.

DAY 6: Begin the day with another shot of adrenaline at the *BMW Performance Center*. Strap into a high-performance BMW and learn to negotiate one of three private road tracks under your instructor's watchful eye. Before the 2.5-hour drive to San Diego, allow La Quinta Resort & Club to nourish the body with authentic Mexican cuisine at the resort's signature restaurant, *Adobe Grill*.

DAYS 7-10: SAN DIEGO

DAY 7: After spending a couple of days immersed in the desert's awe-inspiring scenery and healing energy, pack up the car to explore the world-famous attractions and neighbourhoods of *San Diego*. The region's unique Cali-Baja culinary scene and craft brew industry have foodies

flocking for fresh experiences, while a dynamic downtown is a home to nightlife that's as vibrant as the city itself.

Plus, it's only 2.5 hours away! Spend the late morning exploring the Embarcadero, an epicentre of maritime history, where you can tour the *USS Midway Museum*, take a 1- or 2-hour harbour cruise or visit the floating Maritime Museum. Later, watch the sunset while sipping cocktails at one of Harbor Island's trendy bay-side restaurants, then indulge in incredible cuisine prepared by top chefs in *Little Italy*, San Diego's current restaurant "hot spot."

DAY 8: Wake up and walk on the wild side at the world-famous *San Diego Zoo*, home to more than 4,000 animals. Stroll through the country's largest urban park—*Balboa Park*—featuring 15 museums, an artist colony and fascinating architecture. Then top it all off with dinner and dancing in the *Gaslamp Quarter*, a historic downtown

neighbourhood where you'll find 200+ restaurants, bars and nightclubs within a 14-block radius.

DAY 9: Make your last morning memorable by enjoying breakfast at a cosy *La Jolla* cliffside restaurant (be sure to check out the sea lion colony!) followed by some much-needed beach time. Kick back and catch some rays along San Diego's 70 miles of coastline. Round out the day in *Old Town*, the "Birthplace of California," where museums, restaurants and Mexican traditions combine to provide an unforgettable cultural experience.

DAY 10: START DREAMING ABOUT YOUR RETURN VISIT

Enjoy a light bite at one of San Diego's hidden gem neighbourhoods of *North Park*, *South Park* or *Hillcrest*, then head to the airport (located just 10 minutes from downtown San Diego) for your trip back home—and start dreaming about your next SoCal getaway!



Booking.com reveals 8 top trending destinations in 2022

Forget the days of dreaming of trips and holidays abroad, 2022 is looking like an optimistic and extraordinary year for travel.

Booking.com's annual Travel Predictions research found that nearly two thirds (63%) of travellers say they need to make up for lost vacation time from the pandemic. In addition, nearly half (47%) of travellers would rather go somewhere most people haven't heard but have to keep it a secret, instead of a well-

known destination that they can tell people about in 2022.

To help inspire travellers to find their own hidden gems as travel makes its triumphant return, Booking.com has delved into global booking trends to share the eight of the top trending destinations for travellers to explore in 2022. From urban cities and



mountain resorts to seaside escapes and destinations rich with culture and history, there's a destination for everyone to plan an unforgettable trip in 2022.

Taichung, Taiwan

Taiwan's second-largest city is famous for its big night markets. Over half

(57%) of travellers want to try new and different cuisines while travelling in 2022, so as you bustle your way through one of the buzzing street markets, be sure to try sun cakes, Taichung's local meatballs, and of course a refreshing bubble tea. By day, Taichung is home to incredible historical temples and must-see sites

including the prestigious 200-year-old Lecheng Temple, the ornate Chenghuang Temple, and the three-hall style Wanhe Temple, which showcase intricate architecture and reveal the rich cultural past of the city's ancestors.

Melaka, Malaysia

Known as the historical state of Malaysia, Melaka is rich with heritage buildings and ancient landmarks. Travellers can take in the cool street art that covers the city with a stroll down Jonker Walk while enjoying local boutiques, small museums and restaurants with local Nyonya cuisine



that can be tantalizingly spicy, but is a delight for the tastebuds! Take in all Melaka has to offer, with Melaka Bird Park being a great day out for the family to see over 700 Malaysian bird species in an idyllic botanical garden and, for a stunning view, pay a visit to the beautiful Masjid Selat Mosque. When the water levels are high, the Mosque looks like it is floating on top of the strait of Melaka and is magical at both sunrise and sunset.

Atlanta, USA

As the capital of Georgia, Atlanta is known as the cultural centre of the American South and offers a true urban adventure. Full of lively neighbourhoods with world-class restaurants and a wealth of vibrant nightlife, it is a great destination for all types of travellers. For history lovers, the city is home to some important sites such as the Martin Luther King Jr National Historical Park and the National Center for Civil and Human Rights. As 73% of travellers want to have authentic experiences that are representative of the local culture*

locals would recommend visiting Ponce de Leon Avenue, a 16-mile road that connects Atlanta's diverse communities and allows visitors to fully immerse themselves into the city down one long straight road. The 'Ponce,' as it is known locally, is home to everything from tattoo parlours and underground nightclubs, to antique shops, and churches and showcases all the rich culture Atlanta has to offer.

Gramado, Brazil

Gramado is located in the 'Romantic Route' region of southern Brazil, a scenic route that runs through 13 municipalities of Rio Grande do Sul. This picturesque mountain resort is perfect for two-thirds (68%) of travellers who like travelling 'off-the-beaten-path' to destinations that are less crowded. With charming boutique shops, restaurants that serve chocolate and fondue, and pedestrian crosswalks – Gramado feels like a quaint Swiss village in the heart of South America, making it an unexpected destination thanks to the fusion of two cultures. As two-thirds (66%) of travellers wish to

stay somewhere with different scenery from what they are used to back home, this unique destination is one of the most charming places in the Brazilian hinterland and is well worth the visit for a memorable trip in 2022.

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Santo Domingo exemplifies the pulse of Dominican culture and is a city where old perfectly meets new, with art galleries, buzzing nightlife and delicious foodie scene sitting seamlessly alongside architectural wonders from the 16th century and a UNESCO world heritage site. Explore the Zona Colonial in the core of the city by bike or by joining a guided tour, visit the National Botanical Garden for a beautiful taste of nature and finish with a sunset drink with a seaview at the Malecón pier. The historical charm met with a modern Latin flair is perfect for the half (49%) of travellers who want to stay somewhere close to plenty of nightlife options, as they can enjoy the salsa clubs by night and recuperate on the pristine beaches in the glorious Caribbean by day.

INTERNATIONAL





Braşov, România

Full of medieval ambience, the 13th Century city of Braşov set in the heart of Transylvania inspired the world's most famous vampire and will transport you back in time. Fringed by the peak of the Southern Carpathian Mountains, the city is full of romantically Gothic architecture creating an awe-inspiring skyline.

Main attractions include the spookily famous Bran Castle which inspired Bram Stoker's Dracula, or you can even visit a bear sanctuary to see these incredible animals in their natural habitat. Whether conquering a hiking trail, taking a cable car up Mount Tampa to overlook the whole city or perusing the charming cafes surrounding the central Council Square, the city is a hidden European gem, with no vampires in sight.

