

LUXURY AND LIFESTYLE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

travel

Volume 25 | Issue 07 | August 2025 | ₹500 / \$12 US

A Profiles Media Network Publication

www.travelspan.in

SPAN

IHCL Announces
Strategic Partnership
to Expand Portfolio
with 150+ Hotels
Across India

Saudi Arabia
Emerges as a
Premier Honeymoon
Destination for
Indian Travelers with
Exclusive TBO Offers

Germany's
Fairytale Route
Celebrates 50 Years
of Cultural Tourism

ASEGO
Pioneers Next-
Generation Safety
Solutions for Domestic
Travel in India



SUBSCRIBE travel SPAN



TRAVELSPAN.IN

Inspiring the most affluent and discerning travellers.

Engage with the website and its social media platforms through: Display ads, carousels, videos, photos and more.



@travelspanindia



travelspan1



travel span



@travelspan1

For advertising queries please contact
91-124-411 1182

Why Subscribe?

- 33% off on annual subscription
- delivery monthly to your doorstep
- 42% off on digital subscription and read Travel Span on any device

Subscription	Cover Price	You save	You pay
Print	₹ 250 x 12 = ₹ 3000	₹ 890	₹ 2110
Digital	₹ 250 x 12 = ₹ 3000	₹ 1440	₹ 1560

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

online: www.travelspan.in / call: +91 124 411 1182

All Payments in favour of Profiles Media Network Pvt Ltd.

Contact: **Studio 9 Productions** - C-59, Defence Colony, Chetna Marg, New Delhi 110024, India

MOMENTS MADE FOR YOU

VISITQATAR.COM



Crystal Walk
Gwan Island

visit
QATAR

tbo.com
TRAVEL SIMPLIFIED

Contents

Volume 25 | Issue 07 | August 2025



- 06** IHCL enters into a strategic partnership for 150+ hotels in India
- 10** Etihad for Business corporate portal goes live
- 16** Virgin Atlantic Launches Free Starlink Wi-Fi and Premium Cabin Upgrades
- 18** From terminal to touchdown Virgin Atlantic - A premium experience
- 25** Emirates introduces retrofitted Boeing 777 to Madrid

30

Contents



- 26** Emirates expands retrofitted A380 and Boeing 777 services footprint to 8 more cities, plans deployment of first long-range A350 to Australia
- 28** American Express Opens New Centurion Lounge at Tokyo's Haneda Airport
- 30** 'Emirates First' officially opens – an exclusive new First Class experience at Dubai International (DXB)
- 32** Noida International Airport Poised to Redefine Aviation and Tourism in Uttar Pradesh by November 2025
- 34** Saudi An Emerging Destination for Indian Honeymooners: Unveiling Exclusive Offers with TBO

- 36** High-Speed Rail Links London with Frankfurt and Geneva in Upcoming Cross-Border Travel Milestone
- 38** Saudi Arabia Welcomes Record 115.9 Million Tourists in 2024, Cementing Status as Global Tourism Powerhouse
- 41** Hong Kong Airlines to Launch Direct Melbourne Service in December 2025
- 44** ITC Hotels Expands North India Footprint with the Launch of Welcomhotel Prayagraj
- 46** Hilton 2025 Expanding Boldly Amid Shifting Travel Trends
- 48** Radisson Hotel Group opens Radisson Hotel Don Mueang Bangkok, strengthening its footprint in the Thai capital
- 50** IHG Hotels & Resorts signs first Vignette Collection in Venice, Italy
- 53** ASEGO Is Transforming Domestic Travel Safety in India
- 54** A Masterclass in Modern Wellness: Ada Ooi's INTEGRATV Healing Comes to Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa
- 56** German Fairytale Route marks 50th anniversary
- 61** Etihad Airways welcomes 20 million passengers and over 100 aircraft
- 62** Georgia Beckons A European Escape for Indian Travelers with Scenic Beauty, Rich Culture, and Affordable Charm
- 68** Amalfi Coast & Capri Italy's Summer Icons Balance Beauty, Popularity, and Sustainability

EDITOR'S LETTER

IHCL enters into a strategic partnership for 150+ hotels in India

IHCL portfolio reaches 550+ hotels and ~ 55,000 rooms

- doubles its mid-scale presence to 240+ hotels
- expands brandscape with Brij Hotels in the boutique leisure segment

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), India's largest hospitality company, today entered into a strategic partnership, signing definitive agreements to acquire a controlling stake in ANK Hotels Pvt Ltd and Pride Hospitality Pvt Ltd, and signed a distribution agreement with Brij Hospitality Pvt Ltd. With many decades of hospitality experience, the promoters of these companies belong to the illustrious Clarks Hotels family. This takes IHCL's portfolio to over 550 hotels.

Speaking on the milestone occasion, **Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, IHCL**, said, "India's hospitality sector has witnessed sustained demand momentum over the last three consecutive

fiscal years, reflective of the country's growing economic prominence and rising discretionary spends. The outlook for the sector remains buoyant as demand outpaces supply and India continues to be an underserved hospitality market, especially in the mid-market segment. Our partnership with ANK, Pride, and Brij Hospitality is a multi-pronged approach addressing India's heterogeneous market landscape and is in line with IHCL's five-year road map 'Accelerate 2030' of unlocking India's tourism potential."

He added, "Furthering IHCL's leading presence in the midscale segment with the successful transformation of Ginger, this partnership doubles our portfolio with 240+ hotels addressing the growing needs

of the aspirational traveller. Expanding our brandscape, the strong brand equity of Brij hotels in India's cultural and historical centres extends our offering in the experiential boutique luxury segment. With their rich legacy and hospitality expertise, the key managerial personnel of ANK, Pride, and Brij Hospitality will continue to oversee the running of the respective companies, thereby providing business continuity and also enabling future growth of the companies."

ANK Hotels Pvt Ltd and Pride Hospitality Pvt Ltd have a portfolio of 135 hotels in the midscale segment spread across 110 locations and are presently operated under The Clarks Hotels & Resorts, which over the next few

DEVENDER GROVER Editor in Chief & Publisher

GAURA G BAHL Group Editor
ANURADHA M Associate Editor
JYOTSNA MALIK International Sales Director

RASIKA MATHUR Events Coordinator
RAJESH MAURYA Head of Finance
JITESH GANDHI Creative Director

Address changes and subscription order to travelspan@gmail.com
Registered with Registrar of Newspapers of India under RNI No. DEL/ENG/2000/03308

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY

Profiles Media Network Pvt Ltd., C-59, Defence Colony, Chetna Marg, New Delhi 110024, India
Tel - +91 (124) 4111182, Mob- +91 99999 97607, Website: www.travelspan.in

PRINTED BY

STUDIO 9 PRODUCTIONS, C-59, Defence Colony, Chetna Marg, New Delhi 110024, India
Volume 25, Issue 11, August 2025

Content June not be reproduced in any format without written permission from **Profiles Media Network Pvt Ltd.**

RNI No. DEL/ENG/2000/03308 Travel Span is Printed Published Edited and Owned by **Devender Grover**. Printed at G S Graphic Arts. A-18, Naraina Industrial Area, New Delhi - 110028

Editor: Devender Grover. All Rights Reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without written permission is strictly prohibited. All information is correct at the time of going to press but subject to change. Editorial material, views and opinions expressed in Travel Span are those of authors. Editor(s) assume no responsibility of any errors or omissions. Neither is any liability assumed resulting from the use of this information. The Publisher will not be responsible for any damage or loss caused by the late Publication, errors or failures of advertisements to appear. Products and services mentioned are subject to change without prior notice.

months will be integrated operationally and migrated to IHCL's brandscape predominantly under the Ginger brand, among others. These hotels are on a capital light arrangement of management contracts and select operating leases. Brij Hospitality has a portfolio of 19 hotels in the experiential leisure segment in India's unique destinations.

Mr. Ankur Dalwani, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, IHCL, said, "IHCL will fund this investment through internal accruals given our strong cash flows. The primary investment in the companies will be used for unlocking value in the existing assets and for fuelling future growth opportunities."

Mr. Anoop Kumar, Founder of ANK Hotels Pvt Ltd, said, "It is with great enthusiasm that we move forward towards new vistas with India's largest hotel group. Our forefathers, who sowed the seeds of the hospitality sector in India in 1947, will be proud."

Mr. Aryavir Kumar, Promoter of ANK Hotels Pvt Ltd, said, "Combining over 200 years of collective hospitality legacy, we come together with IHCL, part of the iconic Tata Group. Together, we are a powerhouse of energy with a shared vision for growth and transformation. This is more than a partnership — it is a union of legacies, ready to inspire the future."

Mr. Anant Apurv Kumar and Udit Kumar, Founders of Brij Hotels and Promoters of Clarks Group of Hotels, jointly said, "Together with IHCL, we carry forward the shared vision of our respective founders, Jamshed Ji Tata and Babu Brijpal Das Ji, in shaping and propelling India's tourism journey. IHCL's legacy of showcasing Indian hospitality to the world resonates deeply with our core objective at Brij Hotels – to immerse travellers in the authentic spirit of India's most storied destinations. Together, we will blend IHCL's century-old tradition of excellence with our experiential approach, creating journeys that honour our shared heritage, nurture local communities, and reveal to the world the India that we love in its most beautiful and timeless form. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to **Mr. Vijay Thacker from Horwath HTL** for helping facilitate this strategic alliance."

ANK Hotels Pvt Ltd & Pride Hospitality Pvt. Ltd : The Clarks Hotels & Resorts stepped into the Midscale Segment in 2006, with their brand Clarks Inn, which filled an important gap between luxury and economy hotels. With the objective of achieving industry-



leading net room growth over the medium term, driven by an asset-light strategy under the companies ANK Hotels Pvt Ltd & Pride Hospitality Pvt. Ltd. Together it is a portfolio of 135 hotels in India.

Brij Hospitality Pvt. Ltd is a collection of boutique hotels that curates soulful journeys into India's heart—where heritage, nature, and mindful luxury intertwine. From restored palaces to hidden forest sanctuaries, every stay is an invitation to slow down, savour local flavours, and connect with timeless traditions. We work hand-in-hand with communities, source sustainably, and celebrate the stories of each land. Here, sunsets linger longer, welcomes are handwritten, and experiences are deeply personal—leaving you with more than memories, but a renewed sense of belonging. The company has a portfolio of 19 hotels, of which 10 are operational and 9 are in development.

Horwath HTL (Transaction Advisors) is a global brand with 52 offices in 38 countries is a part of the Crowe Global network, a top 10 accounting and financial services network. Horwath HTL is the global leader in hospitality, tourism and leisure consulting. Mr. Vijay Thacker, FCA, is the Managing Director of Horwath HTL India and Partner & CEO of Crowe Advisory India. With an illustrious career spanning nearly four decades, he has been a pivotal figure in the evolution of the Indian hospitality industry since 1986.

The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) and its subsidiaries bring together a group of brands and businesses that offer a fusion of warm Indian hospitality and world-class service. These include Taj – the iconic brand for the most discerning travellers and ranked as World's Strongest Hotel





Brand 2025 and India's Strongest Brand 2025 as per Brand Finance; Claridges Collection, a curated set of boutique luxury hotels merging elegance with historical charm; SeleQtions, a named collection of hotels; Tree of Life, private escapes in tranquil settings; Vivanta, sophisticated upscale hotels; Gateway, full-service hotels designed to be your gateway to exceptional destinations and Ginger, which is revolutionising the lean luxe segment.


Incorporated by the founder of the Tata Group, Jamsetji Tata, the Company opened its first hotel – The Taj Mahal Palace, in Bombay in 1903. IHCL has a portfolio of over 550 hotels including 215 under development globally across 4 continents, 14 countries and in over 150+ locations. The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) is India's largest hospitality company by market capitalization. It is listed on the BSE and NSE.





DEVENDER GROVER

We are on







Etihad announces magnificent seven new destinations



- *New routes expand access in the Gulf, Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia supporting Abu Dhabi tourism and trade*
- *Total of 27 new routes announced or launched in a single year*

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, has announced seven additional new destinations to further expand its network as part of its ongoing strategy to bring more point-to-point traffic directly to Abu Dhabi.

The new destinations – Almaty, Kazakhstan; Baku, Azerbaijan; Bucharest, Romania; Medina, Saudi Arabia; Tbilisi, Georgia; Tashkent, Uzbekistan; and Yerevan, Armenia – will further strengthen Abu Dhabi’s position as a thriving hub for tourism, culture, and commerce.

The flights are set to go on sale over the next few days, and services will begin in March 2026, with Medina to start operating in November 2025.

These latest additions bring Etihad’s total number of new destinations for 2025 to 27, following earlier announcements of year-round routes and seasonal services.

Antonoaldo Neves, Etihad’s Chief Executive Officer said: “Our goal is clear, we want to bring more people directly to Abu Dhabi. These new routes connect us to fast-growing, culturally rich regions and will help stimulate

demand for tourism and trade in the UAE’s capital.

“From the spiritual significance of Medina to the historic charm of Tbilisi and Yerevan, and the modern vibrancy of cities like Baku and Almaty, each destination adds depth to our growing network and attracts travellers with diverse interests.

“With these seven additions, Etihad will have announced or commenced operations to 27 new routes in a single year – a remarkable milestone that reflects our ambition and commitment to Abu Dhabi’s growth.

“Whether for business or leisure, guests can expect a seamless journey and world-class hospitality that reflects Etihad’s elevated service. These connections make it easier than ever to experience everything Abu Dhabi has to offer.”

Etihad has already celebrated inaugural flights to four new destinations this year – Prague, Warsaw, Sochi and Atlanta - and is set to add another 13 routes before the year closes.

The announcement comes just days after Etihad unveiled three new seasonal summer destinations for 2026: Krakow in Poland, Salalah in Oman, and Kazan in Russia, all set to operate during the peak travel months.

Discover the new destinations

A city of profound spiritual significance, Medina welcomes travellers with its serene atmosphere, striking architecture, and deep-rooted Islamic heritage. The Prophet’s Mosque stands as a beacon for pilgrims from around the world, while the city’s hospitality and growing infrastructure offer comfort and convenience.

Romania’s capital Bucharest, blends elegant architecture, vibrant culture, and lively streets, offering a stylish and spirited city escape with Central European charm.

Tbilisi enchants visitors with its vibrant blend of old-world charm and modern flair. Nestled between hills along the Kura River, the city features colourful balconies, lively cafes, historic baths, and a thriving arts scene that showcases Georgia’s rich cultural identity.

Yerevan is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, offering travellers a warm welcome amid grand squares, pink stone buildings, and mountain views. Museums, galleries, and open-air cafes celebrate Armenia’s distinct heritage and creative spirit.

Perched on the Caspian Sea, Baku dazzles with its bold architecture, seaside promenade, and dynamic energy. Visitors are drawn to its blend

of tradition and innovation—from centuries-old palaces to cutting-edge towers that define its iconic skyline.

Almaty charms with tree-lined avenues, alpine scenery and a cosmopolitan buzz. The city is surrounded by majestic peaks and offers access to ski resorts, mountain trails and green spaces, while its restaurants and cultural venues reflect a melting pot of Central Asian influences.

Tashkent blends rich history with a modern, cosmopolitan spirit. From its striking architecture and bustling bazaars to sleek new developments and vibrant cultural institutions, the city offers a unique introduction to Uzbekistan’s heritage.

Flight frequencies:

Destination	Weekly Frequencies	Start Date
MEDINA	6	09 November 2025
BAKU	10	02 March 2026
YEREVAN	10	09 March 2026
TBILISI	8	13 March 2026
ALMATY	8	16 March 2026
BUCHAREST	4	16 March 2026
TASHKENT	6	17 March 2026



Etihad for Business corporate portal goes live

- *Digital platform launches with enhanced self-service capabilities*
- *Companies can now manage travel programmes and redeem benefits online*

Etihad Airways today launched the Etihad for Business corporate portal, bringing the airline's comprehensive business travel programme fully online. Companies can now access their complete corporate travel management suite through a single digital platform.

The portal enables businesses to manage their travel programmes with enhanced tools, track performance data in real-time, and handle benefit redemptions with self-service capabilities. Corporate customers can now access contract details, monitor travel spend, and redeem Etihad for Business credits for a comprehensive suite of travel benefits.

