

LUXURY AND LIFESTYLE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

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poised to gain global festival spotlight

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Contents

Volume 25 | Issue 03 | April 2025



- 07** This is the world's best airport for 2025, according to Skytrax
- 09** ASEGO-Redefining Baggage Protection for the Modern Traveller
- 10** Air India and Virgin Australia Forge Codeshare Partnership to Strengthen India-Australia Connectivity
- 12** Saudi Arabia to showcase record tourism growth at ATM 2025, marked by a 16% increase in exhibitor participation at the event
- 17** Air India Launches Digital Innovation centre focused on AI advancement
- 18** Air India integrates Apple AirTag for enhanced baggage tracking system
- 19** British Airways' NDC content now live in Sabre's travel marketplace
- 20** Ada Tours Appoints Global Destinations to Bring Authentic Latin American Journeys to India

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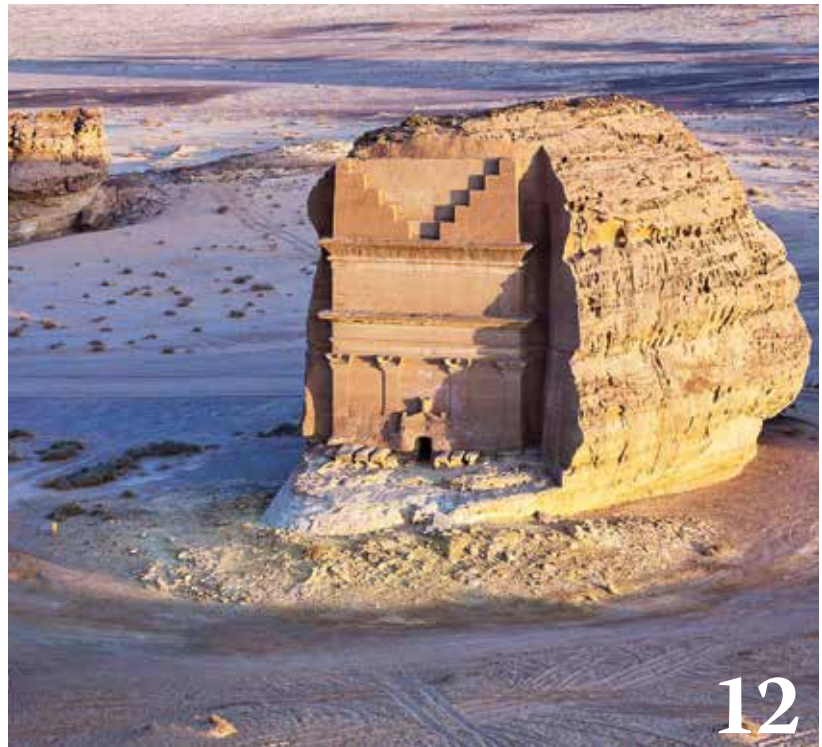
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Contents



20



12



50

- 25** Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts Partners with AVIAREPS India to Expand Presence in Luxury Travel Market
- 26** Saudi Tourism Brings an Immersive Qahwa Experience to Indian Travel Trade and Media in Mumbai
- 27** Dusit International Expands Presence in India, Targets Emerging Cities
- 29** India Strengthens Global Tourism Ties at Arabian Travel Market 2025 With 41% Bigger Presence
- 30** Courtyard by Marriott opens first property in Jharkhand, India

- 32** VFS Global and CzechTourism join hands to promote Czechia's allure to Indian Travellers
- 33** Marriott International Celebrates Record-Breaking Development Year across Europe, Middle East & Africa Region with Nearly 300 Deal Signings in 2024
- 36** Raffles Sentosa Singapore Debuts a Glamorous Resort Experience in One of the World's Most Dynamic Destinations
- 38** Marriott opens luxury resort in Jim Corbett's natural wilderness sanctuary
- 41** Manglam Group Expands Footprint in Hospitality with a Strategic Growth Plan
- 42** Centara's Newest Maldives Oasis Introduces Sanctuary of Indulgence and Serenity
- 44** Rove Al Marjan Island A New Seaside Destination in Ras Al Khaimah
- 46** Thailand's Maha Songkran 2025 poised to gain global festival spotlight
- 48** Luxury Escapes 2: Thailand's Ultimate Luxury Comeback
- 50** Sip Your Way Through Taiwan: A Journey to the Island's Tea Culture
- 56** ABN Sarovar Portico, Jim Corbett A Sanctuary Where Luxury Embraces the Wild
- 62** GNT0 India Unveils Germany's Unique Summer Adventures Beyond the Ordinary
- 66** Fiji's Loloma Hour – A Happy Hour for the Environment

EDITOR'S LETTER

This is the world's best airport for 2025, according to Skytrax

Editor's note: Sign up for travelspan.in daily newsletter. Get news about destinations, plus the latest in aviation, hospitality, airports, food and drink, lifestyle, and best of stays.

Singapore Changi Airport has been named the World's Best Airport 2025 in the **World Airport Awards** which were held at Passenger Terminal EXPO in Madrid on 9th April 2025.

This is the thirteenth time in the history of the awards that Singapore Changi Airport has received this top accolade. Singapore Changi Airport received other major awards, for the World's Best Airport Dining, the World's Best Airport Washrooms and as the Best Airport in Asia.

Mr. Yam Kum Weng, Chief Executive Officer of Changi Airport Group said: "Changi Airport is honoured to be named by Skytrax as the World's Best Airport for the 13th time. It is indeed

gratifying to receive this recognition, and this certainly encourages us to continue to strive to provide the best travel experience. We thank all our passengers for their vote of confidence. And we're especially grateful to the Changi Airport community, whose unwavering commitment to service excellence has made this award possible. As air travel continues to grow, we look forward to welcoming passengers to experience the magic at Changi Airport."

Nine European airports made it into the top 20. The only airport from the Americas to make the list was Vancouver International at No. 13. Cape Town Airport didn't make the top 20, but was named Best Airport in Africa and Best Airport Staff Service in Africa.



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THE WORLD'S TOP 20 AIRPORTS FOR 2025

1. Singapore Changi Airport
2. Hamad International Airport
3. Tokyo International Airport (Haneda)
4. Incheon International Airport
5. Narita International Airport
6. Hong Kong International Airport
7. Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport
8. Rome Fiumicino Airport
9. Munich Airport
10. Zurich Airport
11. Dubai International Airport
12. Helsinki-Vantaa Airport
13. Vancouver International Airport
14. Istanbul Airport
15. Vienna International Airport
16. Melbourne Airport
17. Chubu Centrair International Airport
18. Copenhagen Airport
19. Amsterdam Schiphol Airport
20. Bahrain International Airport

Mr Edward Plaisted, CEO of

Skytrax said: *"It is a great achievement for Singapore Changi Airport to receive the highest award as the World's Best Airport 2025, this being a record-breaking 13th time in the awards history that they have scooped this award. The diversity and expansive choice of dining outlets is also recognised with Changi Airport winning the award for the World's Best Airport Dining. With washrooms being a major driver of customer satisfaction during their airport experience, we congratulate Singapore Changi Airport on receiving the first ever World's Best Airport Washrooms award."*

Doha's **Hamad International Airport**, the former three-times winner of World's Best Airport, is ranked No 2 in 2025, as well as receiving the award for the World's Best Airport Shopping, and the Best Airport in the Middle East.

BEST AIRPORTS BY PASSENGER NUMBERS

The highest ranked Airports by passenger numbers in 2025 are:

- ◆ 70+ million passengers – **Tokyo International Airport (Haneda)**
- ◆ 60 to 70 million passengers – **Singapore Changi Airport**
- ◆ 50 to 60 million passengers – **Hamad International Airport**

◆ 40 to 50 million passengers – **Rome Fiumicino Airport**

◆ 30 to 40 million passengers – **Narita International Airport**

◆ 20 to 30 million passengers – **Zurich Airport**

◆ 10 to 20 million passengers – **Helsinki-Vantaa Airport**

◆ 5 to 10 million passengers – **Bahrain International Airport**

◆ Less than 5 million passengers – **Goa Manohar International Airport**

Tokyo Haneda Airport is ranked No 3 in the global ranking with further outstanding results receiving the awards as the World's Cleanest Airport (*Major Airport*), the World's Best Domestic Airport and as delivering the World's Best Airport PRM & Accessible Facilities.

Seoul Incheon Airport ranks No 4 globally, and won a coveted title being voted by customers as having the World's Best Airport Staff.

Chubu Centrair International Airport, Nagoya, was a repeat winner of the World's Best Regional Airport award.

Paris CDG Airport Terminal 3 received the award as the World's Best Low-Cost Airline Terminal, and Paris CDG Airport was named the Best Airport in Europe for a third successive year.

Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport scored a real success by winning a top award for the World's Best Airport Baggage Delivery.

Copenhagen Airport wins the award as the World's Best Airport Security Processing, and **Hong Kong International Airport** was named the World's Best Airport Immigration.

Rome Fiumicino Airport is named the Best Airport in Southern Europe, **Helsinki Vantaa Airport** the Best Airport in Northern Europe, and **Budapest Airport** once again as the Best Airport in Eastern Europe.

Munich Airport maintained a strong performance being recognised as the Best Airport in Central Europe, and **Hilton Munich Airport** received the Best Airport Hotel in Europe award.

Cape Town Airport is the major award winner in Africa, receiving the award as the Best Airport in Africa and Best Airport Staff Service in Africa.

Houston Airport System was recognised as providing the World's Best Airport Art for the third successive year.

Bahrain International Airport was named the World's Cleanest Airport in the category for airports handling under 25 million passengers annually.

Berlin Brandenburg Airport collected the award as the World's Most Improved Airport with an impressive global rating improvement on previous years.

Istanbul Airport received the award as the World's Most Family Friendly Airport.

Crowne Plaza Changi Airport collected the award as the World's Best Airport Hotel and the Best Airport Hotel in Asia. **TWA Hotel New York JFK** received the award as the Best Airport Hotel in North America for the second time.

Hyatt Regency Shenzhen was named the Best Airport Hotel in China and the **Taj Bangalore** won the award as the Best Airport Hotel in India / Central Asia.

Delhi International Airport was again named the Best Airport in India & South Asia, and **Hyderabad International Airport** received the award for Best Airport Staff Service in India & South Asia.

Bangalore International Airport collected the award for the Best Regional Airport in India & South Asia.



DEVENDER GROVER

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ASEGO-Redefining Baggage Protection for the Modern Traveller

With 26 million bags mishandled globally each year, Asego's new digital baggage tracker, TrackMate, brings peace of mind back to international travel.

Asego has always stepped above the confines of traditional travel protection to become a comprehensive travel risk management provider for the modern traveller. Over the years, they have safeguarded millions of journeys, setting new benchmarks in the travel protection sector. Whether it's health coverage, trip assistance, or baggage protection, Asego provides seamless solutions that cater to the dynamic needs of today's global travellers.

Asego has come full circle with the launch of their all-new Mate Series Products—a suite of innovative products designed to provide seamless support to travellers. Whether it's ensuring a comfortable experience during unexpected flight delays, offering a hassle-free way to stay connected with loved ones, or ensuring that their luggage doesn't go astray while travelling, Asego has remained steadfast in addressing the evolving needs of modern travellers to enhance their overall travel experience.

The Reality of Baggage Loss

Every year, nearly 26 million bags are mishandled globally, with approximately 5% of all checked baggage experiencing delays, damage, or loss. In high-traffic airports, baggage loss incidents surge, with Europe and North America recording some of the highest mishandling rates. The impact of lost baggage goes beyond inconvenience—travellers face financial burdens, missed connections, and disrupted itineraries, turning what should be a seamless experience into a logistical nightmare.

Two decades ago, Asego pioneered the concept of physical baggage tags, setting new standards in baggage protection and offering travellers peace of mind. Today, we are proud to reintroduce this game-changing innovation in a digital form with TrackMate. Over and above our basic baggage loss cover, TrackMate offers real-time baggage tracking and compensation of ₹66,000 for up to two bags on



overseas trips if not found within 96 hours post-arrival.

A Game-Changer for Asego Travel Agent Partners

Since its launch, TrackMate has been a runaway success. Today, nearly 70% of travel protection plans provided by Asego include TrackMate, proving its necessity in the modern travel landscape. Travel agents have embraced the product as a key differentiator, providing their clients with enhanced travel experiences and increasing customer satisfaction. This innovative offering helps agents gain customer loyalty by delivering practical, real-time baggage solutions that meet modern travellers' expectations.

What's Next in Mate Series?

The success of TrackMate is only the beginning. The Mate Series is set to revolutionize travel, becoming the ultimate travel companion for every modern traveller.

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Air India and Virgin Australia Forge Codeshare Partnership to Strengthen India-Australia Connectivity

Air India and Virgin Australia's new codeshare partnership enhances connectivity between India and Australia, offering seamless baggage transfer and 16 onward destinations.



Island, Hobart, Launceston, Melbourne, Newcastle, Perth, Queenstown (New Zealand), Sunshine Coast, and Sydney.

Virgin Australia's Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer, Alistair Hartley, welcomed the collaboration, stating, "We are pleased to partner with Air India to make it easier for their customers to explore everything Australia has to offer. India is a growing tourism market for Australia, and this partnership will encourage travelers arriving on one of Air India's 14 weekly flights to discover more of our wonderful country through seamless onward connections on the Virgin Australia network."

Echoing this sentiment, **Air India's Chief Commercial Officer,**

In a significant boost to air travel between India and Australia, Air India and Virgin Australia have announced a new codeshare partnership that enhances connectivity and streamlines travel for passengers between the two nations.

Under this unilateral codeshare agreement, Air India will place its 'AI' code on select Virgin Australia flights, allowing its customers to seamlessly connect from Delhi to Melbourne or Sydney and continue onward to 16 destinations across Australia and New Zealand. Travelers flying on a single ticket will also benefit from through-checked baggage for their entire journey, ensuring a hassle-free experience.

The 16 destinations covered under this partnership include Adelaide, Ballina/Byron Bay, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra, Darwin, Gold Coast, Hamilton



Nipun Aggarwal, emphasized the importance of the Australian market for the airline. *“Australia is one of Air India’s most important international markets, so it is incredibly exciting for us to be partnering with Virgin Australia to expand our presence in the region. This partnership not only enhances accessibility for the large Indian diaspora but also opens up exciting new destinations for leisure travelers, whether they wish to soak up the beaches of the Gold Coast, discover Tasmania, or explore the natural wonders of the Great Barrier Reef.”*



Air India currently operates 14 non-stop weekly flights between India and Australia, with daily services from Delhi to Melbourne and Delhi to Sydney aboard Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft. These flights feature 18 flat-bed seats in Business Class and 238 spacious

Economy Class seats. Passengers connecting onto Virgin Australia flights will enjoy the airline’s world-class Business and Economy Class cabins, as well as its award-winning service.

Bookings for the codeshare flights will commence on February 11, 2025, with the first codeshare flights set to operate from February 18, 2025, subject to regulatory approvals.

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Why Saudi Should Be Your Next Getaway



What makes a destination ideal for the discerning traveller? Think a mix of cultural experiences and natural beauty, delicious local cuisine, and warm hospitality — all without the burden of jet lag. That’s Saudi for you. Whether you’re a history buff, a food lover, or an adventure seeker, this gem deserves a spot on your bucket list.

A Destination for Every Season

Saudi’s diverse geography makes it a destination for all kinds of explorers, throughout the year. The cooler winter months are ideal for desert safaris, camping experiences, and exploring historic sites. Summer opens the doors to destinations like Asir and Taif with their cooler climates and scenic mountain landscapes.

Looking for a marine escape? The Saudi Red Sea — a paradise for divers, snorkelers, and luxury seekers — is a year-round destination. Whether it’s the coral reefs of Umluj and Yanbu, or luxury stays by Red Sea Global, there’s always something to discover beneath the waves or along the shore.

Culture Trails to Coastal Tales

Saudi is a melting pot of heritage and modernity. Discover the ancient rock formations and archaeological treasures of AlUla, walk through bustling historic souks like Alawi Market and Souq Al Badu in Jeddah, and enjoy authentic meals with local families. Dive into the cultural calendar with events and art showcases such as The Islamic Arts Biennale 2025.

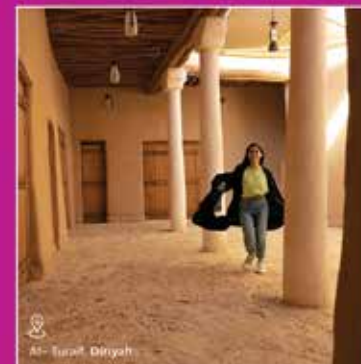
For coastal luxury, check into resorts like Nujuma, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, or the newly opened Shebara Resort — offering overwater villas and unmatched access to pristine marine life. The Saudi Red Sea’s vibrant ecosystem is perfect for marine adventurers looking to snorkel, dive, or simply take in the stunning seascapes.

A Culinary Adventure Like No Other

Saudi’s warm hospitality is greatly reflected in the local food scene. A real feast for all the senses. Traditional dishes such as Kabsa (a spiced rice dish with meat), Jareesh (cracked wheat with meat or vegetables), Sambosa (fried phyllo pastry stuffed with meat, cheese or spinach), and Mutabbaq (a savoury stuffed pancake) packs a flavourful punch. Be sure to partake in Saudi coffee (qahwa) with dates, a centuries-old tradition that reflects the heartwarming hospitality of the locals.

Welcoming Women & Solo Travellers

Saudi has transformed into a confident and secure destination for solo and female travellers. With a growing tourism infrastructure, strong safety standards, and the genuine warmth of the locals, women can experience both the ancient wonders and modern marvels with ease. From wellness getaways to culture-led city breaks and island escapes, Saudi offers a new kind of freedom to explore.