Llandudno, UK

Known as 'The Queen of the Welsh Watering Places', this Victorian seaside gem situated on the North Wales Coast is perfect for exploring beaches, nature and castles. To see all of the city, the formidable limestone headland overlooking Llandudno is known as The Great Orme and visitors can travel up on a tram to reach the summit station for wonderful views. For a quintessentially British seaside experience, Llandudno pier is ideal for seaside fun and charming shops. Llandudno (pronounced *lan.did.no*) is also home to the Oriel Mostyn Gallery; an elegant building that showcases contemporary art lies nearby a variety of restaurants, pubs and shops.

Montpellier, France

Coined as one of the sunniest cities in France, Montpellier sits on the Mediterranean coast of the South of France and is a beautiful city full of elegant architecture. Explore the city by the new modern tram lines which were designed by the luxury designer Christian Lacroix, then visit the white-sand beaches on the city's doorstep for some vitamin-sea as 82% of travellers agree that seeing a body of water instantly changes their mood for the better. Travellers can take a stroll down the historical Promenade du Peyrou to sample some French cheese in the market before a visit to the Cathedral. For any art enthusiast, you can pay a visit to the Musée Fabre to observe exquisite art from the 14th century.





Visit Maldives

successfully concludes WTM London 2021 with 58 Industry Partners



WTM London 2021 was held from 1st to 3rd November.

The World Travel Market London (WTM London) is one of the leading global events for the travel industry to meet industry professionals and conduct business deals. Through its industry networks and unrivalled global reach, WTM London creates personal and business opportunities, providing customers with quality contacts, content and

communities. This year for the first time in history WTM is being held as a hybrid event and the physical fair is taking place after a year's break due to the covid-19 situation in the UK.

A total of 102 representatives from 58 companies participated in the event along with Visit Maldives. The purpose of participating in this event was to connect and network with industry

stakeholders, travel trade partners from the UK market and around the globe. Industry partners were expected to meet up to 150 industry stakeholders during the event.

Maldives was exhibited in a 609sqm stand space, one of the biggest stand spaces to be exhibited in recent times. This event assisted the Maldives in maintaining the



destination presence as one of the safest destinations to travel, due to the unique geographical formation of the islands, allowing natural social distance for travellers. WTM is also a great platform to market our resorts, hotels, guesthouses and liveaboards, and inform travel trade and travellers of the strict measures in place at these facilities, established to ensure

the safety of travellers. Through the event, professionals from the Maldives informed travel agencies and tour operators of the latest destination information and travel guidelines.

During the event Visit Maldives and industry partners conducted one-on-one meetings in person and virtually. It provided a platform to the stakeholders to promote individual

products and properties. A press conference was also held by Managing Director and CEO of MMPRC, Thoyyib Mohamed, the Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdullah Mausoom and Ms Zuley Manik Executive Director of Sun Siyam Resorts on the second day of WTM. A special VIP event was held on the last day of the WTM London 2021 which was attended by his excellency, President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. Visit Maldives also held a Roadshow in the UK to promote MICE opportunities available in the destination after the conclusion of WTM London 2021.

In 2019 WTM was held with over 5,000 exhibitors and reached more than 51,000 visitors. A total of 935,129 business meetings were held during the WTM 2019. 3,000 members of the international media attend the event each year to report on the latest stories relating to the global travel trade industry.

The UK is the 8th top source market to the Maldives as per the most recent statistics. So far this year Maldives had welcomed over 1 million tourists to the country, out of which 2.6 per cent or 29,224 were from the UK, the officials informed. So far this year, Maldives have held media interviews, beachcombers destination training, a global campaign with Skyscanner, a joint marketing campaign with TripAdvisor, Turquoise Holiday, multi-media campaign with ABTA Magazine, digital marketing campaign with Expedia, participated in the National Wedding Show held in the UK. Upcoming activities for the UK market include joint marketing campaigns with British Airways, TV advertising and outdoor advertising campaigns.

Visit Maldives continues to hold several activities, including webinars, familiarization trips, joint marketing campaigns with local and international stakeholders, while also participating in major and minor fairs and exhibitions in order to increase arrivals and maintain destination presence across the globe. These activities are targeted towards the top, new and emerging markets as per our strategies.

COVER STORY: LEADERSHIP



Liberatha Kallat,
Founder and Managing
Director - *DreamFolks*

DreamFolks: Liberatha Kallat, Founder and Managing Director, building effective strategy to convert her dreams into reality.

DreamFolks
Offers The
Ultimate
Red Carpet
Experience
for flyers - enabling
end-to-end airport
solutions and
enfolding future
travel trends

By Devender Grover

It's been a challenging time globally for the travel and tourism industry since the pandemic struck 18 months ago. However, the Industry is now surely moving into action as the travel now resumes with full swing.

DreamFolks, a global airport services provider operating India's largest Airport Lounge Access Program, jump-started the concept of Airport Lounge Access in India and expanded its portfolio with new services like Meet and Assist, Wellness Services, Airport Dining, Airport Transfer, Nap Rooms/ Sleeping Pods, Transit Hotels, and Baggage Transfer to cater to travellers in the airport ecosystem.

With a vision to create a global airport experience for travellers, DreamFolks facilitates ready solutions for airport services access to its clients like card networks (e.g., Mastercard, RuPay) and banks (e.g., ICICI and HDFC).

Today, the bulk of airport lounge access in India is facilitated by DreamFolks. It has a leadership position in the Industry with an 80% share in the Indian market and has spread its wings across 100+ countries worldwide.

In an exclusive to Travel Span, Liberatha Kallat, Founder and Managing Director, DreamFolks, talks about the present trends and her vision to provide the complete airport experience for the travellers.

Ms. Liberatha Kallat is the chief architect of DreamFolks. A woman with passion, full of ideas and directions for what she wants to do

With a vision to create a global airport experience, DreamFolks facilitates its alliances by providing customized solutions to its target audience.

and achieve. She takes pride in being an entrepreneur who evolved the concept of amplifying the customer experience at the airport via her brainchild – ‘DreamFolks’ one of the largest airport service providers in the world. A company committed to creating a global airport experience that truly differentiates, marked with operational excellence through robust technology-driven setup.

Liberatha created this Industry in India 10 years ago when she saw an opportunity while being part of the airport industry. At that time, banks and networks would contract with each lounge independently, with separate contracts between each set of entities. She set up DreamFolks to solve the challenges for both banks and lounge partners by creating a platform where both parties could ‘plug in’ to the platform and leverage the economies of scale to benefit all.

Liberatha is an agile and energetic professional with hands-on experience in establishing strategic partnerships, technology setups, corporate planning across various industries, primarily hospitality and fast-moving consumer goods. Initially, her vision was to democratise lounge access and provide travellers access to luxurious lounges to relax. Gradually, with the change in customer needs, her vision expanded, and today the services encompass the other airport services.

Q Kindly talk about the exclusive products or services offered by the company, how does it distinguish you from your competitors?

A DreamFolks is one of the largest providers of airport solutions. It stands apart from its competitors due to its approach



DreamFolks

Your Airport Experience Amplified!

and its technological independence. Since the inception of DreamFolks, it has been working on the B2B business model associated with major banking institutions; card network companies. It has been catering to this set of audiences via its flagship Airport Lounge Access Program. It also designed its innovative technology platform to leapfrog existing systems for an end-to-end re-engineered solution to solve industry issues and create new business models for its clients.

