

LUXURY AND LIFESTYLE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

travel

SPAN

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**The Alaskan
wilderness:
America's final frontier**



Mt Titlis

Glacier Gem in
Central Switzerland

**The most incredible
natural rock and
geographical
formations in Alula**

**Discover
Sarawak
Taking the Road
Less Travelled**

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you'll never
forget




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to Arabia

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Visit Finland launches its brand
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Malaysia Airlines is Asia's Leading Airline for Business Class at the 29th World Travel Awards

Malaysia Airlines has been named Asia's Leading Airline for Business Class at the 29th World Travel Awards, adding to its honours record.

The airline emerges as the winner after receiving the most votes from industry participants, consumers, media, and travel professionals across the region, outperforming other nominated full-service Asian airlines. Underpinned by the airline's Malaysian Hospitality commitment across its services, the award is a testament to its successful endeavour to maintain the highest service level and safety assurance through its #FlyConfidently commitment.

Malaysia Airlines' Group Chief Marketing and Customer Experience Officer, Lau Yin May, said, "This award is a true testament to the organisation and national icon's hard work, long hours, sacrifice, and ultimate passion. As the COVID-19 pandemic has forced a lasting change in travelling preferences, we constantly improve and enhance our products and services with a range of flexibility and choices. One of our most prominent innovations include our business class fare structure that was redesigned to match the value proposition of business class passengers and market demand. Our Business Class fare family makes Malaysia Airlines one of the few airlines in the world to offer flexibility coupled with multiple perks."

Malaysia Airlines' Business Class is recognised for providing an unrivalled premium end-to-end experience, from its exclusive priority check-in counters, priority luggage handling, and access to the beautiful Golden Lounges with picturesque views, to its board-anytime flexibility.

The Business Class completes the premium experience by providing spacious lie-flat seats to selected destinations. The airline also provides a wide range of cutting-edge in-flight entertainment, including noise-cancelling headphones, to ensure the most pleasurable flying experience on Malaysia Airlines.

Guests departing from Kuala Lumpur may opt for a personalised fine dining experience

with its "Chef on Call" service, which allows customers to select from a variety of specially crafted in-flight meals from 30 to 24 hours prior to their trip and have them delivered to their seat.

This is in addition to the popular signature satay, which has been served onboard since the first flight and has been produced by the airline's caterer since 1973. The meats are freshly marinated with fresh ingredients and chargrilled over mangrove wood charcoal, complemented by nasi impit (compressed rice cake), refreshing cucumbers, and onion.

Business Class passengers will also receive a designer amenity kit by luxury leather goods manufacturer, Aspal of London. The airline's exclusive amenity kits include an impressive array of travel essentials such as PAYOT's skin and body range, which includes the Lip Balm and the luxe Hand and Body Lotion, specially designed to pamper customers throughout their journey, an eye mask, comb, a pair of earplugs, and socks, and an eye mask, comb, a pair of earplugs, and socks. Customers will be given the dual-tone Business Class duvet, which is made of cotton and polyester and has the airline's trademark Wau Bulan, as well as a soft pillow and mattress cover, making it the ideal snuggle partner through their journey.

Customers can travel with peace of mind as Malaysia Airlines has put in place the highest COVID-19 health and safety protocols globally recognised and certified by Bureau Veritas Certification Malaysia via its MHFlySafe program. Malaysia Airlines is a member of Travel Safe Alliance Malaysia (TSAM) and has been awarded a 7-star rating from AirlineRatings for its COVID-19 safeguards.

To keep tabs on the latest updates from Malaysia Airlines or take advantage of the airline's great offerings, visit the Malaysia Airlines official website or download the Malaysia Airlines app. Sign up as an Enrich member at Enrich website and start earning Enrich Points to enjoy exclusive members-only offerings.

We are on



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Sarawak

to showcase Cultural experiences at the **TAFI Convention**

Theme aptly slated as **BUILD BACK BETTER**

Highlights: The Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) Convention 2022 is scheduled to be held in Sarawak for the first time from 20th – 23rd September with an expected arrival of over 500 TAFI members from India.

Themed “Build Back Better”, the convention will explore strategies to integrate sustainability into the heart of every tourism business.

As one of the largest global industries, Travel & Tourism – which accounts for close to 10 percent of global GDP and employs one in 10 persons worldwide, industry has the power to shape the world and the potential to be a powerful force for good.

Speakers include industry players, state government representatives, as well as leaders from the tourism industry, who will take part in stimulating dialogues with ways to build resilience as the tourism industry moves beyond the pandemic.



“**T**he TAFI Convention’s theme this year, ‘Build Back Better’, is very much aligned with our post-COVID-19 Development Strategy (PCDS) 2030 with Sarawak’s aspiration to empower the community and to ensure a sustainable environment, post-Covid.

Themed “Build Back Better” the annual TAFI convention will explore strategies to integrate sustainability into the heart of the tourism business. The convention will highlight Tourism Malay’s Sarawak’s diverse ethnic cities that comprise 28 ethnic tribes, all showcasing their unique tradition, lifestyle, cuisine, music, and handicrafts.

This is TAFI’s third convention in Malaysia. Earlier the conventions have been held in Kuala Lumpur in 1999 and Kota Kinabalu, Sabah in 2007.

Themed “**Build Back Better**”, the delegates will have an opportunity to learn about the Tourism potential that Sarawak has to offer.

“There has been a positive increase of 304% in visitor arrivals from India from January to July 2022 compared to the same period in 2021. TAFI Convention 2022 will showcase a golden opportunity to ramp up Sarawak’s visibility in India and also to showcase to our Indian travel agents partners

why Sarawak should be their next destination of choice when it comes to tourism and business events,” said **YB Dato Sri Haji Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, Minister of Tourism Creative Industry and Performing Arts Sarawak (MTCP).**

Dato Zainuddin Abdul Wahab, Tourism Malaysia's Director General said “We will be looking into bringing more arrivals to enjoy the wonders of Malaysia and its delights. Apart from our objective to instill confidence amongst Indians to feel safe to visit Malaysia again, we hope that this convention and the business session will provide a platform for the industry community to gather, exchange ideas, and return even stronger. “I am also delighted to note that the resumption of scheduled international flights from India has been timely in promoting Malaysia to Indian travellers. Hence, we anticipate a 30% increase in the pre-pandemic arrivals to Malaysia this year”.

In 2019 the Indian market contributed to 735,309 arrivals(22%)to the country.

Sarawak Tourism Board CEO Sharzede Dato Haji Salleh Askor

said, “We are happy to welcome TAFI delegates to our shores. As we see signs of recovery, now is a crucial time to **Build Back Better** and this process begins with seeing the confidence of a group of key tourism players to gather in Sarawak”.

Ajay Prakash, President TAFI said “As we seek recovery post covid, it is vital that the tourism industry does not forget the lessons of the Pandemic. As one of the biggest global industries, the power of Tourism to shape the world is phenomenal. It can be a powerful force for doing good, not only for the stakeholders but for the entire world.” **Build Back Better** encapsulates the resolve to rebuild Tourism more responsibly and sustainably.”

“The Indian market is growing, and they are constantly looking for newer destinations, products, and experiences, and Sarawak has great potential to become a popular destination in the Indian market because today's generation is concerned about the planet, conservation, and sustainability. With the support of Tourism Malaysia, Sarawak Tourism Board, and Business Events Sarawak”.