"We've created a platform that puts control directly in our corporate partners' hands," said Javier Alija, Vice President Global Sales & Distribution at Etihad Airways. "Companies can now

manage everything from performance tracking to benefit redemptions through one simple interface."

The Etihad for Business programme rewards corporate customers for their business travel, allowing them to enhance their employees' travel experience through a flexible credit system. Companies can use earned credits to purchase from a suite of benefits including seat upgrades, priority services, lounge access, and ground transportation.

Key portal features include automated performance reports, transparent tiering requirements, and streamlined contract management. The platform eliminates administrative burdens while providing companies with clear visibility into their travel programme value.

"Business travel management should be straightforward, not complicated,"

Javier Alija added. "Our portal delivers exactly that: a user-friendly experience that makes it easy for companies to maximise the value of their travel programmes."

The platform offers different levels of support based on company needs. Enhanced analytics capabilities will follow shortly after launch, with additional features planned to expand the portal's functionality over time.

Corporate customers can also access dedicated support through the platform, from online assistance to account management services, ensuring comprehensive support throughout their travel journey.

The platform represents a valuable tool that can assist travel management companies and businesses in managing their corporate travel programmes more effectively, combining digital efficiency with personalised service.





In a first-of-its-kind move for the Air France-KLM Group, Air France pilots are now operating select KLM flights between Amsterdam and New York, marking a new era of cooperation within the transatlantic alliance. The initiative, which began July 16 and will run through October, addresses staffing challenges at KLM while maintaining seamless long-haul operations during the peak travel season.

This cross-crew strategy is more than a short-term fix; it reflects the group's growing operational flexibility and deepened integration. As KLM pilots train on Air France aircraft ahead of upcoming fleet changes, the move also signals future synergies. While ensuring continuity on one of Europe's busiest long-haul corridors, the collaboration highlights how airlines are reimagining resource sharing in an era of evolving workforce dynamics.

KLM Begins Unique Deployment of Air France Pilots

"This collaboration will help KLM to operate its scheduled flights this summer. It supplements our capacity this summer, which is good for KLM as a whole," said Maarten Stienen, COO of KLM. "I am proud that we have made this possible within the Air France-KLM Group. I wish all my colleagues on the route a safe flight and a pleasant collaboration."

With pressure mounting from strong competition on the route, KLM's crew-sharing move is a smart response to staffing gaps, one that reinforces its adaptability and long-term strategic agility.

The joint flights include one aircraft on the route between John F. Kennedy Airport in New York and Schiphol, which will be crewed by Air France pilots starting today. In total, this will last until the end of the summer schedule on October 25.

Singapore Airlines adds Capital One Lounge access at JFK



Singapore Airlines (SQ), often regarded as one of the best Southeast Asian carriers, has made a significant upgrade to its lounge offerings at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) by partnering with Capital One, who has just opened their flagship lounge at the airport. This is a major win for Singapore Airlines travelers, especially Business Class and PPS Club members, who were previously relegated to

lesser-known lounges such as the Air India Lounge (JFK) and HelloSky.

Singapore Airlines Capital One JFK Lounge

Previously, Singapore Airlines (SQ) had to rely on third-party lounge partners at New York's JFK Airport (JFK), a move that led to some frustrations for premium passengers. With no dedicated lounge of its own, the carrier made do with lounges

like the well-regarded Virgin Atlantic Clubhouse and others like the less popular Air India Maharaja Lounge. However, the introduction of the **Capital One Lounge** marks a major step forward in improving the customer experience for its premium flyers.

The Capital One Lounge, which opened in June 2025, is a **13,500-square-foot facility** located at **Terminal 4** of JFK, further elevating the airport's overall offerings

for Singapore Airlines passengers. With this new partnership, Singapore Airlines passengers flying **First Class**, **Business Class**, or those holding **Solitaire PPS Club** and **PPS Club** memberships (regardless of cabin) will now have access to this exclusive and premium space.

Access and Guest Privileges at the Capital One Lounge

As of now, Singapore Airlines will grant access to this lounge for their **First Class** and **Business Class** passengers, along with **Solitaire PPS Club** and **PPS Club** members. There are specific guest privileges tied to each category:

- **First Class and PPS Club members:** These passengers are allowed to bring one guest flying on the same Singapore Airlines flight.

- **Business Class passengers:** Access is granted to the lounge, but these passengers are not allowed to bring a guest unless they hold **Star Alliance Gold status**.

The lounge, which aims to provide an exceptional experience for travelers, also promises more exclusive features and high-end offerings to match the premium nature of Singapore Airlines' service.

Features of the Capital One Lounge

The **Capital One Lounge** at JFK Terminal 4 is open daily from **6 a.m. to 11 p.m.**, and from **July 17, 2025**, it will operate **24/7** with limited access during off-peak hours.

Capital One designed the lounge with a **bold tribute to New York City**, and passengers will be able to

experience the Big Apple's **unique style and culture** through several exciting features. Here's a glimpse of what awaits:

- **Central Park-inspired dining area**
- **Manhattan-style cocktail bar curated by Death & Co.**
- **Art installations by local New York-based artists**

Besides its stunning aesthetics, the lounge is equipped with some great amenities for travelers:

- **Shower suites** for freshening up before your flight
- **Tarmac views** to watch planes take off and land
- **High-speed Wi-Fi** for work or leisure

- **Charging ports and workstations** for convenience

The **food and beverage offerings** are a highlight, too:

- **Ess-a-Bagel** hand-rolled bagels
- **Locally sourced espresso and cold brew**
- **Grab-and-go items** such as wraps, pastries, and salads
- **Cheesemonger station** featuring selections from Murray's Cheese
- **A rotating hot menu** with dishes like **Berkshire pork shank with pea risotto**

The **cocktail bar** will serve a variety of custom cocktails with themes based on the NYC boroughs, along with exclusive brews like the **Skyscraper IPA** from **Grimm Artisanal Ales** in Brooklyn. For champagne enthusiasts, several labels are available for purchase, ranging from **\$48 to \$150 per bottle**.

Full Lounge Network for Singapore Airlines at JFK

With the addition of the **Capital One Lounge**, Singapore Airlines now has access to **four lounges** at JFK Airport. Here's a breakdown of which passengers have access to each:

While **First Class** travelers technically have access to all four lounges, the experience varies greatly depending on the lounge. The **Capital One Lounge**, however, stands out as a superior option for passengers, particularly for **Business Class** travelers who were previously relegated to less desirable lounges like the **Air India (AI) Lounge**.

Considerations and Traveler Takeaways

The arrival of the **Capital One Lounge** is certainly a major improvement for **Singapore Airlines** passengers, especially **Business Class** and **PPS Club members**. The premium design and elevated **culinary offerings** ensure that it stands out from the legacy lounges previously used by the airline at **JFK**.

However, travelers should note that while the lounge is a welcome addition, there may be potential for **overcrowding**, a challenge that frequently arises in lounges linked to credit card programs. This is especially true during peak travel times, so it's wise to plan accordingly.

In conclusion, if you're transiting through **JFK** on Singapore Airlines, the new **Capital One Lounge** is bound to provide an enhanced **pre-departure experience** that focuses on comfort, service, and high-end amenities, allowing you to start your journey off right.

Lounge	Eligible Passengers	Guest Policy
Virgin Atlantic Clubhouse	First Class, Solitaire PPS, PPS (SQ23 only)	1 guest
Capital One Lounge	First Class, Business Class, Solitaire PPS, PPS	1 guest (except Business)
Air India Lounge	First Class, Business Class, Solitaire PPS, KrisFlyer Elite Gold, Star Gold	1 guest
HelloSky Lounge	First Class, Business Class, Solitaire PPS, KrisFlyer Elite Gold, Star Gold	1 guest



Etihad Airways and SKY express sign codeshare partnership

- *New agreement unlocks access to 24 unique Greek island destinations*
- *Partnership enhances connectivity between Abu Dhabi and Greece's most sought-after destinations*

Etihad Airways has signed a codeshare agreement with Greek regional carrier SKY express, opening access to 24 Greek island

destinations and three additional Eastern Mediterranean cities for customers travelling via Athens.

The partnership, effective 14 July 2025, builds on the strong performance of the existing interline cooperation between the two airlines and significantly expands Etihad's reach across the Greek islands and broader Eastern Mediterranean region.

Under the codeshare agreement, Etihad will place its code on SKY express-operated flights beyond Athens, providing seamless access to Greece's most popular island destinations including Crete, Rhodes, Mykonos, Santorini, and Kos, alongside sought-after destinations such as Corfu, Paros, and Thessaloniki.

The partnership complements Etihad's daily service to Athens by expanding connectivity exclusively via Athens as the gateway, positioning the Greek capital as a strategic hub for onward island travel.

Arik De, Chief Revenue and Commercial Officer at Etihad Airways, said: "This partnership with SKY express opens exciting new possibilities for our customers to discover Greece beyond Athens. SKY express's comprehensive island network perfectly

complements our Athens service, giving travellers seamless access to some of the Mediterranean's most beautiful destinations through a single booking."

Gerasimos Skaltsas, Chief Commercial Officer at SKY express, said: "The collaboration with Etihad is a strong vote of confidence in SKY express, reinforcing our position as a reliable partner and significantly enhancing our connectivity. Passengers can now enjoy seamless access to the largest network of Greek destinations, served by the youngest fleet in Greece. Together, we are dedicated to making Greece a sought-after, year-round destination for visitors from around the world."

The codeshare arrangement allows customers to book connecting flights with streamlined check-in processes and automatic baggage transfers to their final destination. Customers can book the enhanced Greek network through etihad.com, the Etihad app, or travel agencies.

The partnership reinforces Athens' role as a key gateway in Etihad's European network whilst offering customers unparalleled access to Greece's stunning islands and cultural treasures.

Etihad to upgrade flights to Kolkata to brand new A321LRs

- *Game-changing A321LR features luxury First suites and lie-flat Business seats*
- *Next-generation Economy with 4K touchscreens with high-speed Wi-Fi underlining Etihad's commitment to the Indian market*



Etihad Airways is set to enhance its Kolkata service with the introduction of the next-generation Airbus A321LR, reinforcing its commitment to the Indian market.

Starting 26 September 2025, all Etihad flights between Zayed International Airport, Abu Dhabi (AUH) and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata (CCU) will be operated by the state-of-the-art A321LR, offering guests an upgraded travel experience across all cabin classes. The aircraft is equipped with luxury First Suites, fully lie-flat Business seats, and a cutting-edge Economy class featuring ultra-modern 4K touchscreens and high-speed Wi-Fi, ensuring seamless connectivity

throughout the journey.

The Airbus A321LR is designed to bring wide-body comfort to a single-aisle aircraft, offering enhanced space, privacy, and premium amenities. The First Suites provide an exclusive experience with forward-facing fully-flat beds in a 1-1 configuration, while Business Class features 14 lie-flat seats, ensuring maximum comfort on medium-haul routes. Economy Class passengers will enjoy next-generation seating, complete with advanced in-flight entertainment and connectivity, making every journey more enjoyable.

Arik De, Etihad's Chief Revenue and Commercial Officer, said: "India is a key market for Etihad, and we are

delighted to elevate our Kolkata service with our latest A321LR aircraft. With this upgrade, our guests can now enjoy a superior travel experience, whether in our luxurious First Suites, Business Class lie-flat seats, or next-generation Economy cabin. This investment underlines our ongoing commitment to providing world-class service and greater connectivity across the Indian subcontinent."

The new A321LR aircraft brings enhanced efficiency and comfort, making Etihad the premier choice for travellers between Abu Dhabi and Kolkata. The airline continues to strengthen its footprint in India, offering passengers greater access to Etihad's growing global network.



Virgin Atlantic Launches Free Starlink Wi-Fi and Premium Cabin Upgrades

Wi-Fly! Virgin Atlantic becomes the first UK airline to announce free, fleet-wide Starlink Wi-Fi

The airline is going all-in on premium: adding Starlink streaming Wi-Fi, more Upper Class seats, and a full 787 retrofit—at economy's expense

- *Starlink provides the fastest, most reliable connectivity in the sky*
- *Guests will enjoy free, streaming quality, gate-to-gate connectivity in all cabins*
- *Availability will begin in Q3 2026 and is expected to be completed by the end of 2027*

Virgin Atlantic is the first UK airline to announce plans to introduce Starlink in-flight connectivity. The airline will begin installing streaming-quality Wi-Fi on its Boeing 787s, Airbus A350s, and A330neos from Q3 2026, with the installation expected to be completed by the end of 2027.

By leveraging the world's most advanced satellite constellation in low Earth orbit, Starlink offers high-speed, low-latency internet access around the world, including the most isolated areas. This makes for a reliable, fast, and secure user experience. The fastest Wi-Fi in the skies will be offered entirely free of charge for Flying Club members, creating a digitally connected cabin, across its entire fleet.

The new service aims to create

a 'home away from home' Wi-Fi experience, allowing customers to connect seamlessly, from the moment they board the aircraft, enjoying the same quality in the air as they do on the ground. During the flight, Starlink will enable customers to enjoy elevated entertainment, including downloading and streaming their favourite TV shows, gaming with friends on the ground, browsing internet shopping, catching up on work, watching live sports games and connecting with friends and family. Customers will be able to utilise multiple devices simultaneously including smartphones, laptops and tablets.

Siobhan Fitzpatrick, Chief Experience Officer, Virgin Atlantic, commented;

"We never stop innovating for

our guests and today, in a first for any UK airline, we'll soon have free, streaming quality, unlimited, fleet-wide Wi-Fi. Together with Starlink, we are delighted to provide our guests with the best connectivity in the skies, further elevating our onboard experience.

"The new service allows our guests to create a home away from home experience, allowing customers to connect seamlessly, from the moment they board the aircraft, enjoying the same quality in the air as they do on the ground."

In July 2024, Virgin Atlantic confirmed an order for seven A330-900neos, completing its \$17 billion fleet transformation. By 2028, the airline will operate a mixed fleet of 45 next-generation aircraft comprising 19 A330-900s, 12 A350-1000s, and 14 787-9s.



From terminal to touchdown

Virgin Atlantic - A premium experience

- Virgin Atlantic will be the first UK airline to introduce free, streaming-quality, unlimited Wi-Fi throughout its fleet, using Starlink technology, with rollout completing in 2027
- Its Boeing 787-9 fleet will undergo complete cabin refurbishment, introducing increased premium cabins from 2028, with design inspired by the A330neo
- Starting Q3 2026, ten A330neo aircraft will join the fleet with larger premium cabins; six Retreat Suites, 48 Upper Class, and 56 Premium seats
- Following the successful launch of the LAX Clubhouse, the airline will invest in Clubhouses at London Heathrow and New York JFK
- A new app, focused on Flying Club with improved personalization, will launch later this year – the World of Virgin Atlantic in Your Pocket
- First European airline to partner with OpenAI, integrating real-time voice and emotionally intelligent AI concierge services
- Flying Club to roll out a programme acknowledging multi-year loyalty for guests who do not travel often enough to achieve tier status progression



Born to be different

Since 1984, Virgin Atlantic has evolved from a challenger to a leading premium long-haul airline. The company continues to enhance its personalised guest experience across travel, hospitality, and entertainment, driven by its standout crews, as it aims to be the most loved travel company.

Travel

Following the completion of its \$17 billion fleet transformation, by 2028, Virgin Atlantic will operate a mixed fleet of 45 100% next-generation fuel-efficient aircraft, including 19 A330-

900s, 12 A350-1000s, and 14 787-9s, with an average age of just under seven years. Due to high demand for premium cabins, the premium seat count will be increased in its fleet.

Reimagined 787- 9 Fleet: The airline's Boeing 787-9s will boast a full cabin re-design, introducing new seating in all three cabins. The cabins will be inspired by the award-winning A330neo design, taking guest experience to the next level. Both the Upper Class and Premium cabins will increase in size, offering 44 Upper Class seats and 56 Premium seats (up from 31 and 35, respectively). For

the first time, the Retreat Suite will be introduced to the 787-9, with eight seats available in every Upper Class cabin. The Economy cabin will reduce from 192 to 127 seats, featuring existing Economy Delight, Classic, and Light products. Rolling out from 2028 and completed by 2030.