Q **Could you please share your noted milestones, accomplishments throughout your journey so far, along with company highlights and achievements under your leadership?**

A DreamFolks distinguished itself by being a frontrunner in envisioning future trends and reinventing itself to meet all the requirements of the consumers and expand its portfolio of services. DreamFolks had tied up with all the major Banks and card network companies in India like Visa, Mastercard, Diners, RuPay, ICICI Bank, HDFC, and many more, through which it has emerged as the first choice of the companies who wish to provide world-class Airport services to their clients. The B2B approach has paved the way for DreamFolks to penetrate the market swiftly and capture major Airport Lounge businesses in India.

“We are also associated with online travel agents (OTAs), airlines, medical institutions, telecom, and corporates, as well as leading hospitality industry players to provide an unabridged bouquet of airport services to travellers,” says Liberatha.

In 2017, DreamFolks built its in-house technology and unveiled the ‘DreamFolks Privilege Card’ in the market with International Lounge Accesses for travellers. In 2019, DreamFolks successfully migrated the external tech program to its platform to provide a complete in-house Lounge Access Program. Today, the majority of tech transactions happen through the DreamFolks platform, with many networks and bank partners migrating completely.

Q **Could you please explain what new DreamFolks has done in terms of Innovation and technology?**

A Previously, the organization relied on external tech platforms for all the technical work. At that point, the Industry was struggling with two isolated solutions – separate ways to access lounges for domestic (via Bank’s cards) and international lounges (via a membership card) plus lack of visibility of benefits and utilisation, and sometimes surprise billing in next credit card statement ending in customer service issues and client dissatisfaction.

The new platform allows the banks to either go completely digital or run hybrid solutions where both the physical bank card and digital card access can run in parallel. This, along with the access to the usage data, helps the banks design new models to incentivise their users.

Q **How do you motivate your team to be innovative and productive at work?**

A We have a team of enthusiastic and hardworking people at work. We have a clear vision with a complete understanding of job responsibilities. Being in the hospitality industry and a part of a tech-driven company, we always promote and encourage our employees to learn new skills, which will help them to have creative and out-of-the-box thinking. Also, we have flexible working hours, which help them to maintain a work-life balance.

Q **Where do you see yourself and the company in the future? Or what is your goal to mark the uniqueness in the future?**

A Thinking about the future, we foresee DreamFolks as World’s number one airport services provider supported by robust technology. We will continue revamping our platform and extend it to other solutions like retail, airport shopping, baggage handling, porter service, and many more. In addition, we integrate our platform with airport apps for a smooth airport journey and customize loyalty solutions for different segments like corporates, OTAs, etc.

Q **Your Advice for the entrepreneur who is trying to embark on the same field.**

A *“My advice to all entrepreneurs is to be passionate, creative, and innovative. Always follow your passion and do what you love. And have a clear vision about the 5Ws (What, Who, Where, When, and Why) of your business”,* concludes Liberatha.

Business travel spend set to reach two thirds of pre-pandemic levels by 2022: WTTC

Corporate travel in the Middle East and Asia Pacific set to lead the way with fastest recovery



Worldwide business travel spending looks set to rise by more than a quarter this year and reach two thirds of pre-pandemic levels by 2022, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC).

The forecast comes in a major new WTTC report in collaboration with McKinsey & Company called 'Adapting to Endemic Covid-19: The Outlook for Business Travel'.

It draws on research, analysis and in-depth interviews with Travel & Tourism business leaders to enable organisations to prepare for corporate travel in the post-pandemic world.

Business travel was disproportionately affected by

COVID-19 and has been slower to resume. Given that business travel is vital for many sectors of the global economy, it is important that all stakeholders join forces to find solutions to aid its recovery.

According to the new report, the modest boost for business travel with global business travel spend rising 26% this year will be followed by a further rise of 34% in 2022.

But this comes in the wake of a 61% collapse in business travel spend in 2020, following the imposition of extensive travel restrictions with considerable regional differences in the bounce back around the world.

To speed up the recovery of

business travel, the report recommends businesses adjust their revenue models, expand geographic focus, and improve digital services.

The shared challenge of restoring business travel will also depend on ongoing collaboration and partnerships across the private and public sectors and nurturing new relationships.

Julia Simpson, WTTC CEO & President, said: "Business travel is starting to pick up. We expect to see two thirds back by the end of 2022.

"Business travel has been seriously hit but our research shows room for optimism with Asia Pacific and Middle East first off the starting blocks".

Considering this year and next, WTTC data shows which regions around the world are leading the revival in business travel, led by the Middle East:

1. Middle East - Business spending is set to rise by 49% this year, stronger than leisure spending at 36%, followed by a 32% rise next year
2. Asia-Pacific - Business spending is set to rise by 32% this year, and 41% next year
3. Europe - Set to rise by 36% this year, stronger than leisure spending at 26%, followed by a 28% rise next year
4. Africa - Spending is set to rise by 36% this year, slightly stronger than leisure spending at 35%, followed by a 23% rise next year
5. Americas - Business spending is expected to rise by 14% this year, and by 35% in 2022.

The report details how global travel-related spending declined significantly from 2019 to 2020, as a result of COVID-19 and the ongoing restrictions to international mobility.

Last year, the Travel & Tourism sector suffered losses of almost US\$4.5 trillion, and more than 62 million people lost their jobs. Domestic visitor spending decreased by 45 percent, while international visitor spending fell by an unprecedented 69.4 percent.

WTTC's report also shows significant changes over the past 18 months, particularly in demand, supply, and the overall operating environment which



affect business travel.

Demand for business travel has been slower to recover than leisure and corporate policies continue to influence business travel demand according to national travel restrictions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also been a catalyst for change, driving the move to digital and so changing the supply for possible business travel as hybrid events become the new norm.

The operating environment has also become more opaque with a greater need for clarity around the rules and regulations necessary to allow unimpeded international travel.

However, some sectors have fared better than others with early rebounders including manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, and construction companies while service-orientated and knowledge industries including healthcare, education, and professional services are likely to experience longer-term disruption.

The report emphasises the continuing importance of business travel and the spend it generates for global economic growth.

Analysis shows that in 2019, most major countries depended on business travel for 20% of their tourism, 75 to 85% of which was domestic.

Although business travel represented only 21.4% of global travel in 2019, it was responsible for the highest spending in many destinations, making it essential for the recovery of the entire travel sector and for its many stakeholders.

Business travel is an important part of the service offering for airlines and high-end hotels and essential for generating much of their revenues.

Before the pandemic, business travel accounted for around 70% of all global revenue for high-end hotel chains while between 55 and 75% of airline profits came from business travellers, who made up around 12% of passengers.

Jane Sun, Chief Executive Officer of Trip.com, said: "In China, business travel is booming very fast. Trip.com Group's corporate travel business is actually one of our fastest growing segments, so people still need

to see each other to conduct a business and close the deals. We remain positive that once business is back to normal, we expect even stronger growth compared to the pre COVID level."

Chris Nassetta, President & CEO Hilton, said: "A return to business travel will be critical in our industry's recovery from the pandemic. "We're continuing to see incremental progress and this report illustrates just how important business travel is to the global economy. Travel and tourism will continue to drive progress for millions around the world – especially as people begin traveling again."