He added, “Sarawak is a relatively unexplored destination for Indian Travellers. We anticipate that after the convention, our members will be inspired to promote tourism to this beautiful province since it can be a great venue for destination weddings, family travel, and corporate events. We appreciate the support given by Sarawak Tourism Board, Business Events Sarawak, Tourism Malaysia, and Malaysia Airlines”.

According to **Amelia Roziman, Business Events Sarawak CEO** “Business events such as TAFI Convention are a great platform to initiate change, motivation, and collaboration. It is an exemplary strategy for developing the Indian travel market in Malaysia, and the convention will be a powerful catalyst in bridging the gap between the two countries”.

TAFI is a progressive and vibrant association with a nationwide membership base of 1,400 members and growing. Most TAFI members are IATA Accredited agents and contribute to more than 75% of the outbound business in India.

Air India to offer long-haul premium economy cabin

Air India has outlined plans to increase its fleet by over 25 per cent in the next 15 months, with the delivery of 30 narrow and wide-body aircraft.

The carrier has signed lease agreements for 25 Airbus A320 and A321 neos, as well as five Boeing B777-200LRs.

The airline said that the move – along with the recent return to service of 16 short and long-haul aircraft – marks Air India's first major fleet expansion since it was acquired by the Tata Group earlier this year.

The B777-200LRs will join the carrier's fleet between December 2022 and March 2023, and will operate on routes to the US.

It's not clear exactly how the aircraft will be configured, but the airline confirmed that the planes will feature premium economy seating. No further details were given on the seat itself.

The Air India press release also announced that “Mumbai will see the addition of flights to San Francisco as well as to both of the New York area's international airports, Newark Liberty and John F Kennedy, while Bangalore will receive a three-times-weekly service to San Francisco”.

Meanwhile a total of four A321 neos will be delivered in the first quarter of next year, followed by 21 A320 neos in the second half of 2023.

Air India's operational narrow-body fleet currently stands at 54 aircraft,

with a further 16 set to progressively return to service by early 2023, while its widebody fleet stands at 33 aircraft, with ten again set to return to service by early next year.

Commenting on the news **Mr Campbell Wilson, Air India's CEO and managing director**, said:

“After a long time without significant growth, Air India is delighted to resume expanding its fleet and global footprint. “These new aircraft, together with existing aircraft being returned to service, address an immediate need for more capacity and connectivity, and mark a strong step forward. “Air India has exciting expansion and renewal plans, of which these new aircraft are just the beginning.”

Discover Sarawak

Taking the Road Less Travelled



Revealing a side of Asia unlike anywhere else, Sarawak offers an alternative for those seeking humble authenticity far from the tourist-trap clichés. Visiting Sarawak can be done as a complementary trip to Peninsular Malaysia and neighbouring countries, or as a journey discovery all

on its own. To discover Sarawak means taking the road less travelled.

Whether it is sharing in a lifestyle of one of the many indigenous communities' longhouses, or exploring gigantic caves in the UNESCO World Heritage of Gunung Mulu National Park, Sarawak offers a host of memorable

experiences to bring home.

Connect with your inner self; kayak along our boutique rivers, run your personal best marathon, or hike the many jungle trails of Sarawak's diverse *national parks*. From participating in a volunteer programme to learning how to cook Sarawakian dishes, from





making new friends at major festivals and events to seeing orangutans up close, Sarawak is a prime destination for the intrepid traveller in you.

As part of Malaysia on the island of Borneo, Sarawak is a peaceful and stable place for travel, suited for large groups or single travellers alike.

More Culture

Sarawak, the largest state in Malaysia, is home to 27 ethnic groups. With 45 different dialects, each group has its own unique stories, beliefs, traditions, and cultures.

You can meet people from the Iban tribe, known for their legendary headhunting customs from days of old. They have long since ceased headhunting, but they still maintain their rich customs, art, practices, and language.

The *Orang Ulu*, or 'people from upriver,' comprise different tribes such as the Kayan, Kenyah, Lun Bawang, and Kelabit. Their exotic art and music have spread internationally, as seen in the growing popularity of the boat lute or *sape*. The *sape* has become the symbol of the *Rainforest World Music Festival*, one of Malaysia's largest music festivals.

Entrenched in Sarawak's history are the remnants of the reign of the White

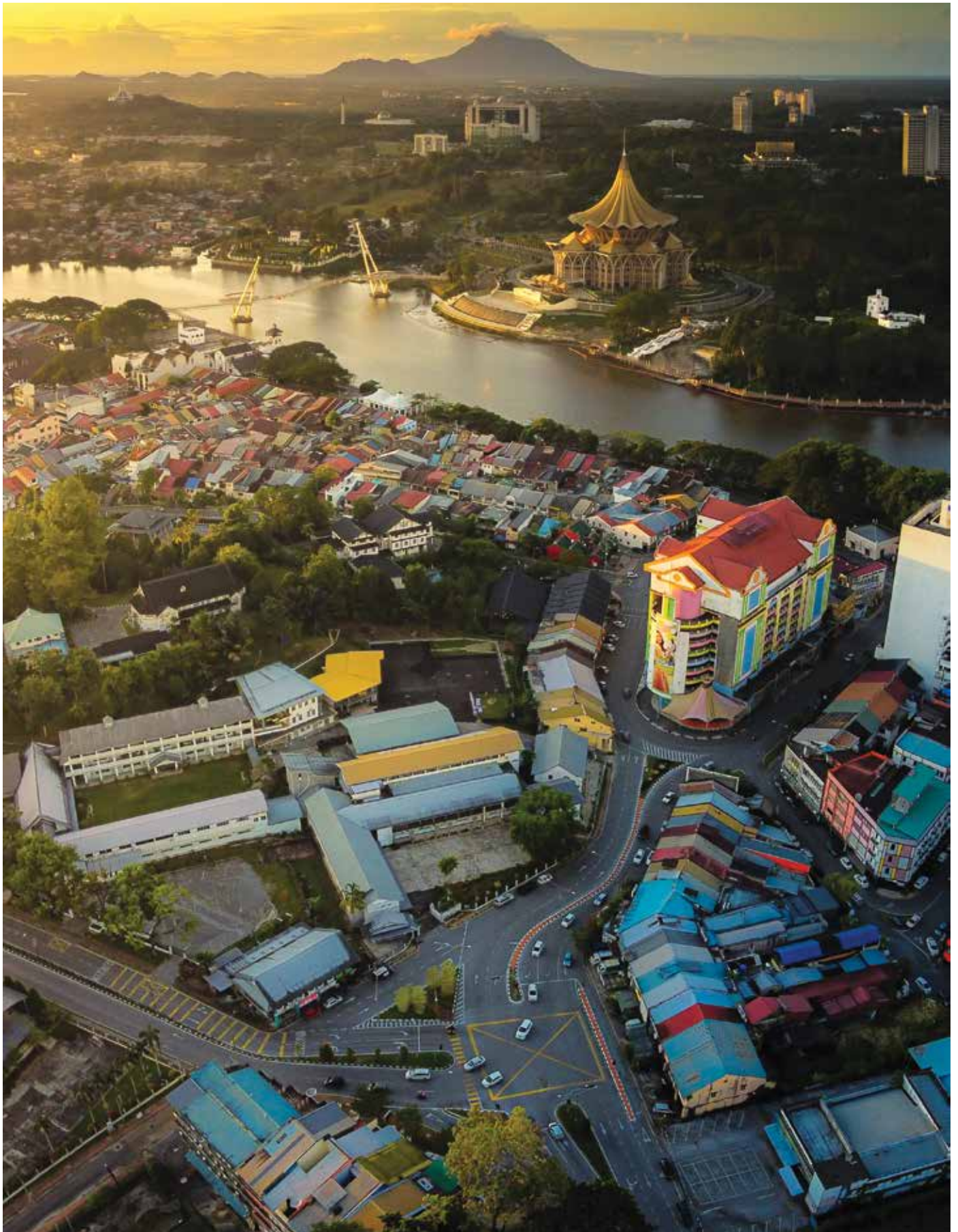
Rajahs, the Brooke family monarchy that ruled the Kingdom of Sarawak from 1841 to 1946. Traces of the Brookes can be found throughout the state, from physical reminders such as colonial buildings, preserved relics that populate today's museums, and events such as the Sarawak Regatta, to the more intangible traces within the law and culture of the people.