More Premium Seats on A330neo: From Q3 2026, ten A330neo will be delivered configured with increased premium cabins, boasting 48 Upper Class, 56 Premium and 128 Economy (vs 32, 46 and 184 respectively). Following its popular introduction in 2022, four more Retreat Suites will

be added to the A330neo Upper Class cabin. With a total of six per aircraft, the Retreat Suite is the airline's most spacious suite yet. Your private space, made for sharing; the Retreat suite comprises of a 6ft 7" direct seat to a fully flat bed, a 27" touchscreen with Bluetooth connectivity, wireless charging and an ottoman that doubles up as an extra seat, allowing up to four people to comfortably dine, work or play.

Fantastic Flying Club: Virgin Atlantic continues to reward loyalty, now introducing recognition for guests with multi-year loyalty who may not travel enough for tier status progression. This follows previous innovations like reward flights counting towards status, non-expiring points, and Unlimited Availability of reward seats in 2024. Details to follow.

Entertainment

Free, streaming-quality Wi-Fi: Virgin Atlantic was the first airline to introduce fleet-wide Wi-Fi across the Atlantic in 2017 and now it will become the first UK airline to announce a partnership with Starlink, the world's fastest and most reliable connectivity, transforming how guests connect, engage, and entertain at 38,000ft. Free, streaming-quality Wi-Fi will be available across its fleet, with unlimited usage for every guest that signs up to Flying Club. The new service aims to create a 'home away from home' Wi-Fi experience, allowing customers to connect seamlessly from the moment they board the aircraft, enjoying the same quality in the air as they do on the ground. The installation across the airline's entire fleet of Airbus A330neos, A350s and Boeing 787s will begin in Q3 2026 and be completed by the end of 2027.

The World of Virgin Atlantic in your Pocket: Available from December 2025, the new mobile app is designed to put the world of Virgin Atlantic in the pocket of every guest, making their experience faster, simpler, and smarter. Seamlessly integrating both airline and holiday journeys into one intuitive platform, the app is designed

to be a personal travel companion from booking to boarding and beyond. Built for Flying Club members but accessible to all, it brings inclusivity and accessibility to every interaction. Guests will be able to search and book Flights and Holidays directly through the app, be guided seamlessly through their journeys with a rich new suite of notifications, taking advantage of native iOS and Android features that put relevant and time-sensitive journey information at their fingertips.

Your Virgin Atlantic Concierge: Virgin Atlantic, in partnership with OpenAI and Tomoro.ai, is the first European airline to integrate advanced voice mode through the Realtime API. Accessible through the Virgin Atlantic app, the concierge provides personalised, hands-free assistance when needed, anytime, anywhere, and in any language. Whether you prefer to tap, scan or speak, it helps guests with travel ideas, airport navigation, and more, offering quick support on the go.

Exclusive partnership with Joby: In March, Virgin Atlantic announced an exclusive UK partnership with Joby, the global electric air taxi service leaders. The partnership will bring fast, short-haul emissions-free travel, seamlessly connecting airport hubs and cities across the UK, combining Joby's expertise in design, engineering, and technology with the power of Virgin Atlantic's brand and award-winning customer experience. Launch of this exciting service is expected before the end of the decade once all regulatory and safety approvals have been obtained.

Hospitality

Investing in iconic Clubhouses: Clubhouses are a hallmark of Virgin Atlantic, offering guests elevated comfort and style before they fly. Following the successful opening of the Los Angeles Clubhouse in March, a multi-million-pound investment will focus on the refurbishment of both the London Heathrow and New York JFK Clubhouses, updating the look and feel of both flagship spaces to provide an even greater sense of comfort.

The Signature Ten: The airline has recently launched ten signature food and beverage creations, each unmistakably Virgin Atlantic, including The Clubhouse Burger, The Red Head cocktail, Mile High Tea, plus recently launched Virgin Atlantic Bloody Mary and Cherry Pie in the Sky ice cream.

Luxury has landed: In a new partnership, Votary will provide luxurious new skincare. Thoughtfully crafted to be kind to the skin and to the planet, guests will enjoy indulgent wellness from the moment they step onboard. The first stage of the partnership will see Votary products such as face creams and mists, multi balms and hand creams as part of the Upper Class amenity kit, due to be on board from the beginning of next year.

Shai Weiss, CEO, Virgin Atlantic, commented;

"In the last four decades, we've evolved from a challenger to a leader and a premium, long-haul flag carrier. We exist to make our customers smile, it's that simple – obsessing over finding new ways to delight our guests, delivered by our amazing people, on our journey to become the most loved travel company. We are investing billions to fly the youngest fleet across the Atlantic; the first UK airline to have free, streaming quality, fleet-wide Wi-Fi; more premium cabins and a full retrofit of the 787 fleet; alongside a new app featuring the world of Virgin Atlantic in your pocket, all delivered by our amazing teams. The best is yet to come."

Siobhan Fitzpatrick, CXO, Virgin Atlantic, commented;

"Our announcements today provide a snapshot into the future of how we care, serve, and delight every single one of our guests. Every new product, partnership, and platform unveiled has been shaped by guest insight and fuelled by our people's ingenuity. We understand who our guests are and everything we do begins with them, as we use our insights to create thoughtful experiences that feel brilliantly different at every opportunity."

Virgin Atlantic creates Mexican-inspired afternoon Tea -Quila Experience: Nacho average afternoon tea



Virgin Atlantic has put a spicy spin on a British tradition, announcing the launch of a new fiesta-fuelled afternoon tea, inspired by the flavours and the airline's new destination - Cancun, Mexico

Created by **Virgin Hotels Chef, Barry Vera**, the Afternoon Tea-quila lives up to its name with a watermelon and steak finger sandwich, a grilled strawberry burrito, tequila chilli macarons, an iced Earl Grey margarita, and even cheddar and jalapeños butter scones topped with sticky short rib

Available during Afternoon Tea Week (11th - 24th August) from 1 pm - 4 pm at Virgin Hotels London-Shoreditch, including both alcoholic and non-alcoholic offerings, plus the opportunity to save up to 65% on a Virgin Atlantic Holidays package to Cancun

It comes as research finds almost three-quarters (71%) of Brits would choose Mexico as a top travel destination, thanks to its vibrant food culture

Fasten your taste buds and prepare for take off, Virgin Atlantic is putting a spicy spin on a British tradition with

the launch of a new fiesta-fuelled afternoon tea to celebrate its new route to Cancun, inspired by the flavours and destinations of Mexico.

With an eclectic menu, designed by Virgin Hotels London-Shoreditch Chef, Barry Vera, the aptly named 'Afternoon Tea-quila' features a watermelon and steak finger sandwich, a grilled strawberry burrito, tequila chilli macarons, an iced early grey margarita, and even cheddar and jalapeños butter scones topped with sticky short rib.

Launching during Afternoon Tea Week, 'Afternoon Tea-quila' is available at Virgin Hotels London-Shoreditch and will serve up some fiery Mexican flair on British tea-time classics to get taste-obsessed travellers in the mood before their holiday.

Inspired by Virgin Atlantic's signature Mile High Tea—a modern take on

British afternoon tea served at 38,000 feet—the menu invites guests to chip, sip, and dip into bold Mexican flavours, with eclectic creations including:

Earl-garita: Infusing the traditional taste of Earl Grey with the fiery kick of chilli lime perfume served through a theatrical experience at the table

The Finger Fruitwich: A fruity twist on a classic finger sandwich with a chipotle steak and salted chilli filling packed between a compressed watermelon crust

Strawburrito: A juicy grilled strawberry burrito filled with a refreshing lemon balm creme fraiche and a silky sweet dulce de leche

Bone Voyage Tacos: Prawn Tacos that pack a punch with a rich bone marrow salsa and finished at the table with tequila & lime foam

Mexi-scone: A flaky and buttery scone that combines the sharp kick of Montgomery cheddar with jalapeño butter heat. Topped with sticky short rib for a rich, spicy, and just the right amount of naughty combo

Tastier still, the tantalising tea could save travellers up to 65% off on a trip to Mexico, which complements Virgin Atlantic's Afternoon Tea-quila, with a holiday package to Cancun, to celebrate Virgin Atlantic's new route to Mexico.

Visitors will also be treated to Lime Curd & Raspberry Tart with a tequila gel and fruit scones paired with spiced tequila syrup, clotted cream, and strawberry and jalapeños jam as traditional afternoon tea is served up with a Mexican flare.

Afternoon Tea-quila will be available from 11th August to 24th August from 1pm - 4pm to celebrate Virgin Atlantic's new three-times weekly service from London Heathrow to Cancun. The new route will cater for increased demand for travel to sunny destinations as travellers search for warmer climes during the winter months. Whilst Brits will be heading off to Mexico when the new service launches on 19th October 2025, the airline is also seeing increased demand for Dubai with bookings up 72% year on year, and Cape Town, with a 38% increase in bookings from 2024.

Research shows that 71% of Brits voted Mexico as the top destination to travel for food culture as well as a 53% increase in Brits considering it as their next holiday destination over the last two years.

Over a third (34%) said that a thriving food scene is the number one factor they think about when booking a holiday, above museums (9%) and historic landmarks (28%). Brits are increasingly living their food dreams while on their travelling adventures, with 56% agreeing their travel itineraries revolve around foodie hotspots.

Executive Chef at Virgin Hotels London-Shoreditch, Barry Vera commented: "Creating Afternoon

Tea-quila has been a real celebration of flavour and fun, just as any great trip should be. With Virgin Atlantic jetting off to Cancun soon, we wanted to take taste buds on a journey of their own, fusing the bold, punchy tastes of Mexico with British classics. We can guarantee that every element aims to surprise and delight."

Corneel Koster, Chief Customer & Operating Officer at Virgin Atlantic, said: "As we count down to our much-anticipated return to the sun-drenched shores of Cancun this October, we're inviting flavour-loving flyers to join us for a delicious detour - Afternoon Tea-quila. This bold new twist on our signature Mile High Tea blends the best of British tradition with the

vibrant spirit of Mexico, served up in tiers stacked with tacos, tequila, sugar, and spice. It's the perfect way to toast Afternoon Tea Week and get inspired to visit the Riviera Maya - salud!"

To book a holiday to Cancun and to find out more about Afternoon Tea-quila, visit here. Those unable to book the Afternoon Tea-quila, will still be able to get a taste of Mexico and expert holiday tips in Virgin Atlantic Holidays stores, with mini bottles of PATRÓN EL ALTO, a unique blend of PATRÓN Extra Añejo, Añejo and Reposado tequilas, available to all who book a trip to Cancun in selected stores* from 11 - 24 August. The London Heathrow Clubhouse will also be offering PATRÓN cocktails during the two weeks.

Sarova Hotels & Resorts Wins Top Honours at WTA 2025, Strengthens Focus on Indian Market

Sarova Hotels & Resorts, one of Kenya's most iconic hospitality brands, has been recognised with top accolades at the 2025 World Travel Awards, affirming its excellence in guest experience and service. Among the prestigious wins:

- **Sarova Stanley** – Africa's Leading City Hotel
- **Sarova Whitesands Beach Resort & Spa** – Kenya's Leading Beach Resort
- **Sarova Mara Game Camp** – Kenya's Leading Tented Safari Camp

From the heart of Nairobi to the white sands of Mombasa and the legendary Masai Mara, each Sarova property is a testament to Kenya's rich heritage and Sarova's signature warmth and hospitality.

Recognising the Indian market as a key growth segment, Sarova Hotels is curating experiences that resonate deeply with Indian travellers. This



includes customised culinary offerings, group-friendly accommodations, and versatile venues ideal for milestone celebrations, destination weddings, and corporate incentives.

Kenya's unique blend of wildlife, coastal beauty, and seamless accessibility—combined with Sarova's strong service infrastructure—is increasingly appealing to Indian event planners and MICE operators. With

favourable visa processes, short-haul connectivity, and immersive experiences, Kenya is emerging as a sought-after alternative to conventional long-haul destinations.

Mita Vohra, Board Director, Sarova Hotels & Resorts, said:

"These awards honour our deep bond with Kenya's land, its people, and our guests. At Sarova, we don't just host travellers—we immerse them in stories of the wild, flavours from our soil, and moments that linger for a lifetime. For Indian travellers, whether for intimate escapes or grand celebrations, we promise experiences that feel personal, soulful, and unforgettable."

As India's outbound travel appetite grows across weddings, MICE, and experiential leisure, Sarova Hotels & Resorts is committed to delivering tailored Kenyan hospitality that celebrates tradition, luxury, and cultural connection.

Emirates drops second limited edition collection of luggage made from upcycled aircraft interiors - 'Aircrafted by Emirates'



Image shows some pieces from the second collection of 'Aircrafted by Emirates' - unique luggage handmade from upcycled aircraft interiors

After the sellout success of Aircrafted by Emirates' launch collection in 2023, Emirates is introducing a second, limited edition collection of handmade luggage and bags crafted from upcycled materials from retrofitted aircraft. Aircrafted by Emirates 2025 Collection is now available to purchase at the Emirates Official Store, and the 167 collectors' items are expected to sell out within days. Like the previous collection, which raised more than USD 17,000, most proceeds will be donated to children in need via the Emirates Airline Foundation.

Offering an opportunity to own a unique piece of aviation history, the second collection of Aircrafted by Emirates features 3 new trolley bag styles – the most popular item from the launch collection. Two trendy backpack styles are also available, as well as two handbags – one of which is made from the fur of the Emirates' Captain seat. Prices of each handmade item range from USD 80 to USD 350.

The materials used to craft the collection have been gathered from the iconic Emirates A380, as well as from Boeing 777 aircraft. From 63 retrofitted aircraft so far, more than 30,000 kg

of materials have been repurposed and assigned to creating luggage and bags. The materials used range from aluminium headrests to pure leather from First and Business Class seats, and the sofas in the A380 onboard lounge. All fabrics are freshly laundered in a facility, then further deep cleaned by hand, leather-conditioned, and thoroughly disinfected before being sewn into unique pieces. Brand new lining is added to the bags, along with functional zippers. Some bags even feature actual Emirates' seatbelts as straps.

All the Aircrafted bags were designed and handmade by Emirates tailors in a dedicated cabin workshop at Emirates Engineering facility in Dubai. Emirates has a team of 14 'tailors', officially titled as Engineering Maintenance Assistants, whose usual role involves fixing and stitching any tears in the interiors of Emirates' vast aircraft fleet. The success of Aircrafted by Emirates and Aircrafted KIDS, means that an entire team of tailors are now dedicated full-time to the initiative.

The Emirates Retrofit Project

In August 2022, Emirates began the largest known fleet retrofit project, as part of a multi-billion-dollar investment to elevate customer experience. Emirates aims to upgrade the entire interior cabins of 219 of its Airbus A380 and Boeing 777 aircraft – two of the largest commercial aircraft types in service today. Managed entirely by Emirates' Engineering team, the retrofit will see nearly 4,000 brand new Premium Economy seats installed, 728 First Class suites refurbished, and over 5,000 Business Class seats upgraded to a new style and design when the project is complete.

Gulf Air Announces Services to New York JFK, during the official visit of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister to the U.S.

Starting October 1, 2025, the airline will operate three weekly flights to JFK from Bahrain International Airport (BAH) using its Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft. Gulf Air's Dreamliners are outfitted with an economy cabin and the carrier's plush Falcon Gold business class, which offers lie-flat seats, turndown service with bedding and pajamas, and a 22-inch entertainment screen with noise-canceling headphones.

Gulf Air will initially operate its flights from the current Terminal One at JFK. The airline intends to transition its operations to JFK's New Terminal One in June 2026, offering passengers a seamless and modern travel experience aligned with Gulf Air's premium service standards.

Gulf Air Group Chief Executive Officer Jeffrey Goh stated, «We are excited to announce the launch of our direct flights to New York's JFK and our return to the North American market. This service aligns with Gulf Air's strategy of calibrated expansion and serving strategic markets, providing passengers with greater choice and convenience for travel, through Bahrain International Airport, between Bahrain and North America, and beyond, supporting the connectivity strategy of the Kingdom.»

Nicknamed the "Island of Pearls," Bahrain is known for its many islands, water sports, beautiful desert landscapes, and events like the Formula 1 Bahrain Grand Prix. Beyond Bahrain, Gulf Air flies to popular destinations

in the region, including Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Cairo, and Amman. It also flies to Europe and Asia, including destinations like Athens, Frankfurt, and Bangkok. In March, the carrier launched a new route to London Gatwick Airport.