Paul Griffiths, Chief Executive Officer of Dubai Airports International, said: "The loss of mobility experienced by billions of people during the COVID-19 pandemic served as a stark reminder of the immense social and economic contribution that travel and tourism brings to the global population. Whilst the proliferation of digital communications is set to transform the way we do business, it has also proven that so many aspects of our lives are dependent on the level of social interaction uniquely afforded by the ability to travel. "The industry must adapt to the new world in a more innovative, value driven and sustainable way and the initiative by WTTC sets out a clear road map for the future."

Fred Dixon, President and CEO of NYC & Company, said: "Bringing back business travel is a critical

component of New York City's continued economic recovery. It's reassuring to see the deliberate focus on this import segment by the WTTC, and we support all efforts under way to further encourage the resumption of this vital source of visitation. As one of the world's most iconic business capitals, we are committed to nurturing this segment and highlighting the many advantages of meeting in person in New York City."

Paul Abbott, Chief Executive, American Express Global Business Travel, said: "We have now seen what a world without travel looks like. Businesses struggle, GDP capitulates, unemployment rockets and mental health issues soar. A world without travel is less prosperous, less tolerant and lacks the excitement and serendipity that gives us our energy. For all these reasons, we can be very confident about the future of business travel. "Pent-up demand for travel is already turning into a release of human energy across the world. Travel is a force for good. It is the engine room of the economy, driving commerce and innovation. At the same time, travel underpins social progress by breaking down cultural barriers and helping build respect and understanding."

WTTC believes while business travel will return, its uneven recovery will have important implications across the global Travel & Tourism sector, making private public partnerships even more important in the months and years ahead.



Top 10

Arrivals after 1 November Thailand Reopening

USA, Germany, and UK top most arrivals during 1-6 November 2021.

Thailand is now welcoming fully vaccinated visitors from around the world via two specially-designed entry schemes: TEST & GO Exemption from Quarantine and Living in the “Blue Zone” (17 Sandbox destinations). Partially or unvaccinated visitors are also much welcomed via the Happy Quarantine requirements.

During 1-6 November 2021, visitor arrivals to Thailand from the top 10 countries* at all international airports were:

1. USA – 2,465 arrivals
2. Germany – 2,334 arrivals
3. UK – 1,376 arrivals
4. Japan – 1,258 arrivals
5. South Korea – 906 arrivals
6. Russia 905 – arrivals
7. Switzerland – 838 arrivals
8. Sweden – 724 arrivals
9. France – 695 arrivals
10. UAE – 542 arrivals

The Exemption from Quarantine (TEST & GO) entry scheme is currently only for travellers from 63 approved

countries and territories. The list of approved countries will be expanded later to cover the entire world from 1 January 2022.

Meanwhile, the “Thailand Pass” web-based system has been launched to support the “Ease of Travelling” policy, allowing foreign travellers to fill in their travel and health information and upload the related documents before travelling to Thailand.

See a user-friendly checklist of points covering before, during, and after travelling to Thailand under the three key entry schemes: Exemption from Quarantine (TEST & Go), Living in the “Blue Zone” Sandbox, and Alternative Quarantine (AQ). This statistic will be changed regularly once new information becomes available. Kindly check in on www.tatnews.org to stay current on what remains a very fluid and fast-changing situation.

**Source: Ministry of Public Health*

British Airways Continues to upgrade the fleet with Club Suite to enhance customer experience



British Airways is continuing with the rollout of its newest business class seat, Club Suite, as it continues to retrofit the seat across its Boeing 777 fleet, with the rollout expected to be completed by the end of 2022.

The airline already has retrofitted a number of its Boeing 777 aircraft with the latest seat and will be working with Collins Aerospace to ensure the rest of the airline's 777 aircraft are fitted with the new cabin.

The airline's sophisticated Club Suite was first rolled out in July 2019

on the first A350 and since then has been installed on the Boeing 787-10 aircraft. The seat offers direct-aisle access, a suite door for greater privacy and luxurious flat-bed seats in a 1-2-1 configuration. Boasting 40 per cent more storage, including a vanity unit and mirror, WiFi, enviable 18.5-inch inflight entertainment screens, high definition gate-to-gate programming and PC / USB power; every aspect of British Airways' Club Suite has been designed for today's customer.

As part of its commitment to the North Atlantic, all British Airways

flights to JFK will be operated by an aircraft that has the airline's Club Suite product.

Sajida Ismail, Head of Inflight Product at British Airways, said: "When we launched our Club Suite product, it was a huge hit with our customers who loved the privacy the new seat offers. We are focused on the rollout of this product and other cabin enhancements to ensure we deliver on our commitment to provide the very best British quality, style and comfort for our customers."

Trevor Skelly, General Manager Integration Engineering for Collins Aerospace, said: "The upgraded Club World cabin raises British Airways' already high standards and provides commonality across their fleet of aircraft. Our Integration Engineering team has worked closely with British Airways designers for several years to bring the latest in business-class comfort, style and privacy from concept to reality."

As part of the upgrade, the airline's Club Kitchen is also getting a makeover with new Club chillers and built-in storage for snacks, drinks and other refreshments, allowing customers in Club World to help themselves to refreshments at their leisure.

The latest generation of the First cabin including the introduction of the First suite door will also continue to be rolled out across the airline's B777-300 aircraft. The First suites were meticulously designed based on our customers' feedback, the cabin puts comfort at the heart of the experience and makes the very best use of the generous space designed for just a few customers at a time. The suite includes a fixed 23-inch high definition inflight entertainment screen that can be controlled with an integrated handset.

British Airways

Powers First TransAtlantic Flight

following the lifting of US Restrictions with Sustainable Aviation Fuel

- *British Airways first flight to the US since the lifting of restrictions for the majority of UK travellers departed for New York JFK at 0830 this morning in a synchronised take-off with Virgin Atlantic*
- *BA001, a flight number previously reserved for Concorde, is being directly powered by 35% sustainable aviation fuel – believed to be the first commercial transatlantic flight to ever be operated with this high percentage blend of sustainable aviation fuel*
- *The sustainable aviation fuel being used reduces lifecycle CO2 emissions by more than 80% compared to the traditional jet fuel it replaces*



British Airways flight BA001 became the airline's first flight to depart for the US, as the country lifted restrictions imposed on British travellers for more than 18 months.

The BA001, the flight number previously reserved for Concorde, departed Heathrow in a synchronised take-off with Virgin Atlantic's VS3 flight. Both flights were bound for New York, JFK.

The British Airways A350 flight is being directly powered by a 35% blend of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) provided by bp and made from used cooking oil. It is believed to be the first commercial transatlantic flight ever to be operated with such a significant level of fuel blended with traditional jet fuel*.

The airline's newest and most fuel-efficient long-haul A350 aircraft are up to 40% more efficient than the Boeing 747-400 Jumbo Jet aircraft that used to operate between London and New York. Combining this modern aircraft efficiency with today's blend of SAF means the flight's overall CO2 emissions are more than 50 per cent less than those emitted by the now-retired 747 aircraft that previously operated on this route.

In addition, British Airways also offset all emissions associated with the flight, to demonstrate the various ways in which the airline is decarbonising its operations **.

In September, British Airways announced a collaboration with bp to source sustainable aviation fuel in respect of all flights between London, Glasgow and Edinburgh during the UK COP26 conference. British Airways' parent company International Airlines Group recently committed to operating 10% of its flights using SAF by 2030.