Sarawak's ever-expanding world-class museums, authentic hospitality, and diverse religious and cultural trade, all form part of the cultural attraction.

More Adventure

Land, waters, sky; pick your adventure! On land, there is everything from jungle trekking and mountain climbing to adventure caving and rock climbing. In the water, you





can choose from river activities like scuba diving in Miri and Kuching, watersports, deep sea fishing, jet skiing, and yachting. Looking for some airborne adventure? You can jump from Sarawak's tallest building...safely. Or you can peer down from the treetops from the canopy and walk in Mulu!

Urban explorers can visit Kuching, which has one of the most interesting architectural mixes in Malaysia, with colonial buildings amongst religious, cultural, and modern architecture.

In addition, you can not only take home the arts and crafts created by local artisans but can also learn how to make them from the local skilled craftspeople. The Orang Ulu are adept at teaching skilled beadwork, while the Iban are deft weavers. Both Melanau and Bidayuh are associated with basketry making and weaving hats and artifacts using natural resources like bamboo, palm, rattan, and tree bark.

More Nature

Sarawak has a whopping 56 protected areas, 37 gazetted national parks, five wildlife sanctuaries, and 14 nature reserves. Its rainforests are the size of Austria.

Sarawak's rainforests house one of the world's richest and most diverse ecosystems. Home to the world's largest flower, the Rafflesia (that can grow to the size of a coffee table), squirrels and snakes that fly, deer the size of cats, and plants that eat insects (and small animals). The orangutan, proboscis monkey, hornbill, the Rajah Brooke butterfly, and the silver leaf monkey, all call Sarawak home. Experts believe that there are some species of flora and fauna yet to be discovered.

Sarawak also has the most Important Birding Areas (IBAs) in Malaysia, with a great portion of Borneo's 650 bird species having been recorded here.

Mulu National Park is a priceless UNESCO World Heritage Site, in a league of its own as it qualifies for all four of the World Heritage criteria. Fewer than twenty World Heritage areas have managed this feat. Bako

National Park traces its first visitors' footprint to 1957, making it one of Malaysia's oldest National Parks. Niah National Park is famed for Sarawak's genesis, with evidence of human presence from 40,000 years ago discovered in the form of Paleolithic and Neolithic burial sites.

More Food

So much to eat, so little time! From the delectable "manok pansuh," chicken cooked in bamboo, to the savoury "Sarawak laksa," to the delicious "kolo mee," to the mouthwateringly crispy jungle fern "midin" dish, to the herby broth known as "kueh chap" and the rich "manok kacangma" made from motherwort and rice wine to the seasonal "dabai" fruit to the Melanau "umai" delicacy with thin slivers of fish and rich sago pearls, Sarawak's very long list of unique culinary offerings is unparalleled.

The late Anthony Bourdain popularised the "laksa Sarawak" as a breakfast option which he referred to it as "breakfast of the gods" and featured the delectable dish in his globally-acclaimed CNN series.

The month-long Kuching Food Fair isn't all about local cuisine. The dazzling array of street food inspired by the world all over can fill your evenings, the occasion an excellent way to mingle with the local community. The festival typically stretches over the July/August period.

More Festivals

For the first time, Sarawak's top 3 most anticipated music and cultural festivals were held from July, back to back! The Rainforest World Music Festival (RWMF) is the region's largest World Music event, bringing over 20,000 festival goers a year to the Sarawak Cultural Village in Kuching for a fun-packed three-day weekend; featuring activities for children, cultural and musical sessions, food and crafts bazaars, wellness workshops and stunning performances. The Borneo Jazz Festival is the longest-running jazz event in the region, entering its 14th year in the sun-soaked coastal

city of Miri, on the Northern side of Sarawak. It features Jazz music with a wild dash of culture and energy. The third edition of the Rainforest Fringe Festival is a prelude to the Rainforest World Music Festival and Borneo Jazz Festival, featuring music, art, craft, film, photography, food, and culture of Sarawak and beyond. Sarawak is home to the most unique festivals in Malaysia throughout the year, due to its diverse demographic. The celebration is endless, from the Gawai harvest festival of thanksgiving to the Kaul which is celebrated by the Melanau fishing communities and marks the beginning of the fishing season, Sarawak offers a plethora of festivals for tourists to participate in. In addition, other spectacular festivals include the Kuching Waterfront Jazz Festival, Tidal Bore Festival, Borneo Cultural Festival, and Sarawak Regatta.

Getting to Sarawak

Kuching International Airport (KIA), Sarawak's largest airport, receives direct international flights from Singapore, Pontianak (Indonesia), and Bandar Seri Begawan (Brunei Darussalam). Sarawak also receives domestic flights from Peninsula Malaysia and the neighbouring state of Sabah, with flights from Kuala Lumpur to Kuching, Sibul, and Miri, flights from Johor Bahru to Kuching and Sibul, flights from Penang to Kuching as well as flights from Kota Kinabalu to Kuching, Sibul and Miri.

DID YOU KNOW?

Borneo Convention Centre Kuching (BCKK) is another of the main catalysts in Sarawak ensuring growth in the meetings market.

The centre can seat up to 5,000 delegates in plenary, 2,000 in the banquet hall, 14 meeting rooms, 8,815 sqm of exhibition space, and a public restaurant. It's a 15-minute drive from Kuching city centre and 20 minutes from Kuching International Airport. Most long-haul visitors arrive there via the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur. The flight takes about one-and-three-quarters of an hour.



Mt Titlis

Glacier Gem

in Central Switzerland



At 10,000 feet above sea level, Mt Titlis is Central Switzerland's highest mountain excursion guaranteeing ice and snow 365 days. Millions of visitors from all over the world have enjoyed a fun-filled day with lots of activities for all ages on its snow-filled slopes and the lake of Truebsee and Indians contribute a lot to

these amazing figures.

The journey itself is spectacular, starting from the green meadows of the picturesque village of Engelberg in the super smooth Titlis Xpress and culminating with the last stage in the world's first revolving cable car, the Rotair. The 30-minute journey with one change will keep you spellbound with

the dramatic change in the flora and the fauna and also from the meadows to the craggy peaks and the glistening glacier.

The summit station which will soon be rebuilt opens up into the terrace from where you can see the high mountains of the Alps and the Dolomites of Italy on one side and as far as the black forest of Germany on good weather days. After taking in the breathtaking scenery and frolicking in the snow it would be time to sit on the Ice-flyer, an open chairlift, which in 3 minutes will whisk you down to the glacier park for the unlimited and free use of all the snow toys. After that, a walk on Europe's highest suspension bridge, the Titlis Cliff Walk, will surely

set your pulse racing as it sways gently when you are with a 400-metre vertical drop below your feet. Then it is time to go into the belly of the glacier into the Glacier cave, 20 metres below the surface of the ice. Here it is always -1.5° no matter what time of the year you go. Then it is time for some lip-smacking local delicacies or pizzas at the award-winning restaurant but in case you want a quick meal as you want to spend more time enjoying the activities the self-service cafeteria provides 6 daily menus and a variety of snacks and drinks. Indulge in some ice cream at the Movenpick boutique or some Swiss chocolates at the chocolate shop. The photo studio gives you an opportunity to dress in local attire and take home a memorable souvenir.