The return follows Bahrain's upgrade to Category 1 safety status by the US FAA, a regulatory milestone allowing Bahraini airlines to operate direct services to the US. Gulf Air last served JFK in the 1990s with various one-stop routes but has since focused on regional connectivity.

Passengers can book their flights to/from New York and stay updated on flight timings by downloading the Gulf Air mobile application, visiting Gulf Air's website gulfair.com, or through travel agents.



Emirates to introduce third daily flight to Mauritius to facilitate travel from the airline's network

- The third daily service will be operated by a three-class Boeing 777-300ER, boosting seat capacity by over 30 per cent on the busy route
- Winning partnership with Air Mauritius contributes to and supports increased demand for Emirates' services to the Indian Ocean destination



In its commitment to supporting inbound tourism to the island nation of Mauritius, Emirates has announced it will introduce a third daily flight, starting on 1 December. The additional service, to be operated by a Boeing 777 aircraft as EK709/710, will complement existing schedules and support the travel plans of Emirates customers planning trips to the popular destination from across its network of more than 140 points.

Emirates, the world's largest international airline, currently serves Mauritius with two daily services aboard its flagship A380 aircraft, operating as EK701/702 and EK703/704. The addition of the third daily service, under a codeshare arrangement with Air Mauritius, will provide convenient flight timings to support travel itineraries and enable seamless connectivity for customers from the Middle East, Europe, and the Americas travelling to the Indian Ocean holiday spot. The additional daily service will also provide seamless connections from and to Far East markets, where Emirates will actively promote the destination to audiences in Japan, China, Malaysia, and Hong Kong.

Passengers can now book seats to the exotic island destination in First Class, Business Class, and Economy Class on flight EK709, to operate daily and departing Dubai at 06:55 hrs and arriving in Mauritius at 13:40 hrs. Flights from Mauritius, operating as EK710, will depart Mauritius at 18:30 hrs and arrive in Dubai at 01:10 hrs the

next day. All times are local.

Tickets on the third daily service can be booked immediately by visiting emirates.com, for travel starting from 1 December. Tickets can also be booked on the Emirates App, Emirates Retail stores, the Emirates contact centre, or via travel agents.

Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer, said: "We would like to thank the Mauritian authorities for making an additional daily service possible. We have been proudly serving Mauritius since 2002, and our double daily A380 services have been a major success and contributor to the growth of the country's tourism industry. The additional daily service on our wide-body Boeing 777 aircraft will enable a more than 30 per cent increase in capacity on the route, while also providing additional flight options for leisure and business travellers to seamlessly connect to flights."

"We recently reaffirmed our codeshare partnership with Air Mauritius and our shared commitment to putting the destination on the global stage by facilitating steady growth in tourist demand for visits to Mauritius. We are also pleased to support and complement the operations of the national carrier, whose services have contributed to our success on this route. The additional daily service will allow both airlines to meet demand from global travellers."

Since Emirates launched its scheduled services to Mauritius in

2002, the airline has carried more than 8.8 million passengers and more than 126 thousand tonnes of cargo on flights to and from Mauritius. Its passenger and cargo operations have generated significant economic and social contributions, including USD119 million in direct contribution from Emirates' flights, USD264 million in tourism receipts, as well as USD530 million to the Mauritian economy through tourism-related spending.

Emirates' operations have also had an immense impact on uplifting the economy and supported the creation of 3,600 jobs in the nation. In addition, hundreds of Mauritians work for Emirates, from pilots and cabin crew to engineering, customer service, and corporate roles.

Emirates has succeeded in driving demand across its global network thanks to its long-standing partnership with Air Mauritius, since 2003, and Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA), allowing both the airline and tourism body to collaborate on joint initiatives that showcase the appeal of Mauritius to stakeholders in key markets, since 2012.

The airline currently operates 14 flights per week between Dubai and Mauritius on the airline's flagship A380 aircraft, with a weekly capacity of more than 15,000 seats. Besides being the only airline offering services on the double-decker aircraft to the island, Emirates is also the only airline providing seats in First Class cabins.

Emirates introduces retrofitted Boeing 777 to Madrid

*Airline will serve the Spanish capital with its refurbished aircraft featuring its highly lauded Premium Economy cabin starting from 16 September**



Emirates will serve Madrid with its refurbished four-class Boeing 777 aircraft

Emirates, the world's largest international airline, has announced it will deploy its newly refurbished Boeing 777 aircraft to/from Madrid starting from 16 September. Customers can look forward to an enhanced travel experience with upgraded interiors and premium signature travel touches across all cabins. Madrid is Emirates' first destination in Spain to operate with the airline's next-generation interiors.

Emirates' four-class Boeing 777 will operate as flight EK143/EK144. Emirates flight EK143 will depart Dubai at 14:30 hours and arrive in Madrid at 20:20 hours local time. The return flight, EK144, will depart Madrid at 22:05hrs and arrive in Dubai at 7:10hrs local time, the following day.

The deployment of Emirates' retrofitted Boeing 777 to Madrid marks a new era of premium travel to

the Spanish city - offering customers the airline's award-winning Premium Economy service*, newly configured Business Class cabin, and a 'better' travel experience to/from the country.

Enhanced travel experience

Emirates' newest Boeing 777 cabin interiors will wow customers with their modern design details and signature cabin finishings, including:

- A refurbished First-Class cabin with upgraded interiors offering unparalleled luxury.
- New Business Class cabin that provides more privacy and comfort for customers with fully lie-flat seats in an updated 1-2-1 seating configuration.
- The latest Premium Economy cabin, which combines accessible luxury with comfort, offers cream leather seats, increased legroom, adjustable headrests, deeper seat recline, and raised cushioned leg rests.

- Spacious Economy Class seats with new design elements.

Serving 'fly better' experiences

Emirates continues to invest in elevating the travel experience through its ambitious multibillion-dollar retrofit program — one of the largest in aviation history. With 61 aircraft already refurbished, including 31 A380s and 30 Boeing 777s, the program is set to upgrade over 220 aircraft with Emirates' latest cabin products.

Passengers travelling with Emirates will enjoy the airline's regionally inspired gourmet meals, premium beverage selection, and award-winning inflight entertainment on *ice* with up to 6,500 channels of on-demand entertainment - including more than 260 channels of Spanish content.

**Flights are now open for sale for travel starting September 16.*

The fleet factor:

Emirates expands retrofitted A380 and Boeing 777 services footprint to 8 more cities, plans deployment of first long-range A350 to Australia

By the end of 2025, the airline will serve over 70 cities with aircraft sporting the latest interiors on Boeing 777s, A380s and A350s, representing almost 50% of its network

- In total, Emirates will offer over 2 million Premium Economy seats per year by the end of 2025
- Airline's retrofit programme represents the largest in aviation history, with ramped up investment of US \$5 billion and 219 aircraft slated for refresh

continues to advance at a remarkable pace with Emirates Engineering Centre teams working round the clock to complete full nose-to-tail makeovers at an average rate of one wide-body aircraft every three weeks.

The airline will also receive its first long-range A350 later this year, which is set to make its debut in Australia with the introduction of flights to Adelaide from 1 December**.

Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer, said: "The latest rollout of refurbished Airbus A380s and Boeing 777s and new A350s offer more opportunities for customers in over 70 dynamic cities and growing economies to enjoy our latest generation premium onboard experience combined with our award-winning service. The redoubling of our refurbishment programme efforts means that by the end of this year, Emirates will have established itself as one of the preeminent industry leaders offering Premium Economy seats. In the next two years, we will definitely cement our position as the industry leader in Premium Economy deployment. The scaling up of our Premium Economy offering strengthens our competitive proposition to travellers and makes it our strategic differentiator by offering them more choice as they increasingly seek premium travel experiences.

Deploying our first long-range A350 to Adelaide is an exciting development and underscores the importance of Australia as a major eastbound anchor in our network. It also represents our commitment to delivering the best possible long-haul experience on our



Emirates will introduce a slew of Boeing 777 and Airbus A380s with upgraded cabins to 8 more cities on its network in the coming months. The airline will roll out its refreshed A380s to Bangkok, Hong Kong, Nice and Perth, and its upgraded Boeing 777s to Madrid, Kuala Lumpur, Phuket and Frankfurt, as well as another refitted Boeing 777 service to Dublin*.

These latest planned deployments will offer customers more opportunities to enjoy a seamless, consistent and industry-leading Emirates experience, whether they are travelling to or through Dubai, as the total number of cities served by refurbished Boeing 777s and Airbus A380s and newly delivered A350s reaches over 70 cities.

The airline's retrofit programme

latest generation aircraft.”

Emirates plans to deploy its latest Boeing 777s and Airbus A380s across these key destinations:

- Emirates flights EK372/373 to **Bangkok** will operate with the refreshed A380 from 1 July* 2025.
- **Hong Kong** will receive its first A380 fitted with four classes and the latest interiors on EK380/381 from 1 October*. The operation will complement the airline’s newly introduced retrofitted Boeing 777 operations set to start this summer.
- Emirates will debut its latest Premium Economy cabins to **Nice** on EK077/078 from 15 October. *
- Reaffirming Australia’s strategic importance in Emirates’ network, **Perth** will become the fourth Australian city to receive the latest-generation A380 starting 26 October* on EK 420/421.
- Customers travelling to and from **Madrid** will enjoy an enhanced Boeing 777 onboard experience with refreshed interiors on EK 143/144 from 15 October*. Madrid becomes the first destination in Spain to operate with the airline’s next-gen interiors.
- **Kuala Lumpur** flights EK346/347 will operate with a retrofitted Boeing 777 from 15 October. *
- Emirates will introduce its latest generation cabins to Germany for the first time, with **Frankfurt** set to receive the Emirates Boeing 777 on its daily EK043/044 from 15 December. *
- Emirates’ upgraded Boeing 777 will operate to **Phuket** starting 1 December on the daily EK396/397. *

Additionally, **Dublin** will receive its second refitted Boeing 777 on 1 December.*

Adelaide will be the first city in the airline’s network to receive the long-range Airbus A350 with the introduction of flights on EK440/441 beginning 1 December**. The Emirates Airbus A350-900ULR can stay in the air for over 15 hours non-stop, with a range exceeding 14,000 km.

By the end of 2025, Emirates expects to receive 5 A350 aircraft earmarked to serve long-haul missions, featuring 32 lie-flat Business Class

seats in a 1-2-1 configuration, 28 seats in Premium Economy, and 238 generously pitched Economy Class seats.

Leading in Premium Economy

Since the start of the refurbishment programme in November 2022, Emirates has upgraded the interiors of 51 Airbus A380 and Boeing 777 aircraft, now flying to 38 destinations. The airline’s plans include entire cabin refurbishments of 219 aircraft, representing 110 Airbus A380s and 109 Boeing 777s.

As the programme accelerates, Emirates is poised to rise in the rankings as one of the top airlines in Premium Economy capacity based on international seats offered, with over 2 million seats on offer per year by the end of 2025 on aircraft flying to over 70 cities, and a doubling of that capacity to 4 million seats per year by the end of 2026. By the end of this year, close to 40% of the airline’s fleet will offer its latest interiors, including Premium Economy and a refreshed Business Class cabin.

More significantly, as the airline adds Premium Economy capacity, it has also maintained high seat loads averaging over 80% on its long-haul routes, speaking to the strength of its world-class product and demonstrating robust demand for an elevated onboard experience.

Today, the spread of Emirates’ Premium Economy capacity is geographically diverse, and the airline is focused on introducing more of its latest products and harmonising its interiors on offer across more cities so customers flying to and through Dubai enjoy a more seamless experience.

Emirates’ retrofit programme picks up momentum

The airline’s unprecedented US\$5 billion retrofit investment stands unrivalled in the aviation industry in scale and size, uniquely focused on enhancing the onboard experience for customers. Meticulously orchestrated under the expertise of the Emirates Engineering team, over 270 engineers



and technicians work round the clock, devoting over 1,800 manhours each day to bring each aircraft to impeccable completion.

On average, it takes 22 days to retrofit an A380, and 18 days for a Boeing 777. Every month, two aircraft roll out of the programme, ready for deployment to a new city or to be layered on an existing operation sporting refurbished aircraft.

Once this monumental project is complete, Emirates will have installed 8,512 next-generation Premium Economy seats, 2,034 refreshed First-Class suites, 12,720 upgraded Business Class seats with entirely new configurations, and thoughtfully overhauled 68,364 Economy Class seats.

Delivering on the airline’s commitment to provide a best-in-class suite of products for its new cabins will require the installation of 218,000 metres of fabric for the latest Economy Class seats, while Premium Economy, Business Class and First Class will get a fresh reupholstering that entails the use of 130,000 square metres of buttery leather. Over 132,000 square metres of fresh, durable carpets will be rolled out across cabins, and 14,000 square metres of laminate sheets will be applied to cabin walls.

**Aircraft deployment may be advanced if released earlier from refurbishment*

***If aircraft are delivered ahead of schedule, Emirates will bring forward the deployment of its Airbus A350*

American Express Opens New Centurion Lounge at Tokyo's Haneda Airport



On July 16, American Express opened a new Centurion Lounge at Tokyo's Haneda Airport (HND), the busiest airport in Japan and one of the busiest airports in the world. The Centurion Lounge at HND marks the 30th to open worldwide and the 4th to open in Asia, joining lounges at Indira Gandhi International Airport (DEL) in

Delhi, Hong Kong International Airport (HKG) in Hong Kong, and Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport (BOM) in Mumbai. The new lounge in Tokyo features locally sourced decor and artwork that celebrates Japanese philosophy, craftsmanship, and artistry, a live, open kitchen where guests can watch the chefs cook, a buffet offering

a variety of Japanese and Western food and beverages, a dedicated sweets bar nodding to Japan's snack culture, and private phone rooms that are also equipped with a curated audio program for meditation. Located in Haneda's Terminal 3 near Gate 114, guests can enjoy sweeping views of the airfield while they rest and refuel before their flights.

"The Centurion Lounge at Haneda Airport celebrates Japanese culture, featuring custom artwork, an exciting menu that showcases the flavors of Tokyo, and my personal favorite – private meditation booths to help you recharge and find some calm before your flight," said Audrey Hendley, President, American Express Travel. "We've seen incredible demand for travel to Japan; it is one of the destinations where we've seen the highest growth recently. We look forward to showcasing the impeccable service Centurion Lounges are known for in a destination we know is so important to our Card Members."

"Long-awaited by our eligible Card Members, we are thrilled to open Japan's first Centurion Lounge at Haneda Airport," said Yasuhiro Sudo, Senior Vice President, Japan Country Manager at American Express. "We look forward to providing a best-in-class experience with high-quality meals, a wonderful atmosphere, and local charm to eligible Japanese Card Members and eligible Card Members from all over the world. We are committed to delivering the exceptional customer experience American Express proudly offers and is known for."

Select Dishes by Chef Satoshi Ogino, Plus Specialty Drinks and Sweets Bar

Acclaimed Chef Satoshi Ogino is known for his mastery of classic Japanese cuisine with an emphasis

on seasonality and has helmed the kitchens of several Michelin-starred restaurants in Tokyo, including his own Akasaka Ogino. In addition to a special lounge menu by Chef Ogino showcasing local flavors in his signature style, the kitchen will also offer Japanese favorites, including sushi and ramen, and a buffet will serve both local and global cuisine. A full bar will offer a premium menu of wine, locally inspired cocktails, and a selection of Japanese beers, sake, and shochu[1], while a dedicated sweets bar will feature a selection of teas and traditional Japanese Wagashi sweets, plus a rotating menu of additional treats.

Art and Design Inspired by Local Craftsmanship and “Japan Blue”

Designed by OnBrand, American Express's in-house creative agency, the lounge is inspired by the philosophy, craftsmanship, and artistry of Japanese culture and “Japan Blue”. Produced by the Japanese dyeing technique of Aizome, “Japan Blue” is a deep indigo hue that represents tranquility and stability and is ubiquitous in Japanese art, architecture, and fashion. The color is woven throughout the lounge and complemented by natural materials and textures, including slatted wood, stone, and subtle walnut and black ash accents. The bar features elegant Uroko ceramic tiles and a dramatic ceiling canopy, while an Edo-Kiriko-inspired custom chandelier hangs in the main seating area, and locally inspired textiles and wall coverings can be found throughout the space.