Closer Than You Think

With over 300 direct weekly flights from India — operated by Saudia, Flynas, Indigo, Air India, Air India Express, SpiceJet, and Akasa Air — Saudi is more accessible than ever. From Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kochi, Ahmedabad, and counting, this magical destination is just a five-hour flight away.

Check out www.visitsaudi.com to start planning your next Arabian escape.

Saudi Arabia to showcase record tourism growth at ATM 2025, marked by a 16% increase in exhibitor participation at the event



- ATM 2025 will spotlight Saudi Arabia's growing tourism sector and future-focused vision
- Prominent exhibitors participating in ATM 2025 include SAUDIA, Riyadh Air and Cruise Saudi

Saudi Arabia's travel and tourism sector continues on an upward trajectory, with the Kingdom welcoming 30 million international visitors in 2024, representing a 9.5 percent increase from the previous year. This impressive growth will be under the spotlight at the upcoming Arabian Travel Market (ATM), where Saudi Arabia will present its latest tourism milestones, showcase new projects and highlight its vision to become a premier destination.

ATM 2025 will feature several

prominent exhibitors from the Kingdom. In addition to the Saudi Tourism Authority, returning exhibitors include SAUDIA, flynas, Qiddiya Investment Company, Sixth Gulf Travel Company, Taiba Investment, Makkah Clock Royal Tower, Fairmont Hotel, Cruise Saudi, and L'azure Hospitality. First-time exhibitors this year include flyadeal, Riyadh Air, Diriyah Company, Aseer, BAAN Holding Group, Makkah Hotel & Towers, Alhussam Tourism, and StayKSA.

These exhibitors, along with many others, will be highlighted in a

dedicated Saudi Land hall, an expanded version of last year's ATM Saudi Village, which will be representative of the Saudi Arabian culture, heritage and tourism, while reflecting the upward trajectory of the Kingdom's travel industry, which has seen Saudi Arabian exhibitor presence increase by 16% this year.

Recent research conducted by VIDEA, on behalf of ATM, has highlighted Saudi Arabia's remarkable status as the largest and fastest-growing economy within the Gulf

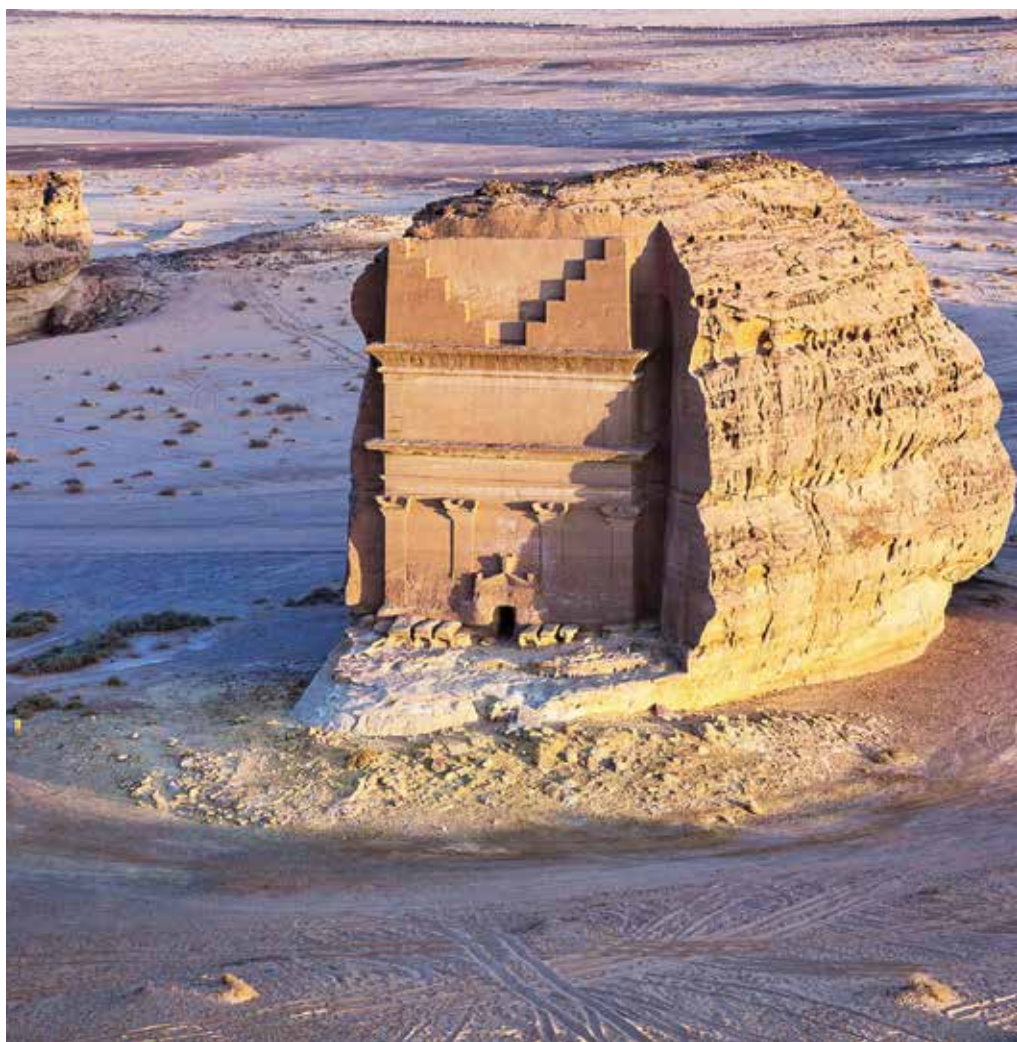
Cooperation Council (GCC) region. In 2023, Saudi Arabia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached an impressive USD 1.1 trillion, translating to a per capita GDP of USD 32,500. This positions the nation as one of the most significant and influential markets in the region.

The report further reveals that the contribution of the non-oil sector to the country's GDP has increased substantially, reaching 63% in 2021. This represents a significant leap from 39% in 2000, indicating a strategic diversification of the economy away from reliance on oil revenues. Saudi Arabia also experienced a surge in inbound leisure tourists in 2023, growing from 1.12 million in 2019 to 6.2 million. Meanwhile, domestic travel grew from 48 million to 78 million in the same period.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market, said: "Saudi Tourism Authority's unwavering commitment to the event highlights the Kingdom's rapid progress in establishing itself as a world-class tourism hub and reflects the broader momentum of investment, innovation and ambition that is driving the region's travel sector forward. This year, ATM 2025 will have one of the strongest Saudi presences to date, with leading airlines, hospitality brands and cruise representation taking centre stage."

VIDEC estimates that Saudi Arabia's Total Air Market (TAM) will grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 12.2%, reaching USD11.3 billion by 2028. With SAUDIA focusing on international expansion and new airline Riyadh Air aiming to connect the Kingdom with over 100 cities by 2030, the report predicts that this will have a significant impact on the international air travel market, which is expected to grow at a CAGR of 14.1% until 2028.

The report also outlines how Saudi Arabia's hotel market accounted for 60% of the GCC's hotel market in 2024, emphasising its dominant position in the region. Hotel bookings are predominantly driven by the domestic market, which accounts for approximately 70% of the Gross



Booking Value (GBV). With 40,000 hotels under development, adding approximately 320,000 rooms, the Kingdom's hotel market is set to accelerate further.

Saudi Arabia's growing importance in the global travel industry will be explored during the ATM Conference Programme, which will unfold across three stages – the Global Stage, the Future Stage and the New Business Events Stage and will feature 68 sessions, led by 185 high-profile speakers.

On 28 April, Turkey Kari, Executive Director of Marketing, AROYA Cruises, will join a distinguished panel on the Global Stage to explore the Considerations and Implications of Involving Communities in Destination Revitalization. Meanwhile, Abulkarim Aldarwish, MEA President, Saudi

Tourism Authority, will join tourism leaders and travel experts to discuss Big Ticket Events: Global Impact and Learnings on the Business Events Stage.

ATM 2025 is poised to welcome 55,000 attendees and will serve as a platform to showcase over 2,800 exhibitors from more than 161 global destinations. The event will centre on the transformative power of connectivity as part of the theme "Global Travel: Developing Tomorrow's Tourism Through Enhanced Connectivity." Held in conjunction with Dubai World Trade Centre, ATM 2025's strategic partners include Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), Destination Partner; Emirates, Official Airline Partner; IHG Hotels & Resorts, Official Hotel Partner; and Al Rais Travel, Official DMC Partner.

Singapore Changi Airport Named World's Best Airport for a record 13th time at 2025 Skytrax World Airport Awards



Changi Airport also won Best Airport in Asia, World's Best Airport Dining, and World's Best Airport Washrooms awards

Airport Dining. With washrooms being a major driver of customer satisfaction during their airport experience, we congratulate Singapore Changi Airport on receiving the first ever World's Best Airport Washrooms award."

Enhanced Global Connectivity

In 2024, Changi welcomed eight new passenger airlines to the Changi family, including Aero Dili, AirAsia Cambodia, Air Canada, Air Japan, Loong Air, Peach Aviation, Tianjin Airlines and West Air. It also added 11 new passenger city links to its growing network, connecting Singapore to Broome, Brussels, Guiyang, Kertajati, Lhasa, Linyi, Malacca, Phu Quoc, Quanzhou, Vancouver, and Wenzhou, enhancing Changi's strategic position as a major transit and destination hub.

Driven by travel demand from across the Asia-Pacific and beyond, North Asia remained one of the fastest-growing regions, with traffic up by 40% as compared to 2023. Changi's top-performing markets for the year were China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia and Thailand.

Stronger India Links: Passenger Traffic at Historic High

Passenger traffic between Singapore and India is at a historic high, registering 5.5 million passenger movements in 2024, up 12% compared to 2023 and surpassing pre-pandemic (2019) traffic by 15%. This also marked

Singapore Changi Airport, which welcomed approximately 67.7 million passenger movements in 2024, has been named the World's Best Airport 2025 at the prestigious Skytrax World Airport Awards, held during the Passenger Terminal EXPO in Madrid. This marks the 13th time Changi Airport has earned this prestigious honour, reaffirming its position as a world-class aviation hub renowned for innovation, service excellence, and passenger comfort. In addition to the top accolade, Changi also won awards for the World's Best Airport Dining, World's Best Airport Washrooms, and Best Airport in Asia — bringing its total tally to over 690 airport awards to date.

Mr. Yam Kum Weng, Chief Executive Officer of Changi Airport Group, said: "Changi Airport is honoured to be named by Skytrax as the World's Best Airport for the 13th time. It is indeed gratifying to receive

this recognition, and this certainly encourages us to continue to strive to provide the best travel experience. We thank all our passengers for their vote of confidence. And we're especially grateful to the Changi Airport community, whose unwavering commitment to service excellence has made this award possible. As air travel continues to grow, we look forward to welcoming passengers to experience the magic at Changi Airport."

Commenting on the achievement, **Mr Edward Plaisted, CEO of Skytrax**, said: "It is a great achievement for Singapore Changi Airport to receive the highest award as the World's Best Airport 2025, this being a record-breaking 13th time in the awards history that they have scooped this award. The diversity and expansive choice of dining outlets is also recognised with Changi Airport winning the award for the World's Best

the first year annual passenger traffic between Singapore and India crossed the 5 million mark.

India is currently Changi's top sixth market. At present, Changi Airport is linked to 16 Indian cities, including major hubs such as Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad, with six airlines (Air India, Air India Express, DrukAir, IndiGo, Scoot and Singapore Airlines) providing approximately 280 weekly services between the two countries.

Changi Airport remains one of the most connected hubs in Southeast Asia to India. In its effort to continue to build on this momentum, Changi aims to further expand its connectivity to other cities in India including Jaipur, Lucknow, Surat, and Chandigarh in the near- to mid-term.

Enhancing Experiences & Amenities for Indian Travellers

In addition to its lush gardens, unique attractions and relaxing and

thoughtful amenities, Changi continues to enhance offerings for Indian travellers, which are a growing visitor group for the airport.

- The **Free Singapore Tour** offered to passengers with at least 5.5 hours of transit time is a standout complimentary experience available at Changi Airport. Indian travellers are among the top 3 nationalities of travellers who enjoy this 2.5 hour guided tour. Running six times a day, the tours feature refreshed itineraries—including the newly introduced Singapore River and Marina Bay Sands Tour—giving transit passengers an enriching glimpse into Singapore's vibrant cultural heritage and iconic attractions.

- The **Shop & Dine Privileges** at Changi Airport continues to be a crowd favourite with Indian travellers, allowing them to redeem up to \$20 worth of Changi vouchers, which can be used at dining and retail outlets across the airport's four terminals.

Changi goes beyond being an airport—it is a destination in itself, delivering hospitality, relaxation, and retail therapy under one roof. Its commitment to enhancing every passenger's journey, whether in transit or at departure-arrival, makes it a consistent winner on the global aviation stage.

Changi Airport Group continues to be optimistic about continued growth in the coming year. As of March 2025, Changi Airport serves 100 airlines operating 7,400 weekly scheduled flights to over 160 cities across 49 countries and territories. With recent new routes such as Phu Quoc in Vietnam, Dali in China, and upcoming new connection to Vienna in Austria, passengers now have even more exciting options for their holidays. The airport will also continue to invest in infrastructure, systems and processes to enhance capacity and support long-term growth in the Asia-Pacific region.



Fiji Airways joins oneworld, expanding alliance's South Pacific reach



Fiji Airways becomes a full oneworld member from April 2025, offering global benefits and seamless connectivity to South Pacific routes.

The oneworld alliance welcomed Fiji Airways, the flag carrier of Fiji and the South Pacific, as its newest member airline, with a full suite of oneworld® benefits available to customers around the world beginning 01 April 2025.

Fiji Airways will provide top tier customers a full suite of oneworld benefits as a full member airline:

- Access to a network of nearly 700 airport lounges globally, including recently opened oneworld branded lounges in Amsterdam's

Schiphol and Seoul's Incheon airports

- Priority check-in and boarding
- Earning and redeeming miles
- Earning Tier Points

"The introduction of Fiji Airways marks an important strategic step for our alliance as we connect even more people, places and experiences than ever before," said **Nat Pieper**, CEO of oneworld. *"Fiji Airways customers will benefit from oneworld's global reach of more than 900 destinations, priority services and premium lounge access, and we're thrilled to welcome them to the oneworld family."*

Fiji Airways, with its hub

at Nadi International Airport, serves 25 destinations in 14 countries and territories globally, including oneworld hubs in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Sydney and its newest global destination, Dallas-Fort Worth, further connecting the airline into the oneworld network.

"Becoming a full member of the oneworld alliance is a proud and momentous milestone for Fiji Airways. This achievement reflects our commitment to providing world-class service and expanding our global reach, while showcasing the warmth and hospitality of Fiji to the world", said **Andre Viljoen**, Managing Director and CEO of Fiji Airways. *"As a full member, we are excited*

to offer our customers even greater benefits and seamless connectivity across the extensive oneworld network. We look forward to welcoming more oneworld customers onboard to experience the beauty of Fiji and the exceptional service of Fiji Airways."

Fiji Airways has also adopted the American Airlines award-winning AAdvantage® travel rewards programme as their frequent flyer programme, ensuring its most frequent travellers can now enjoy all the benefits of oneworld alliance as AAdvantage® members.

Founded in 1948, and taking to the skies on 1st September 1951, Fiji Airways now boasts a fleet of 23 state-of-the-art aircraft, including its flagship A350-900s, offering customers warm and welcoming Fijian hospitality on all flights.

Fiji Airways continues to be recognised for its excellence, earning a Five Star Major Airline rating from APEX for the third consecutive year and multiple Skytrax 2024 awards, including Best Airline, Best Business Class Onboard Catering, and Best Cabin Crew in Australia/Pacific. As part of its oneworld integration, Fiji Link joins as an affiliate airline, further expanding the alliance's reach with domestic services across Fiji and regional connections to Tonga, Samoa, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Air India Launches Digital Innovation centre focused on AI advancement

Air India opens CODi in Kochi to drive AI, data, and digital technologies that enhance guest experience and operational excellence.

Air India has announced the inauguration of its newly created Air India Centre of Digital Innovation (CODi) in Kochi. The centre will focus on developing customer-facing digital touchpoint technologies and cutting-edge data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities, which are playing a key role in shaping Air India as a modern, world-class airline.

Air India CODi was inaugurated by the Chairman of Tata Group, N Chandrasekaran, who is also the Chairman of Air India. Campbell Wilson, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, Air India, Dr Satya Ramaswamy, Chief Digital & Technology Officer, and P. Balaji, Group Head, Governance, Regulatory & Compliance and Corporate Affairs, Air India, were also present on the occasion.

The new office building exclusively housing Air India CODi is located in the Caspian Techparks facility in Infopark Phase II of Kochi. It features nine floors of office space with an innovative mix of workstations, meeting rooms, collaboration spaces, and discussion cabins. The facility also has a one-of-a-kind design collaboration space named 'Bodhi Tree' and the various floors of the building are named after erstwhile historic kingdoms from Kerala, such as Travancore, Venad, Kochi, Valluvanad, Eranad, Kozhikode, Arakkal, Kottayam and Chirakkal.

The team housed at Air India CODi has contributed to developing several digital technologies to ensure a smooth experience for Air India's guests. These include:

- Air India's mobile app
- Air India's website
- Air India's generative AI chatbot AI.g



Air India's notification system
Air India's new inflight entertainment system

Air India's data analytics and AI systems

Addressing the teams at Air India CODi, Mr. Chandrasekaran shared his vision of a data-driven, AI-infused future for Air India and the larger Tata Group. Noting the AI-driven advancements in today's scenario, he urged the teams to develop digital interfaces and experiences that will enhance intelligence and empathy at Air India's customer-facing digital touchpoints.