A break-in journey on the Lake of Truebsee is a must because here you will have a lot of other activities that one can enjoy in summer and winter. In summer you will find the Zip-line, the airbag jump, and oar boats on the lake. Children can go to the fun park which has been specially crafted for them beside the lake. A stroll around the lake can be quite refreshing especially when you see all the different flowers dotting the lakeside. Winter is different because the lake freezes up. The summer glacier activities all shift down to the lake area and the glacier park with the snow toys may be found here. Electric SnowXbikes may be hired for a few rounds on an ear-marked course.

The ticket also includes a trip to the Jochpass from where one may take a chairlift down to the other side and towards Engstlesee, another pristine mountain lake amid nature. Here you may walk for a long time before you meet any other person. It truly is a hidden gem.

And not many people know that the Titlis ticket also includes a ride on the funicular from Engelberg to Gerschnialp. So, when you come down from Titlis this is what you should do. From Gerschnialp you may rent a Trotti-bike and come back to Engelberg, a 6-km journey past alpine farms and cows, totally Instagrammable.







The fresh air mountain village of Engelberg is very popular with Indians. It has over 3500 beds in hotels and apartments. The Terrace Hotel is

the mecca for Indian travellers as, besides the popular Indian food, the welcome drink happens to be the traditional Indian masala chai. Four

times a week the Indian disco sets the village alight. The Titlis Resort has 110 apartments from studios to even 4-bedrooms. Indian families find these apartments very convenient to stay in and contribute to the largest overseas market.

So, Mt Titlis and Engelberg have become a destination for all Indian travellers, whether travelling as a group or as a discerning family or honeymoon couple. There is something in the destination for everyone and all ages. Mt Titlis continues to evolve, re-invent and enhance its offerings every year to ensure something different for even the local villagers and their families.

Think Switzerland, think Engelberg and Mt Titlis, pack your bags, and go! Heaven or earth awaits you!



Rayomand Choksi | Regional Director (Responsible: India, S. Asia, GCC, Iran)
TITLIS | Cableways, Hotels & Restaurants

The Alaskan wilderness America's final frontier



With awe-inspiring scenic beauty, enormous ice-age glaciers, and abundant wildlife, Alaska is like nowhere else on earth. You'll find a wide variety of activities in Alaska, everything from the mild to the wild. Whatever you do, traveling in Alaska is just plain fun!

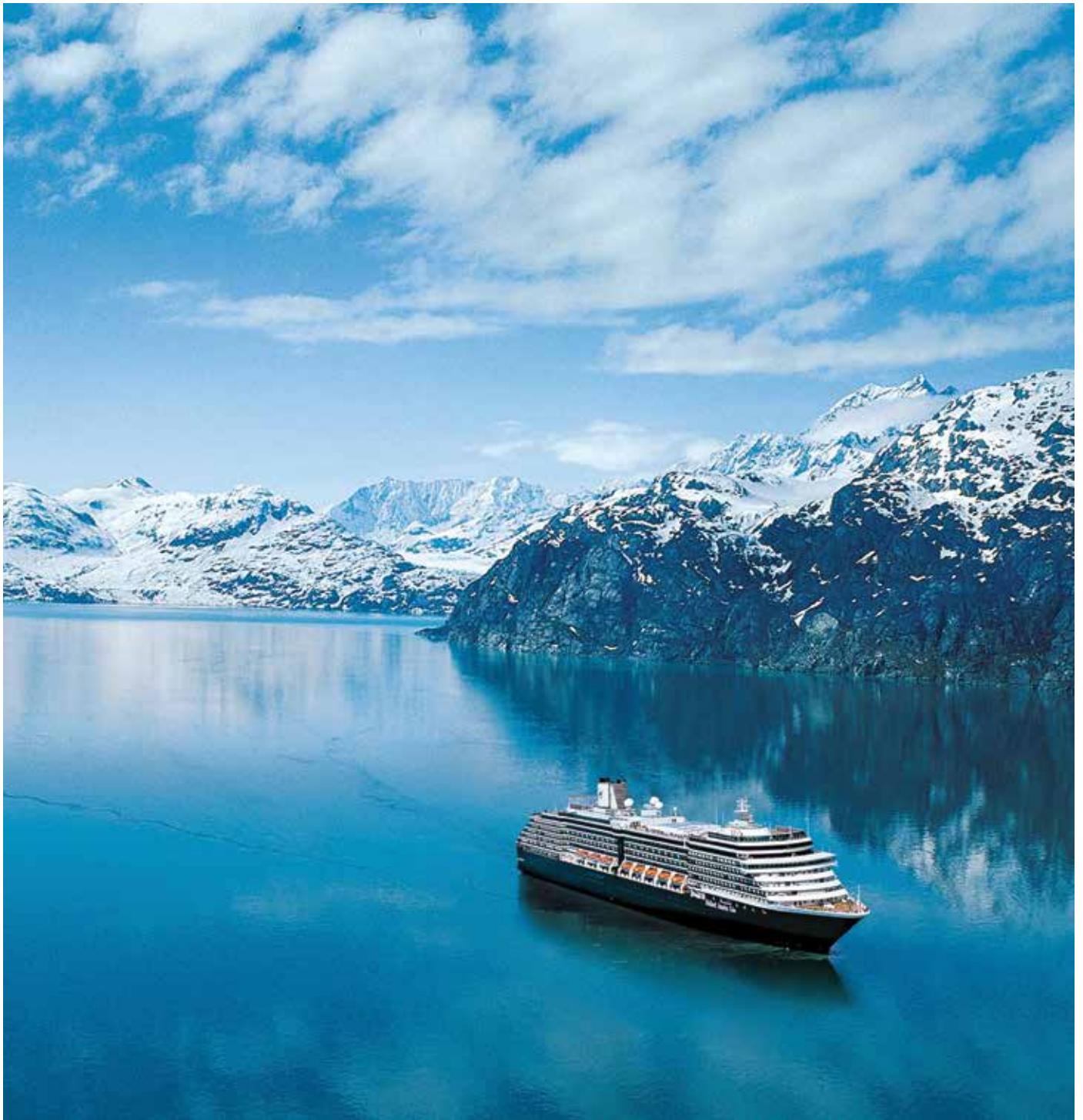
Watch the Wildlife

If you want to see wildlife, Alaska is the place to visit. Bald eagles gather by the hundreds, moose cause traffic jams, and millions of salmon spawn in its rivers. Take a guided tour through a national park or wildlife refuge to see moose and caribou or a boat tour to see otters, whales,

and porpoises. No matter where you go, you'll find an amazing variety of watchable wildlife.

Take a Breathtaking Drive

Driving in Alaska is an unforgettable experience. Spectacular views, pristine lakes, and towering mountains are all part of the Alaska driving experience.



Looking for adventure? Fly to Alaska and rent a car or RV. You'll find 3 routes that have been designated National "Scenic Byways;" the Glenn and Seward Highways, with road-accessible glaciers, and the Alaska Marine Highway, a unique ferry route connecting 3,500 miles of coastal waterways.