The lounge features commissioned artwork from several local artists, including a custom American Express-inspired mural by Shu Kuroki, and Saki Matsumoto's textile reimaging of the American Express bulldog, Sir Charles Frosty Blue, as Komainu — a guardian of Japanese shrines symbolizing trust and protection. The artwork also includes ceramics by Ryuji Iwasaki, ink paintings by Ryohei Sasaki, and a traditional Japanese Wajima Nuri lacquerware installation by Miho Yokoyama. The pieces for the installation were sourced from

Ishikawa — home of the Wajima Nuri lacquerware tradition — to support recovery efforts following the 2024 earthquake that devastated the Noto Peninsula.

At nearly 7,500 square feet, The Centurion Lounge at HND will feature luxury amenities and several areas for travelers to work, relax and recharge before boarding their flights, including:

- **Private phone rooms with curated audio programming for meditation:** Private booths that can be used for phone calls or meditation provide functionality and tranquility with acoustical fabric panels, traditional Japanese artwork, and a curated audio program of calming water, forest, bird, and wind sounds.

- **Comfortable seating areas for all types of travelers:** Guests will have a wide range of seating options to choose from, including armchairs, high tops and dining banquettes, cozy couches, and a private room with seating to accommodate families and small groups, complete with a television.

- **Centurion VIP Room:** Centurion Members have access to a VIP area featuring elevated yet comfortable furnishings and finishes, including Kumiko-style woodwork, a private beverage station, and a curated display of Japanese artwork and photography that captures scenes from the country's lively festival culture.

- **Signature Centurion Lounge amenities for all types of travelers:** Guests will also find signature Centurion Lounge amenities, including dedicated workstations and phone booths, premium shower suites and restrooms, abundant outlets and USB ports, access to complimentary high-speed Wi-Fi, and more.

Meeting More Card Members in More Places

With more airport lounge options than any other credit card issuer[2], the American Express Global Lounge Collection™ is just one of the many ways American Express supports Card Members while they travel. Eligible Card Members have access to more than

1,550 lounges worldwide, including 30 Centurion Lounges. American Express continues to expand and enhance the Centurion Lounge Network with plans announced to open new lounge locations at Salt Lake City International Airport (SLC) in Salt Lake City in 2025 and Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) in New Jersey and Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS) in Amsterdam in 2026.

AMERICAN EXPRESS - American Express is a global payments and premium lifestyle brand powered by technology. Our colleagues around the world back our customers with differentiated products, services, and experiences that enrich lives and build business success. Founded in 1850 and headquartered in New York, American Express' brand is built on trust, security, and service, and a rich history of delivering innovation and Membership value for our customers. With a hundred million merchant locations on our global network in around 200 countries and territories, we seek to provide the world's best customer experience every day to a broad range of consumers, small and medium-sized businesses, and large corporations.

THE CENTURION LOUNGE

- The Centurion Lounge is the signature lounge program within the broader American Express Global Lounge Collection, which includes complimentary access to American Express Centurion Lounges, Escape Lounges, Delta Sky Club® for Card Members flying on Delta, Priority Pass™ Select Lounges upon enrollment, Plaza Premium Lounges, select Lufthansa Lounges when flying Lufthansa Group, and Additional Global Lounge Collection Partner Lounges--a total of more than 1,550 lounges across 140 countries and counting. Eligible Card Members can find a lounge at the Global Lounge Collection website, <https://americanexpress.com/findalounge>, or by using the American Express® App. They can also begin their check-in process for select Centurion Lounges through the mobile check-in tool within the American Express® App.



‘Emirates First’ officially opens – an exclusive new First Class experience at Dubai International (DXB)

‘Emirates First’ was officially opened today at Terminal 3, Dubai International (DXB), offering a luxurious and unique airport experience for Emirates’ First Class customers and Skywards Platinum members. The check-in area has been meticulously upgraded with an opulent and refined private seating area, offering an exclusive check-in process.

As the world’s largest operator of international First Class travel - offering 26,800 seats a week and the largest inventory of international First Class seats in the industry, Emirates continues to invest and uplift its customers’ experience at every

touchpoint on the ground and in the air. This is a clear demonstration of Emirates’ commitment to renovating its ground products and providing more comfort to its customers.

Adel al Redha, Emirates’ Deputy President & Chief Operating Officer, remarked:

“We invest heavily in upgrading our ground products, and Emirates First is one of the areas that will offer a unique and private environment to our First Class customers and Skywards Platinum members. We know our customers value privacy and convenience, and this will provide another level of hospitality to

the check-in experience, as part of our efforts to continuously uplift the overall travel journey.

Now, our customers can enjoy a sleek transfer with our Chauffeur Drive Service, a swift check-in at the exclusive Emirates First, explore a world-class lounge before boarding, and relax into a multi-award-winning inflight experience with Emirates.”

Emirates First has been reimaged with premium customers in mind, and every detail of the travel journey considered to ensure a ‘Fly Better’ experience. From the moment customers reach the dedicated Emirates Terminal 3 departures area,

and just a few steps inside, a grand golden entryway now signifies the entrance the private space, where a dedicated Emirates host verifies guest eligibility for entry.

With a neutral palette of warm earth tones subtly blended with accents of Emirates' signature rich bronze and gold, Emirates First is both visually relaxing and luxurious to the eye, offering a serene escape from the hustle and bustle of the airport. While grand columns flank the space, wooden floors are mixed with elegant marble flooring, while soft carpeting lies underfoot in the seating areas, and plush leather and soft fabric armchairs and sofas await. In a nod to Emirates' premium First Class Lounges, renowned Emirates' Rolex clocks indicate the time in major world cities and adorn a feature wall behind a podium with an extravagant fresh flower arrangement. Echoing the iconic interior cabins of Emirates' newest aircraft, a magnificent backlit Ghaf Tree honours the national tree of the UAE. Within the new area,

all digital screens and advertising have been removed, soft integrated lighting has been curated to ensure a tranquil ambience, and natural greenery adds a soothing yet vibrant touch.

Recognising the importance of time to premium customers, Emirates First offers a sleek experience where check-in formalities can be performed on iPads while guests are seated. Families can relax in the seated areas, while one member is assisted with the check in process for all. Customers can also utilise the counters to check in if preferred and drop baggage at the eye-catching marble and brass desks, where they are loaded onto dedicated First Class baggage belts. Customers can then breeze through Security and Immigration and proceed to one of the three dedicated Emirates First Class Lounges in Terminal 3, DXB to enjoy chef-crafted à la carte meals, fine wines, spirits and Champagne, complimentary spa treatments, business centres and kids' areas, and concierge duty-free shopping. Across

the world, the journey for Emirates First Class customers is curated from start to finish, with complimentary access to 43 dedicated Emirates Lounges across the globe, and complimentary chauffeur drive for seamless door-to-door transfers across most destinations.

The re-opening of Emirates First is the latest addition to Emirates' recent suite of investments for First Class customers. In May of this year, Emirates announced an array of new enhancements that finesse the finer details of hospitality and service onboard, from a keepsake menu which tells an explorative story of Emirates' wine selection and culinary inspirations, to new Emirates engraved Robert Welch bowls designed for unlimited caviar, to rustic cheeseboard slates to enhance Emirates' renowned artisan cheeseboard. Emirates First Class cabin crew now also provide a gloved service for exceptional hospitality onboard.

Photo Caption - Emirates First, an exclusive airport experience for First Class customers at T3, DXB



Noida International Airport Poised to Redefine Aviation and Tourism in Uttar Pradesh by November 2025



A landmark infrastructure project, DXN is set to become one of Asia's largest airports—accelerating regional development, boosting international connectivity, and reshaping India's aviation future.

After years of planning, investment, and phased development, **Noida International Airport (DXN)** in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh, is on track to begin operations by **November 2025**. Positioned just 75 km from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, DXN is expected to play a pivotal role in reshaping air connectivity in northern India while catalyzing tourism, trade, and economic development across the region.

With more than 80% of its first-phase construction completed, the airport is now in its final stretch toward commercial launch—aiming to rank among the largest in Asia by area and capacity.

Construction Progress and Timeline

Originally slated for completion in September 2024, DXN encountered delays due to construction and regulatory complexities. As of mid-

2025, final works are accelerating:

- **Runway and airside development:** 90% complete
 - **Terminal and support infrastructure:** Rapidly advancing
 - **Domestic and cargo operations:** Expected to commence mid-September 2025
 - **Full international services:** Targeted for launch in November 2025
- Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Minister **Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi'** recently reaffirmed the

state government's full commitment to seeing the project over the finish line, noting that DXN will serve as a critical asset in meeting growing aviation demand.

Two-Phase Operational Rollout

DXN's entry into service will follow a **phased approach**:

- **Phase 1 (Mid-September):**

Domestic passenger flights and cargo operations

- **Phase 2 (November):**

Commencement of full international services

World-Class Design and Passenger-Centric Experience

DXN is being designed as a next-generation airport, integrating both **efficiency and passenger comfort**, including:

- A **Ground Transportation Centre** linking metro, bus, taxi, and private vehicles
- Planned **high-speed rail** link to Delhi and Varanasi, potentially reducing travel time to just **21 minutes**
- **Multimodal cargo hub** in partnership with **Air India SATS**,

Phase 1 alone is valued at **₹10,056 crore**.

Developed and operated under a **40-year concession by Zurich Airport International AG**, the project leverages global expertise while unlocking major economic potential in sectors such as:

- **Tourism and hospitality**
- **Air cargo and logistics**
- **Industrial development**
- **Job creation across the aviation value chain**

A Key Driver of India's Aviation Evolution

DXN arrives at a pivotal time for Indian aviation. With domestic air traffic rising rapidly and infrastructure in metro hubs nearing saturation, Noida International Airport promises to:

- Ease pressure on Delhi's IGI Airport
- Introduce new route options and airline competition
- Enhance pricing dynamics and passenger services
- Position India more strongly in global aviation networks

*Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Minister **Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi'** recently reaffirmed the state government's full commitment to seeing the project over the finish line, noting that DXN will serve as a critical asset in meeting growing aviation demand.*

Pending regulatory milestones include:

- **Aerodrome License (DGCA)**
- **Security Clearance (BCAS)**

A joint readiness inspection by the **DGCA, BCAS, and Airports Authority of India** in May 2025 laid the groundwork for final approvals.

Strategic Location & Projected Reach

Strategically located in Jewar, DXN provides direct access to major urban and industrial centers:

- **Noida – 52 km**
- **Dadri – 90 km**
- **Agra – 130 km**

With an estimated **80 million residents** in its regional catchment area, the airport is projected to handle **12 million passengers annually in its first phase**, with capacity expected to reach **70 million by 2040–2050**.

capable of handling over **100,000 tons of freight annually**

Sustainability and Regional Identity at the Core

Environmental and cultural sustainability remain core pillars of DXN's development strategy:

- **Over 580 mature trees relocated** to preserve biodiversity
- Creation of an **eight-acre green buffer zone**
- Terminal design incorporates **natural light, energy efficiency, and North Indian cultural aesthetics**

Economic Impact and Global Investment

With a total investment of **₹34,000 crore (approx. \$4.1 billion)**, DXN represents one of the most ambitious aviation infrastructure projects in India.

What It Means for B2B Travel and Cargo Professionals

For corporate travel planners, logistics firms, tour operators, and GSA networks, DXN offers a transformative new platform. Key benefits include:

- Expanded travel itineraries and cargo routing options
- Increased service flexibility and connectivity
- Opportunities in the fast-growing pharma, express, and perishables segments

Looking Ahead

As Noida International Airport prepares for its commercial debut, it stands as more than just an infrastructure milestone—it is a **symbol of India's bold ambitions** in aviation, tourism, and sustainable growth. With strategic partnerships, advanced technology, and a passenger-first philosophy, DXN is poised to redefine how northern India connects with the world.



Saudi

An Emerging Destination for Indian Honeymooners: Unveiling Exclusive Offers with TBO

Saudi is rapidly emerging as one of the most sought-after honeymoon destinations for Indian couples seeking something beyond the ordinary. With its unique blend of modern marvels, futuristic luxury, and romantic desert stays, Saudi is now opening its doors wider to Indian honeymooners. TBO is playing a vital role in positioning Saudi as the new hot-selling honeymoon destination with exclusive offers tailored specifically for this growing travel segment.

Saudi: Redefining Romance in the Heart of the Desert

From the untouched beaches of the Red Sea to the dramatic sandstone cliffs of AlUla, the kingdom offers a honeymoon experience that is luxurious, adventurous, romantic, and, of course, memorable. For a honeymoon in Saudi, travelers must be offered:

- **Romantic Desert Stays-** From stargazing under the desert skies, exceptional Arabian experiences, to

private candlelit dinners, and glamping – the desert offers perfect privacy and serenity.

- **AlUla Domes-** Set amidst the historic and geological wonders of AlUla, these luxury desert domes combine modern comfort with ancient vibes. Exploring UNESCO sites by day and chilling in cozy spaces at night – sounds like a perfect honeymoon.

- **Red Sea Camps-** Placed beside the untouched coastline of the Saudi Red Sea, couples can stay at



breathtaking beachfront resorts where luxury and adventure know no bounds.

TBO.com, India's leading B2B travel platform, is positioning Saudi as a preferred honeymoon destination for Indian travelers. As the go-to platform for the best hotel deals and curated sightseeing packages, TBO makes it easy to offer memorable trips that

provide the best of Saudi. On the other hand, TBO Academy focuses on empowering travel partners through marketing resources, networking opportunities, and consistent training support.

A New Chapter for Indian Honeymooners

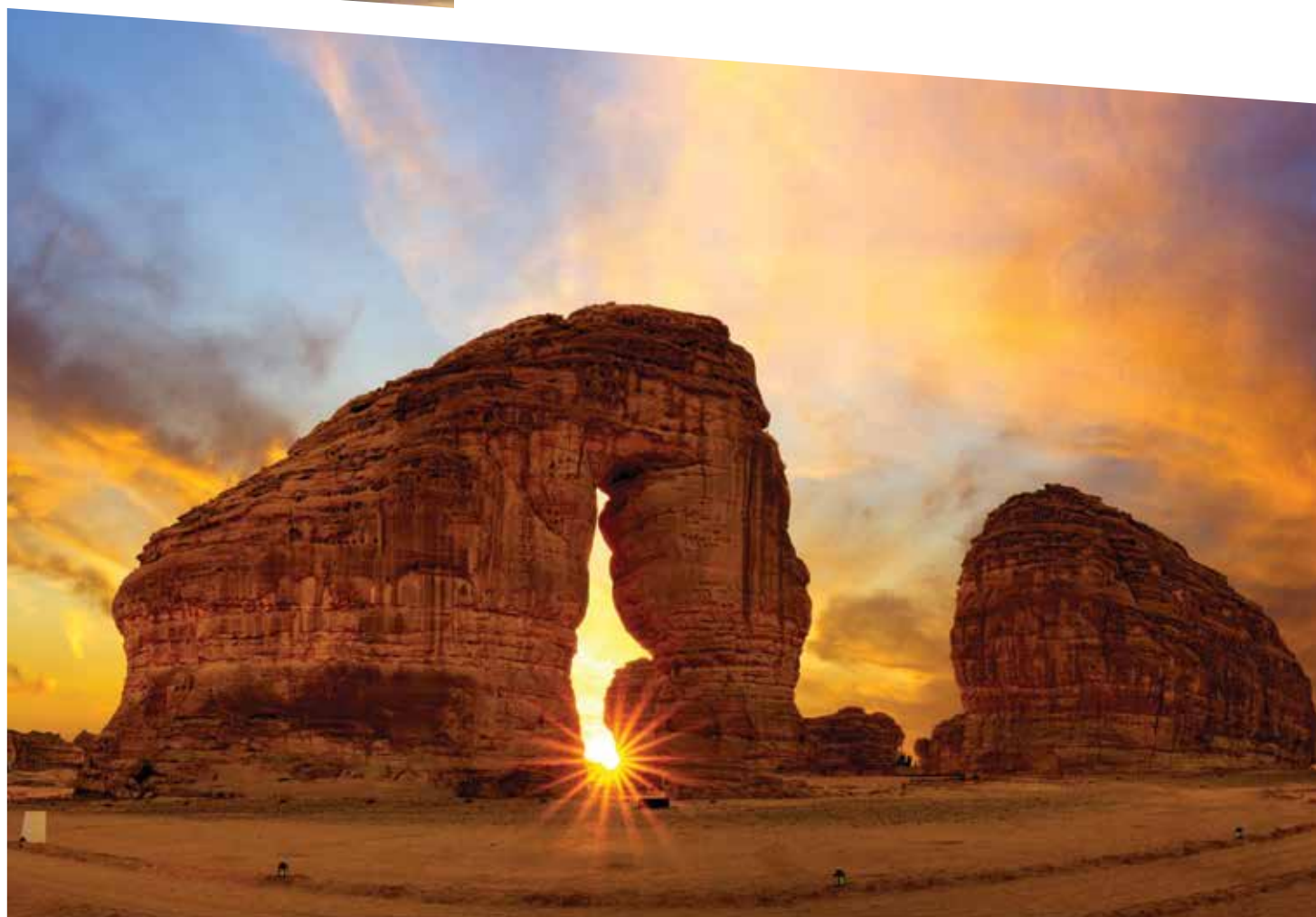
With easy visa processes, growing flight connectivity, and a wide range of luxury and adventure offerings, Saudi is becoming quite accessible to Indian travelers. Indian honeymooners are no longer looking for traditional beach

holidays — they are

seeking immersive, meaningful, and luxurious getaways. Saudi's modern charm, turquoise waters, world-class resorts, and cultural richness offer just that.