Mr. Chandrasekaran also called for digital tools that empower frontline Air Indians to excel in delighting guests. He exhorted the Air India CODi team to develop fully autonomous digital assistants that can proactively anticipate and fulfil every need of Air India's guests.

Campbell Wilson, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, Air India said, "We are very excited to announce Air India CODi that will help

further strengthen India's innovation ecosystem. At Air India, we believe equipping our frontline employees with tech-enabled systems will help us provide greater level of customer service to our guests. To this end, the team at Air India CODi will continue to develop cutting-edge AI solutions that will delight our guests."

"The Air India Centre of Digital Innovation will be a space for collaboration and innovation for our talented workforce that will focus on developing customer-facing digital touchpoint technologies and cutting-edge data and AI capabilities. In the last two years, the team has made significant contributions to elevate customer delight through digital touchpoints as well as AI and data-driven decision-making capabilities across all our internal departments, as part of Air India's Vihaan.AI transformation program. I am confident that Air India CODi will help further enhance the experience of our guests," said Dr Satya Ramaswamy, Chief Digital & Technology Officer, Air India.

Air India integrates Apple AirTag for enhanced baggage tracking system



Air India becomes Asia's first airline to integrate Apple AirTag with its app for improved real-time baggage tracking and recovery. Air India has integrated Apple AirTag with its baggage-tracking system and mobile app, allowing customers using Apple iPhone, iPad, or Mac devices to securely track the location of their baggage. Air India is the first airline in Asia to offer this integrated tracking service to guests.

Air India transports more than 100 million items of baggage annually, with more than 99.6% of items arriving together with the accompanying customer. For the small proportion that do not, due to issues with airport baggage systems, flight misconnection or other factors, this new AirTag integration will help locate items and expedite recovery.

The integration builds upon the easy-to-use baggage tracking feature Air India offers on its mobile app and website, which leverages real-time information available from airports to keep guests informed. For customers who have added their flight to the "My Trips" section of the app, baggage information becomes automatically

available soon after the bags are checked-in, as well as on the "Track my Bags" tab of the website. Customers may also scan the barcode on their baggage receipts to initiate tracking.

"At Air India we continue to innovate and introduce cutting-edge digital capabilities as part of our customer-centric approach. As we transform into a world-class global airline, we are excited to offer our guests an innovative option to help locate their baggage in case it does not arrive at the destination on schedule. We are confident that our guests will find the baggage location capability offered using Apple's AirTag and Share Item Location feature along with Air India's real-time baggage-tracking system on its website and mobile app quite helpful," said **Dr Satya Ramaswamy**, Chief Digital & Technology Officer, Air India.

How passengers can use the AirTag feature:

- If the baggage, with the AirTag in it, does not arrive at the destination, the guest can report it at Air India's Baggage Counter at the airport. Air India airport staff will assist in filing a Property Irregularity Report (PIR) for the baggage.

- The guest will then need to generate the 'Share Item Location' in the 'Find My' app on their Apple device and share the location link with Air India and associate it with the above-mentioned PIR via the Air India mobile app or website:

- **Mobile App:** The guest can visit the 'Customer Support Portal' on the app and choose 'Baggage' and then select 'Lost and Found Check-in Baggage' and provide the AirTag link there.

- **Website:** The guest can visit 'Lost and Found Check-in Baggage' in the Customer Support Portal page to provide the 'Share Item Location' link for their Apple AirTag, along with PIR number. Following this, guests will receive an acknowledgment email from Air India with a link to check baggage status.

- The shared AirTag link is then used by Air India's authorised airport teams to locate the baggage if its within airport premises and reunite the baggage with the guest at the earliest.

- For ensuring privacy and security, location sharing will automatically end as soon as a guest is reunited with their bag, or automatically expire after seven days. It can also be stopped by the guest at any time.

British Airways' NDC content now live in Sabre's travel marketplace



Sabre®

Sabre Corporation, a leading global travel technology company, today announced the launch of British Airways' New Distribution Capability (NDC) content in Sabre's travel marketplace. Starting 18th March 2025, Sabre-connected travel agencies worldwide can shop, book, and service NDC offers alongside traditional ATPCO/EDIFACT options.

By activating NDC through Sabre, agencies will seamlessly manage British Airways' offers and orders via Sabre Red 360, Sabre Red Launchpad™, and the Sabre Offer and Order APIs. Sabre's multi-source content strategy enables NDC content to integrate smoothly with traditional ATPCO/EDIFACT options,

providing a unified shopping experience that simplifies workflows and enhances productivity.

British Airways' Chief Commercial Officer, Colm Lacy, said: "At British Airways, we want to give customers a seamless digital-first retailing experience, so we're pleased to extend access to our exclusive NDC content, using Sabre's technology, to our agencies worldwide. This will open up even more ways for agencies to search, book, and service our offers, all whilst providing a more personalised experience for customers across the globe."

"Sabre is proud to continue leading the way in NDC adoption by providing robust technology solutions that

empower our customers to evolve with the industry," said Kathy Morgan, Senior Vice President, Distribution Experience, Sabre Travel Solutions. "Our partnership with British Airways demonstrates our commitment to building a modern travel marketplace where agencies have access to the most comprehensive content portfolio available."

Currently, thousands of agencies in over 150 countries use Sabre's NDC capabilities to efficiently shop, book, and service dynamic airline content. By incorporating BA's NDC content, travel sellers gain access to more personalized offers, enabling them to stay competitive and deliver exceptional value to travelers.

Ada Tours

Appoints Global Destinations to Bring Authentic Latin American Journeys to India



Imagine sipping fine Argentine wine beneath Patagonian skies, dancing to the rhythms of Rio's carnival, or tracing the mysteries of Machu Picchu — Latin America's most iconic experiences are now within reach for Indian travelers, as Global Destinations steps in as the official Sales and Marketing arm for Ada Tours in India.

With this exciting partnership, Ada Tours, a leading inbound tour operator (DMC) specializing in Brazil, Latin America, Central and South America, and Antarctica, brings bespoke, high-touch travel experiences to India's fast-growing outbound market.

Founded in 2007, Ada Tours has curated exceptional, personalized journeys for over 10,000 happy travelers, offering a wide range of travel solutions for individual travelers, families, friends, corporate groups, MICE, and special interest segments. Their portfolio spans VIP experiences, adventure and eco-tourism, gourmet and wine-focused tours, cultural journeys, and niche programs for professionals such as baristas, chefs, perfumers, and spiritual travelers. The company has also successfully managed delegations for major global events such as BRICS, G20, the Olympics, and international sporting events.

With a highly experienced multilingual team fluent in seven languages, Ada Tours ensures 24/7 ground support, deep local insights, and curated experiences, making them a trusted DMC for travelers seeking authentic journeys through Latin America.



Strategic Partnership to Expand Latin America's Reach in India

Through this partnership, Global Destinations will focus on building Ada Tours' brand visibility, trade relationships, product training, and customized itinerary support in India. The collaboration aims to tap into the growing interest among Indian travelers for offbeat, exotic, and experiential destinations, including Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Chile, Costa Rica, Colombia, and beyond.

Speaking of this significant partnership, **Pranav Kapadia, Founder & Director of Global Destinations**, shared:

"We are excited to represent Ada Tours in India and bring their deep expertise and creative travel solutions for Latin America to our market. With Indian travelers increasingly seeking unique and meaningful experiences, destinations like Brazil and other parts of Latin America hold immense appeal. Ada Tours' commitment to personalization and quality aligns

With this exciting partnership, Ada Tours, a leading inbound tour operator (DMC) specializing in Brazil, Latin America, Central and South America, and Antarctica, brings bespoke, high-touch travel experiences to India's fast-growing outbound market.

perfectly with the expectations of Indian travelers. Together, we aim to bridge the gap and create extraordinary travel experiences that will resonate with the Indian audience."

Adding to this, **Anna Avanesova, CEO, Ada Tours**, said:

"India is a vibrant and growing outbound market, and we are thrilled to partner with Global Destinations to introduce our diverse offerings to Indian travelers. From nature lovers and adventure seekers to gourmet enthusiasts and corporate groups, Latin America has something for everyone. With Global Destinations' strong network and market knowledge, we are confident this partnership will open new horizons and inspire more Indians to explore the wonders of Latin America."

This collaboration promises to make Latin America more accessible and attractive to Indian travelers, offering custom-designed journeys that reflect the rich diversity, culture, and natural beauty of the region.

Virginia Tourism Corporation Embarks on Marketing Mission to India



Mission Aims to Highlight Virginia's Extensive Tourism Assets and Encourage Partnerships with Indian Travel Trade

networking events.

Known for its iconic and timeless “Virginia is for Lovers” slogan, the state is eager to draw more Indian travelers to its scenic shores. With its diverse blend of natural landscapes, rich cultural history, and culinary delights, Virginia is a state that appeals to those seeking outdoor adventure, family-friendly vacations, or immersive historical experiences.

“Virginia truly is for lovers – lovers of life, and memorable times with friends and family,” McClenny said during the mission. “From the peaks of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the sandy beaches of the Atlantic coast, we offer a unique mix of natural beauty, luxury accommodations, and world-class attractions that make for the perfect vacation. We are excited to share these offerings with the Indian market, which has shown increasing interest in visiting Virginia,” and India ranks as a top overseas inbound market for Virginia.

From the famous Shenandoah National Park and the Blue Ridge Mountains in the west, to the long sandy beaches along the Atlantic coast and the Chesapeake Bay in the east, there is a wide range of attractions, culinary hotspots and sites of significant American history across the entire state. “Our scenic beauty and diverse landscape make for the ideal backdrop for outdoor adventure and superior luxury stays, while our tantalizing culinary offerings

In an effort to tap into the growing Indian tourism market, the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) recently led a dynamic five-day marketing mission across India. Running from March 24 to 28, the mission aimed to showcase the state’s extensive tourism offerings, foster connections with the Indian travel trade, and bolster Virginia’s position as a top travel destination for Indian holidaymakers.

At the helm of the delegation was **Rita McClenny, President and**

CEO of VTC, alongside Barry Biggar, CEO of Visit Fairfax. Representatives from several key Virginia tourism partners, including Visit Williamsburg, Luray Caverns, and Visit Fairfax, joined the trip, which was organized in collaboration with Sartha Global Marketing LLP. The group visited two of India’s most prominent cities, New Delhi and Mumbai, engaging with over 100 travel professionals and media representatives through a series of one-on-one business meetings and

and immersive cultural and historical experiences ensure there is always something new and exciting to discover. We are thrilled to be here and show more Indians the exciting potential of a Virginia holiday," she added.

In addition to travel trade business meetings, **McClenny and CEO of Visit Fairfax Barry Biggar** will conduct interviews with trade media representatives to illustrate the Commonwealth's extensive tourism assets to prospective travelers.

The mission comes at a time when India has solidified its place as one of Virginia's most important overseas tourism markets. In 2023, Indian visitors accounted for Virginia's second-largest overseas inbound market, with more than 53,000 Indian travelers spending \$91 million in the state. Preliminary estimates for 2024 show a 15% increase in visitor numbers, with about 61,500 Indian tourists expected to visit Virginia and contribute an estimated \$105.6 million in tourism spending.

This surge in Indian visitation reflects broader trends, with Indian tourism to Virginia rising sharply in recent years. Since 2019, Indian visitors have increased by a striking 76%, and spending has grown by 26%. In fact, India has moved from fifth place in 2019 in terms of visitor volume to second place by 2024, surpassing countries like the UK, China, and Germany. This dramatic shift underscores the growing importance of the Indian market in Virginia's tourism strategy.

"Face-to-face meetings with trade professionals and media allow us to directly showcase the extraordinary experiences Virginia has to offer," said **Barry Biggar, CEO of Visit Fairfax**. "These trade missions not only enhance Virginia's visibility but also help establish meaningful, long-term relationships with tour operators, agents, and media outlets across the globe."

The Virginia Tourism Corporation's ongoing partnership with Sartha Global Marketing LLP, which has been



instrumental in managing the state's marketing efforts in India since 2018, has played a key role in expanding the state's presence in the Indian market. Through this collaboration, Virginia has been able to more effectively tailor its tourism outreach, ensuring that Indian travelers understand the diverse array of experiences the state offers.

"Virginia's tourism market continues to grow at a remarkable pace, and India is a critical component of that expansion," said McClenny. "This mission has provided us with an excellent opportunity to strengthen our

ties with the Indian travel industry and media, ensuring that Virginia remains at the forefront of Indian travelers' minds when planning their next vacation."

For Virginia, the Indian market is not just about tourism numbers—it's about fostering lasting relationships and creating meaningful experiences that will draw travelers back again and again. As the mission concluded, it was clear that Virginia's appeal to Indian visitors is only set to grow, with the state positioned to become an even more prominent player in the global tourism market in the years to come.

Sun Siyam Resorts Partners with Intrepid Marketing & Communications to Boost Indian Presence

Strategic Collaboration Aims to Enhance Brand Visibility and Engagement in India's Growing Outbound Tourism Market



Sun Siyam Resorts, the celebrated Maldivian-owned hospitality brand, has announced a strategic partnership with Intrepid Marketing & Communications as its India PR representative. This collaboration seeks to elevate the brand's presence, enhance engagement, and support sales efforts targeting Indian travelers.

A New Chapter in Growth for Sun Siyam Resorts

With over three decades of hospitality expertise, Sun Siyam Resorts continues to redefine luxury travel. The Maldives-based group, founded by Ahmed Siyam Mohamed, has expanded its offerings from travel services to a multi-award-winning portfolio of luxury resorts. Under

Mohamed's visionary leadership, Sun Siyam has broadened its scope, venturing into logistics, sustainable farming, and construction.

Today, the resort group owns five luxury private-island properties in the Maldives and a boutique beach retreat in Sri Lanka, which reflect the brand's ethos of personalized luxury and unparalleled service.

Expanding Reach in India's Booming Tourism Market

India has rapidly become one of the fastest-growing outbound tourism markets, offering significant opportunities for premium, curated travel experiences. Sun Siyam Resorts' collaboration with Intrepid Marketing & Communications is strategically designed to leverage this growing demand. The PR agency will play a key role in increasing brand visibility and driving engagement through targeted campaigns and media partnerships.

The Sun Siyam Resorts portfolio includes a diverse range of offerings, from the 4-star *Sun Siyam Olhuveli* to the 5-star *Sun Siyam Iru Fushi*, *Sun Siyam Iru Veli*, *Sun Siyam Vilu Reef*, and *Siyam World* in the Maldives, alongside *Sun Siyam Pasikudah* in Sri Lanka. Each property epitomizes the brand's commitment to delivering accessible luxury, unforgettable experiences, and the warmth of authentic Maldivian hospitality.

A Strategic Partnership for Growth

Intrepid Marketing & Communications will work closely with Rakesh Gupta, Account Director for the Indian market, to support Sun Siyam Resorts' sales and marketing strategies. The collaboration will align PR activities with ongoing sales efforts, driving visibility and enhancing engagement with Indian travelers seeking world-class island experiences.

Claudia Klingbeil, Group Director of PR & Communications at Sun Siyam Resorts, shared, "India is a vital market for Sun Siyam Resorts. This partnership with Intrepid will help us further solidify our brand in the Indian market, enabling us to deliver premium, immersive travel experiences to Indian travelers. By combining our PR efforts with our sales strategy, we aim to accelerate growth and enhance our connections with this key audience."

Crafting Compelling Narratives for Indian Travelers

Neeti Sharma, Director of Intrepid Marketing & Communications, expressed excitement about the partnership: "Sun Siyam Resorts offers a perfect blend of refined luxury and immersive landscapes, making it an ideal choice for Indian travelers. Our goal is to create impactful stories and engage with key stakeholders to position Sun Siyam as the top destination for those seeking idyllic island escapes. We are eager to drive results and expand the brand's presence in the market."

With this new collaboration, Sun Siyam Resorts is poised to offer Indian travelers seamless access to its stunning resorts, helping them create lasting memories in some of the world's most breathtaking destinations.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts Partners with AVIAREPS India to Expand Presence in Luxury Travel Market

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts has teamed up with AVIAREPS India to enhance its public relations efforts and strengthen its position in India's luxury travel market. This collaboration aims to boost the brand's visibility and attract the growing number of affluent and experiential travellers in India. The move comes at a time when Sri Lanka's tourism industry is on the rise, fuelled by improved air connectivity, visa policies, and marketing efforts. Cinnamon Hotels plans to tap into this growth by targeting Indian travellers, with projections indicating that Sri Lanka could welcome 2.5 million visitors by 2025.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts has announced a strategic collaboration with AVIAREPS India to enhance its public relations efforts and boost its brand visibility in India's rapidly growing luxury travel sector. The partnership aims to capture the increasing demand for high-end travel experiences among affluent Indian travelers.

The move comes at a pivotal moment for Sri Lanka's tourism industry, which is experiencing a significant resurgence, driven by improved air connectivity, more favorable visa policies, and aggressive marketing campaigns. With projections indicating that Sri Lanka is poised to welcome 2.5 million visitors



by 2025, Cinnamon Hotels plans to tap into this growth by specifically targeting Indian tourists.

AVIAREPS India, known for its strong media presence and deep industry ties, will spearhead efforts to build brand awareness for Cinnamon Hotels, positioning the brand as a premier choice for luxury travelers. This partnership aligns with Cinnamon's broader international expansion strategy, which includes a focus on markets like the Maldives, UK, Middle East, and China.