The lifting of US restrictions after more than 600 days means that fully vaccinated Britons are now able to travel freely between the two countries – something that has not happened since March 16, 2020. The changes have enabled British Airways to meaningfully re-start direct services to 17 US destinations. The airline is set to extend its services to 23 US airports this winter, with up to 246 flights a

week, more than any other transatlantic carrier. Flights to New York will increase from five to eight per day in December. There will also be double-daily services to Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, Dallas, Miami and Toronto, as well as daily services to Philadelphia, Phoenix, Seattle, Atlanta, Denver, Houston and Vancouver.

British Airways is operating 26 flights to the US today.

UK Ambassador to the United States, Dame Karen Pierce DCMG, said:

"Today is an incredibly exciting and meaningful day for the UK-US relationship. We can all once again travel to each other's countries to visit families, take holidays, and conduct transatlantic business. I am absolutely thrilled that safe and sustainable travel can fully resume between the UK and the United States."

The British Airways A350 flight is being directly powered by a 35% blend of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) provided by bp and made from used cooking oil.

British Airways Chairman and CEO Sean Doyle, who is travelling on the BA001, said:

"Today is about celebrating the UK-US reopening of the transatlantic corridor after more than 600 days of separation, and it was fantastic to be able to mark this by synchronising the take-off of British Airways and Virgin Atlantic flights for the first time ever."

"While flying is vital to connect the world and support the UK's economic recovery from the pandemic, it's important for us to use this moment to demonstrate how we're driving our decarbonisation plans forward, and what the future will look like for aviation. That's why we've directly powered our first flight to the US

today with sustainable aviation fuel and offset emissions on behalf of our customers. We're looking forward to the Government's continued support to ensure the development and mass production of sustainable aviation fuel continues at pace."

Four aviation decarbonisation projects supported by British Airways recently received Government funding as part of the Department of Transport's Green Fuels, Green Skies (GFGS) competition. All of these projects have a clear potential to produce SAF capable of reducing emissions by more than 70% on a lifecycle basis when used in place of conventional fossil jet fuel***.

- Current regulations stipulate that the maximum sustainable aviation fuel blend passenger aircraft can use is 50%. Today's flight is operating using 35% sustainable aviation fuel and 65% traditional jet fuel

- **Carbon projects supported through voluntary carbon offsetting include the protection of the rainforests, improved cookstove distribution and the replacement of fossil fuel with wind and solar power

- ***British Airways is partnering with technology company Velocys on the Altalto project to build a commercial waste-to-SAF plant in Immingham, Lincolnshire. Project Speedbird is a collaboration between British Airways, LanzaJet and Nova Pangaea, using waste wood, with a goal of producing 100 million litres of sustainable fuel a year from 2025, sufficient to decarbonise 1,400 flights from London to New York operated by an A350 aircraft. The airline is also working on two further decarbonisation projects with LanzaTech and LanzaJet that, if successful, could each produce more than 100 million litres a year of SAF. The first would involve capturing carbon dioxide (CO2) from the atmosphere and converting it into SAF. The second would support the development of a SAF plant in Port Talbot, South Wales that would produce SAF from waste and industrial gases, with the potential to support significant jobs in the area.



Coming to America:
**British Airways and Virgin Atlantic
Celebrate US Reopening with Historic First-
Ever Dual Take Off from London to New York**

- *Customers return to British Airways and Virgin Atlantic flights to the US on Monday 8 November as country relaxes entry requirements*
- *It marks the first day since March 16, 2020, that the vast majority of UK nationals have been able to fly to the US*
- *Airlines will celebrate the easing of restrictions with a unique show of unity; a dual take-off of their first flights from London Heathrow to New York, JFK*
- *Both carriers have campaigned for the safe return of transatlantic travel to ignite economic recovery and allow friends and families to reunite*



Transatlantic rivals British Airways and Virgin Atlantic join forces today to celebrate the reopening of the US to UK nationals.

In recognition of a long campaign for and pivotal moment for the travel industry, for the first time ever, the airlines will come together in a unique show of unity, taking to the skies in a synchronised departure on parallel runways at Heathrow. British Airways flight BA001, a flight number previously reserved for Concorde, and Virgin Atlantic flight VS3, operating on A350 aircraft, will both leave London Heathrow for New York JFK at 8.30am on Monday 8 November.

Reopening the transatlantic travel corridor more than 600 days since

the US travel ban was introduced will provide a significant boost for the aviation industry, help both nations' economic recoveries and re-establish vital business connections. The US is the UK's largest trading partner, and aviation contributes £23m per day to the UK economy. In 2019, 22 million people travelled between the two countries, along with 900,000 tonnes of cargo.

Today's change to US entry requirements follows the UK Government's decision in the summer to lift quarantine restrictions for fully vaccinated US customers when travelling to Britain. With world-leading vaccination programmes in the UK and US, customers on both sides of the Atlantic will finally be able to see loved ones again and explore new and familiar destinations after more than eighteen months of travel restrictions.

Sean Doyle, British Airways Chairman and CEO said:

"After more than 600 days of separation, today is our moment to celebrate the UK-US reopening. We're setting aside rivalry and for the first time ever, British Airways and Virgin Atlantic aircraft will be seen taking-off together to mark the vital importance of the transatlantic corridor.

"Transatlantic connectivity is vital for the UK's economic recovery, which is why we've been calling for the safe reopening of the UK-US travel corridor for such a long time. We must now look forward with optimism, get trade and tourism back on track and allow friends and families to connect once again."

Shai Weiss, Virgin Atlantic Chief Executive said:

"Today is a time for celebration, not rivalry. Together with British Airways, we are delighted to mark today's important milestone, which finally allows consumers and businesses to book travel with confidence. The US has been our heartland for more than 37 years and we are simply not Virgin without the Atlantic. We've been steadily ramping up flying to destinations including Boston, New York, Orlando, Los Angeles and San Francisco, and we can't wait to fly our customers safely to their

The US is the UK's largest trading partner, and aviation contributes £23m per day to the UK economy. In 2019, 22 million people travelled between the two countries, along with 900,000 tonnes of cargo.

favourite US cities to reconnect with loved ones and colleagues.

"As the UK forges its recovery from the pandemic, the reopening of the transatlantic corridor and the lifting of Presidential Order 212F acknowledge the great progress both nations have made in rolling out successful vaccine programmes. The UK will now be able to strengthen ties with our most important economic partner, the US, through boosting trade and tourism. We are thankful to Prime Minister Johnson and the UK Government, the Biden administration and our industry partners for their support in removing these barriers and allowing free travel between our countries to resume."

Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps said:

"This historic event marks a significant moment for the aviation sector. Transatlantic travel has long been at the heart of UK aviation and I'm delighted to see flights return in time for Thanksgiving and Christmas. "Thanks to the work of industry and the US-UK Experts Working Group, these vitally important flight routes will help boost the economy, protect and create British jobs and through the work of the Jet Zero Council help to build back greener."



Emirates

launches daily flights to Tel Aviv from 6 December

Emirates has announced it will launch a daily non-stop flight between Dubai and Tel Aviv, Israel, starting 6 December.