With TBO and STA making it easier to explore this surprising destination, Saudi is poised to become the next big honeymoon hotspot for Indian couples looking to celebrate love in a destination that's anything but ordinary.

TBO Academy is a leading e-learning platform tailored for today's travel professionals, offering powerful tools and resources to support their success. From expert-led destination courses and insightful blogs to in-depth product training and exclusive deals, the platform equips travel partners to enhance their knowledge, refine their selling skills, and unlock greater revenue opportunities.





High-Speed Rail Links London with Frankfurt and Geneva in Upcoming Cross-Border Travel Milestone

European rail travel is poised for a transformation with the signing of the **Kensington Treaty**, a landmark agreement between the United Kingdom and Germany that paves the way for direct high-speed passenger train services between London and key European cities, including **Frankfurt**, **Geneva**, and eventually **Berlin**.

Signed on July 17 by German Chancellor **Friedrich Merz** during his first official visit to the UK, the treaty marks a historic shift in cross-border mobility. The agreement is being hailed as a major step toward **sustainable, connected, and passenger-friendly transport** across Europe, offering an alternative to short-haul flights and their environmental toll.

London to Europe by Rail: A Greener, Faster Alternative

Central to the agreement is the development of **non-stop rail services** between London and several major European cities. Trains to **Frankfurt** are expected to take approximately **five hours**, while travel to **Geneva** will clock in at just over **five hours and 20 minutes**—



Eurostar to Expand: Berlin on the Horizon

The agreement also breathes new life into **Eurostar's expansion ambitions**. Known for connecting London with Paris and Brussels since the 1990s, the operator is expected to play a central role in these new cross-Channel routes. The addition of **Frankfurt, Geneva, and Berlin** would significantly extend its footprint and influence.

Berlin, in particular, represents the next frontier. As the UK-Germany **Transport Taskforce** now shifts focus to developing supporting infrastructure and border control systems, direct services to the German capital could launch soon after the initial phase. Once operational, these links will provide seamless access to one of Europe's most culturally and politically significant cities.

Reimagining the Travel Experience

For travelers, the appeal goes beyond speed. Direct international rail services promise **comfort, convenience, and accessibility**. With **fewer queues, less security hassle, and city-center-to-city-center service**, the experience is expected to be significantly more user-

friendly than flying.

Importantly, these trains will open access to historic cities for a broader range of travelers. With **affordable pricing** as a stated goal of the project, destinations like Geneva — home to international institutions and scenic alpine views — and Frankfurt — Germany's financial hub — will become more reachable for leisure and business alike.

"Britain is stepping into a leadership role in European rail once again," said Alexander. "This is not just about transport — it's about **reaffirming the UK's role in a more united, sustainable Europe** post-Brexit."

A Turning Point for Europe's Transport Future

The Kensington Treaty arrives at a moment when **rail is regaining favor** across the continent as both a **practical and environmentally responsible** form of travel. With rising awareness of climate issues and renewed investment in cross-border infrastructure, the new direct services are expected to redefine how Europeans move across nations.

As governments, rail operators, and engineering teams collaborate to bring the treaty's vision to life in the **early 2030s**, the benefits for passengers are clear: **shorter travel times, lower carbon footprints**, and an end to the traditional reliance on short-haul flights.

The Road — and Rail — Ahead

While challenges remain, including logistical coordination, safety standards, and customs agreements, the momentum is building. The UK and Germany have made a clear commitment: to build a **modern, connected Europe** where rail once again takes center stage.

With **Frankfurt, Geneva, and Berlin** set to join the list of cities accessible directly from London by train, **a new era of cross-border travel** is on the horizon — one that promises to be **faster, cleaner, and more inclusive** than ever before.

competitive with air travel once airport transfers and security checks are considered.

"This deal will fundamentally change how millions of people travel," said UK Transport Secretary **Heidi Alexander**, calling the initiative a flagship component of the government's **Plan for Change** — a forward-looking transport strategy centered on sustainability and enhanced international connectivity.

These new routes aim to address growing demand for climate-conscious alternatives. With **electric rail travel emitting significantly less carbon** than commercial aviation, the services are expected to be a cornerstone of Europe's green mobility goals.

*The agreement is being hailed as a major step toward **sustainable, connected, and passenger-friendly transport** across Europe, offering an alternative to short-haul flights and their environmental toll.*



Saudi Arabia Welcomes Record 115.9 Million Tourists in 2024, Cementing Status as Global Tourism Powerhouse

Saudi Arabia has reported a remarkable achievement in its **tourism** sector, according to the Ministry of Tourism's annual report for 2024. The Kingdom has officially welcomed **115.9 million tourists**, a landmark number that includes both international and domestic travelers. This achievement marks a significant milestone in the country's vision to become one of the world's leading tourism destinations under its Vision 2030 initiative.

Tourism Growth in Saudi Arabia: A Record-Breaking Year

The latest statistics underscore the remarkable growth in Saudi Arabia's tourism industry. In 2024, the Kingdom saw **29.7 million inbound visitors**—a **record high**—reflecting an 8% year-on-year increase. Even more impressive is the **70% growth** compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019. The total number of tourists, both international and domestic, reached an all-time high of **115.9**

million, with **86.2 million Saudis** choosing to explore their own country, underscoring the growing domestic tourism market.

One of the standout trends from this surge in visitor numbers is the **increase in tourist spending**. International tourists spent more than in previous years, with a **19% year-on-year growth** in spending, highlighting the Kingdom's ability to attract high-spending visitors. This increase is partly attributed

to longer stays, with international tourists staying an average of **19 nights**, indicating that Saudi Arabia is becoming a more attractive destination for long-haul travelers.

Peak Tourism Moments: Formula 1 and Major Events Drive Growth

Saudi Arabia's tourism growth was significantly boosted by international events, particularly the **Formula 1 Saudi Arabian Grand Prix in March 2024**, held at the **Jeddah Corniche Circuit**. This event alone contributed

to an influx of **3.2 million inbound visitors**, showing just how impactful major sporting and entertainment events can be in driving tourism. As Saudi Arabia continues to host world-class events, from cultural festivals to global sporting competitions, the country's reputation as a top-tier travel destination continues to rise.

Saudi Arabia's Global Ranking: A Leader in Tourism Growth

On the global stage, **Saudi Arabia's** tourism sector has been making waves.

According to UN Tourism data, Saudi Arabia ranks **#1** among G20 countries for **growth in international tourist arrivals** and **#2** globally for inbound tourist growth when comparing the period from January to November 2024 to the same period in 2019. These numbers reflect the growing appeal of the Kingdom as an international destination, outpacing many other countries in terms of tourist growth.

This success is no accident, as the Saudi government has heavily invested in **infrastructure**



development, events, and destination marketing. These investments have not only expanded the tourism infrastructure, making it easier and more attractive for tourists to visit, but they have also enhanced the country's appeal as a multi-faceted destination offering a diverse range of experiences.

Cultural Exchange and National Identity: Tourism's Role in Saudi Arabia

According to **Ahmed Al-Khateeb, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Tourism**, tourism plays a critical role in fostering cultural exchange, preserving the national identity, and introducing **Saudi Arabia** to the world. He emphasized that the Kingdom's **rich cultural heritage, deep-rooted history**, and diverse landscapes are vital elements of its appeal to both international and domestic tourists. The Minister stressed that tourism in Saudi Arabia not only showcases its world-class destinations but also helps connect people from different cultures, serving as a bridge for global exchange.

In line with Saudi Arabia's **Vision 2030**—which focuses on diversifying the economy, creating new job opportunities, and reducing the country's dependency on oil—tourism is becoming one of the key sectors driving the Kingdom's economic growth. The sector's rise in prominence is a critical step in the broader effort to position Saudi Arabia as a leading destination in the global tourism landscape.

Saudi Arabia's Diverse Tourism Offerings

Saudi Arabia's success can be attributed to its diverse range of tourism offerings, catering to various types of travelers. Whether it's cultural heritage, adventure tourism, religious tourism, or modern luxury experiences, Saudi Arabia is positioning itself as a country with something for everyone. The Kingdom boasts **UNESCO World Heritage Sites**, ancient ruins, vibrant cities,

luxurious resorts, and sacred religious sites, all of which are drawing millions of tourists every year.

Some of the country's most famous tourism destinations include:

- **Makkah and Madinah:** Home to Islam's two holiest cities, Makkah (Mecca) and Madinah (Medina) are prime destinations for religious tourism, with millions of Muslims visiting each year for **Hajj** and **Umrah**.
- **Riyadh:** The capital city is known for its modern infrastructure, shopping malls, cultural centers, and historic landmarks such as **Masmak Fortress** and **Al-Murabba Palace**.
- **Al-Ula:** An ancient archaeological site home to stunning rock formations and the ruins of the **Nabataean tombs**, Al-Ula is quickly becoming one of the most sought-after destinations for cultural and adventure tourism.
- **The Red Sea Coast:** Known for its pristine beaches, crystal-clear waters, and vibrant marine life, the Red Sea has seen a surge in tourism, particularly for those interested in diving and marine sports.
- **Jeddah:** As a gateway to the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, Jeddah is known for its **beautiful coastline**, historical landmarks, and as a cultural hub with museums and galleries.

Looking Ahead: Saudi Arabia's Tourism Vision for the Future

As Saudi Arabia looks to the future, its tourism sector remains central to the Kingdom's Vision 2030. With plans for **mega-projects** such as **Neom**—a futuristic city being built in the northwest of the country—Saudi Arabia is investing heavily in **tourism infrastructure** that will make it even more appealing to global travelers. The Kingdom is also focusing on **sustainable tourism** by incorporating eco-friendly initiatives into its development plans to ensure that its natural and cultural resources are preserved for future generations.

Additionally, **Saudi Arabia** has set a goal to **increase the contribution of tourism** to its **GDP** and create new job opportunities for its citizens, particularly in the hospitality,

entertainment, and tourism sectors. These efforts are helping to position the Kingdom as a leader in global tourism, with a growing emphasis on **cultural exchange, world-class events**, and **diverse travel experiences**.

The Role of Digitalization in Saudi Tourism

Digital innovation is also playing a significant role in the Kingdom's tourism sector. With the rise of **smart cities, digital platforms**, and **e-commerce**, Saudi Arabia is ensuring that travelers have easy access to information, bookings, and services. The Ministry of Tourism is investing in technology-driven solutions, such as **mobile apps** and **online travel services**, to streamline the visitor experience.

Moreover, the Kingdom has launched campaigns like **#SaudiTourism** to promote tourism through social media, helping to boost visibility and engage a younger, tech-savvy audience eager to explore new destinations. Through these digital initiatives, Saudi Arabia is making it easier for travelers to plan their trips and enjoy their stay in the Kingdom.

Conclusion: Saudi Arabia's Tourism Future is Bright

In conclusion, **Saudi Arabia's tourism** sector has experienced unprecedented growth in 2024, and the future looks even brighter. With a strong foundation of investment in infrastructure, events, and destination development, the Kingdom is poised to become one of the world's top tourism destinations. Saudi Arabia's diverse offerings, combined with a focus on **sustainable tourism** and **cultural exchange**, position the Kingdom as a place where visitors can experience both ancient traditions and modern luxury. As the Kingdom continues to align with its **Vision 2030**, its tourism industry will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in diversifying the economy, creating jobs, and contributing to the Kingdom's rise on the global stage.

Hong Kong Airlines to Launch Direct Melbourne Service in December 2025



Hong Kong Airlines is set to expand its Australian footprint with the launch of a new direct service to Melbourne starting 12 December 2025. The thrice-weekly flights will enhance connectivity between Hong Kong and Victoria, offering travellers greater flexibility and strengthening bilateral ties across tourism, trade, and culture.

The airline commemorated the announcement with a signing ceremony at Melbourne Airport, attended by senior officials from Hong Kong Airlines, Melbourne Airport, and the Victorian Government.

Jeff Sun, President of Hong Kong Airlines, highlighted the significance of the new route in the carrier's broader Australia strategy. "This has been a year of significant progress for our Australian market. Following the return of our Gold Coast service in January and the launch of Sydney flights in June, we are proud to add Melbourne as a key destination within just six months," he said. "This positions Hong Kong Airlines as the second local carrier offering direct connections to Australia's major cities and marks a pivotal moment in our international transformation."

Sun added that the Melbourne service underscores the airline's commitment to providing competitive, high-quality travel experiences tailored to both business and leisure passengers. "The new route will help deepen trade, tourism, and cultural connections between Hong Kong and Melbourne. Its launch is a result of strong support from both city governments, and we aim to continue expanding with the enhanced capabilities of the Hong Kong International Airport's Three-Runway System."

Melbourne Airport CEO Lorie Argus welcomed the announcement, noting that the new service would provide greater choice for travellers and boost capacity to a key Asian market. "Hong Kong is Melbourne Airport's fourth-largest international market, and we expect strong demand for this new route," Argus said. "In today's highly competitive aviation landscape, this addition reflects the importance of cooperation between the Federal Government, the Victorian Government, and tourism authorities like Visit Victoria."

Victorian Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs,

Danny Pearson, also praised the development. "More flights mean more visitors, a stronger economy, and more jobs for Victorians—whether in tourism, hospitality, or freight logistics," he said. "This route will also enhance air freight capacity for Victorian exporters looking to reach Asian markets."

The service will be operated by Airbus A330 aircraft and timed to enable smooth onward connections via Hong Kong to popular destinations including Tokyo, Osaka, Vancouver, Bali, and others. It will also facilitate efficient inbound travel from key Asian cities such as Shanghai, Fukuoka, and Hangzhou to Melbourne via Hong Kong.

As a full-service carrier, Hong Kong Airlines currently serves over 30 destinations globally and continues to invest in enhancing its onboard product, which includes Business and Economy Class seating, curated in-flight dining, and personalised service.

With the Melbourne route launch, Hong Kong Airlines solidifies its position as a growing force in the Asia-Pacific travel landscape while reinforcing its commitment to international expansion and service excellence.

Hong Kong Airlines flight schedule* between Hong Kong and Melbourne is as follows (All times local):

Route	Flight Number	Departure	Arrival	Frequency
HKG – MEL	HX013	23:10	11:30+1	Mon, Wed, Fri
MEL – HKG	HX014	13:00	19:20	Tues, Thurs, Sat



Cygnett Inn Dibrugarh

opens with 50 keys in Assam

Cygnett Hotels & Resorts has announced the launch of its newest property, Cygnett Inn Dibrugarh, in Assam. The property is centrally located and is just 15 minutes away from the Dibrugarh railway station and 25 minutes away from the airport.

Affordable Luxury and Modern Design

Guests visiting the property will experience the perfect blend of comfort, affordability and convenience. Cygnett Inn Dibrugarh redefines affordable luxury with a harmonious mix of contemporary design, modern amenities and warm hospitality – all at budget-friendly rates.

Comfortable Rooms Designed for Every Traveller

The property's 50 well-appointed rooms are spread across three distinct categories, each thoughtfully designed with stylish interiors and equipped with modern amenities to provide a calm and comfortable retreat.