Cinnamon Hotels is also expanding its portfolio, with notable new additions such as the Kandy Myst by Cinnamon and the flagship Cinnamon Life resort, which opened in 2024. A USD 1.3 billion investment in Cinnamon Life is expected to transform Sri Lanka's tourism landscape, offering state-of-the-art amenities and positioning the country to achieve USD 3.17 billion in tourism revenue by 2025.

Ellona Pereira, General Manager of AVIAREPS India, expressed excitement about the partnership, stating, "We are thrilled to strengthen our long-standing relationship with

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts by leading its PR strategy in India. With the Indian travel market rapidly expanding and Sri Lanka emerging as a top destination, we see tremendous potential to elevate Cinnamon's brand visibility. Our focus will be on positioning Cinnamon as the premier choice for Indian travelers seeking exceptional hospitality. This collaboration is a significant addition to our PR portfolio, and we are eager to shape a compelling narrative for Cinnamon in India."

Radhey Tawar, Chief Commercial Officer of Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, highlighted the promising outlook for Sri Lanka's tourism industry, noting, "Sri Lanka's tourism sector is experiencing a powerful revival, thanks to targeted promotions, enhanced airline connectivity, and strategic visa policies. With 2.5 million tourists expected by 2025, Sri Lanka is firmly on track to become one of Asia's must-visit destinations."

With its expanding portfolio and new strategic partnership, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is set to strengthen its foothold in the competitive luxury travel market.

Saudi Tourism Brings an Immersive Qahwa Experience to Indian Travel Trade and Media in Mumbai



A celebration of heritage, hospitality, and cultural connection, the Saudi Tourism Authority (STA) recently hosted Brewtopia — an exclusive, invite-only Qahwa experience that brought to life the traditions and storytelling behind Saudi coffee. Curated for select members of the Indian travel trade associations, content creators, influencers, journalists, media partners, the evening offered an immersive glimpse into the destination's warm and time-honoured coffee culture.

Brewtopia, held at Soho House Mumbai, offered guests a multisensory introduction to Arabian coffee,

celebrating its rich flavours and the warm traditions of Saudi hospitality, also known as the 'Saudi Welcome'.

Under the expert guidance of Ganga Prabhakar and Pavan Hanbal, founders of Coffee Mechanics and Kana, attendees explored a distinctive fusion—brewing Qahwa using a French press, a nod to popular Indian brewing methods. The fragrant blend was then poured from a traditional brass Dallah into petite ceramic cups and paired with indulgent Medjool dates, symbolising authentic 'Saudi Welcome'. Guests were immersed in the synergy between India and Saudi, united by a shared passion for coffee.

The evening unfolded with

storytelling and concluded with networking with representatives from the Saudi Tourism Authority – India team, who shared insights into the destination's growing appeal as a dynamic, welcoming, and diverse destination for Indian travellers.

As part of STA's ongoing commitment to strengthening ties with India's travel trade and media, Brewtopia served as a platform to spotlight emerging travel opportunities, entertaining festivals, and international sporting events. With its rich history, modern cities, beautiful coastlines, and warm culture, Saudi continues to emerge as one of the most exciting places to visit.

Dusit International Expands Presence in India, Targets Emerging Cities



L-R: Deepika Arora, Head – India; Siradej Donavanik, Vice President – Development Global, Dusit International

Dusit International, the renowned Thai hotel and property development company, is set to expand its footprint in India, with a focus on emerging cities. The brand's strategic push aims to introduce its luxury and upper-midscale offerings to high-potential, underserved markets. New properties are slated for Raipur, Bhiwadi, Kolkata, and Himachal Pradesh, as part of the company's broader growth plan.

This expansion builds

on the momentum of Dusit's recent debut in India, which included the soft opening of the dusitD2 Fagu, a contemporary hotel near Shimla, in December. Additionally, the company signed agreements for three significant properties in Karnataka, including the wellness-centric Devarana Sakleshpur, a Dusit Retreat scheduled for a 2028 opening, and two new Dusit Princess Hotels & Resorts.

The company's vision is to bring Thai-inspired hospitality to emerging

markets in India, offering a mix of luxury, wellness, and personalized service. With this in mind, Dusit plans to launch its upper-midscale Dusit Princess brand in Raipur (200 keys), Bhiwadi (165 keys), Kolkata (220 keys), and Lonavala (120 keys). Additionally, the company is preparing to unveil two boutique luxury properties under its Dusit Collection brand in Kasol and Manali, Himachal Pradesh, each offering 40 rooms.

Dusit International's Vice President of Global Development, Siradej Donavanik, expressed confidence in the company's growth trajectory, noting that the recent signings align with Dusit's long-term strategy. "India represents an exceptional growth opportunity, particularly in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, where premium hospitality options are still limited despite strong demand," he said. "We are committed to delivering Thai-inspired hospitality in destinations where it will resonate with both business and leisure travellers."

Catering to Millennials with ASAI Hotels

In addition to its luxury and midscale properties, Dusit is tapping into India's rising demand from younger, experience-seeking travellers through its lifestyle brand, ASAI Hotels. Launched in 2020, ASAI caters to Millennials and Gen Z, offering a 'live local' philosophy that emphasizes community engagement and authentic travel experiences.

"ASAI was created in

response to the growing demand for experiential travel," Donavanik explained. "We focus on fostering connections with local communities, which is a key priority for today's millennial travellers." The brand has already launched properties in Bangkok and Kyoto, with additional locations in Southeast Asia under development. ASAI Hotels' philosophy is expected to resonate with Indian travellers seeking cultural immersion and local flavour, aligning perfectly with the evolving preferences of domestic and outbound travellers.

Sustainability at the Core

As Dusit expands its presence in India, it is also committed to building a sustainable hospitality ecosystem. The company's Tree of Life sustainability program, which aligns with select United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, is central to its approach. The program includes 31 measurable criteria to ensure that Dusit's operations make a positive and lasting impact in the communities where it operates.

Dusit International's broader global expansion, which includes markets like Vietnam, Indonesia, Japan, China, and India, reflects its ambition to sign more than 100 hotels worldwide in the next five years. The company's signature Thai hospitality, combined with locally rooted experiences and sustainable practices, is poised to appeal to the growing demand for premium, experience-driven stays.

Asia's Growing Influence at Arabian Travel Market 2025: A 27% Surge in Participation Highlights the Region's Key Role in Global Tourism



The Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2025, set to take place from April 28 to May 1 at the Dubai World Trade Centre, is gearing up for a significant surge in Asian representation. This year, Asia's participation has grown by an impressive 27% year-on-year, underscoring the continent's expanding influence in the global tourism sector. With over 2,600 exhibitors from 161 countries, ATM 2025 promises to be a landmark event, positioning Asia at the forefront of international travel and tourism.

A Diverse and Dynamic Asian Presence

Asian countries are bringing a wealth of diverse destinations and tourism offerings to the spotlight at ATM 2025. Key nations set to participate include:

- **India:** Boasting a remarkable 41% increase in participation, India will feature the Ministry of Tourism alongside major airlines and regional tourism boards from vibrant states like Rajasthan, Goa, and Andhra Pradesh, showcasing the country's rich cultural heritage and emerging travel hotspots.

- **Japan, Macao, Maldives, Mauritius, South Korea, Thailand, Philippines, China, Cambodia,**

Nepal, and Sri

Lanka: These nations will highlight their unique tourism experiences, from immersive cultural journeys to luxurious resort getaways, catering to the broadening demands of international travelers.

• Regional Tourism Boards: Prominent entities

such as the Phuket Tourist Association, Hong Kong Tourism Board, and the Jakarta Provincial Government will spotlight their region's attractions, focusing on both traditional cultural landmarks and innovative tourism initiatives.

Strategic Focus on Connectivity and Luxury

ATM 2025 will revolve around the theme **"Global Travel: Developing Tomorrow's Tourism Through Enhanced Connectivity,"** emphasizing the need for stronger regional and international collaboration. In line with this focus, Asian exhibitors will highlight advancements in air travel routes, digital infrastructure, and luxury travel experiences designed for affluent travelers. These elements are central to the region's tourism strategy, as Asia positions itself as a leader in global travel, catering to both mass and high-net-worth tourists.

Opportunities for Industry Professionals

For stakeholders across the travel and hospitality industries, ATM 2025 offers a prime opportunity to:

- **Explore emerging trends** in Asian tourism markets, which

continue to evolve rapidly in response to changing consumer behaviors and technological advancements.

- **Forge partnerships** with key Asian tourism boards and private sector players, capitalizing on the region's booming tourism economy.

- **Gain insights** into the shifting preferences of Asian travelers, helping to shape strategies for attracting this growing demographic.

Asia's amplified presence at ATM 2025 is not just a reflection of its growing tourism potential but also a call for deeper collaboration and strategic investment. As the region continues to dominate the global travel landscape, ATM 2025 serves as a key platform for fostering partnerships and driving innovation in the tourism sector.

The Role of ATM in Shaping Global Tourism

The Arabian Travel Market has long been the Middle East's premier international travel and tourism event. Held annually at the Dubai World Trade Centre, it brings together a diverse array of global destinations, tourism boards, hospitality brands, travel technology innovators, and industry professionals. The event serves as a critical hub for networking, knowledge exchange, and showcasing cutting-edge developments that will shape the future of travel. By focusing on both inbound and outbound tourism trends in the Middle East and beyond, ATM plays a pivotal role in fostering global connectivity and facilitating investments that drive the industry forward.

As Asia continues to expand its footprint at ATM, industry professionals are encouraged to engage with Asian exhibitors to unlock new opportunities and explore the dynamic tourism trends emerging across the continent.

India Strengthens Global Tourism Ties at Arabian Travel Market 2025 With 41% Bigger Presence



Outbound Travel Set to Hit \$55 Billion by 2034, as India Targets Strategic Growth in International Tourism

India is set to make a significant impact at this year's **Arabian Travel Market**, as the country deepens its engagement with global tourism stakeholders and capitalises on rapid growth in both its outbound and domestic travel markets.

India is making a bold statement on the global tourism stage with a significantly expanded presence at the **Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2025**, deepening its strategic engagement with international stakeholders and underscoring its rising influence as both a key source and destination market.

Set to take place from **April 28 to May 1** at the **Dubai World Trade Centre**, ATM 2025 will witness a **41% year-on-year increase** in India's representation—an unmistakable sign of the country's tourism resurgence and global ambition.

According to **Future Market Insights**, India's outbound travel sector is on track to **hit USD 55 billion by 2034**, growing at a robust **CAGR of 11.4%**. This growth is powered by a rising middle class, increased disposable income, improved air connectivity, and a predominantly young, travel-hungry population. Millennials are leading the charge, driving demand across diverse niches—from cultural and wellness tourism to adventure and luxury experiences.

That trend is already evident in the Gulf. In 2024, **Dubai welcomed over 3.14 million South Asian visitors**, with Indian travellers making up the largest share. India's amplified presence at ATM reflects not only its outbound potential but also a renewed push for deeper **bilateral tourism cooperation** with the UAE and beyond.

A Powerful Delegation

India's ATM 2025 delegation will be spearheaded by the **Ministry of Tourism**, supported by national carriers **Air India** and **Air India Express**, and a strong lineup of **state tourism boards** including Goa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh. Together, they will showcase India's wide-ranging tourism offerings—from ancient heritage and spiritual retreats to modern eco-tourism and five-star luxury.

"India's larger showcase at ATM not only highlights the country's rich and diverse travel offerings but also underscores its strategic importance to global travel markets," said **Danielle Curtis**, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market.

Spotlight on Strategy and Innovation

India's role extends beyond the exhibition floor. On **April 30**, ATM's conference programme will shine a spotlight on hyper-local marketing strategies in emerging markets, including India and China. One session will delve into how **mega sporting events like the Indian Premier League**, now hosted in Saudi Arabia, can boost regional tourism ties.

On **May 1**, **Euromonitor International** will present a forward-looking market outlook on the **Asia-Pacific region**, followed by "India's

Next Gen Traveller," a panel led by **Shivani Gupta** of SPAG – A FINN Partners Company. This session will offer exclusive insights into the evolving preferences of Indian globetrotters and strategies for destinations to better engage this high-growth audience.

Growing at Home, Soaring Abroad

While India expands its global footprint, its domestic tourism infrastructure continues to evolve. According to **STR**, hotel supply in India has grown over **3% CAGR** in the last decade, with **114,000 rooms** added since 2014. Hotel occupancy has climbed in eight of the past ten years, a clear indicator of both demand and investor confidence.

With **2,600+ exhibitors** and **47,000+ attendees** from **161 countries**, ATM 2025 reinforces **Dubai's position as a global nexus for tourism trade and cooperation**. This year's theme, *Global Travel: Developing Tomorrow's Tourism Through Enhanced Connectivity*, mirrors India's own push to build a more **sustainable, inclusive, and interconnected tourism future**.

India's rising profile at ATM marks a pivotal moment for the country's tourism sector—as it balances global aspirations with a commitment to showcasing its cultural wealth and travel diversity.

Courtyard by Marriott opens first property in Jharkhand, India

Marriott International debuts in Jharkhand with Courtyard Ranchi, expanding its footprint in emerging Indian markets with 111-room hotel.



Courtyard by Marriott announced the opening of **Courtyard by Marriott Ranchi**, marking the debut of the first **Marriott International** brand in **Jharkhand**. Nestled in the state's most sought-after areas, renowned for the stunning Rock Garden and picturesque Kanke Dam, this 111-room hotel exemplifies refined living and modern design. It offers a welcoming escape for both business and leisure travelers with enhanced comforts, memorable experiences and a delightful mix of local and international cuisines. Courtyard by Marriott Ranchi is ideally situated just 35 minutes from Birsa Munda Airport and 30 minutes from

The Ranchi Junction and Hatia Railway Stations.

"We are excited to mark a significant milestone in our expansion journey in India with the opening of Courtyard by Marriott Ranchi, our first in the vibrant capital of Jharkhand. This launch underscores our commitment to entering promising markets like Ranchi, which offers a unique blend of urban energy and natural beauty. Courtyard by Marriott is designed to cater to the evolving needs of modern travelers, seamlessly combining innovative technology, comfort, and style. We look forward to welcoming guests for business, leisure, or a blend of both, as we continue to bring our signature

hospitality to new destinations", said **Ranju Alex**, Area Vice President, South Asia, Marriott International.

Courtyard by Marriott Ranchi features 111 spacious rooms thoughtfully designed for the comfort and convenience of the modern-day traveler. Paired with smart amenities, each room blends sleek, contemporary aesthetics with functionality, offering conveniences such as high-speed Wi-Fi, a flat-screen TV, and a well-appointed writing desk. The room views alternate between the pristine, peaceful waters of the Kanke Dam and lush, manicured gardens, offering guests the option of a refreshing pause between work commitments.

Dining venues at the hotel consist of an all-day dining – Viraasat, where a warm, bustling open kitchen and a tempting selection of local and international cuisines await to satisfy every palette. For a more casual experience, guests can head to the Courtyard Cafe, the hotel's charming deli-style cafe, offering a selection of locally inspired small bites, freshly brewed coffees, and a variety of beverages. Whether it's a quick mid-day break or, wrapping to a day well spent, Skyline, the rooftop bar offers a serene escape to soak in the sun by the poolside, or enjoy a sundowner with expertly crafted cocktails, refreshing mocktails, and a delectable menu.

To keep guests moving forward and help them pursue their passions while on the road, the hotel offers a fully equipped 24-hour Fitness Center with state-of-the-art workout machines. Complementing this is the rooftop pool, an open-to-sky retreat on the top floor, along with a dedicated steam area, where guests can relax while soaking in the breathtaking panorama of Kanke Dam.

Ideally located adjacent to the Nucleus Mall, the hotel offers guests easy access to the Rock Garden and Kanke Dam, which are must-visit attractions. Referred to as the 'City of Waterfalls' Ranchi, is dotted with lush green hills and generous waterfalls such as the Hundru, Dassam and Jonha Falls. The city also holds deeply

religious roots, with the 17th-century Jagannath Temple and the Pahari Mandir, situated on a hillside, offering panoramic city views. Those interested in the region's rich tribal heritage can visit the Tribal Research Institute and Museum, which provides a deep dive into Jharkhand's indigenous cultures, traditions, and artifacts. Ranchi is renowned for its rich tribal heritage and cultural diversity, showcased through local festivals, art, dance and traditional crafts.

The hotel features 9,100 sq. feet of versatile event space, blending elegance and functionality for both corporate and social occasions. Vista Hall, the crown jewel, spans 4,123 sq.

feet and accommodates up to 300 guests, making it the ideal venue for grand celebrations, conferences, and receptions. With cutting-edge AV equipment and customizable layouts, it promises seamless service and a sophisticated atmosphere. For more intimate gatherings, the Executive Chamber offers a private, 400 sq. foot sanctuary on the top floor, designed for up to 14 guests, ensuring both productivity and discretion. The 4,000 sq. foot Skyline Venue offers an enchanting open-air setting with breathtaking views of Kanke Dam, perfect for outdoor banquets, evening celebrations, or corporate events. With tailored catering and décor, it promises

to elevate any occasion into a truly unforgettable experience.

On this exciting launch, **Pramod Singh**, Hotel Manager, Courtyard by Marriott Ranchi, shared, *"We are excited to introduce the first Courtyard by Marriott hotel in Jharkhand, bringing our signature warmth and hospitality to the heart of this vibrant state. At Courtyard by Marriott Ranchi, our trailblazing guests are welcomed with genuine care, thoughtful comforts and provided an effortlessly inviting atmosphere. Whether you're exploring the region's rich heritage or simply looking for a place to relax, we look forward to making your stay truly memorable."*

Unwind in Elegance with **Taj Holidays**

With the arrival of the summer season, **Taj Holidays** invites you to embark on unforgettable journeys, offering refreshing escapes to unwind and reconnect with loved ones. As multigenerational travel grows in popularity, these carefully curated experiences provide the perfect opportunity to explore India's diverse landscapes while enjoying luxury, comfort, and creating lasting memories.