Visit the Country's Largest National Park

Alaska is home to 17 national park areas, which is two-thirds of the land in the entire national park system. From mountain ranges and volcanoes to wild rivers and vast tundra, Alaska's parklands offer an array of recreation and sightseeing opportunities. Visit

Wrangell-St. Elias, the country's largest national park, and see the best remaining example of a 20th-century copper mining town.

Cruise to a Glacier

See the ancient, enormous rivers of ice that sculpted Alaska's mountains. You can get up close to glaciers on



cruise tours and day cruises in many areas of Alaska including Glacier Bay, Kenai Fjords, and Prince William Sound. These trips offer a wonderful glimpse of coastal Alaska with its dramatic mountain scenery and tidewater glaciers.

Go Flightseeing

Flying is a way of life in Alaska and a trip to Alaska would not be complete without a flightseeing excursion. Get a bird's eye view of this great land as you circle majestic Mt. McKinley, take a floatplane to a wilderness lodge or land on a glacier in a helicopter.

Explore the Wilderness

In Alaska, you can explore the wilderness by day and sleep in a warm bed at night. Guided trips and tours take you to a variety of remote - or not-so-remote — places where you can enjoy almost any outdoor interest. Stay at a backcountry lodge for fly-fishing and bear watching, or join an expedition



to one of Alaska's remote parks forests, or refuges.

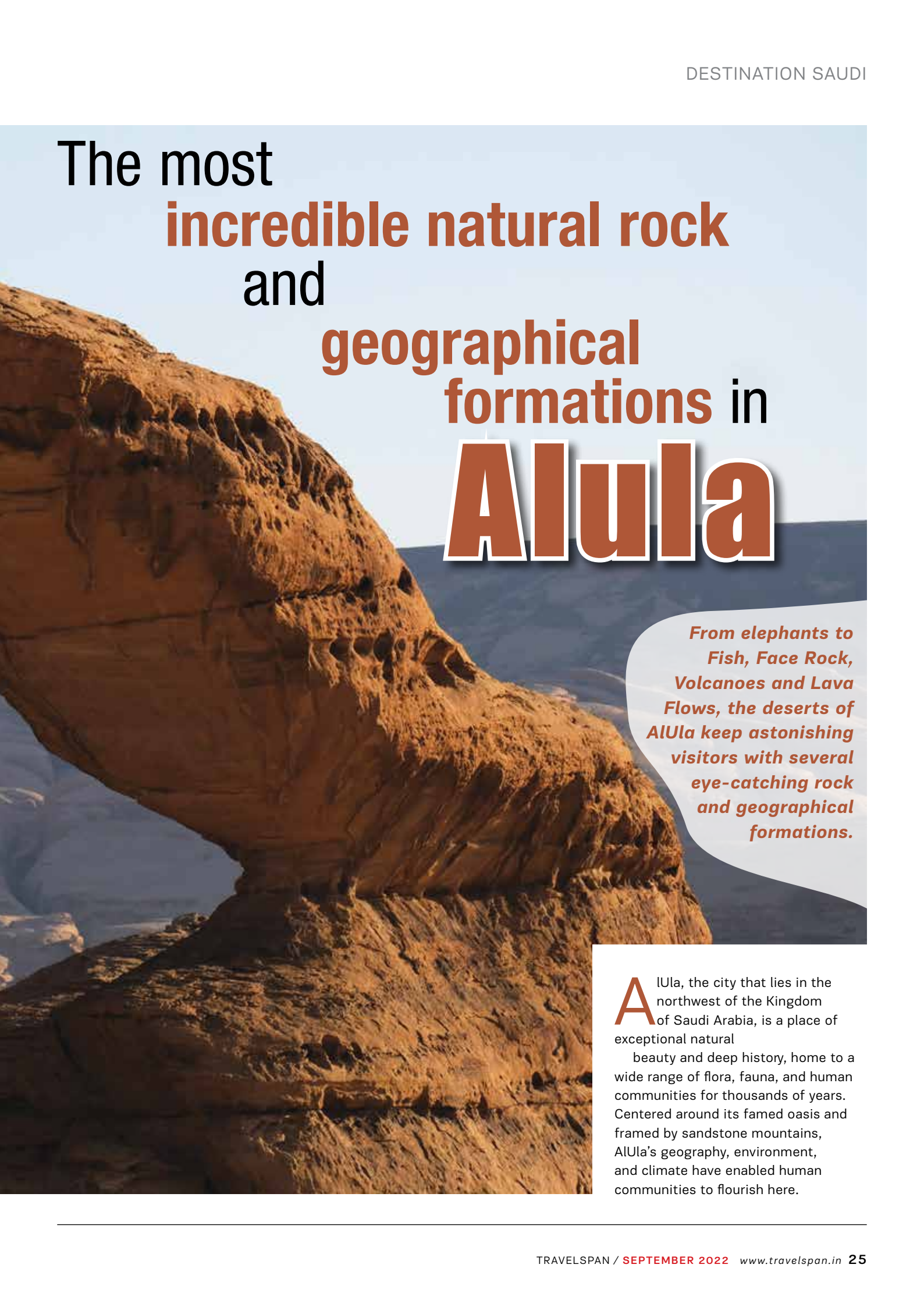
Explore Alaska's Rich History and Unique Cultures

Native and cultural diversity abounds in Alaska. Each region contains its unique people and customs. From

traditional music and dance to beautiful Native art, there are many opportunities for Alaska visitors to experience Alaska's culture and history.

Plan your trip to the largest state in America. Alaska: It's beyond your dreams yet within your reach.





The most **incredible natural rock** and **geographical** **formations in** **AlUla**

From elephants to Fish, Face Rock, Volcanoes and Lava Flows, the deserts of AlUla keep astonishing visitors with several eye-catching rock and geographical formations.

AlUla, the city that lies in the northwest of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is a place of exceptional natural

beauty and deep history, home to a wide range of flora, fauna, and human communities for thousands of years. Centered around its famed oasis and framed by sandstone mountains, AlUla's geography, environment, and climate have enabled human communities to flourish here.

AlUla is a unique and extraordinary landscape because of the three distinct geological eras packed together in one region.

The earliest of the geologic ages which formed the rocks of AlUla was during the Precambrian Arabian shield rocks, which are marked by different layers of sedimentary rock. Laid down over millions of years, these rock layers contain a permanent record of the Earth's past, including the fossilised remains of plants and animals that were buried when the sediments were formed.

Second, the area's underlying sandstone was created during the Cambrian period over 485 million years ago, and tectonic activity has helped further shape its dramatic geology, creating volcanic landscapes, basalt plateaus, and sandstone massifs. These geological features enable the area to act as a water catchment basin with an area of nearly 700 square kilometres, allowing the valley to flow southwards

Photo of the Fish Rock, a natural rock formation in AlUla formed

by the forces of nature through millions of years towards AlUla's settlements. Trilobite trace fossils discovered in AlUla's sandstone date to at least 252 million years ago and provide evidence of some of the earliest life in the area. The soft and porous rock, perfect for carving, also acts as an aquifer that can store the vital freshwater resources required to sustain life in an arid environment.

Following that was the black basalt layer formed by volcanic eruptions creating the dramatic plateaus called the Harrat.

The desert of AlUla is famous for its several geological rock formations, formed over millions of years by the hands of the best sculptors, the wind and the water, to form natural shapes untouched by human hands, and to become exceptional natural shapes that are unseen except in this vast natural desert. With the contrasts of these colours and the lush green oasis running through the middle, it makes AlUla like no other place on earth.