Diverse Culinary Experiences and Stylish Bar

Cygnett Inn Dibrugarh goes beyond just a stay. Offering a unique and diverse food and beverage experience, the property features C Pavilion, which can accommodate up to 70 guests and serves a delightful variety of local and international

cuisine. For a more relaxed evening, patrons can head to the Metro Bar, a cosy and stylish setting with seating for 38 guests, perfect for unwinding with a curated selection of beverages.

Banquet Spaces for Events and Celebrations

While 'Discussion' is a small meeting room designed for efficient group discussions, accommodating 50 guests, 'Summit' is an exquisite banquet hall designed to accommodate 250 guests. It offers a perfect setting for intimate gatherings, conferences, seminars, product launches and social events.



Focus on Northeast Growth and Hospitality Excellence

“Cygnett Inn Dibrugarh is the ideal venue, be it for corporate meetings or social events like weddings. Northeast expansion is integral to our strategy to establish Cygnett Hotels & Resorts as a 100-plus strong hotel group in the coming years,” said Sarbendra Sarkar, Founder & Managing Director, Cygnett Hotels & Resorts.

Expanding Footprint in Northeast India

With this opening, Cygnett Hotels & Resorts, one of the first branded hospitality chains to establish a presence in Northeast India, are steadily moving toward a 2000-key footprint in the region by 2029. The group currently operates five hotels in the Northeast with nine additional properties in various stages of development and pre-opening.

Strong Tourism Potential and Infrastructure Support

“Northeast India has become an important part of our expansion

strategy due to its rising tourism appeal, improving connectivity and growing demand for quality accommodations in the region. The Indian government has created a

conducive environment for businesses to invest in Northeast India, and we are already seeing a strong corporate travel demand besides a robust growth from leisure and wedding segments,” added Sarkar.

New Strategic Alliance with Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

On the other hand, in a key development, Cygnett Hotels & Resorts has formed a new strategic alliance with Wyndham Hotels & Resorts to introduce La Quinta® by Wyndham and Registry Collection Hotels® brands to the country. Through this strategic partnership all Cygnett brands aligns with the Wyndham distribution system and getting benefit from their global reservation system and global Wyndham reward program consisting of 115m members. Wyndham Hotels & Resorts is expecting to utilise Cygnett’s extensive regional network and commitment to brand integrity to uniquely position the roll-out of these brands across South Asia. The partnership is expected to add more than 60 hotels across India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal over the next 10 years.





ITC Hotels Expands North India Footprint with the Launch of Welcomhotel Prayagraj

Blending cultural heritage with contemporary hospitality in the heart of Uttar Pradesh.



Set in a city of timeless tradition, Welcomhotel by ITC Hotels, Prayagraj, offers a stay that feels both deeply rooted and quietly refined. Prayagraj, previously known as Allahabad, is a city where mythology breathes through the ghats, pilgrims gather in reverence, and where heritage is etched into every sandstone corridor and temple bell.

ITC Hotels has announced the grand opening of **Welcomhotel Prayagraj**, marking a significant addition to its growing portfolio in northern India. Nestled in one of the world's oldest and most culturally rich cities, the new property blends heritage-inspired design with contemporary luxury, catering seamlessly to both discerning business travellers and leisure guests.

With this latest launch, **ITC Hotels Ltd.** now operates **seven properties in Uttar Pradesh**, with an additional **six hotels currently in the pipeline** across the state, reinforcing the

brand's commitment to expanding its presence in key heritage and business destinations.

A Harmonious Blend of Heritage and Modern Elegance

Welcomhotel Prayagraj features **60 elegantly designed rooms and suites**, offering panoramic views of the city's storied skyline. Thoughtfully crafted to reflect the spiritual and cultural legacy of Prayagraj, the property promises an elevated hospitality experience rooted in local authenticity.

The hotel also positions itself as a premier venue for **destination weddings, corporate meetings, and social gatherings**, offering a versatile mix of **indoor and outdoor banqueting facilities**.

Leadership Reflections on the Launch

Speaking on the occasion, **Anil Chadha, Managing Director, ITC Hotels Ltd.**, remarked:

"It is with great pride that we unveil Welcomhotel Prayagraj, in a city of profound cultural and spiritual eminence. This expansion not only fortifies our footprint in Uttar Pradesh but also underscores our dedication to crafting immersive hospitality experiences — celebrating the region's culture while upholding the highest standards of service excellence."

J.K. Agrawal, representative of the owning board, shared his enthusiasm:

"This project is a milestone for us as it brings together our vision for Prayagraj with ITC Hotels' trusted legacy in hospitality. Welcomhotel Prayagraj is more than just a hotel — it is a tribute to the city's timeless identity and a commitment to enriching the local community through quality, employment, and authentic cultural engagement."

Culinary Experiences Rooted in Local Traditions

Dining at Welcomhotel Prayagraj is a celebration of regional and global flavours. Highlights include:

- **WelcomCafé** – An all-day dining



restaurant serving a curated selection of local and international cuisine

- **Dough & Co.** – A charming bakery and café offering gourmet coffee, premium teas, and artisanal treats

- **Swizzle** – The in-house bar designed for relaxed evenings and social gatherings

- **Kebabs & Kurries (Coming Soon)** – Featuring signature ITC cuisine with a focus on regional Indian fare

- **WelcomSthalika** – A regional thali experience spotlighting local delicacies such as "Prayagraj ke Dum Aloo" and "Nimona Paneer"

Wellness, Recreation, and Immersive Local Experiences

Guests at Welcomhotel Prayagraj can enjoy a range of wellness and leisure facilities, including:

- A **swimming pool**, with a **fitness centre and spa** set to open soon

- Curated **heritage walks** and **spiritual trails** to Shri Bade Hanuman Ji Mandir

- Guided visits to iconic landmarks such as **Khusro Bagh**, the **Kumbh Mela grounds**, and other cultural heritage sites

A Strategic Step in ITC Hotels' Growth Journey

As ITC Hotels continues to expand its Welcomhotel portfolio, the Prayagraj

launch is a testament to its strategy of combining **regional identity** with **world-class hospitality standards**.

The brand's growing footprint in Uttar Pradesh highlights the state's increasing importance as a cultural, spiritual, and commercial hub.

Enriching experiences Boat Ride to Triveni Sangam

Take a boat ride to the sacred confluence at *Triveni Sangam* for a holy dip for a moment of spiritual pause. By evening, witness the ghats come aglow with the *Ganga Aarti*, an evocative blend of light, chant, and devotion.

Shri Bade Hanuman Ji Temple

Visit the revered temple known for the rare idol of *Lete Huye Hanuman Ji*, a sacred site where devotion lies grounded in faith, drawing pilgrims from near and far.

Allahabad Fort

Discover the architectural marvel of Allahabad Fort, standing tall at the confluence of history and heritage. Its majestic walls and timeless corridors invite you to walk through centuries past.

For travellers seeking a meaningful connection with India's heritage, paired with modern comforts and impeccable service, **Welcomhotel Prayagraj** offers a truly enriching stay experience.

Hilton 2025

Expanding Boldly Amid Shifting Travel Trends

In the second quarter of 2025, Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc. demonstrated its continued commitment to growth by expanding its global footprint with a robust 8% year-on-year increase in hotel room count. However, while the expansion underscores Hilton's aggressive development strategy, a simultaneous 1% dip in revenue per available room (RevPAR) has brought into focus the complex and evolving challenges confronting the global travel and hospitality industry.

Strong Growth, Tempered by Revenue Pressure

Hilton's Q2 performance reflects a dual narrative. On one hand, the company continued to roll out new properties across its diverse portfolio of brands, strengthening its presence in both established and emerging markets. On the other hand, it contended with softer RevPAR, a key industry metric, which suggests the impact of broader economic and travel-related headwinds.

This divergence in performance underscores the delicate balance hospitality giants must maintain in a post-pandemic landscape defined by fluctuating demand, heightened competition, and shifting traveler preferences. While domestic demand—particularly in the United States—remains strong, pressures on international travel and increasing consumer price sensitivity are affecting hotel revenues across the board.

U.S. Tourism Drives Demand, But Global Headwinds Persist

Hilton's expansion in the U.S. continues to pay dividends, buoyed

by resilient domestic travel. Cities with strong tourism appeal, along with business hubs, have experienced a healthy resurgence in occupancy. However, international markets tell a more complicated story.

While inbound travel from Europe, Asia, and Canada has shown some signs of recovery, volumes remain below pre-pandemic levels. This has had a disproportionate impact on RevPAR, particularly as international travelers traditionally contribute to higher-yield bookings.

Consumer behavior is also shifting. Today's travelers are more budget-conscious, booking shorter stays and actively seeking deals. The result: downward pressure on room rates and revenue generation, even as occupancy rises.

A Focused Global Strategy Amid Industry Disruption

Despite these challenges, Hilton continues to pursue an ambitious global growth agenda. The second quarter saw the addition of numerous new hotels, including in high-demand urban areas and aspirational travel destinations. The company's focus on lifestyle and luxury segments reflects a broader effort to diversify its offerings and appeal to travelers seeking premium, experience-driven stays.

Hilton's investment in expanding brands such as Waldorf Astoria, Conrad, and Canopy also supports its strategy of tapping into evolving demand for upscale, design-forward accommodations. As experiential travel and wellness tourism gain traction, these brand extensions are helping the company attract new demographics of travelers.



External Pressures Shaping the Industry

The hospitality sector, including Hilton, continues to face a complex set of macroeconomic and competitive forces:

- **Inflation and fuel costs** are increasing the cost of travel, prompting many consumers to scale back or adjust their travel plans.
- **Business travel** remains below historical levels, with corporate and government travel budgets still under pressure—limiting a once-reliable revenue stream for brands like Hilton.
- **Alternative accommodations**, such as short-term rental platforms



and boutique hotel offerings, are capturing an increasing share of travelers, particularly among younger audiences.

In response, Hilton is placing greater emphasis on sustainability initiatives and digital loyalty programs aimed at building long-term customer engagement. These efforts, combined with an expanding global pipeline, are helping the company remain competitive in a rapidly evolving market.

Looking Ahead: Strategic Growth with an Eye on Market Realities

As 2025 progresses, Hilton's outlook remains cautiously optimistic.

The company's development pipeline is robust, with additional openings planned in key international markets and urban centers. This includes a strategic focus on luxury properties in gateway cities and high-growth tourism destinations.

Still, the key to Hilton's long-term success will lie in its ability to manage market volatility, navigate shifting traveler expectations, and differentiate itself in an increasingly crowded global hospitality space.

Conclusion: Hilton's Measured Resilience

Hilton's Q2 2025 performance

highlights the complex balancing act facing global hospitality leaders: achieving aggressive growth while adapting to an uncertain and evolving travel landscape. Strong unit growth has reinforced the company's resilience and strategic foresight, even as challenges in revenue generation persist.

By continuing to innovate, diversifying its brand offerings, and expanding in high-opportunity markets, Hilton is positioning itself to weather industry turbulence and emerge stronger in the years to come. As global travel continues to redefine itself, Hilton's adaptability may be its most valuable asset.

Radisson Hotel Group opens Radisson Hotel Don Mueang Bangkok, strengthening its footprint in the Thai capital



Radisson Hotel Group is proud to announce the opening of Radisson Hotel Don Mueang Bangkok, a new addition to its expanding portfolio in Thailand. Perfectly positioned just minutes from Don Mueang International Airport, the 89-key hotel offers a contemporary escape for travelers seeking comfort, convenience, and cultural connection.

Where comfort meets character

Radisson Hotel Don Mueang Bangkok combines modern elegance with a deep appreciation for local design and storytelling. The property reflects the city's vibrant contrasts through minimalist architecture and artistic details that create a peaceful sanctuary in the heart of Bangkok's dynamic Don Mueang district. With

serene guest rooms, tailored meeting spaces, and elevated leisure facilities, the hotel is ideal for both business and leisure travelers.

"We're proud to introduce Radisson Hotel Don Mueang Bangkok as a strategic step in expanding our presence in one of Asia's most dynamic travel hubs," said, Sukanyapach Homchuen, General Manager, Radisson Hotel Don

Mueang Bangkok *"We aim to be the preferred choice for modern travelers seeking convenience, connection, and a sense of place."*

Artful design in a connected hub

The hotel's interiors are inspired by Bangkok's rhythm and resilience, clean lines, airy spaces, and subtle local touches. Guest rooms feature plush bedding and Thai artwork by Kwanchai Lichaikul, who's *Under Contraction* series offers guests a contemplative visual journey rooted in traditional storytelling and modern transformation. These spaces encourage rest, reflection, and reconnection.

Connection hub

Located just minutes from Don Mueang International Airport, the hotel provides easy access to both domestic

and regional flights. Guests can relax at The Cabin, an all-day dining venue inspired by the luxury of first-class travel, where bold Thai flavors and international favorites are prepared using locally sourced ingredients.

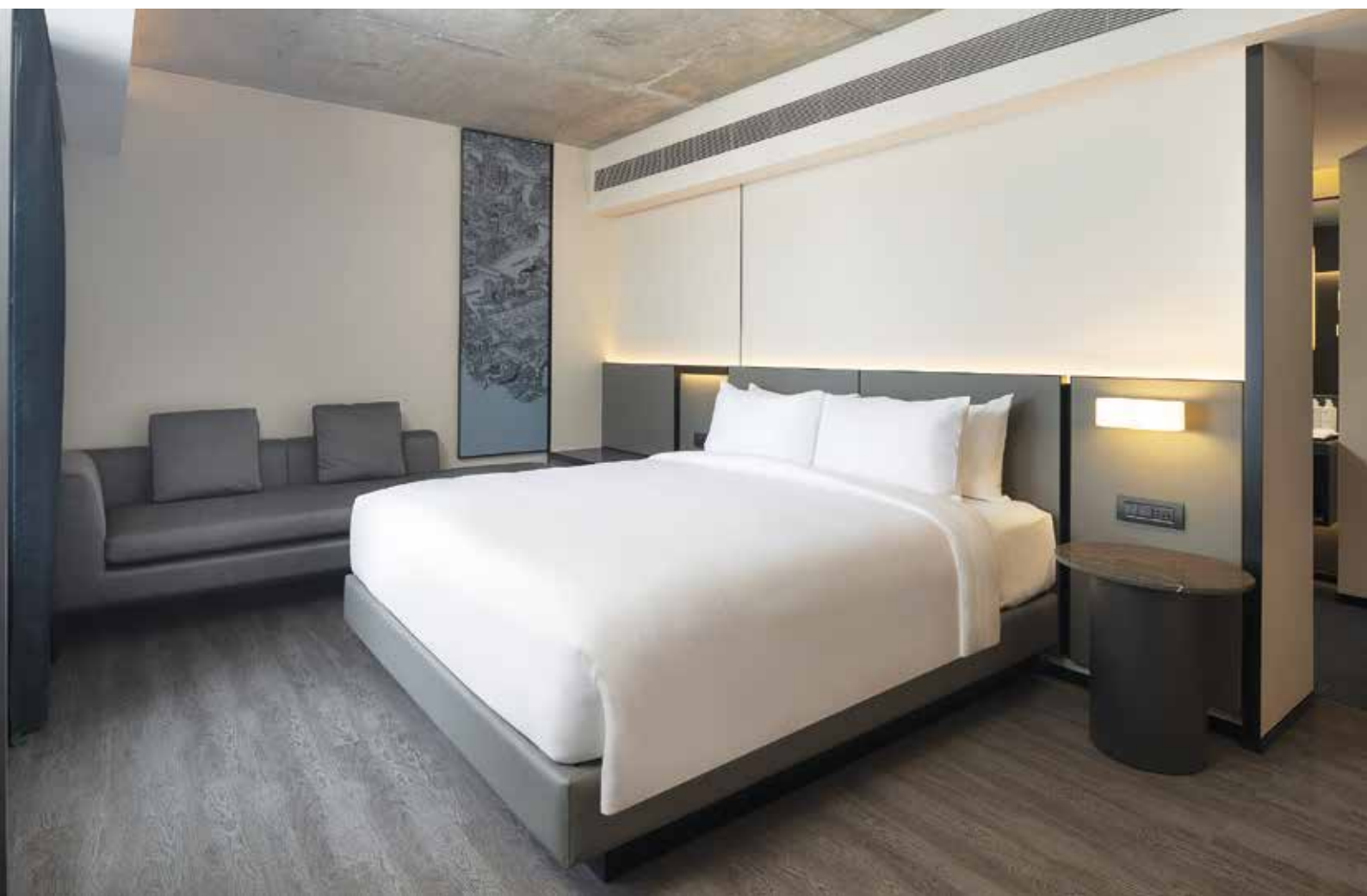
Whether planning a conference or an intimate event, the second-floor meeting space accommodates up to 129 guests. It features high ceilings, large windows, and a dedicated foyer for pre-function gatherings. With advanced technology and personalized service, the hotel offers a seamless setting for successful meetings and events.