Taj Holidays offers special Family Getaways, thoughtfully curated to create cherished moments that will last a lifetime. These unique experiences cater to every traveler's preference – whether it's bringing history to life for children with heritage walks at Taj's authentic palaces in Rajasthan, immersing in nature at Taj Safaris lodges, or unwinding by the serene waters at Taj resorts in Goa.

Families can indulge in unique wellness treatments at **J Wellness Circle** spas across Kerala or uncover the hidden treasures and culinary delights of India's heritage-rich cities. Travelers seeking adventure



and cultural immersion can explore breathtaking mountain retreats in Rishikesh, Manali, Munnar, Mahabaleshwar, Mumbai, Goa, and beyond.

Book the Taj Holidays **Early Bird** offer between 1st April and 30th

April 2025 to enjoy stays at special rates, including 25% savings on stays, complimentary meals, curated kids' activities, and much more. Whether it's a wildlife escape or a relaxing family retreat, create unforgettable memories with Taj Holidays – Family Getaways.

VFS Global and CzechTourism join hands to promote Czechia's allure to Indian Travellers



- VFS Global to represent Czechia in India for Sales, Marketing, PR and Trade initiatives.
- The collaboration aims to increase visitor numbers by highlighting Czechia's rich cultural heritage, scenic landscapes and leisure offerings.
- VFS Global will leverage its extensive network and tourism expertise to position Czechia as a premier, must-visit travel destination.

VFS Global has announced that it has been appointed as the destination representation partner for CzechTourism in India to showcase Czechia's diverse travel experiences and unique attractions. Leveraging its extensive reach and expertise, VFS Global will represent CzechTourism to drive marketing, public relations and trade engagement efforts to boost visitor numbers and enhance overall awareness of Czechia as a premier destination.

Travelers from India can experience Czechia's exciting outdoor activities and rich cultural heritage— featuring majestic castles, chateaux, seventeen UNESCO monuments, historic cities and Czech cuisine in traditional and modern form with a glass of premium Czech beer or local wine. With this strategic collaboration, CzechTourism and VFS Global are poised to elevate Czechia's presence on the global tourism map, inspiring more travellers to explore the country's extraordinary beauty and cultural richness.

Jana Štumpová Konicarová, Marketing Director and Director of Foreign offices at CzechTourism,

expressed, "We are excited to continue our long-standing partnership with VFS Global to promote Czechia's rich cultural and natural attractions to travellers from India. In 2024, Czechia welcomed over eighty thousand Indian visitors, reflecting a growing interest in our vibrant cities, historic landmarks and serene countryside. Through this partnership, we aim to inspire even more travellers to explore and create lasting memories in one of Europe's most captivating destinations."

Barbara Andelová, International Marketing Manager - New Markets at CzechTourism, added, "Partnering with VFS Global presents a tremendous opportunity to amplify Czechia's presence in India. With a strategic focus on PR and marketing initiatives, our goal is to showcase Czechia's deep-rooted heritage, diverse landscapes and unique travel experiences to a broader audience. Through this collaboration, we look forward to building stronger connections with the travel trade and media fraternity, inspiring more visitors to discover the charm of our country."

G.B. Srithar, Global Head of Tourism Services, at VFS Global, said, "We are happy to partner with CzechTourism to promote its diverse and exciting offerings to Indian travellers. In line with our destination promotional approach of powering tourism happiness, this collaboration will enable us to bring Indian visitors to have fun and discovery in Czechia. With Indian travellers becoming more discerning in their travel needs - seeking rich gastronomy, immersive heritage and authentic local experiences - they will find Czechia a very appealing destination. At VFS Global, we are delighted to foster a long-term partnership, building on our strong travel trade partner-friendships across India."

Marriott International Celebrates Record-Breaking Development Year across Europe, Middle East & Africa Region with Nearly 300 Deal Signings in 2024



Marriott International, Inc. (Nasdaq: MAR) announced another year of strong growth across Europe, Middle East & Africa (EMEA) with a record-breaking number of annual signings of 291 deals representing over 34,000 rooms in 2024. The company added over 180 properties to its operating portfolio in EMEA last year, expanding its product offerings in the region across travel purposes and segments – from

affordable midscale to luxury, as well as entering three new markets – Luxembourg, Angola and Senegal.

“We celebrated exceptional growth across the EMEA region in 2024 with a record-breaking number of deal signings, growth across all segments and entry into emerging markets – further enhancing our portfolio and bringing even more unique travel experiences to the region,” said Satya Anand, President, Europe Middle

East & Africa, Marriott International. “We remain focused on connecting people through the power of travel and look forward to building on this growth momentum to offer our owners, Marriott Bonvoy members and customers even greater options to extend their horizons.”

Following the record year of deal signings in the region, the company’s total pipeline for EMEA grew to 596 properties at year-end, representing

HOSPITALITY

104,731 rooms (a 10% increase from the previous year). Conversions drove growth across segments and markets in EMEA, representing 45% of the region's rooms signings in the year. The company saw exciting development activity in Denmark, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and the United Kingdom, all of which led the way with the highest number of signed deals in EMEA in 2024.

Jerome Briet, Chief Development Officer, Europe, Middle East & Africa added, "Our growth achievements in the past year, particularly in the conversion space, reflect the trust our owners have in Marriott International and the power of our well-established brands, competitive affiliation costs, powerful revenue generation engines and award-winning loyalty program. This region continues to offer tremendous opportunities for us to expand into new segments and markets, catering to the evolving needs

of both domestic and international travelers."

Marriott witnessed strong growth in the EMEA region across all segments in 2024. Signings highlights included:

- Marriott signed 26 deals in EMEA across its luxury brands, further expanding its pipeline of luxury projects in the region to more than 80 hotels and resorts at year-end.

- **Four Points Flex by Sheraton**, the company's conversion-friendly midscale brand in EMEA, celebrated 34 deal signings in Europe – representing the most signings across Marriott Bonvoy brands in the region in 2024.

- In the premium segment, **Autograph Collection, Tribute Portfolio** and **Marriott Hotels** signed a combined 50 deals in the region in the past year.

- **Courtyard by Marriott, Four Points by Sheraton** and **Moxy Hotels** spearheaded the company's





growth in the select service segment with 39 deal signings in EMEA in 2024.

- Marriott continues to see momentum in the branded residential segment across EMEA with 11 project signings across the region in 2024, bringing its total EMEA residential portfolio to 72 locations at year-end (42 projects in the pipeline and 30 open locations).

In 2024, Marriott also added 181 properties and nearly 20,000 rooms to its operating portfolio in EMEA. Openings highlights included:

- Ritz-Carlton Reserve made its highly anticipated debut in the EMEA region with the opening of **Nujuma, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve** in the Red Sea, Saudi Arabia.

- **W Hotels** expanded its footprint in the region with the highly anticipated opening of **W Prague**.

- **St. Regis** further expanded into Serbia and Oman with the openings of **The St. Regis Belgrade** and **The St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort**.

- The Luxury Collection announced the opening of four properties - **Koenigshof, a Luxury Collection Hotel, Munich** in Germany, **Hôtel du Couvent, a Luxury Collection Hotel, Nice** in France, **Bab Samhan, a Luxury Collection Hotel, Diriyah** in Saudi Arabia and **Sansarayan Han, a Luxury Collection Hotel, Istanbul** in Türkiye.

- **Fairfield by Marriott Copenhagen Nordhavn** opened in

Denmark's capital city, marking the brand's first property in Europe.

- Moxy Hotels celebrated 10 years of stylish and playful hospitality in Europe with six openings including the brand's debut in Spain with **Moxy Barcelona** and the addition of **Moxy Luxembourg Airport**, which marked the company's debut in Luxembourg.

- Marriott also made its entry into Angola and Senegal with the openings of **Protea Hotel Luanda** and **Courtyard Dakar Diamniadio**.

As Marriott continues to expand its offerings, the breadth and depth of the company's portfolio remains well-positioned to offer a compelling value proposition for developers.

Raffles Sentosa Singapore

Singapore's First All-Villa Property is a Serene Escape Rooted in Natural Beauty, Holistic Wellbeing, and Legendary Service

Debuts a Glamorous Resort Experience in One of the World's Most Dynamic Destinations



Raffles Hotels & Resorts is thrilled to announce the opening of the highly-anticipated Raffles Sentosa Singapore, the country's first all-villa resort. Set within 100,000 square metres of lush tropical greenery on Sentosa Island, this exceptional resort, created in collaboration with the Royal Group, thoughtfully blends natural beauty with impeccable hospitality, building on the rich legacy of the storied Raffles brand, which was founded in Singapore in 1887.

"Through the debut of this resort, we are introducing an elegant all-villa offering on Sentosa Island, where guests can immerse themselves in nature while embracing tranquility and wellbeing. We look forward to creating magical moments in an exquisite setting, highlighting the beauty of this unique island destination while delivering exceptional hospitality," said **Omer Acar, CEO, Raffles Hotels & Resorts**.

"This is a very special moment for us as we proudly launch Raffles Sentosa Singapore, the Republic's first all-villa resort," said **Bobby Hiranandani, Co-Chairman of the Royal Group**. "We are honoured to have been entrusted with continuing the distinguished Raffles legacy, particularly here in Singapore where this iconic brand was born and still has such a special place in everyone's hearts."

Just a 15-minute drive from the city's Central Business District, the resort is perched on a hilltop surrounded by the lush greenery of Sentosa Island, Asia's first Global Sustainable Tourism Council-certified island destination. Designed by Yabu Pushelberg, Raffles Sentosa Singapore features 62 villas, each with a private pool and outdoor terrace, ranging from a one-bedroom 211 square metre villa to the four-bedroom 650 square metre Royal Villa. Expansive floor-to-ceiling windows frame sweeping views of the verdant landscaping, while a harmonious blend of natural materials and intricate textures creates a seamless tie between indoor and outdoor spaces. The immersive

experience serves to connect guests to the resort's tranquil landscape, which is home to distinct flora and fauna, such as two majestic heritage Ficus trees, and a magnificent muster of resident peacocks. Guests of the resort will also enjoy the legendary Raffles Butler service, ensuring that their every need is met with impeccable care. For a grand arrival, guests can arrange to be chauffeured up a meandering driveway in one of the resort's Rolls-Royce limousines.

Holistic wellbeing is at the forefront of the resort experience where every detail is designed to inspire a sense of calm. The Raffles Sentosa Spa, housed in a transformed heritage landmark building, features 13 treatment rooms and offers a contemporary wellbeing journey. Perfect for spa retreats or a relaxing escape, treatments are designed to optimise rejuvenation through mindfulness, massage, fitness, and hydrotherapy. In addition to an expansive fitness centre, resort guests will enjoy preferential green fees at the Sentosa Golf Club, located across from the resort, as well as direct access to Tanjong Beach.

Set to be a new dining destination in the city, Raffles Sentosa Singapore is home to five exceptional restaurants and lounges, showcasing a diverse array of global cuisines and culinary talent. At the signature **Empire Grill**, under the leadership of Chef Bjoern Alexander, guests can savour modern Italian cuisine, while **Royal China** offers refined Cantonese delicacies prepared by Executive Chinese Chef Ling Heng Yao. A distinctive Japanese omakase journey awaits diners at **Iyasaka by Hashida** where Chef Kenjiro Hashida brings the same level of skill and craftsmanship found at his father's Michelin-starred restaurant in Tokyo. The elegant **Raffles Room** hosts the brand's signature afternoon tea, and in a nod to the speakeasies of the past, the **Chairman's Room** offers a refined selection of whiskies, cognac, and fine wines. Guests may also opt to dine al fresco by their villa pool, in the resort's lush gardens, or on

a secluded stretch of Tanjong Beach. Guests can also enjoy the Sentosa Sling, the resort's unique twist on the legendary Singapore Sling, which was created at the original Raffles Singapore in 1915. Made with upcycled watermelon skin from the resort's kitchens and lemon leaves grown in the gardens, the Sentosa Sling highlights the hotel's focus on sustainability.

Raffles Sentosa Singapore will also be a magnificent new venue for weddings and events, with its state-of-the-art ballrooms, the larger of which can seat up to 400 guests for banquets, as well as the magical backdrop of nature, setting the stage for milestone celebrations and special occasions.

"We look forward to welcoming guests and local visitors to enjoy Raffles Sentosa Singapore, a distinct retreat in one of the world's most exciting cities. While just a short distance from Central Singapore, this private sanctuary offers a serene escape where guests can connect with nature while indulging in the world-class hospitality for which Raffles is renowned," said **Cavaliere Giovanni Viterale, Cluster General Manager of Raffles Sentosa Singapore and Sofitel Singapore Sentosa Resort & Spa**.

In celebration of its opening, guests can enjoy the resort's *Welcome Home* experience, which includes private roundtrip transfers, daily breakfast for two at the Empire Grill, and a complimentary Sentosa Sling. This offering is available for bookings from March 1 to May 31, 2025, for stays up to September 30, 2025, with rates starting from \$1,698 SGD per villa per night. The rate is subject to 10 percent service charge and prevailing government tax.

Raffles Sentosa Singapore marks the brand's second property in Singapore. Raffles was founded in 1887 with the debut of Raffles Singapore, which remains a flagship of the storied brand, one of the world's top hotels, and an icon of the destination.



Marriott opens luxury resort in **Jim Corbett's** natural wilderness sanctuary



Jim Corbett Marriott Resort & Spa opens in Uttarakhand, blending luxury hospitality with immersive wildlife, wellness, and cultural experiences.

Marriott Hotels announced the opening of Jim Corbett Marriott Resort & Spa, located in the pristine wilderness of Uttarakhand. Set amidst the dense forests of Jim Corbett National Park and on the bank of river Kosi, this retreat is a gateway to nature's wonders and authentic local experiences. Guests can embark on thrilling jungle safaris, serene nature walks by the river or birdwatching excursions, and indulge in the rich flavours of Kumaoni cuisine as they explore the vibrant culture through guided village tours, offering a deep connection to the traditions of the region.

Jim Corbett National Park, rich in flora and fauna, and home to one of the densest tiger populations in India, is a unique and breathtaking wildlife destination. As India's first national park and the cornerstone of Project Tiger, it plays a crucial role in tiger conservation, offering visitors a

rare chance to witness the majestic Bengal tiger in its natural habitat. The thrill of spotting a tiger amidst the wilderness, coupled with the park's rich biodiversity, makes it a must-visit destination for those seeking both adventure and serenity. Easily accessible by road and well-connected to major cities in North India, Jim Corbett National Park is 145 kms from Bareilly Airport, Uttar Pradesh and 270 kms from Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi, making it a perfect getaway for those seeking comfortable yet adventurous stays in the heart of the wild.

"We are thrilled to bring Marriott Hotels to Jim Corbett National Park, a renowned sanctuary of natural beauty and rich biodiversity," said **Ranju Alex, Area Vice President, South Asia, Marriott International**. "This opening reflects our commitment to expanding in India's most sought-after travel destinations, providing guests with

world-class hospitality in harmony with nature. Jim Corbett Marriott Resort & Spa, our 13th hotel under the brand in India, is designed to provide refined accommodations, exceptional service and immersive experiences. We look forward to creating unforgettable stays for travelers seeking adventure, relaxation, and a deep connection with nature, whether they are wildlife photographers, nature lovers, or simply seeking an escape from the hustle of the city for a weekend."

Building on the brand's legacy of exceptional hospitality, the 99 modern, contemporary rooms are well-furnished and offer stunning views of the Malani Range and Kosi River, immersing guests in the raw beauty of Jim Corbett. Private balconies and large windows enhance the experience, whether overlooking the river's serene flow or the lush, landscaped resort surroundings. Each room features comfortable bedding, technology-





enabled work surfaces, and spacious, meticulously appointed bathrooms. Designed to create a seamless fusion of indulgence and convenience, every detail ensures every stay is as enriching as it is rejuvenating.

The resort offers delightful culinary experiences with its eclectic mix of dining spaces. The Corbett Kitchen, a contemporary all-day dining restaurant, features international favorites that highlight the myriad flavors of traditional Kumaoni cuisine. Guests can also dine under the stars with lush forest views at Malani Grill, which includes a menu of artfully reimagined delicacies and skillfully crafted concoctions. The speciality restaurant offers a unique dining experience inspired by the five elements of nature. Overlooking the majestic Malani Range and serene Kosi River, the restaurant blends fresh, locally sourced ingredients with traditional flavors, creating a harmonious culinary journey in the heart of the wilderness.

The Greatroom, which is Marriott Hotels' take on the traditional lobby space, is the heart and soul of

the resort, offering an inviting and sophisticated space for guests to relax and reconnect over artisanal teas and full-bodied coffees as well as an indulgent menu of creatively infused cocktails with seasonal ingredients. Sal Bar is a refined yet cozy indoor and outdoor space where guests can unwind with handcrafted cocktails, premium spirits, and a selection of fine wines. Inspired by the towering Sal trees that dominate the region, the bar is an ode to Indian spirits and blends rustic charm with modern sophistication. Complementing the drinks is a thoughtfully curated menu of gourmet small plates and hearty bar bites, featuring locally inspired flavors and international favorites—perfect for refueling after a thrilling day in the wild.

The resort caters to travelers across age groups, offering a range of activities to indulge in. Guests can enjoy the tranquility of nature while kids stay engaged at the Kids Club, a nature-inspired playground, and The Jungle, an entertainment zone. Other recreational options include

a gaming arcade, a golf simulator, and board games to be enjoyed as a family. For those seeking relaxation and rejuvenation, the Quan Spa offers six therapy rooms with treatments that embrace the ancient wisdom of Ayurveda and contemporary wellness practices. Guests can also indulge in some quiet calm by the poolside while fitness enthusiasts can recharge their body and mind at a fully equipped fitness center.