Here are the nine most incredible natural rock formations in AlUla:





1. Elephant Rock - The Elephant Rock is one of the world's most popular rocks and the highlight of the region of AlUla. Looking at it

from afar, this rock seems like an elephant with a ground-bound trunk. The Elephant Rock is also known as Jabal-AlFil in the Arabic language. Standing at a height of 52 meters, the giant rock climbs three stories into the Arabian sky.

This mammoth stands out among

the other hand-carved, ornate structures of nearby Hegra's Nabataean tombs as it was shaped by natural forces. The trunk and body of this red sandstone beast were shaped through water and wind erosion that was caused over millions of years.

The huge elephant stands in a landscape of golden sands, surrounded by other rocky formations which are equally impressive in size. Regardless, the Elephant Rock still overshadows

all that falls in its sight and acts as a reminder of the sands of time. The beauty of this mighty elephant increases at nightfall when it becomes more lifelike in the warm lights that have been installed at the site. Visiting the rock at night is advantageous to avoid the hot weather during the summer day.

2. The Mushroom Rock - You can find several Mushroom-shaped rocks in the deserts of AlUla. The most famous

is located in Sharaan Nature Reserve. mushroom rocks are a wonderful natural phenomenon usually formed as a result of the erosion of sedimentary layers over millions of years. The remaining part of these layers is exposed again to wind, resulting in the lower parts of the layer breaking down more quickly.

The Sharaan Nature Reserve itself consists of 1,500 square kilometres (579 square miles) of soaring red-rock canyons, sprawling desert and valleys carpeted in delicate wildflowers offering a treasure trove of natural wonders. The mission of Sharaan Nature Reserve is to restore, protect and conserve the sensitive ecosystem native to AlUla. Efforts are currently underway to restore the area, allowing for its natural inhabitants to reclaim the land.

3. The Fish Rock - This Desert Fish was recently gone viral on social

media through a photo taken by the photographer Khaled AlEnazi, as he spotted a rock in the form of a fish in the desert sands and transformed through millions of years ago into one of the most important ancient archaeological inscriptions and strange rock formations that marks the lands of AlUla.

4. The Face Rock - Amongst the monumental tombs of Hegra, next to Jabal AlAhmar (Which means The Red Mountain due to the colour of its rocks), you will notice a formation that resembles the profile of a human head gazing out over the desert landscape. As with all of AlUla's rock formations, sunrise and sunset are prime times to visit, when the light plays on the sandstone, seeming to illuminate the rocks from within — a magical sight for observers and photographers alike.

5. The Arch Rock - One of AlUla's

most recognisable rock formations, The Arch (also known as Rainbow Rock) is well worth the 90-minute drive from the centre of the city. Its bridge-shaped structure, which resembles a rainbow flanked by two clouds, is a rare sight indeed. Enthralled by this sprawling display of sandstone, don't miss spotting semi-precious desert diamonds on-site. You can eye these multi-coloured pieces of quartz embedded in the rock itself and scattered on the surrounding ground.

The Arch Rock hosted Symphony Under the Stars back in March 2022 as part of AlUla Skies Festival events, which was dedicated to the spectacular starry night of the desert of AlUla. Under the backlit Arch Rock, Italian pianist Dardust led a magnificent Symphony Under the Stars in a show like no other. This modern take on classical music had the audience



on their feet for a spectacular performance.

6. The Dancing Rocks - The Dancing Rocks are so-called because these formations are sculpted by nature to appear as if they are swaying in unison. Located in the Raggasat Valley, the rocks seem to dance together, slightly removed from the surrounding rock formations. This place is famous for hiking activities and dune buggies experience. Reach Dancing Rocks in 45 minutes from the city centre, while hiring a four-wheel-drive vehicle with an experienced driver is recommended.

7. Gharameel Desert - About an hour outside of the city centre, discover dark, thin pillars of stone stretching up to the sky. This is Gharameel. You'll need to go off-road to reach the site, so we recommend hiring a four-wheel-drive vehicle with an experienced driver. Your reward is a view unlike any other,

made even more dramatic at night when AlUla's dark skies showcase a brilliant display of stars above the rocks. Stargazing packages welcome you to gaze at Gharameel's stone pillars and follow their spires upward toward the twinkling stars.

8. Volcanoes - At the remote desert areas of AlUla, find stark, black volcanic rock and inactive volcanoes which stand atop sandstone and are surrounded by seas of golden sand to make for truly dramatic, other-worldly sights. Some of those areas are visitor-friendly with guides to experience hiking around the top of a volcano. Khaybar, the neighbouring Oasis in the south of AlUla is well known for its two famous; The White Volcano and the Black Volcano.

9. Lava Domes and Flows - The earliest human activity is evidenced in AlUla in Harrat Uwayrid and elsewhere

in northwestern Saudi Arabia in Harrat Khaybar. These important volcanic areas comprise two of the largest in Saudi Arabia.

Harrat Khaybar includes a spectacular 100-kilometer-long vent system containing lava domes, tuff rings, basaltic cones, and the Jabal Qidr stratovolcano. The dramatic lava flows of volcanic events can be seen across the region. Harrat Khaybar has at least seven post-Neolithic (less than 4,500 years old) and eight historical (less than 1,500 years old) lava flows. The last eruption in the Harrat Uwayrid is believed to have occurred around 640 CE. According to Bedouin legends, the explosion erupted fire and stones, killing herdsmen and their animals. The best way to see these formations is by taking a helicopter tour to see incredible formations from a panoramic sky view.





The
destination wedding
market is expected
to reach
US\$ 290,550.5 Mn
in 2031

The destination wedding market with the rising penetration of social media. Usage of drone footage in marriage events takes destination weddings to the next level. **Future Market Insights** (FMI) in its

Future Market Insights (FMI) in its latest study has forecast the market to rise at a CAGR of ~30.6% between 2021 and 2031.

latest study has forecast the market to rise at a CAGR of ~30.6% between 2021 and 2031.

As per the market analysis, the destination wedding market will generate revenue, surpassing US\$ 21.5 Bn in 2021. By 2031, the market is forecast to cross US\$ 290 Bn. Food service activities remain important and are set to account for 39% of the value share in 2021.

With the help of drone videography, couples can avail high-quality footage and photos while saving time and money compared to traditional photography solutions. New generation couples are focusing on sustainability and many consumers prefer eco-friendly destination weddings.

Many players offer natural locations for destination weddings like the Riverview Retreat in Jim Corbett and the Banyan Tree, Phuket. Choosing a park or resort not only provides a beautiful spot to get married but also contributes economically while bolstering exposure to a place devoted to environmental stewardship.

Companies are extensively focusing on leveraging their services through enhancing retail penetration and

mass marketing. They are actively collaborating with well-established and local online retailers to ensure accessibility in both developed as well as developing countries. These trends are expected to fuel growth in the long term.

Key Takeaways from the Destination Wedding Market Study

- International destinations are expected to hold 66% revenue share owing to a wider range of options for aesthetics and climate that have attracted a larger pool of couples.
 - Wedding ceremonies dominate the market with a 33% share, with higher importance being given to family functions. Italy holds a noteworthy share of 17% of destination weddings, aided by a wider range of location options. Santorini will account for a 16% share owing to a high level of penetration of key players with varieties of beaches and scenic mountain locations.
 - Corfu accounts for 15% of destination wedding events, aided by destination options and optimal climate for most of the year
- “Rise in personalized, innovative, and green wedding events with a focus*

on attractive surroundings, advanced facilities, and a surge in income and rapid urbanization are key factors that will positively influence market revenue through 2031,” says an FMI analyst.