The move comes as the UAE and Israel continue to develop greater economic cooperation to drive growth across a range of sectors, in addition to boosting trade flows between both nations. With the new daily flights, Israeli travellers will be able to connect safely, seamlessly and efficiently to Dubai, and through Dubai to Emirates' global route network of over 120 destinations. The flight timings to/from Tel Aviv will offer

travellers convenient access to major leisure destinations beyond Dubai like Thailand, the Indian Ocean Islands and South Africa, among others.

Furthermore, the new flights introduce convenient inbound connections to Tel Aviv from close to 30 Emirates gateways across Australia, the United States, Brazil, Mexico, India and South Africa, all home to some of the largest Jewish communities in the world. Travellers from the United

States looking to stop in Dubai before embarking on their onwards journey to Tel Aviv can avail the Dubai Stop Over package, which includes stays at world-class hotels, sightseeing, and other activities.

Dubai also continues to attract leisure travellers from Israel with its ever-expanding list of experiences, including hosting Expo 2020 Dubai which has drawn in more than 2 million visits in its first month. Israel is participating at Expo 2020 Dubai with its own country pavilion under the theme 'connecting thoughts – creating the future.'

Emirates' new flights will also boost connections for business communities in both countries, creating new channels to network and forge investment opportunities across industries. With the opening of visa-free travel between both countries and the easing of restrictions across the Emirates network, the new services will meet future travel demand in and out of Tel Aviv.

The airline will deploy its modern Boeing 777-300ER aircraft in a three-class configuration, offering private

suites in First Class, lie-flat seats in Business Class and spacious seats in Economy Class to serve customers on the route between Dubai and Tel Aviv. Daily flights are scheduled to depart Dubai as EK931 at 14:50hrs, arriving at Ben Gurion Airport at 16:25hrs local time. The return flight EK 932 will depart Tel Aviv at 18:25hrs, arriving in Dubai at 23:25hrs local time.

Emirates' customers will also benefit from the airline's codeshare partnership with flydubai. The codeshare provides travellers with short and seamless connectivity from Dubai to points across the combined networks of both carriers, which today consists of 210 destinations in 100 countries.

Adnan Kazim, Chief Commercial Officer, Emirates Airline said:

“Emirates is excited to announce Tel Aviv, one of the region's key gateways, as its newest destination. With the start of services in just a few weeks, Emirates will provide more options for travellers to fly better to and from Tel Aviv via Dubai. We also look forward to welcoming more business and leisure travellers from Israel to Dubai, and onwards to other destinations on Emirates' network.

He added: *“We would like to thank the UAE and Israeli authorities for their support, and we await the opportunity to serve Israel and open up more prospects for both countries to continue to build a strong relationship while growing business and expanding tourism in the near future.”*

In addition to passenger operations, Emirates SkyCargo will offer 20 tonnes of cargo capacity each way between Dubai and Tel Aviv on the Boeing 777-300ER to support exports of pharmaceuticals, high-tech goods, vegetables and other perishables from Tel Aviv. The flights are also expected to transport manufacturing raw materials and components, semiconductors and e-commerce parcels into Israel.

Travellers to and from Israel can look forward to experiencing Emirates' award-winning service and industry-leading products in the air and on the ground across all classes, with regionally inspired dishes and complimentary beverages, as well as the option of kosher meals onboard. The airline's ice inflight entertainment system offers more than 4,500

channels of on-demand entertainment in over 40 languages, including movies, TV shows, and an extensive musical library along with games, audiobooks and podcasts.

Emirates has fully restored its Middle East network and currently flies to 12 cities across the region.

Tel Aviv is Israel's largest and most populous city and is the economic and technological hub for the country. The city attracted more than 4.5 million visitors in 2019, according to the Israeli Ministry of Tourism. Tel Aviv is known for its pristine beaches, thriving culinary scene, cultural sights, and the world's largest collection of 4,000 signature white Bauhaus style buildings, which have become a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city is also an advanced centre of science and pioneering technology, with a strong entrepreneurial and start-up ecosystem that has produced innovations and products adopted around the globe and across a gamut of sectors.

Flexibility and Assurance:

Emirates continues to lead the industry with innovative products and services



and recently took its customer care initiatives further with even more generous and flexible booking policies, which have been extended to 31 May 2022. The airline also offers multi-risk insurance cover, for tickets booked on or before 30 November, and is helping loyal customers retain their miles and tier status.

Dubai and Expo 2020: Since it safely resumed tourism activity in July 2020, Dubai remains one of the world's most popular holiday destinations, especially during the winter season. The city is open for international business and leisure visitors. From sun-soaked beaches and heritage activities to world-class hospitality and leisure facilities,

Dubai offers a variety of world-class experiences. It was one of the world's first cities to obtain the Safe Travels stamp from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) – which endorses Dubai's comprehensive and effective measures to ensure guest health and safety.

Dubai is currently hosting Expo 2020 between October 2021 and March 2022. Through the theme of *Connecting Minds, Creating the Future*, Expo 2020 Dubai aims to inspire people by showcasing the best examples of collaboration, innovation and cooperation from around the world. Its six-month program is packed with experiences to suit all ages and interests, including a rich line-up

of themed weeks, entertainment, and edutainment. Art and culture fans, as well as food and technology enthusiasts, can explore exhibits, workshops, performances, live shows and more.

Health and safety: Keeping the health and wellbeing of its passengers as a top priority, Emirates has introduced a comprehensive set of safety measures at every step of the customer journey. The airline has also recently introduced contactless technology and scaled up its digital verification capabilities to provide its customers with even more opportunities to utilise the IATA Travel Pass, which can now be used across the Emirates network.

GoTürkiye.com is on with a new design



The global tourism information platform of Türkiye, GoTürkiye.com, has gone online with a new design. The platform will give Türkiye a competitive edge with its modern design and state-of-the-art infrastructure, providing a one-stop shop for all cultural and touristic value of the country for those who would like to get information about Türkiye or plan their next visit.

Designed with the latest technology and design trends by Türkiye Tourism

Promotion and Development Agency (TGA) and Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the new platform is intended to provide a superior user experience. The platform will offer content tailored to the profile and digital consumption habits of each user so that they can make best use of the broad content about Türkiye.

The new GoTürkiye platform will promote all tourist attractions in Türkiye from an experience-oriented perspective. For this purpose, the Ministry is creating content for the platform in coordination with local

administrations and non-governmental organizations in 81 provinces, featuring cultural and touristic values of each province individually on GoTürkiye.com.

Different Types and Activities of Tourism are Highlighted

GoTürkiye.com offers a rich content in different fields including gastronomy, religious tourism, fashion and shopping, camping, blue cruise, cycling, golf and skiing, enabling them to plan their travel to Türkiye with routes. Users will be able to plan a route for an experience addressing five senses on GoTürkiye.com. The platform will include a rich content for tourism professionals in Türkiye and abroad as well as users who are simply interested in traveling to Türkiye. GoTürkiye.com will play a particularly important role in holding such events as cruise ship tourism, business, entertainment and weddings in Türkiye.

Visited by three million users each month, GoTürkiye.com will continue to play a vital role in promoting Türkiye as a global tourism brand with personalized content as well as a new platform structure and updated design.