Adding to the immersive experience, guests can participate in morning yoga sessions, set against the serene backdrop of the Corbett wilderness, offering a perfect start to the day. The resort also hosts interactive cooking classes, where guests can learn the art of crafting regional delicacies, guided by expert chefs—making for a memorable and enriching culinary experience.

With 5068 sq. meters of event spaces, including the largest pillarless ballroom in Jim Corbett and a spacious pre-function area, the resort offers versatile venues with stunning Malani Hills views, perfect for weddings, social gatherings, and corporate retreats. The 2,100 sq. meter central lawn, next to the swimming pool, provides an elegant setting for celebrations and weddings. The 2,400 sq. meter riverside lawn, the largest in Jim Corbett, features a wooden deck with the jungle as backdrop, creating a picture-perfect space for wedding rituals by the Kosi River. For a more intimate setting, Sal Bar's terrace offers uninterrupted Malani Hills views, making it an ideal spot for cocktail evenings and private gatherings.

“Jim Corbett National Park is a land of adventure, beauty, and rich traditions,” said Pawan Chahar, General Manager of Jim Corbett Marriott Resort & Spa. “We are excited to bring guests closer to nature while offering them the signature Wonderful Hospitality our brand is known for, with the finest comfort and curated experiences. Whether it's a wildlife safari, a cultural immersion, or a relaxing retreat, our resort is designed to create unforgettable memories.”

Manglam Group Expands Footprint in Hospitality with a Strategic Growth Plan



The Group has announced a Rs. 1,000 Crore Investment to Accelerate Sustainable Luxury Hospitality in Rajasthan

Rajasthan's leading real estate developer, Manglam Group, is making a decisive move into the Rs. 82,000 crore Indian hospitality industry with a Rs. 1,000 crore investment plan over the next five years. This strategic expansion leverages the group's deep expertise in real estate to develop premium hospitality assets, reshaping Rajasthan's tourism landscape with

a focus on luxury and world-class experiences.

With over 70 completed real estate projects, Manglam Group is channeling its market expertise into greenfield hospitality projects, prioritizing new developments rather than acquiring existing or brownfield properties. The group is targeting high-growth tourism segments, including destination weddings, leisure travel, and MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions).

Following the announcement of the Westin Jaipur Resort, a 150-room luxury property set to open soon on the Delhi-Jaipur Highway, the group has already started work on its second hospitality project in Jaipur. This new hotel will be a part of a mixed-use development in Jagatpura and will be managed under an international hotel partnership, marking Manglam Group's first collaboration with a global hospitality brand. This upcoming property will feature approximately 200 rooms, further strengthening Manglam Group's footprint in Jaipur's luxury hospitality sector.

Recognizing the surging demand for premium wedding destinations, Manglam Group's expansion includes luxury resorts tailored for grand celebrations. Rajasthan is India's top wedding destination, with the industry valued at \$130 billion and growing at 13–15% annually. Manglam's upcoming properties will offer bespoke wedding venues, seamlessly blending regal heritage with contemporary luxury. Additionally, India's MICE industry, valued at \$4.5 billion, presents a massive opportunity. Manglam's expansion will include high-end accommodations and conference facilities catering to business travelers.

"Our Rs. 1,000 crore hospitality investment is a strategic step toward reshaping Rajasthan's tourism industry. The demand for world-class luxury experiences is at an all-time high, and Manglam Group is committed to delivering exceptional hospitality assets that cater to this evolving market. This expansion goes beyond a single project; it is about creating a lasting impact on

Rajasthan's tourism ecosystem," said Ms. Amrita Gupta, Director, Manglam Group.

Jaipur, known for its majestic palaces, heritage forts, and rich cultural legacy, has solidified its position as a premier wedding destination in India. The city attracts couples from across the country and the world who seek regal and picturesque venues for their celebrations. Its architectural grandeur, combined with modern luxury, makes it an unparalleled choice for high-end wedding events. With increasing demand for exclusive, tailor-made wedding experiences, Manglam Group aims to develop properties that not only provide opulent settings but also seamlessly blend sustainability with traditional charm.

Aligned with the growing emphasis on sustainability in the Indian hospitality sector, Manglam Group is integrating eco-friendly practices into its upcoming projects. These initiatives will feature solar passive zoning and renewable energy solutions to minimize carbon footprints and ensure environmentally responsible operations. The group is also prioritizing sustainable architecture by utilizing locally sourced and recycled materials, reducing environmental impact while preserving regional heritage. Furthermore, advanced water conservation measures, including rainwater harvesting, will be implemented to promote efficient resource management. Manglam's eco-conscious strategies align with India's 2070 net-zero emissions goal, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable development.

With a long-term vision for hospitality, Manglam Group is set to launch a diverse portfolio of properties that will strengthen Rajasthan's position as a premier destination for luxury tourism, corporate travel, and cultural experiences. While Jaipur remains the primary focus of Manglam Group's 1,000-room development plan, the company is actively exploring hospitality opportunities in other parts of Rajasthan and even in Goa. The group's expansion strategy aims to position itself as a key player in India's high-end hospitality sector.

Centara's Newest Maldives Oasis

Introduces Sanctuary of Indulgence and Serenity



Breathtaking accommodation, transformative wellness journeys, and world-class culinary experiences await at Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives

Centara Hotels & Resorts, Thailand's leading hotel operator, officially opened the doors to Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives on 1st April 2025, welcoming guests to a secluded haven where gracious Thai hospitality meets Maldivian allure. Nestled within The Atollia by Centara Hotels & Resorts, this sophisticated retreat marks Centara's fourth distinctive property in the Maldives.

The resort introduces 142 elegantly designed beachfront and overwater villas and residences ranging from 78 to 290 square metres. With direct access to a private stretch of beach or a serene slice of the ocean, guests can enjoy as much connection or seclusion as they desire. Each accommodation is crafted to complement the island's

natural charm, featuring a private pool, Jacuzzi, or both, with select villas offering connecting options for families and groups. The Grand Two Bedroom Beach Pool Villa, Three-Bedroom Sunset Beach Pool Residence, Grand Two Bedroom Overwater Pool Villa, and Three-Bedroom Sunset Overwater Pool Residence, provide the ultimate in spacious living, including indoor and outdoor lounging and dining areas, and even a fully equipped kitchenette, from which the resort's chefs will happily serve in-villa tipples and culinary experiences for private romantic or family dining, or group entertaining.

Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives invites guests on a gastronomic journey across its diverse dining venues. The Gallery serves as a vibrant all-day

dining hub, featuring live tandoor and teppan grills. Bluefin brings a sophisticated Mediterranean beach club atmosphere, with fresh seafood and live music, while Coco Drift, the resort's swim-up bar, offers laidback cocktails and light bites. Sunset Social presents a premier champagne bar set over shimmering waters, while The Club offers exclusive fine dining, featuring raw bars, expertly paired tapas and wines, and intimate buffet setups.

"We are thrilled to officially welcome guests to Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives," said **Andrew Jansson, Cluster General Manager of Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives & Centara Mirage Lagoon Maldives.** *"From our picturesque beachfront and overwater villas to our exquisite*

dining and wellness journeys, our team has worked tirelessly to ensure every aspect of this magnificent property exceeds expectations. We look forward to offering travellers stays that embody both Centara's signature warm hospitality and the beauty of this Maldivian paradise."

Thirayuth Chirathivat, Chief Executive Officer of Centara Hotels & Resorts, commented, "The launch of Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives is a testament to our commitment to providing extraordinary guest experiences in the world's most sought-after destinations. This resort not only completes our visionary multi-island project, The Atollia by Centara Hotels & Resorts, but also strengthens Centara's position as a leader in the hospitality industry."

Just a short speedboat ride from Malé International Airport, Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives is designed for both indulgence and discovery. Embark on transformative wellness journeys at Spa Cenvaree Retreat, an oasis of holistic well-being where immersive spa experiences rejuvenate mind, body, and spirit; explore our vibrant underwater life, or enjoy family fun at the diverse children's clubs for both teenagers and little ones.

The opening of Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives also signifies the completion of The Atollia by Centara Hotels & Resorts, a visionary project set to redefine experiential travel in this breathtaking destination. As part of this exclusive multi-island destination, Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives blends sophisticated tranquillity with

immersive experiences, catering to discerning travellers seeking a refined escape while also granting guests unprecedented access to the thrilling water attractions and vibrant facilities of neighbouring Centara Mirage Lagoon Maldives.

To celebrate its grand opening, Centara presents the Grand Island Indulgence: Exclusive Introductory Offer. Available for bookings until 30th June 2025 for stays until 15th October 2025, this luxurious experiential package offers more time to unwind with complimentary nights, along with meal plan upgrades, champagne, and a relaxing couples' massage. Guests will also enjoy exclusive access to The Club lounge and a choice of captivating ocean excursions, with additional privileges for CentaraThe1 members.

Nikhil Sharma Appointed Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer for South Asia at Radisson Hotel Group



Radisson Hotel Group has announced the promotion of Nikhil Sharma to the role of Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer for South Asia. Having previously served as Managing Director and Area Senior Vice President, Sharma will now spearhead the Group's operations and strategic growth across the region, continuing to leverage his extensive experience to foster Radisson's success in South Asia.

Sharma, who boasts a profound understanding of the South Asian hospitality sector, has been integral to Radisson Hotel Group's expansion in the region. His renewed leadership will play a crucial role in driving operational excellence and supporting the company's rapid growth trajectory as it continues to scale its presence.

This strategic redesignation underscores Radisson Hotel

Group's commitment to fortifying its leadership team and aligning with the dynamic shifts in the hospitality industry. It comes at a pivotal time as the company accelerates its growth and adapts to evolving market demands.

Radisson Hotel Group remains a dominant force in the Indian market, one of the largest international hotel operators in the country with nearly 199 hotels in operation and development. The Group continues to hold a leading position in key markets, including Delhi NCR, and has established a significant footprint in tier-2 and tier-3 cities. Radisson's diverse portfolio in India spans across various brands, such as Radisson Collection, Radisson Blu, Radisson RED, Park Inn by Radisson, Country Inn & Suites by Radisson, and the recently introduced Radisson Individuals and Radisson Individuals Retreats.



Rove Al Marjan Island

A New Seaside Destination in Ras Al Khaimah

Rove Hotels has unveiled its latest property, Rove Al Marjan Island, nestled along the picturesque shores of Al Marjan Island in Ras Al Khaimah. Located just an hour's drive from Dubai, the hotel provides easy access to a wealth of local attractions and five international airports. This

new addition to the Rove portfolio brings 441 contemporary rooms, exclusive beach access, and a host of entertainment options that promise an energetic and unforgettable experience for guests of all ages.

With the opening of Rove Al Marjan Island, Rove Hotels now boasts over

4,000 operational rooms across the UAE, reinforcing its reputation as one of the region's fastest-growing lifestyle hospitality brands. Known for its commitment to high-quality, accessible stays, the homegrown brand blends comfort, value, and fun in its new seaside retreat.

Rove Al Marjan Island offers the perfect mix of relaxation and adventure. Surrounded by the natural beauty of soft white sandy beaches, vibrant dining options, and a rich local culture, it's an ideal destination for both short getaways and extended

stays. Guests can immerse themselves in Ras Al Khaimah's heritage while enjoying a range of activities, from outdoor cinema screenings to live DJ performances. Families will appreciate the hotel's family-friendly amenities, including an indoor play area and an outdoor water play zone.

Developed by Marjan and managed by Stirling Hospitality Advisors, Rove Al Marjan Island features a wide selection of rooms, including two categories of Rove Rooms designed with comfort in mind. Whether guests opt for stunning island views or breathtaking sea vistas, the rooms are designed for ultimate relaxation, with 30% offering interconnecting options perfect for families.

Sustainability is a core value at Rove Hotels, and Rove Al Marjan Island is no exception. The hotel adheres to Ras Al Khaimah's Green Building Regulations (Barjeel), implementing eco-friendly initiatives such as eliminating single-use plastics, offering refillable water bottles in rooms and dining areas, and composting food waste. These

This new addition to the Rove portfolio brings 441 contemporary rooms, exclusive beach access, and a host of entertainment options that promise an energetic and unforgettable experience for guests of all ages.

efforts are part of Rove Hotels' broader commitment to responsible tourism and sustainability.

Dining at Rove Al Marjan Island is a sensory delight. Guests can savor international favourites with a creative twist at *The Daily*, relax with a refreshing post-swim snack at *The Pool Bar*, or enjoy quirky drinks from the *Rove Beachside Truck*. The hotel also offers exclusive benefits at various food and beverage outlets across the island, ensuring guests enjoy a memorable culinary experience during their stay.

Ras Al Khaimah continues to rise as a leading tourism destination, with visitor numbers growing year after year. In 2024, the emirate welcomed 1.28

million overnight visitors. Known for its diverse landscape, which includes mountains, desert, and sea, Ras Al Khaimah offers a range of outdoor experiences, including trips to the Suwaidi Pearls Farm, the historic Al Jazeera Al Hamra village, the ancient Dhayah Fort, and Jebel Jais, the UAE's tallest mountain.

The opening of Rove Al Marjan Island marks a significant milestone for both Rove Hotels and Ras Al Khaimah's tourism industry. With its ideal blend of modern amenities, sustainability, and a prime location, Rove Al Marjan Island promises to be a sought-after destination for travelers seeking a memorable seaside escape.





Thailand's Maha Songkran 2025 poised to gain global festival spotlight

Maha Songkran 2025 aims to position Thailand as a global festival destination while promoting regional tourism and cultural heritage.

The **Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT)**, under the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, is gearing up for the **Maha Songkran World Water Festival 2025** — the flagship event of Thailand's New Year celebrations and a centrepiece of the **Amazing Thailand Grand Tourism and Sports Year 2025** and the Thailand Summer Festivals' Grand Festivity campaign.

Mr. **Jakkaphon Tangsutthitham**, Vice Minister of Tourism and Sports, said: "Songkran is more than a celebration — it's a proud symbol of Thai identity and soft power. With this year's festival, we aim to share our

cultural richness with the world while encouraging travellers to explore every corner of Thailand, from major cities to hidden gems."

Taking place from 11–15 April at Sanam Luang in Bangkok, the festival marks a bold step in positioning Thailand as one of the world's top 10 global festival destinations. It builds on the international recognition of 'Songkran in Thailand, traditional Thai New Year festival' as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage and presents a reimagined experience designed to captivate both local and global audiences.

A standout feature of this year's

celebration is the Maha Songkran Parade, featuring eight themed processions that reflect Thailand's cultural identity, creativity, and soft power. On 12 April at 17.00 Hrs., the parade will move from Democracy Monument along Ratchadamnoen Avenue to Sanam Luang. On 13 April, a second parade will circle Sanam Luang, followed by static displays of the decorated floats at the venue through 15 April.

Beyond the parades, Sanam Luang will come alive with a multi-zone festival experience, including:

- Five regional Songkran zones

showcasing distinct traditions from across Thailand

- “5 Must Do in Thailand” experiences highlighting key cultural activities

- A Thai temple fair zone featuring a haunted house, open-air cinema, Ferris wheel, and sand pagoda building

- Traditional bathing of the Buddha image and water-pouring rituals for elders

- A water play zone with a giant spill bucket, music-synchronised fountain shows, water station (for a refill for those playing Songkran), and EDM sets by top DJs

- Over 100 booths offering food, crafts, and regional specialities from all five regions

Festival Goers can also look forward to nightly performances on the main stage, including traditional shows, contemporary acts, and live concerts from some of Thailand’s most popular artists, such as Bodyslam, Polycat, Jeff Satur, The Toys, 4EVE, Joey Boy, Paradox, Ink Waruntorn, and Carabao, among many others.

Ms. Thapane Kiatphaibool, TAT Governor, said: *“Maha Songkran World Water Festival 2025 captures the spirit of Thailand — joyful, welcoming, and full of creative energy. This year’s programme is packed with firsts and favourites, designed to inspire wonder while upholding our heritage and ensuring a safe, memorable experience for all.”*

TAT is also enhancing the visitor experience with the Maha Songkran World Water Festival 2025 web application, which provides real-time updates, zone maps, and performance schedules. In line with its commitment to sustainable tourism, the event will feature “GCYOU-TURN,” a plastic recycling and upcycling initiative that will help manage festival waste responsibly.

For safety and convenience, the Tourist Police Bureau will provide 24-hour support in eight languages, alongside the Thailand Tourist Police mobile app, which integrates an SOS button, GPS location sharing, and direct links to national emergency services.

Nationwide, the “Yen Tua La Maha Songkran” series will extend the celebrations to communities across Thailand, with events running throughout April in provinces such as Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, Lampang, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Nong Khai, and Ayutthaya, among others. These regional festivals showcase local heritage while promoting tourism in Hidden-Gem cities. In addition, private sector events including ICONSIAM’s Maha Songkran, S2O Songkran Music Festival, and GCircuit Songkran 2025 will amplify the festive atmosphere in Bangkok and beyond. For a full list of events, visit: Maha Songkran World Water Festival 2025.

TAT projects that Songkran 2025 will generate over 26.5 billion Baht in tourism revenue during 12–16 April, marking an 8% increase year-on-year. This includes 476,000 international arrivals contributing 7.324 billion Baht, and more than 4.4 million domestic visits generating 19.24 billion Baht.