Impact of COVID-19 on the market

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus has resulted in an economic downswing by causing disruptions in business operations in various sectors. The service industry is one of the hardest hit. There has been observed a reduction in the overall discretionary spending, which posed a temporary challenge for the players operating in the market.

As the coronavirus crisis continued, large cities banned gatherings and asked people to follow social distancing guidelines.

Couples have moved on to live streaming using videoconferencing applications. This led to a major slowdown in the wedding industry, with many couples canceling or postponing their events. Many people who work in the wedding industry including photographers and caterers also suffered due to strict norms.

However, with improving situations in the third quarter of 2020, the market saw a slight improvement. It is expected for the market to gain its initial growth in the second quarter of 2021.

Who is winning?

Aggressive promotional strategies, advertisements, and new product launches have driven sales of destination weddings around the globe.



The cruise tourism market is forecasted to be appraised at US\$ 17.4bn. by 2032



Cruise ships can bring as many as lots of passengers in an unmarried trip and are a number of the most important ships in the global by using internal volume, larger than many cargo ships.

The global cruise tourism market is forecasted to be appraised at US\$ 17.4 Billion by 2032, up from US\$ 5.3 Billion in 2022, advancing at a CAGR of 11.97% during the forecast period.

According to **Future Market Insights**, the launch of novel inventive ships with technological advancements

and numerous onboard activities for travelers to enjoy is one of the primary factors driving the demand for cruise tourism. Cruise tourism implies holidays that are partly or solely based on a cruise ship. Cruise tourism lets tourists experience a multi-center holiday, wherein the tourists spend quality time at several destinations during their entire trip.

The rise in the disposable earnings of people coupled with the expansion within the cruise onboard facilities and services will grow the market for cruise tourism in the forecast length.

Cruise tourism is travel on a cruise ship. A cruise ship is a passenger ship used for pride voyages whilst



the voyage itself, the ship's facilities, and every so often the extraordinary destinations along the manner shape a part of the passengers' revel in.

Cruise ships can bring as many as lots of passengers in an unmarried trip and are a number of the most important ships in the global by using internal volume, larger than many cargo ships. The following is a list of cruise ships with a gross tonnage large than 120,000.

The file covers all of the major

traits and drivers gambling a key function inside the increase of the cruise tourism marketplace. The cruise tourism marketplace is segmented via Type and Region.

Market dynamics

Worldwide cruise tourism is more often than not driven with the aid of the upward thrust inside the disposable income of human beings everywhere in the globe, coupled with the growth within the choice of luxurious life via human beings.

The growing demand for cruise excursions among all ages human beings with all sorts of fun sports for them is in line with the age institution. The new modern ships are developing with new technological development and mass extra onboard fun for the tourists to experience, and therefore attracting large crowd all over the international.

The growing demand for cruise excursions for an extraordinary region and the growing desire of people for luxury tours is looking the vendors to add new cruise ships which more luxurious capabilities and a more quantity of cruises to be had for exclusive places to offer options to the people journeying.

The agencies are all set for the rising demand for the development of the latest cruise ships. For example, there is a report of 42 ocean and river cruise ships under construction or on order for deliveries over the next years (2021 – 2028). Twenty of these are massive cruise ships wearing over 1,000 passengers every. Thirteen are mega cruise ships that everyone carries over 4,000 passengers. In addition to extra than 167 cruise ships essential cruise line corporations have been added given that 2000. As this increase maintains, 2019 – 2020 might be a great year for brand new cruise ships.

However, excessive fees, higher operation fees, and also because of environmental issues are a number of factors that will be hampering the boom of Cruise Tourism within the forecast period.

For instance, the river cruise sector is growing by about 16% annually and is impressive with both the number of passengers and yields, especially on the market in Germany – the unquestioned river vacation travel market's leader. River cruise ticket sales are growing faster compared to ocean-going ship vacations. Passenger capacity on the main European rivers is also increasing, and new operators emerge, the old ones renovate regularly or expand their fleets by building larger, new-generation boats

Competitive analysis

Key players are adopting strategies such as investing in R&D, new product launches, and expansion in Technology to stand out as strong competitors in the market. Global Cruise Tourism is a competitive market with the presence of various global and regional players in the market. The major players are **Carnival Corporation & PLC, Disney Cruise Line, MSC Cruises, NCL Corporation, and Royal Caribbean International**. Other key players in the market include **AIDA Cruises, Celebrity Cruises, Cunard Line, Marella Cruises, and Saga Cruises**.

- In January 2019, **Essel Group's** cruise business, **Zen Cruises**, announced that its cruise line, **Jalesh Cruises**, will begin its first sail in April from Mumbai. The multi-destination cruise line will offer entertainment shows, adventure activities, and exotic authentic cuisines packed with international hospitality on the high sea.

- In March 2019, Italian shipbuilding giant **Fincantieri** launched **Costa Venezia**, a massive new cruise ship with a capacity of over 5,200 guests. With 135,500 tons and 323 meters in length, the Costa Venezia will be the largest ever ship introduced by Costa to the Chinese market. The Costa Venezia is part of an expansion plan that includes a total of 7 ships being delivered to the Costa Group by 2023, for a total investment of over 6 billion euros. It started its voyage on 8 March.



Indian travellers

are increasingly interested in sustainable holiday experiences

Unspoilt natural landscapes, fresh, surprising cuisine, competent and responsible hosts: those who travel sustainably are not only doing something good for the environment but above all for themselves

Innovative mobility concepts, pioneering green icons of architecture, and sprawling parks can make a city break in Germany exciting yet relaxed. The aim is to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable behaviour and the lasting impact that every individual can have. The tourism industry too is shifting its focus on responsible travel that benefits the traveller, as well as the destination. There is a clear trend

that Indian travellers are increasingly interested in sustainable holiday experiences, which has risen within the last decade.

For many years, sustainability has been a key element in the GNTB's strategy to promote incoming tourism, a process that has been accelerated by the pandemic. Through our marketing campaign, the GNTB aims to make travellers aware of Germany's diverse offering of unspoilt natural landscapes,

Green Cities, and rural areas with an abundance of sustainable options.

Romit Theophilus, Director, German National Tourist Office, India said: "India is a growing market with more than 160,000 overnight stays recorded until May 2022. That is an immense increase of roughly 214 percent when compared to the same period of 2021. Our year-round campaigns aim to inspire travellers to explore Germany seamlessly, and



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experience-oriented travel, not to mention a stress-free journey to the destination and a relaxing stay.

We collaborate with many partners in the German tourism sector to set new benchmarks in sustainability. In response to the changes in consumer behaviour, many businesses in Germany, including start-ups, SMEs, and major businesses, play an active role in the transformation of the travel industry.

The following are examples of stakeholders that have adopted sustainable strategies and started a variety of green initiatives.

German Islands are leading the way toward sustainable living

Eco-friendly living is the ethos of Juist Island in the North of Germany. Cars are completely banned from the Island and horse-drawn carriages are the main mode of transportation for people, goods, and even local services

like waste collection. Because of the island's small size, most residents walk or ride a bike to get around, which might explain the locals' expertise in the art of slow and sustainable living. This is encouraged from a very young age.