Win the opportunity of a lifetime with Qatar Airways and Hamad International Airport's "Fly and Win" campaign



The World's Best Airline has teamed up with the World's Best Airport in an unprecedented move to make one lucky passenger a millionaire, with stunning prizes for other winners

The new 'Fly and Win' campaign from Qatar Airways and Hamad International Airport, will offer passengers flying with the award-winning airline the opportunity to become a USD millionaire, experience the trip of a lifetime to the Maldives

on a Qatar Executive private jet or sit behind the wheel of brand-new Porsche car.

To enter the raffle, passengers simply need to have enrolled into Privilege Club, the Qatar Airways Loyalty programme and fly anywhere on the airline's expanding network through Hamad International Airport, recently ranked as the World Best Airport by Skytrax.

For every ticket purchased and used between 1st November 2021 and 31st January 2022 on qatarairways.com or through a travel agency, passengers will have the chance to win one of the following prizes (Terms & conditions apply):

- USD 1 million
- Private jet experience with

Qatar Executive to the Maldives with accommodation

- A new Porsche car

With these incredible prizes, there are even more reasons to fly with Qatar Airways. In addition to being voted the World's Best Airline and the World's Best Airport, both the airline and the airport have received Skytrax Five Star COVID Safety Ratings in recognition of their biosafety efforts to protect passengers and staff during the pandemic.

Enter now at qatarairways.com/win One winner for each prize will be drawn and announced in Feb 2022.

Multiple award-winning airlines, Qatar Airways was announced as the 'Airline of the Year by the international air transport rating organisation, Skytrax, in addition to securing five additional awards including World's Best Business Class, World's Best Business Class Airline Lounge, World's Best Business Class Airline Seat, World's Best Business Class Onboard Catering and Best Airline in the Middle East. The airline continues to stand alone at the top of the industry has now won the main prize for an unprecedented sixth time (2011, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2019 and now 2021). The airline's hub, Hamad International Airport (HIA), was also recently recognised as the 'Best Airport in the World 2021', ranking at number one in the Skytrax World Airport Awards 2021.

In addition to this, Qatar Airways is the first global airline in the world to achieve the prestigious 5-Star COVID-19 Airline Safety Rating by Skytrax. This follows the success of Hamad International Airport (HIA) as the first airport in the Middle East and Asia to be awarded a Skytrax 5-Star COVID-19 Airport Safety Rating. These awards provide assurance to passengers around the world that the airline's health and safety standards are subject to the highest possible standards of professional, independent scrutiny and assessment. For full details of all the measures that have been implemented onboard and at HIA, qatarairways.com/safety.



Emirates Group announces half-year performance for 2021-22



The Emirates Group has announced its half-year results for its 2021-22 financial year.

- **Group:** Revenue up 81% to AED 24.7 billion (US\$ 6.7 billion), and loss of AED 5.7 billion (US\$ 1.6 billion) after last year's loss of AED 14.1 billion (US\$ 3.8 billion). Substantially improved results reflect recovery across all business segments and the easing of COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions worldwide.

- **Emirates:** Revenue up 86% to AED 21.7 billion (US\$ 5.9 billion), and loss of AED 5.8 billion (US\$ 1.6 billion) compared to AED 12.6 billion (US\$ 3.4 billion) loss for the same period last year. Revenue recovery is supported by increasing passenger demand and a continuous strong cargo business.

- **dnata:** Revenue up 55% to AED 3.7 billion (US\$ 1 billion), profit of AED 85 million (US\$ 23 million) after last year's loss of AED 1.5 billion (US\$ 396 million), as operations across all dnata business units globally recover from the substantial impact of COVID-19.

Group revenue was AED 24.7 billion (US\$ 6.7 billion) for the first six months of 2021-22, up 81% from AED 13.7



His Highness (HH) Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive, Emirates Airline and Group said:

“As we began our 2021-22 financial year, COVID-19 vaccination programmes were being rolled out at unprecedented scale around the world. “Across the Group, we saw operations and demand pick up as countries started to ease travel restrictions. “This momentum accelerated over the summer and continues to grow steadily into the winter season and beyond. “Our cargo transport and handling businesses continued to perform strongly, providing the bedrock upon which we were able to quickly reinstate passenger services. “While there’s still some way to go before we restore our operations to pre-pandemic levels and return to profitability, we are well on the recovery path with healthy revenue and a solid cash balance at the end of our first half of 2021-22”.

Sheikh Ahmed added: *“We would like to thank our customers for their continued support, as well as all our aviation and travel industry stakeholders and partners for their efforts that have made it possible for international air travel to resume safely and smoothly.” “Our ability to pivot and pull through the toughest period in our history to date can be attributed to Emirates’ and dnata’s strong brands, high-quality products and services, digital and innovation capabilities, and our amazing people. “We intend to continue investing in these core areas to take our business into the future, together with the leaner processes and new technology capabilities that we’ve implemented in the past months.”*

Emirates airline

During the first six months of 2021-22, Emirates took delivery of 2 new A380s and retired 2 older aircraft from its fleet as part of its long-standing strategy to improve overall efficiency, minimise its emissions footprint, and provide high-quality customer experiences.

With a clear focus on restoring its

passenger network and connections through its Dubai hub, Emirates responded with agility whenever travel restrictions were lifted to restart services or layer on additional flights. In July, it launched services to Miami, a new destination, and during the first half of 2021-22, Emirates also activated codeshare and interline partnerships with AirlinK, Aeromar, Azul, Cemair and South African Airways to expand connectivity options for customers.

By 30 September, the airline was operating passenger and cargo services to 139 airports, utilising its entire Boeing 777 fleet and 37 A380s.

Emirates also continued to introduce initiatives that improve the travel experience, boost customer confidence, and enable secure and efficient operations. In June, Emirates became the first airline to sign up for the worldwide implementation of the IATA Travel Pass, in addition to its ongoing investments in additional biometric and other digital verification technologies at Dubai Airport.

For its premium customer and frequent flyers, Emirates reinstated more of its Signatures Lounge and Chauffeur Drive services at key airports outside of Dubai, and it also launched an online subscription platform “Skywards+”, to offer its 27 million members easy access to customized rewards and privileges.

The Emirates Group has been able to tap on its own strong cash reserves, and access funding through its Owner and the broader financial community to support its business needs through the unprecedented challenges wrought on the aviation and travel industry by COVID-19. In the first half of 2021-22, its Owner further injected AED 2.5 billion (US\$ 681 million) into Emirates by way of an equity investment and they continue to support the airline on its recovery path.

The Emirates Group’s employee base, compared to 31 March 2021, dropped marginally by 2% to an overall count of 73,571 on 30 September 2021.

billion (US\$ 3.7 billion) during the same period last year.

This strong revenue recovery was underpinned by the easing of travel restrictions worldwide and the corresponding increase in demand for air transport as countries progressed their COVID-19 vaccination programmes.

The Group is reporting a 2021-22 half-year net loss of AED 5.7 billion (US\$ 1.6 billion), substantially improved from its AED 14.1 billion (US\$ 3.8 billion) loss for the same period last year.

The Group also reported an **EBITDA** of AED 5.6 billion (US\$ 1.5 billion), a dramatic turnaround from a negative AED 43 million (US\$ 12 million) EBITDA during the same period last year, illustrating its strong return to operating profitability.

The Group continued to maintain a healthy **cash position** which stood at AED 18.8 billion (US\$ 5.1 billion) on 30 September 2021, compared to AED 19.8 billion (US\$ 5.4 billion) as of 31 March 2021.