Luxury Escapes 2: Thailand's Ultimate Luxury Comeback



In a stunning revival that's set to captivate the Indian luxury traveller, Thailand is once again opening its doors for an unparalleled luxury experience. With the grand success of the inaugural Luxury Escapes campaign in 2024, Thailand's Tourism Authority (TAT) and TravelBullz (TBZ) proudly announce the return of Luxury Escapes 2, running from March 1 to May 31, 2025. This exciting new chapter promises to further cement Thailand's position as the go-to luxury destination for discerning Indian travellers.

A Grand Return: Thailand's Luxe Appeal

After the resounding success of the first edition, Luxury Escapes 2 is poised to raise the bar even higher. **Siriges-a-nong Trirattanasongpol, Director of TAT New Delhi Office**, expresses excitement for this monumental return: "Season 2 of Luxury Escapes invites travellers to experience Thailand's stunning offerings once again. From the pristine beaches of Phuket to the lush landscapes of Chiang Mai, the campaign promises a range of experiences—luxurious five-star resorts, private villas, exclusive yacht charters, and world-class spa retreats

that are bound to mesmerize."

The goal? To provide a sophisticated blend of cultural charm and unmatched comfort, making Thailand the destination of choice for those seeking an extraordinary getaway.

Luxurious Destinations: Thailand Awaits

Luxury Escapes 2 showcases a handpicked collection of Thailand's most celebrated destinations. These include iconic cities such as Bangkok and Phuket, along with hidden gems like Koh Kood and Kanchanaburi. The campaign also shines a spotlight on Krabi, Samui, Chiang Mai, Phi Phi, Hua Hin, Koh Lanta, Khao Yao Yai, and Chiang Rai—each offering unique, luxurious experiences. Whether it is lounging in an opulent resort, dining on gourmet Thai cuisine, or embarking on a private yacht across the Andaman Sea, Luxury Escapes 2 is about more than just a vacation—it's about indulging in a lifestyle of elegance and comfort.

Tailored to Perfection: Crafted Experiences for Indian Travellers **K D Singh, President of TravelBullz**, highlights the effort behind the meticulously crafted experiences

offered in Luxury Escapes 2: "Our campaign has been carefully tailored to meet the unique preferences of Indian luxury travellers. From gourmet meals prepared by renowned chefs to bespoke wellness retreats, this is luxury like never before."

The campaign promises a wide range of bespoke offerings, including:

- **Luxury Hotels & Resorts:** World-class properties in every destination.
- **Private Yachts:** Exclusive journeys across Thailand's spectacular waters.
- **Gastronomy:** Savour delectable Thai cuisine prepared by acclaimed chefs.
- **Spa & Wellness:** Indulge in rejuvenating wellness programs at serene retreats.

Every experience is designed to make the journey to Thailand not just a holiday, but a once-in-a-lifetime luxury escape.

Digital & Print Outreach: Reaching Every Traveller

To ensure maximum reach and engagement, Luxury Escapes 2 employs a robust promotional

strategy. From dynamic web banners on TravelBullz's B2B homepage to eye-catching social media campaigns on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter, the digital reach is extensive. In addition, print media campaigns and editorials will further drive awareness among India's luxury travel enthusiasts.

"We are not only promoting Thailand as a destination but also engaging in comprehensive training for luxury travel agents," says **Trirattanasongpol**. "This ensures that our partners can create customized travel packages, providing the best experiences for their clients."

Building Stronger Ties: Thailand-India Luxury Connection

One of the core aims of Luxury Escapes 2 is to strengthen business relationships between Thailand's luxury suppliers and India's travel agents. Exclusive B2B deals have been rolled out, granting Indian agents privileged access to premium Thai experiences.

Singh emphasizes the importance of this collaboration: "This partnership goes beyond just offering luxury—it's about forging meaningful connections between Thailand's luxury suppliers and Indian travel professionals. The campaign helps us craft truly exceptional experiences that our clients will cherish forever."

A New Era of Luxury Travel: Thailand Beckons

With Luxury Escapes 2, Thailand is not just a destination; it is an experience unlike any other. Offering the perfect fusion of tradition, culture, and modern luxury, the campaign promises to redefine luxury travel for India's sophisticated outbound travellers. With world-class accommodations, exclusive experiences, and unforgettable moments, this is truly the ultimate Luxury Escape. Thailand is ready to welcome Indian travellers to a season of unparalleled luxury—are you ready to take the escape of a lifetime?

IHC unveils Claridges Collection - A New ERA of Boutique Luxury

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), India's largest hospitality company introduces **Claridges Collection**, a curated set of boutique luxury hotels blending elegance with rich historical charm. Designed for those who appreciate life's finer things, every detail at Claridges is a celebration of refined luxury and timeless privilege.

Speaking on the occasion, **Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, IHCL**, said, "With India's growing economic prominence, the income pyramid is witnessing a structural shift and the demand for luxury product and services is at an all-time high led by significant expansion of households in the high-net worth bracket. This presents a market opportunity to extend hospitality offerings in the luxury segment as consumers are seeking differentiated experiences."

He added, "Claridges Collection resonates with those well-versed in the nuances of global luxury and seek evolved and bespoke experiences. Positioned at the heart of key gateway cities across the world, these hotels serve as the epicenter



of cultural and social prominence, offering a refined sanctuary for discerning travelers. The Claridges Collection portfolio will commence with **The Claridges, New Delhi** and will include the historic **Connemera, Chennai** and post a comprehensive renovation, **Blue Diamond, Pune.**

Mr. Suresh Nanda, Promoter of the Claridges Hotels Pvt. Ltd., said, "We are thrilled to announce this strategic partnership between IHCL and the iconic Claridges brand marking a significant milestone in expanding Claridges' legacy of luxury and excellence across India. This collaboration unites IHCL's renowned expertise as a global leader in world-class hospitality with Claridges' rich heritage and award-winning culinary offerings, ensuring guests enjoy an unparalleled experience. We are confident that this alliance will redefine industry benchmarks, showcasing the best of both partners."

Claridges Collection is set to build its portfolio across India's metro cities and key leisure destinations with a vision to reach **20+** hotels by **2030**.



Sip Your Way Through Taiwan:

A Journey to the Island's Tea Culture

Experience Taiwan's tea culture through these museums, plantations and tea houses

-By Devender Grover

Taiwan is known for its world-famous teas. Its tea-making tradition began centuries ago with varieties brought over from mainland China, and the island has since developed its own unique offerings—most notably its high-mountain tea. It's also responsible for the production of a large percentage of

the world's oolong—semi-oxidized teas that fall somewhere between green and black varieties.

From tea house ceremonies to overnight plantation stays, there are plenty of ways to experience Taiwan's vast tea culture for yourself. Here are some of the best regions and teas for making the most of your Taiwanese tea adventure.



DESTINATION

Exploring Songboling: Taiwan's Tea Paradise

A Journey into Taiwan's Rich Tea Culture

Songboling, located in the southern part of Baguanshan, is Taiwan's largest tea-producing region, renowned for its centuries-old tea-making traditions. Known for its ideal climate and soil conditions, the area has a history of over 300 years in tea cultivation, making it a pivotal landmark for Taiwanese tea culture.

A Hub of Tea Knowledge: Songboling Visitor Center

At the heart of this tea-rich region lies the Songboling Visitor Center, which offers both educational and leisure experiences for tea enthusiasts. This two-story building, which houses the Tea Culture Theme Pavilion, provides a comprehensive introduction to the world of tea. Visitors can explore Taiwanese tea history, discover tea varieties, and even experience tea-making techniques through interactive exhibits.

The Pavilion's first floor is dedicated to Taiwan's unique teas and the different tea-growing regions across the island. Guests can engage with miniature tea-making machines, giving them a hands-on understanding of the



delicate tea-making process. A major attraction in the center is Taiwan's largest tea ball, a 280-kilogram masterpiece that offers a nostalgic glimpse into Taiwan's rich tea heritage.

The Renowned Songbo Evergreen Tea

Songboling's fame is largely attributed to its signature "Songbo Evergreen Tea," a variety named in 1975 by Chiang Ching-kuo, the then Premier of Taiwan. After sampling the fragrant Puzhong tea, Chiang was so impressed that he named it in honor

of Songboling. Today, this tea variety, along with Taiwan Tea No. 12 (Jinxuan), Taiwan Tea No. 13 (Cuiyu), Qingxin Oolong, and Sijichun, are the region's standout tea cultivars, establishing Songboling as the largest tea-producing area in Taiwan.

Global Tea Insights and Cultural Art

Tea Culture Theme Pavilion expands on global tea knowledge. It introduces the six major types of tea and highlights tea-producing regions worldwide. Visitors can immerse themselves in an aromatic experience, where the scent of various teas showcases the impact of fermentation on flavor. The space also features the Songling Art Gallery, which regularly hosts exhibitions that explore tea culture through an artistic lens.

The 'Six Senses of Tea' Experience

For those looking to deepen their connection with tea, Songboling offers the exclusive "Six Senses of Tea" experience—a sensory journey designed to engage every aspect of the body and mind. Participants can observe the transformation of tea leaves, savor its flavors, inhale the tea's aromatic essence, listen to the soothing sound of leaves unfurling during brewing, touch the delicate tea leaves, and feel the comforting warmth of the tea. To ensure an intimate experience indulge in TEA SPA.

Whether you're a tea connoisseur or simply looking for a peaceful retreat, Songboling offers a fascinating and immersive journey into Taiwan's tea culture.

Pinglin—Home to One of the World's Largest Tea Museums

Pinglin is one of Taiwan's prime tea-producing spots—a picturesque rural district in the southeastern part of New Taipei that's the heart of the region's famous Baozhong (sometimes called Pouchong) tea. This tea made from leaves that are twisted rather than rolled is rich in body, lightly oxidized, and typically not roasted—an almost hybrid tea style boasting the

lighter colorings of green tea but the flora notes of oolong. Pinglin's tea harvesting season takes place in the spring, when the region's terraced tea plantations are lush with greenery, making for some amazing photographs. You'll find this tea, also known as "flower tea" because of its highly floral aroma, and others at many of the tea shops—and even incorporated into restaurant dishes such as "fried rice with tea leaves"—along Pinglin Old Street, at the center of town.

Another area to absorb everything there is to know about Taiwanese tea is the Pinglin Tea Museum, one of the largest tea museums on the planet. Opened in 1997, the museum offers insight into the history, preparation and processing of tea, as well as the development of tea culture throughout China, through a series of interactive and engaging exhibits. The museum also features a traditional Southern Chinese-style garden and a tea house for sipping brews onsite.

If you have time, pay a visit to nearby Bagua Tea Plantation, one of Northern Taiwan's largest, and its onsite tea garden. Overlooking the waters of Feicui Reservoir, the plantation's seemingly endless rows of tea bushes—set among the area's rolling hills—create an almost magical setting.

Maokong—a Mountain Top Tea Village, A Scenic Tea Destination in Taipei

Maokong, a mountain village in Taipei's Wenshan district, is known for its rich tea culture and beautiful views. Just a short ride on a sky gondola from the Taipei Zoo, Maokong offers a more accessible tea experience compared to other famous tea areas like Pinglin and the Bagua Tea Plantation.

The area is especially known for growing Tieguanyin, a high-quality Chinese oolong tea. This fragrant tea thrives in Maokong's misty mountain environment and can range from light and grassy to rich and floral, depending on how long it's oxidized. Originally brought to Taiwan by Chinese immigrants from Anxi County in Fujian



Province at the end of the 19th century, Tieguanyin flourishes in Maokong's ideal high-altitude conditions, much like the tea in their homeland.

Today, Maokong is home to dozens of tea houses where visitors can enjoy traditional tea ceremonies. The village also has farm-owned shops, temples, and stunning views of Taipei City below.

For tea lovers, the Taipei Tea Promotion Center is just a 20-minute walk from the gondola station. This small but informative center showcases tea-making tools, including a tea leaf shaker used to enhance the fragrance of oolong tea. Visitors can also learn about how tea cultivation has evolved over the years, with a local tea grower often offering free tastings and products for sale.

Hsinchu County: Where Oolong Tea Meets Hakka Culture

Located along Taiwan's northwest coast, Hsinchu County is often called the island's "Silicon Valley" for its high-tech industry. But for tea lovers, it's the Dongfang Meiren, or Baihao, that steals the spotlight. This heavily oxidized oolong tea, known as "Oriental Beauty", in the West, is famous for its sweet honey and peach taste, with a



fruity aroma. What makes it special is the arrival of green leafhoppers each summer. These insects nibble on the tips of the tea leaves, causing them to partially oxidize and develop their distinct flavor. Because it's produced in small quantities, Dongfang Meiren is highly prized. Workers hand-pick the leaves in summer after the leafhoppers have done their work.

A visit to Beipu, a rural township in eastern Hsinchu, is a must. This area offers a deep dive into Taiwan's Hakka culture, a unique Chinese minority with its own traditions and way of life. Beipu Old Street is lined with tea houses where you can enjoy steaming cups of Dongfang Meiren, as well as lei cha, a traditional Hakka tea blend made from ground tea leaves mixed with herbs, seeds, grains, and nuts, creating a thick, porridge-like drink.

Another interesting stop in Hsinchu County is Emei Township, home to the Fuxing Tea Factory. Once a working tea factory, it now serves as a two-story cultural museum. It's also a great place to pick up unique tea-related gifts at its excellent shop.

Nantou County: The Heart of Dong Ding Tea

Nestled in the heart of Taiwan, Nantou County is the island's only

landlocked region, defined by its rolling hills and breathtaking mountain views. Among its natural wonders is Sun Moon Lake, Taiwan's largest body of freshwater, famous for its black tea production. But it's the world-renowned Dong Ding Tea that truly stands out in this region. Grown in the foothills of the Tung Ting Mountain, also known as "Icy Peak," Dong Ding is a premium oolong tea with a distinct toasty flavor, thanks to its traditional charcoal roasting process, and a smooth, sweet aftertaste.

Every fall, Nantou hosts the Global Tea Expo, a major event that brings together tea artisans from across Asia. The expo features a range of activities, from tea brewing and tastings to an organic tea pavilion. Visitors can even book tours to try their hand at tea leaf picking, either by hand or with machines.

Alishan: A Mountain Tea Wonderland

Not far from Nantou, Alishan National Scenic Area in central Taiwan is another tea paradise. Famous for its cloud-covered mountains and historic mountain railways, Alishan is home to the renowned Alishan Tea, an oolong often referred to as the "champagne of teas." This delicate tea boasts a floral

aroma with hints of jasmine and rose, paired with a creamy texture. Harvested twice a year, Alishan Tea is as much a feast for the senses as it is for the palate.

For those curious about the area's tea culture, the Alishan NSA Chukou Visitor Center offers in-depth exhibits on local tea production. Nearby, Shizhuo Village sells teas directly from local farmers. Visitors can also explore the scenic "Tea Trail," a hiking path that winds through picturesque tea terraces. Alishan's Chiayi County is known for its homestays surrounded by lush tea fields, where guests can enjoy tea tastings and even spot fireflies in the evenings. The drive between Fenchihu and Shizhuo offers stunning views of the area's expansive tea plantations.

Taichung—the Land of Bubble Tea, The Birthplace of Bubble Tea

No trip to Taiwan is complete without trying bubble tea, or boba. While it's now popular around the world, this beloved drink originally comes from Taiwan. The classic version is made with Taiwanese black tea, condensed milk, and sweet flavorings like syrup or honey, topped off with chewy tapioca pearls.

While the exact origins of bubble tea are unclear, Taichung—Taiwan's second-largest city—plays a key role in its history. It's home to the Chun Shui Tang Tea House, where the drink is believed to have first been served. In the late 1980s, founder Liu Han-Chieh noticed the growing popularity of iced tea in Japan and decided to try it in Taiwan. But the real turning point came when product manager Lin Hsiu Hui added sweet tapioca pudding, called fen yuan, to her tea. She loved the combination, and soon, it became one of the tea house's bestsellers.

Today, Chun Shui Tang has multiple locations across Taiwan and China, but the original shop in Taichung's West District remains a must-visit spot for bubble tea fans.

DID YOU KNOW?

When was Bubble Tea invented?

It was developed and sold on trial in 1986 and officially launched in the spring of 1987.

Where was Bubble Tea invented?

At the original Chun Shui Tang store in Taichung (Siwei branch).

Who invented Bubble Tea?

It was invented by its founder, Mr. Liu, Han-Chieh, who led the product development team known as the “Golden Tongues”.

Why add ingredients to milk tea?

Throughout the historical evolution of tea, there have been precedents of incorporating various ingredients since the Wei, Jin, Southern, and Northern Dynasties. Enhancing tea with spices, grains, and flowers was not uncommon. Serendipitously, the founder and the product development team decided to revisit their childhood favorite, “tapioca pearls”, and experimented with them in the shop. They initially consumed warm food, but they later sampled cold food. Discovering the unique chewiness and distinct texture of the chilled pearls, they made the decision to incorporate them into their best-selling iced milk tea and iced lemon black tea, thus giving rise to the iconic Bubble Tea.

Was Bubble Tea originally the store manager’s secret tea?

The development team aimed to gauge the reception of tea enthusiasts towards teas with added ingredients. They decided to test the market by selling milk tea with tapioca pearls, initially labeling it as the manager’s “secret tea” for a week. Encouragingly, customers responded positively, and as there was no official menu for this beverage, it became universally known as the “secret tea”. Buoyed by the enthusiastic feedback from tea enthusiasts, the decision was made to formally introduce this tea for sale. Subsequently, the founder was approached to rename the “secret tea”



as “Bubble Tea”, and it was officially launched in 1987.

Why was it named “Pearl Milk Tea”(as known as Bubble Tea)?

The name was chosen to evoke the image of “large and small pearls falling into a jade plate”. The tapioca balls were renamed “pearls”, meaning “Pearl Milk Tea” as known as “Bubble Tea”.