Urban Gardening and Green Spaces

A variety of innovative community projects can be found all over Germany. From a Vegetable Garden in Bremen's industrial harbour district to a dairy farm-turned community centre in the heart of Munich, they all share the goal of promoting and contributing to a sustainable future. Bremen's "Vegetable Wharf" is a prime example of urban agriculture: a former car park has been converted into a 300-square metre garden where vegetables, fruit, herbs and hops are grown. In the South of Germany, Munich is bursting with green movements: a rustic farm now

houses an organic supermarket and a large green space. In the Olympic Park, locals host a variety of get-togethers, ranging from yoga and drawing courses to various sustainability workshops.

Green Hotels – Focus on Zero Carbon

As the green transformation is gaining momentum across Germany, a growing number of hotels have pledged to reduce their environmental impact through more sustainable practices. For example, the "Atlantic Hotel Sail City" in Bremerhaven has already reduced its CO2 emissions by 38 percent since 2013. The hotel has its very own rooftop beehives that produce honey for the fully organic breakfast menu made up of locally grown products from nearby farmers.

The GNTO has made its mission to drive forward the sustainable transformation of Destination Germany in the face of climate change.

The leisure travel market size is likely to reach a valuation of around \$1,737.3 billion by 2027



According to a new report, The leisure travel market has been segmented based on traveler type, sales channel, age group, expenditure type, and region.

According to a new report published by **Allied Market Research**, titled, “*Leisure Travel Market by Traveler Type, Sales Channel, By Age Group and By Expenditure Type: Opportunity Analysis and Industry Forecast, 2021–2027*,” The global leisure travel market size was valued

at \$1,006.5 billion in 2019, and is projected to reach \$1,737.3 billion by 2027, registering a CAGR of 22.6% from 2021 to 2027.

Outbound leisure travel has gained significant momentum at the start of the 21st century as the result of a rise in disposable income, expansion of

logistics & infrastructure, and rigorous promotion & advertising of tourism by governments. The outbound tourism market has expanded sprightly, as a result, the number of outbound tourists maintained robust growth each year from 2002 to 2018. The number of global outbound tourists surpassed a

record 1.4 billion in 2018.

New trends have emerged due to the rapid development of global outbound tourism. Citizens' perceptions have changed from meeting everyday needs to improving the quality of their life. Now more than ever, travel plays a vital importance in the hectic lifestyle of people. Leisure holiday remained the most preferable travel type, however, adventure tourism has gained wide traction in the past few years.

Evidence of evolving leisure travel market is emanating across regions whether developing or developed. Deployment of digital technologies including but not limited to artificial intelligence, big data, analytics, Internet of Things will continue to remain in cynosure for the rapidly developing tourism industry. The increasing advent of digitalization will continue to foster bringing a paradigm shift in the leisure travel and tourism industry regarding how engaged

stakeholders will reach out to tech-savvy customers.

Based on age group, the generation X segment held the major share in 2018, garnering nearly two-fifths of the total market. Simultaneously, the millennials segment would register the fastest CAGR of 6.6% till 2026. The segment of generation Z is also analyzed in the market report.

UK is on the verge of Brexit and no deal exit might have appalling ramifications on the outbound tourism market. According to AMR analysis, a no-deal Brexit might cause a drop of about 5-7% in outbound travelers from the UK. Spain, France, and Italy would see a significant drop in tourists travelling from the UK owing to the weaker exchange rate, imposition of tariffs, higher airfare rates, and higher travel insurance premiums. A decrease in the value of British currency will result in changing UK residents' preferences for domestic holidays A

no-deal scenario will result in increased overall expenditure incurred by UK residents. No deal exit will have a cascading effect to the UK economy, which will negatively impact UK outbound tourism industry.

According to the **United Nations World Tourism Organization**

(UNWTO) estimation, the global international tourist arrivals might decrease by 58-78% in 2020 depending on the speed of containment and the duration of travel restrictions as well as the shutdown of borders.

In addition, the travel & tourism industry will suffer a loss of \$910 billion to \$1.2 trillion in export revenues from tourism in 2020, which is further expected to hamper the growth of the market. Moreover, according to UNWTO, the pandemic is likely to increase unemployment by putting around 100 to 120 million direct tourism jobs at risk, thereby restraining the growth of the leisure travel market.

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MARRIOTT BONVOY

If you're looking for a sign that it's time to book your next trip, this is it. Marriott Bonvoy, the award-winning travel program from Marriott International, is inviting members to make a brand-new bucket list this fall with the launch of its latest Global Promotion. With travel back on the agenda, and explorers eager to finally take those dream trips, Marriott Bonvoy's new offer promises to make these eagerly anticipated moments even better. Members are able to rack up unlimited bonus points throughout the 86-day earning period to put towards future travel and experiences at properties across the Marriott Bonvoy portfolio.

Registration starts September 7, 2022, for the promotion and runs until December 1, 2022, enabling registered members to earn 2,000 bonus points on each eligible stay starting with the second stay, between September 21, 2022, and December 15, 2022. There is no limit to the number of bonus points members can earn, creating a virtuous circle that means the more they travel, the more points they bank for their next trip of a lifetime.

The offer is even more enticing for Marriott Bonvoy® Credit Card holders, who can earn an additional 2,000 bonus points per stay at different hotel brands, starting with their second brand during the promotion earning period. This means Card holders could earn up to 4,000 bonus points on an individual stay, with no maximum limits, while exploring the unrivaled depth and breadth of the Marriott Bonvoy brand portfolio. From a stay at a Courtyard

Make a Brand New Bucket List



- *Marriott Bonvoy Gives Travelers Another Reason to Make a Brand New Bucket List This Fall, With Launch of Unlimited Bonus Points Global Promotion*
- *With No Limit on the Number of Bonus Points, Members Can Earn, More Trips = More Opportunities*

by Marriott while on a cross-country road trip, to a stay at EDITION for an immersive experience in a bustling metropolis, or to a relaxing stay at The Ritz-Carlton in a tropical oasis.

More bonus points mean more opportunities to take advantage of all the elements of the Marriott Bonvoy program. Members can redeem their points not only for stays at 8,100+ hotels, 30 All-Inclusive resorts and 76,000+ premium and luxury home rentals around the world on Homes and Villas by Marriott International, but also for money-can't-buy experiences on Marriott Bonvoy Moments, trip add-ons like flights or car rentals, and much more.

Here are some additional details:

- The promotion earning period runs from September 21, 2022, to December 15, 2022.
- A "stay" is defined as consecutive nights spent in the same hotel, regardless of check-in/check-out activity, at any points-eligible rate.
- Stays completed before registration are not eligible to earn bonus points with this promotion. Members must register at www.marriott.com before December 1, 2022.
- With this promotion, members can

earn unlimited bonus points during the earning period. Registered members can begin earning bonus points from the first eligible stay that falls within the earning period, and on each eligible stay thereafter.

- You must be the primary Credit Card account holder and have an active Marriott Bonvoy® Credit Card, legacy Starwood Preferred Guest-branded or legacy Marriott Rewards-branded credit card issued in the United States, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, United Arab Emirates, Canada, China, and the United Kingdom, or The Ritz-Carlton-branded credit card issued in the United States (collectively "Marriott Bonvoy Credit Cards"), which must be issued at the time of your stay to be eligible for the additional 2,000 bonus points per brand, starting with the second brand.

- Stays at Homes & Villas by Marriott International, Marriott Executive Apartments®, and owner-occupied weeks at Marriott Vacation Club®, Marriott Grand Residence Club®, Sheraton Vacation Club®, Westin Vacation Club®, The Ritz-Carlton Club®, St. Regis Residence Club®, and Luxury Collection Residence Club, are not eligible for bonus points for this promotion.

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