Vistara and Lufthansa

Enter Frequent Flyer Partnership



Vistara, India's finest full-service carrier and a joint venture of Tata group and Singapore Airlines, today announced a reciprocal partnership for its frequent flyer program, Club Vistara (CV), with Lufthansa's Miles & More frequent flyer program.

The partnership enables Club Vistara members to earn and redeem CV Points on flights operated and marketed by Lufthansa, covering an extensive network of nearly 200 destinations across the world. Reciprocally, Miles & More members will be able to earn and redeem miles on flights operated by Vistara. The partnership agreement comes into effect on 27 October 2021.

Vistara's Chief Commercial Officer, Mr. Vinod Kannan, said: "We are delighted to extend our strong partnership with Lufthansa and bring synergies between our respective frequent flyer programs. I

am confident that this will enable us to provide greater value and convenience to our Club Vistara members on their travels across the world. We are also equally excited to welcome Miles & More members and provide them a consistent, world-class flying experience when they fly 'India's best airline'."

"We are pleased to strengthen the already started codeshare partnership between Vistara and Lufthansa with the start into the Miles & More programme", said **Christopher Sieglöcher, Senior Director Loyalty Programme Development & Service at Miles & More GmbH.** "Vistara as a strong partner and popular airline extends our airline portfolio and therefore offers added value to our Miles & More members which now have the opportunity to earn and redeem miles on Vistara flights."

Vistara's three-class cabin configuration with India's only Premium

Economy class provides Lufthansa customers consistency in comfort and overall experience on Vistara's steadily growing domestic and international network. The two airlines had entered into a codeshare partnership in December 2019.

Club Vistara is India's fastest-rewarding frequent flyer program that offers four tiers of membership – CV Base, CV Silver, CV Gold, and CV Platinum. Club Vistara members can also earn and redeem CV Points when travelling on other partner airlines such as Air Canada, Japan Airlines, Singapore Airlines, and United Airlines. Vistara inaugurated its non-stop flights between Delhi and Frankfurt earlier this year, a route operated by its brand-new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft.

Vistara is the Best Airline in India and Southern Asia on Skytrax; the highest-rated airline in the country on Tripadvisor and the winner of several 'Best Airline' awards.

Vistara Inaugurates Non-Stop Flights between Delhi and Paris

Vistara, India's finest full-service carrier and a joint venture of Tata group and Singapore Airlines, operated its first non-stop flight to Paris CDG (Charles de Gaulle) airport on 7th November 2021. Under the air bubble agreement between India and Europe, Vistara will fly twice a week between the two cities - on Wednesdays and Sundays. Bookings for the flights are open on all channels, including Vistara's website, mobile app, and travel agents.

On this occasion, **Mr Leslie Thng, Chief Executive Officer, Vistara**, said, "Paris is one of the most popular destinations in Europe and CDG an important airport for any airline intending to serve the region. Given the strong economic and cultural ties there is a high demand for direct connectivity between India and France, and therefore Paris fits our network very well. We are delighted to expand our global footprint as we bring India's finest airline to Paris."

The Delhi-Paris route is being served by Vistara's Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner,



which provides travellers with a world-class flying experience. Vistara will accept all eligible customers that meet visa/entry requirements in both countries, as specified by the respective government

bodies. Vistara strongly encourages its customers to fully understand these guidelines before making their bookings.

Vistara is India's highest-rated airline on Skytrax and Tripadvisor and has also

been the winner of several 'Best Airline' awards. In a short span of over six years since starting operations, Vistara has raised the bar for operations and service standards in the Indian aviation industry.

SCHEDULE OF FLIGHTS BETWEEN DELHI AND PARIS

Sector	Flight No.	Days of Operation	Departure	Arrival
Delhi (DEL) - Paris (CDG)	UK 021	Wednesdays and Sundays	1345 hrs	1840 hrs
Paris (CDG) - Delhi (DEL)	UK 022	Wednesdays and Sundays	2145 hrs	1030 hrs (+1)

+1 indicates the next day arrival. All timings shown are in local time zones

The inaugural Paris-Delhi flight operated on Monday, 08 Nov 2021. All other flights will follow the above schedule

Finnair to fly to nearly 100 destinations in summer 2022 – opens new routes to Busan, Tokyo Haneda and Dallas

Finnair is preparing for the continued expected gradual opening of Asia and plans to serve nearly 100 destinations in Asia, the US and Europe during the summer season, which begins on 27 March 2022. Finnair will open new long-haul routes to Busan in South Korea, Tokyo Haneda, Dallas in the US, and will also have Sapporo as a summer destination for the first time.

“We look forward to the world continuing opening again,” says **Ole Orvér, Chief Commercial Officer, Finnair**. “Before the pandemic, Japan was our single largest market outside our home market Finland, and we look forward to returning to all our five destinations in Japan. We are also opening a new route to Busan in South Korea, demonstrating our continued commitment to offering the best and most sustainable connections between Europe and Asia via our Helsinki hub.”

“We are also pleased to strengthen our network in the US by adding Dallas as a new destination. Our customers will be able to enjoy great connections to other cities in North America through the extensive network of our alliance partner, American Airlines,” says Ole Orvér.

If travel restrictions allow, Finnair will resume service to all the five destinations in Japan it served before the pandemic – Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka and Sapporo – and launch a new service to Tokyo’s Haneda Airport. Altogether, Finnair will fly up to 40 weekly flights between Helsinki and Japan in summer 2022. Finnair flies daily to Tokyo Narita and Haneda, offering a total of 14 weekly frequencies to the capital of Japan. Finnair also flies daily to Nagoya and Osaka and will introduce double dailies to Osaka in June. Finnair’s Sapporo



route will be introduced for the summer season for the first time with two weekly frequencies, and Fukuoka in Southern Japan is served with three weekly flights.

Finnair connects customers to key Asian megacities, flying to Shanghai and daily to Hong Kong, Seoul, Singapore and Bangkok. Finnair offers daily flights to Delhi as of June. The new Busan route in South Korea will be launched in March with three weekly frequencies.

In North America, Finnair will fly to Chicago, Los Angeles and New York, and open a route to Dallas as a new destination. Dallas will be added to the network as of 7 February 2022 and will be operated four times a week, with excellent connections to Finnair’s partner American Airlines’ network.

As intercontinental traffic grows, Finnair will also strengthen its European network from Helsinki with smooth connections to more than 70 European cities, including new destinations Zagreb and Larnaca.

Finnair offers double-daily flights to cities like Amsterdam, Düsseldorf, Hamburg, Vienna, Zürich, Gdansk and Milan, and even more daily frequencies to Paris, London, Berlin, Warsaw, Brussels, St Petersburg as well as the Scandinavian and Baltic cities.

The Helsinki Airport is expanding, with the new Terminal 2 entrance, arrivals hall and travel centre with the new parking and public transportation arrangements opening in December 2021, and new security control and check-in area opening in summer 2022. The expansion of the airport further supports the Finnair customer experience with smooth and reliable transfers at Helsinki.

“We look forward to being able to serve more customers in a more personal way. I also look forward to updating you on some additional destinations and routes within the coming weeks,” finishes Ole Orvér.

All Finnair products can be found on Finnair.com and the company’s mobile application.

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