How did Bubble Tea become popular worldwide?

Within six months of its launch, Bubble Tea quickly climbed to “the top of the sales charts”. Its unique and enjoyable taste, which can be both a beverage and a snack, was well-received by “tea enthusiasts”. In 1990, it became a nostalgic remedy for overseas immigrants, with stories even emerging of people bringing it from Taichung to Canada, making headlines when discovered by airport customs. Subsequently, as ethnic Chinese people migrated around the world, bubble tea spread globally.

What is Bubble Tea called abroad?

Internationally, this beloved beverage is known by various

names such as “Bubble Tea”, “BOBA Tea”, “BOBA”, “Pearl Milk Tea”, and “Tapioca Tea”. Much like Coca-Cola, it captivates taste buds across borders, transcending cultural boundaries as a contemporary beverage popular worldwide.

Why are the tapioca pearls at Chun Shui Tang relatively small?

Within six months of its debut, bubble tea quickly spread across Taiwan, leading to the emergence of large-sized “boba” pearls and white pearls made from sago rice. However, the original recipe used tapioca pearls with a diameter of 8mm, made from tapioca flour. To maintain the classic flavor, this tradition continues to this day.

How many cups of Bubble Tea do Taiwanese people consume in a year?

If we tally up all the shops selling bubble tea in Taiwan, Taiwanese people drink around 100 million cups of bubble tea each year. If we were to stack these cups, it would be equivalent to 1700 Mount Everests, allowing for a round trip between Earth and outer space 250 times.



ABN Sarovar Portico, Jim Corbett

A Sanctuary Where Luxury
Embraces the Wild

Tucked on the edge of India's most legendary wildlife reserve, **ABN Sarovar Portico, Jim Corbett**, offers a unique fusion of nature's raw beauty and refined hospitality. With modern amenities nestled within forest-inspired design, the property is a true escape for those seeking serenity without sacrificing comfort.

Immersive Living in the Lap of Nature

Boasting **meticulously designed rooms and cottages**, the hotel blends modern interiors with earthy textures and natural tones, echoing the tranquil surroundings of Jim Corbett National Park. Whether you're gazing at the treetops from a private balcony or enjoying plush in-room comforts, every space is crafted to deliver an immersive and relaxing stay.

Perfect for romantic getaways, family holidays, Meetings or solo retreats, the accommodations span a range of categories to suit every travel style:

Room Categories:

Superior Double Room with Balcony (345 sq. ft.)

Ideal for couples or solo travelers, these first-floor rooms offer a serene escape with a cozy balcony and amenities like flat-screen TV, minibar, air-conditioning, and complimentary Wi-Fi.

Premium Double Room with Private Balcony (435 sq. ft.)

Enjoy elevated views and added space with a larger balcony, wooden flooring, and enhanced in-room comforts.

Deluxe Double Room with Sit-out Area (545 sq. ft.)

Designed for those who love the outdoors, these rooms feature a charming sit-out area and elegant interiors.

Cottage Double Room with Two Balconies (675 sq. ft.)

A luxurious forest retreat with dual balconies, wooden flooring, soaking tub, and dual flat-screen TVs—perfect for soaking in nature from every angle.

Premium Cottage Double Room with Sit-out Area (1,000 sq. ft.)





favorites, and Continental delicacies, every meal becomes a global experience grounded in local warmth. Guests can enjoy:

- A **lavish buffet breakfast** to start the day.
- À la carte **lunch and dinner**, curated and served by a thoughtful, attentive team.
- A sophisticated setting that complements the culinary experience with its stylish decor and ambient charm.

Seamless Events and Business Gatherings

Jim Corbett, ABN Sarovar Portico offers a harmonious blend of nature and modernity, making it an ideal destination for both leisure and business events. For guests blending business with leisure, ABN Sarovar Portico offers well-equipped meeting and event spaces. Whether it's a corporate offsite or an intimate celebration, facilities include:

Versatile Event Spaces -

- **Saffron:** A spacious 3,968 sq. ft. banquet hall, Saffron is designed to accommodate up to 200 guests. It is equipped with state-of-the-art audio-visual technology, high-speed Wi-Fi, and customizable seating arrangements, making it perfect for conferences, seminars, and corporate gatherings.
- **Clove:** This 1,500 sq. ft. auditorium-style meeting room offers tiered seating for up to 50 guests, ensuring excellent visibility for all attendees. It is ideal for workshops, presentations, and intimate corporate meetings.
- **Lawn:** Spanning 3,050 sq. ft., the lush green lawn provides an open-air venue suitable for outdoor events, receptions, and team-building activities. It can host up to 200 guests, offering a refreshing environment for gatherings.



The pinnacle of comfort, this expansive cottage offers refined decor, plush furnishings, and a private outdoor area, making it a peaceful sanctuary after a day in the wild.

Savor Every Bite at 'Flavours'

Begin your culinary journey at **Flavours**, the hotel's elegant all-day dining restaurant. With a menu that spans Indian classics, Chinese

Adventure Awaits Right Outside Your Door

What truly sets this hotel apart is its **proximity to Jim Corbett's**





adventure and wildlife hubs. Just steps away, guests can dive into an exciting array of experiences:

- **Corbett Jeep Safari – 120m**
- **Wildlife Safari & Park Tours – within 200–400m**
- **Rafting, jungle trails, elephant safaris – 500m to 1.8 km**

From heart-pounding safaris to tranquil nature walks, the location puts you in the center of Uttarakhand’s rich natural tapestry.

Exceptional Amenities for a Holistic Stay

Whether you’re here to relax, work, or explore, ABN Sarovar Portico ensures you’re well taken care of.

Complimentary Amenities:

ABN Sarovar Portico in Jim Corbett offers a range of complimentary amenities to enhance your stay.

- Swimming pool
- High-speed Wi-Fi
- Recreation room
- Fitness centre
- Coffee/tea maker & bottled water
- Parking & concierge services
- Accessible facilities for specially-abled guests

Additional Services (On Request/ Chargeable):

- In-room dining & minibar

- Laundry and dry cleaning
- Conference/banquet services
- Secretarial services (printing, photocopying)
- Jungle safari bookings & local transfers
- Doctor-on-call and room upgrades (subject to availability)

Signature Features That Make the Difference

- **Recreation Room:** A perfect space for families and solo travelers to unwind.
- **Swimming Pool:** Relax after a jungle safari with a dip or a poolside lounge session.
- **24/7 Room Service:** Midnight cravings or early breakfasts are just a call away.
- **Festival Celebrations at ABN Sarovar Portico**

ABN Sarovar Portico in Jim Corbett offers a picturesque setting for festival celebrations, blending modern amenities with the natural beauty of Uttarakhand. The hotel features versatile event venues, including the expansive Saffron banquet hall and scenic outdoor lawns, ideal for hosting festivals, weddings, and cultural gatherings. Celebrate festivals of India like Holi,

Diwali, Lahori, Christmas etc. as the hotel offers packages during the events.

Final Verdict: A Sophisticated Nature Retreat

ABN Sarovar Portico, Jim Corbett is more than just a hotel—it’s a **gateway to nature, luxury, and rejuvenation.** With its beautifully designed accommodations, delightful dining options, and strategic location near the park’s main attractions, it offers an unforgettable experience where wilderness meets elegance.

Whether you’re an adventure seeker, a wildlife lover, or someone chasing peace in nature’s lap, this property offers the perfect base to explore the beauty and thrill of Jim Corbett.

Wild Escapes: Top Things to Do Near Jim Corbett National Park

Tucked away in Uttarakhand’s Nainital district, Jim Corbett National Park sprawls over 520 square kilometres and holds the distinction of being one of the few tiger reserves in India that permits overnight stays. But beyond its iconic Royal Bengal tigers, the region offers a trove of experiences for thrill-seekers, nature lovers, and history buffs alike. Here’s a roundup of the best things to do in and around Jim Corbett National Park.

1. Trek Through the Wilderness of Sitabani Reserve Forest

Adventure begins on foot at Sitabani Reserve Forest. Known for its well-trodden trekking trails, this forest offers a close brush with the wild. As you walk beneath dense canopies, every step feels like a page from a nature documentary, taking you tantalizingly close to the tiger reserve’s boundary.

2. Conquer the Hills on Two Wheels

Craving an adrenaline high? Opt for mountain biking through one of the most scenic routes in the region. A popular trail starts in Nainital, winds through the lush Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary, and ends near Jim Corbett — a demanding 335-kilometre journey not for the faint-hearted.



3. Reel in a Fresh Catch on the Ramganga River

Angling enthusiasts will find a slice of paradise along the Ramganga River. Rich with local fish varieties, it's the perfect spot to cast a line, relax, and — if you're lucky — enjoy a fresh catch grilled over a riverside fire.

4. Spot Feathered Beauties in a Birdwatcher's Haven

While tigers are the main draw, Jim Corbett is a birdwatcher's dream. With over 650 recorded species, including rare migratory birds, the park is a paradise for ornithologists and amateur bird lovers alike.

5. Go Wild with an Elephant Safari

For an unforgettable jungle experience, hop onto an elephant and explore the park like early adventurers once did. The slow, steady ride offers a majestic view of the forest — and an intimate chance to observe wildlife in their natural habitat.

6. Dive Deeper on a Jeep Safari

No visit to Jim Corbett is complete without a jeep safari. These guided rides take you into the heart of the forest, offering glimpses of elusive big cats, wild boars, deer, and more — all from the safety and comfort of a sturdy 4x4.

7. Step Back in Time at Corbett Museum

History buffs can make a stop at the Corbett Museum in Kaladhungi, the former home of famed conservationist and hunter-turned-naturalist, Jim Corbett. The museum houses rare photographs, antique weapons, letters, and personal belongings — a tribute to the man behind India's first national park.

8. Ride the Rapids of the Kosi River

For water sports enthusiasts, river rafting on the Kosi River delivers a thrilling escape.

Navigate through spirited rapids with the verdant park as your backdrop — a high-octane counterpoint to Corbett's serene trails.

9. Picnic Amidst the Serenity of Corbett Falls

Just four kilometres from the park lies Corbett Falls — a 66-foot cascade tucked into a serene forest glade. Ideal for a picnic or a peaceful afternoon, the falls provide the perfect backdrop for unwinding in nature's lap.

Whether you're chasing the thrill of the wild or the peace of pristine nature, the Corbett region offers a wealth of experiences beyond the safari jeep. So pack your bags, and get ready to meet Uttarakhand at its untamed best.

The Best Time to Visit Corbett: A Seasonal Guide to India's Iconic Wildlife Haven

Winter Wonderland (October to February): The Perfect Escape

Winter is widely regarded as the

best time to visit Corbett. The weather remains pleasant during the day, with clear sunny skies, while nights can get quite chilly—so don't forget to pack warm layers. This is also peak tourist season, and for good reason. With vegetation thinning out and water sources shrinking, wildlife sightings increase, making it easier to spot tigers, elephants, and other exotic animals. It's also a great time to explore the surrounding areas, from Garjia Temple to the Corbett Waterfall.

Monsoon Magic (June to September): For the Adventurous

The monsoon season brings a dramatic transformation to Corbett, painting the forest in vibrant shades of green. Though some zones close due to heavy rains and difficult terrain, the park's buffer zones remain accessible. Fewer crowds mean a more serene experience for those willing to brave occasional downpours. Just be prepared for unpredictable weather and leech-prone trails.

Spring to Early Summer (March to May): Off the Beaten Path

As temperatures begin to rise, the park enters its off-season. While daytime heat can be intense, the scarcity of water draws wildlife to the few remaining waterholes—offering thrilling opportunities for animal sightings. With fewer visitors around, it's a quieter, more intimate time to experience Corbett, especially for seasoned safari-goers or photographers seeking that perfect shot.

How to Reach Jim Corbett National Park

By Road

- From Delhi (270 km):
- From Chandigarh/Ambala (347 km):

km):

- From Lucknow (400 km):
- From Nainital (70 km):

By Train

Ramnagar station (12 km from the park) is the closest.

By Air

Nearest airport: **Pantnagar** (78 km) with limited flights from Delhi and Lucknow. **Delhi Airport** (300 km) is the closest international hub. Taxis available from both airports.

GNTO India Unveils Germany's Unique Summer Adventures Beyond the Ordinary



This summer, the German National Tourist Office (GNTO) India invites Indian travellers to experience Germany in a whole new light, venturing beyond typical European itineraries. Discovering the extraordinary from thrilling treetop adventures to immersive medieval festivals, Germany offers experiences that are uniquely captivating and difficult to replicate elsewhere in Europe.

While Germany's UNESCO sites and



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biosphere reserves showcase its natural beauty, GNTO India is highlighting the country's ability to blend nature with exhilarating experiences that resonate with the adventurous spirit of Indian travelers.

Unforgettable Experiences Unique to Germany:

Treetop Adventures & Rope Bridges:

- Experience the thrill of walking

among the treetops in parks like the Baumwipfelpfad im Schwarzwald (Black Forest Treetop Walk). These elevated pathways and rope bridges offer breathtaking panoramic views and a unique perspective on Germany's lush landscapes. This level of immersive treetop exploration is less common in other European nations.

- Experience the thrill of the Harz Mountains with its many rope bridges and zip lines.

Thermal Spas & Wellness with a German Twist:

- Beyond traditional spas, Germany offers unique thermal experiences, blending wellness with cultural immersion. Explore historic thermal baths in towns like Baden-Baden, where Roman traditions meet modern luxury.

- Germany has a long tradition of "Kur" towns that offer health treatments and relaxing spa experiences.

INTERNATIONAL

Automotive Adventures & Engineering Marvels:

- For car enthusiasts, Germany is a dream destination. Explore the iconic Autobahn, visit world-renowned automotive museums like the Mercedes-Benz and Porsche museums, and even take part in driving experiences. This level of automotive immersion is unparalleled.



Beer Gardens & Culinary Delights:

- Experience the unique culture of German beer gardens, where friends and families gather to enjoy local brews and traditional cuisine. This social experience is a staple of German summer life.

- Sample the many different types of bread, sausages, and local culinary delights that differ from region to region.

Experiences Tailored for Indian Travelers:

• Adventure Seekers:

Paragliding in the Bavarian Alps, canyoning in the Allgäu region, and mountain biking in the Harz Mountains.

• Cultural Enthusiasts:

Exploring the historic cities of Nuremberg and Dresden, attending classical music concerts in Leipzig, and visiting art museums in Berlin.

• Nature Lovers:

Hiking in the Bavarian Forest National Park, exploring the Elbe Sandstone Mountains, and enjoying boat trips on the Rhine River.

“We want Indian travelers to discover the extraordinary side of Germany, experiences that go beyond the typical European vacation,” says **Romit Theophilus, Director for Marketing & Sales Office, GNTO India.** *“Germany offers a unique blend of adventure, culture, and nature, creating memories that will last a lifetime. This summer, we encourage you to explore the unexpected and discover the truly unique spirit of Germany.”*





Fiji's Loloma Hour – A Happy Hour for the Environment



Fiji is redefining sustainable tourism with the launch of Loloma Hour, a first-of-its-kind initiative that invites visitors to spend an hour making a positive environmental, cultural, or community impact during their stay.

Dubbed a ‘happy hour for the environment,’ Loloma Hour embodies the Fijian spirit of Loloma—acting with generosity, driven by love. Whether planting coral, restoring mangroves, or engaging in cultural traditions, travellers can leave a positive mark on Fiji while experiencing its unique way of life.

A New Approach to Sustainable Travel

Tourism Fiji created the ‘Loloma Hour’ initiative as part of the country’s overarching sustainability goals that aim to preserve its natural beauty and

cultural heritage by unifying and amplifying sustainability efforts across Fiji’s vital tourism industry.

With travellers becoming more conscious of their environmental and social impact, Loloma Hour positions Fiji as a leader in sustainable tourism. The initiative not only enhances Fiji’s appeal to eco-conscious travellers but also strengthens its reputation as a destination that prioritizes cultural and environmental stewardship.

“True happiness comes not just from what you take, but what you give,” says Srishti Narayan, Chief Marketing Officer,

Tourism Fiji. “Loloma Hour gives visitors a chance to help preserve what makes Fiji so special—its people, environment, and traditions.”

How It Works

Visitors can take part in Loloma Hour through partnering resorts, hotels, and tour operators across Fiji, with activities spanning four key pillars:

- Giving Back to Wildlife - Conservation walks, marine research, and species protection
- Giving Back to the Community - Cultural storytelling, traditional weaving, and village

programs

- Giving Back to the Reef - Coral planting, reef restoration, and marine habitat building
- Giving Back to the Coastline - Mangrove planting, tree restoration, and beach clean-ups

Participating Resorts

Leading resorts across Fiji are embracing Loloma Hour, offering guests an opportunity to take part in sustainability initiatives during their stay. Participating resorts include:

- InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort & Spa
 - Six Senses Fiji
 - Nukubati Private Island
 - Barefoot Kuata Island Resort
 - Barefoot Manta Island Resort
 - Lomani Island Resort
 - Plantation Island Resort
 - Captain Cook Cruises Fiji
 - Vatuvara Private Islands
 - Seventh Heaven Floating Bar
 - VOMO Island Fiji
 - Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort Fiji (JMC)
 - Viani Bay Resort
 - Shangri-La Yanuca Island, Fiji
 - Wakaya Club & Spa
 - Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort
 - Likuliku Lagoon Resort
 - Malolo Island Resort
 - Mana Island Resort & Spa
 - Sofitel Fiji Resort & Spa
 - Kokomo Private Island Fiji
- These resorts and operators are committed to integrating Loloma Hour into their guest experiences, further strengthening Fiji’s leadership in sustainable tourism.

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