Urban sanctuary with rooftop views

Guests can stay active at the fully equipped fitness center or unwind in the rooftop infinity pool, which offers panoramic views across the city. The

location also encourages exploration, with nearby attractions such as the Royal Thai Air Force Museum, Chatuchak Weekend Market, and the events hub IMPACT Muang Thong Thani. For a more local experience, guests can visit hidden gems like Kantarat Golf Course or the peaceful Wat Don Mueang temple.

Tim Cordon, Chief Operating Officer, Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia Pacific, Radisson Hotel Group, adds: *"Thailand continues to be a key focus for our expansion strategy across Asia Pacific, and the opening of Radisson Hotel Don Mueang Bangkok reflects our commitment to growing in high-potential urban hubs. With its strategic location near the airport and distinctive design inspired by local culture, this hotel is perfectly positioned to meet the needs of today's connected travelers."*





IHG Hotels & Resorts signs first Vignette Collection in Venice, Italy



The Venice Times, part of the Vignette Collection, is expected to complete its conversion by the end of 2025, marking the second collaboration between IHG and Pacini Group

An eye-level outdoor shot shows the illuminated entrance of The Venice Times Hotel. The hotel entrance is framed by a light-coloured awning with “THE VENICE TIMES HOTEL” written in dark blue capital letters. Below the awning, a glass door with a gold handle reflects the interior lighting, leading to a warmly lit lobby with stairs. The building facade is made of light brown stucco, with two windows on the second floor above the entrance and another window to the far right on the ground floor, displaying various ornate objects. Two potted palm trees flank the entrance, and the ground in front is paved with light-coloured cobblestones. The overall lighting suggests either dusk or early morning.

IHG Hotels & Resorts (IHG), one of the world’s leading hotel companies, announces the signing of an agreement with Pacini Group for the rebranding of its Venetian property, The Venice Times, which will officially join the Vignette Collection brand. Located in the heart of Venice’s historic centre, the hotel marks the second collaboration between IHG and Pacini Group—following the opening of Garner Hotel Rome Aurelia—and strengthens a long-term strategic partnership, highlighting IHG’s trust in the Italian group’s expertise and strategic vision in the hospitality sector.

The hotel will join IHG’s existing Hotel Indigo Venice – Sant’Elena property and be the latest addition to its fast-growing luxury and lifestyle portfolio in Italy, joining eight open hotels and a further five in development.

The Venice Times, Vignette Collection marks the third Vignette Collection signing in Italy in just two years – following the signing of Hotel Alexandra, Vignette Collection, and most recently Costa Irminia Retreat & Spa, Vignette Collection. In August 2021, IHG launched Vignette Collection offering a different price point to the upscale conversion brand voco hotels and complementing its existing luxury & lifestyle portfolio. Vignette Collection appeals to owners of world-class independent luxury



and lifestyle hotels seeking to quickly benefit from IHG’s powerful technology and revenue systems, operational expertise, and loyalty offer, without the need for high upfront costs or compromise on a property’s unique character, style, or name.

Located within Venice’s historic centre, The Venice Times, Vignette Collection is expected to rebrand towards the end of 2025. Guests staying at the hotel will enjoy a short

walk from Venice Casino, Ca’ d’Oro, and the Grand Canal, as well as only a 15-minute walk from La Fenice theatre and Rialto Bridge. Its central location offers guests excellent access to Vaporetto water bus services, ensuring seamless and convenient travel throughout the city to attractions and its many bars and restaurants.

One of the key strengths of The Venice Times is the excellence of its service, highly appreciated



by guests for its personalised attention, the staff's availability, and attention to detail. The welcoming and knowledgeable team ensures a tailor-made stay, offering authentic recommendations to help guests experience Venice in all its richness—from lesser-known itineraries to local culinary highlights. Quality is also reflected in the hotel's elegant rooms, impeccable cleanliness, special features such as an intimate courtyard perfect for breakfast and downtime. The location is strategic, just steps from major landmarks and well-connected by public transport, providing convenient and complete access to the city.

Staying true to the brand, the 30-room hotel will be a one-of-a-kind property with a unique identity, complete with Venetian-inspired décor, ensuring guests feel immersed in the local culture. Catering to both domestic and international travellers, guests will be able to enjoy the hotel's cocktail bar and outside terrace, as well as the delicious, locally-inspired cuisine at the restaurant.

(Mrs) Willemijn Geels, Vice President, Development, Europe, IHG Hotels & Resorts, said: "With the signing of *The Venice Times*, Vignette Collection, IHG is delighted to strengthen its presence in one of Italy's most iconic destinations. Strategically positioned near the city's main gateway,

the hotel is poised to benefit from strong year-round demand, further solidifying our luxury and lifestyle positioning in the market.

We are excited to continue the expansion of Vignette Collection alongside our partners at Pacini Group. This signing marks our second collaboration, following the opening of Garner Hotel Rome Aurelia, and reinforces our partnership to bring exceptional hospitality experiences to guests in Italy."

Emidio Pacini, CEO & Owner at Pacini Group, said: "*Venice, the second most visited city in Italy, remains one of the world's top tourist destinations, admired for its rich history, unique architecture, and global appeal. That's precisely why we are heavily investing in this city through our Group's offerings.*

The hotel's rebranding represents a unique opportunity to provide guests with a truly different stay—where responsibility, community, and appreciation of the territory come together, fully in line with the Vignette Collection brand. We aim to deliver a high-quality stay, offer additional services with ease, and allow guests to experience the destination like a local.

I am truly pleased to expand our collaboration with IHG Hotels & Resorts as we continue to diversify our portfolio. Following the success of the Garner Hotel Rome Aurelia,

we are confident that the inclusion of The Venice Times in the Vignette Collection—part of IHG's fast-growing luxury and lifestyle segment—will further strengthen our long-term partnership. The conversion of this property, which holds immense value for us, marks an important milestone in our relationship development, and we look forward to welcoming guests together."

Vignette Collection is IHG's first collection brand and represents a curation of distinct hotels, demonstrating diversity and discovery. The brand combines each property's identity with the brand's promise of '**A Means For Good**', which sees each hotel partner with a local philanthropic organisation to spearhead a positive contribution to local causes, and 'Memorable Rituals', to help connect guests with the hotel's cultural landscape. The brand offers a compelling way for owners of one-of-a-kind hotels to benefit from IHG's powerful enterprise offering and global scale.

The Venice Times, Vignette Collection joins a growing portfolio of IHG Hotels & Resorts' properties, with 30* open hotels across seven brands (InterContinental, Six Senses, Hotel Indigo, voco hotels, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express), with an additional 15 properties in the pipeline.

*Numbers as at 31 March 2025 unless otherwise stated.

ASEGO Is Transforming Domestic Travel Safety in India



India's travel story has always been vast and vibrant, but in recent years, the domestic market has taken centre stage. From weekend city breaks and road trips to spiritual pilgrimages and adventure escapes, Indians are travelling within the country in unprecedented numbers. With this surge has come a critical need for innovative, reliable, and comprehensive protection, and **ASEGO** has emerged as one of the most trusted brands in India, rewriting what global assistance and travel insurance truly means for the travellers.

What sets ASEGO apart in this crowded landscape is its ability to identify the unique way Indians travel and to design travel protection solutions that mirror their needs perfectly. Unlike generic travel insurance offerings, ASEGO's products are built to address the nuances of domestic tourism — for the family heading on a temple tour, the solo adventurer trekking through the Himalayas, or the group of friends road-tripping across states.

One of the company's most groundbreaking offerings is its **coverage for 20+ high-risk adventure sports activities**, a rarity in the Indian insurance space. From paragliding over Bir Billing to white-water rafting in Rishikesh, ASEGO has stepped in to make sure India's growing community of thrill-seekers can pursue their passions with confidence.

The company has also identified a critical gap in protection for **travellers** embarking on Spiritual trips/ yatras — a segment unique to India and growing each year. With **Asego's travel protection for pilgrims**, the brand provides tailored assistance for millions of devotees who set out on pilgrimages, from the Char Dham Yatra to Vaishno Devi, offering safety and support for journeys that are often long, challenging, and deeply meaningful.

Innovation is not just an add-on for ASEGO — it is woven into its core services. Value-added services such as **real-time baggage tracking with TrackMate** mitigate one of travel's biggest pain points, while travel assistance and insurance that protects losses related to **trip delays, missed connections, and interruptions** reflect an understanding of the realities of travelling across India's vast and varied transport networks.

Backing these services is a robust infrastructure that only few can match. Asego's **24/7 emergency medical assistance** and **domestic roadside assistance features** ensure that help is available whether a traveller is stranded on a highway, in a remote rural area, or navigating a busy airport.

The proliferation of India's domestic travel market has created demand for **protection that is as wide-reaching as the journeys themselves**. ASEGO has positioned itself at the leading edge of that evolution, setting new standards for what travel insurance and assistance can mean in a country as complex, diverse, and dynamic as India.

Today, ASEGO is not merely offering travel assistance and insurance; it is **shaping the future of how Indians experience travel**. By bridging global expertise with a deep understanding of India's domestic travel landscape, the company has become synonymous with safety, trust, and innovation — and is ensuring that every trip, from the sacred to the adventurous, is defined not by uncertainty, but by possibility.



A Masterclass in Modern Wellness: Ada Ooi's INTEGRATV Healing Comes to Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa



This August, **Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa** will unveil a transformative wellness experience as it welcomes globally acclaimed integrative medicine practitioner **Ada Ooi** for an exclusive residency at **The Island Spa**. Known for her revolutionary approach to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and holistic skincare, Ada brings her award-winning London clinic, **001 London**, to the Maldives for a limited engagement from **August 9 to 20, 2025**.

Designed to deliver lasting wellbeing beyond the surface, Ada's treatments combine ancient wisdom with modern science—offering guests an opportunity to realign their physical, emotional, and energetic health in

one of the world's most serene island settings.

Science, Soul, and Skincare: The INTEGRATV Philosophy

Internationally trusted by A-list clients and featured in *Harper's Bazaar* and *Tatler*, Ada Ooi's **INTEGRATV Healing** is a unique fusion of Traditional Chinese Medicine, neuropsychology, and advanced skin therapies. Her diagnostic-led sessions aim to uncover root imbalances and recalibrate the nervous system—enhancing fertility, balancing hormones, reducing stress, and revitalizing the skin from within.

"Ada brings **substance, science, and soul** to wellness," says **Didier Jardin**, General Manager at Four

Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa. “Her residency embodies the future of The Island Spa—where transformation is both profound and personal.”

An Oceanfront Sanctuary Meets London’s Elite Wellness Expertise

Set against the tranquil blues of the Indian Ocean, The Island Spa will host Ada’s signature services, including her renowned **MicroSculpt facial**, celebrated for its sculpting effects and red carpet-worthy radiance.

Her treatments are crafted to address a range of concerns, including:

- Hormonal and fertility challenges (both male and female)
- Chronic fatigue and emotional stress
- Skin inflammation, aging, and loss of elasticity
- Digestive issues and mental fog

Curated Treatment Highlights

TCM Discovery (15 minutes,

Complimentary)

A complimentary introduction to Traditional Chinese Medicine—ideal for first-time guests curious about holistic healing.

INTEGRATV Health Consultation (30 minutes, USD 250)

A full-body diagnostic session creating a personalized roadmap covering diet, emotional balance, and lifestyle optimization.

Express Acu-Facial Sculpt (30 minutes, USD 260)

A quick yet powerful lift using scalp acupuncture and MicroSculpt techniques. Perfect before dinner or a long flight.

Bespoke INTEGRATV Health Recalibration (60/90 minutes, USD 380/480)

A tailored treatment integrating acupuncture, meridian massage, gua sha, cupping, and infrared therapy—designed to release stored tension and restore energetic flow.

Bespoke INTEGRATV Facial Resculpt & Nervous System Reset (60 minutes, USD 380)

Combining contouring massage, cranial acupressure, vagus nerve stimulation, and LED infusion, this session lifts the face and calms the nervous system.

A Transformative Experience Rooted in Holistic Intelligence

Each treatment is deeply personalized, guided by Ada’s expertise in **precision diagnostics** and her belief that lasting transformation begins when **mind, body, and skin** are treated as one unified system.

Whether seeking to reset your inner rhythms, boost vitality, or indulge in radiant skincare, Ada’s residency at **The Island Spa** offers an unparalleled opportunity to experience the pinnacle of integrated wellness in a setting of pure natural beauty.





German Fairytale Route

marks 50th
anniversary

As 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of the German Fairytale Route, a journey through the landscapes that inspired the Brothers Grimm, the iconic 370-mile route invites travelers, especially from India, to step into a living fairytale. This enchanting route stretches from Hanau to Bremen, immersing visitors in the heart of timeless stories like Cinderella, Rapunzel, and Sleeping

Beauty. It's not just a trip, but a magical adventure that brings beloved fairytales to life against the backdrop of Germany's captivating landscapes.

Founded in 1975, the German Fairytale Route has evolved into a must-visit journey for travelers seeking a blend of history, culture, and fantasy. This year, as it celebrates its 50th anniversary, the route connects approximately 70 picturesque towns

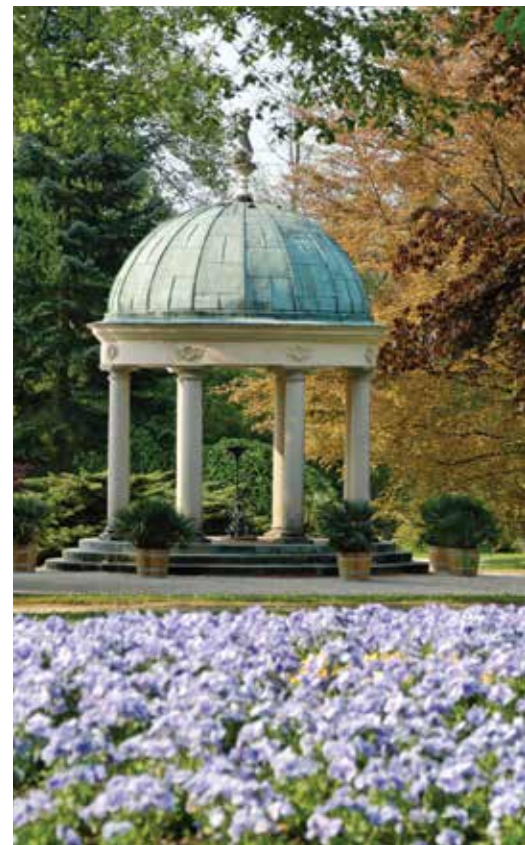
and villages that bring the tales of Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm to life. With its unique blend of charming half-timbered buildings, medieval castles, and fairy-tale landscapes, this historic route is a true testament to the magic of storytelling.

Explore Fairytales in Real Life

The German Fairytale Route offers an unparalleled opportunity to explore



DESTINATION





the real-world settings that inspired some of the most famous fairy tales. Visitors can follow in the footsteps of the Brothers Grimm through their birthplaces, universities, and homes. Each town along the way holds a piece of the puzzle that made these fairy tales iconic. Whether it's a visit to the famous Sababurg in Kassel—known as the home of Sleeping Beauty—or a trip to the GRIMMWELT Museum, which

houses original Grimm manuscripts, there's no shortage of magic to discover.

The 50th anniversary celebrations promise an exciting calendar of special events. Cities along the route will host vibrant parades, themed markets, and captivating musical performances. There will be interactive storytelling sessions, where visitors can engage with the tales in new and immersive

ways. For those with a deeper interest in the cultural heritage of the Grimm brothers, a visit to the GRIMMWELT Museum is essential, as it houses valuable manuscripts that have been designated as part of UNESCO's "Memory of the World" programme.

A Modern Journey Through Time

While the allure of fairytales remains central to the route, the German

DESTINATION

Fairytale Route also caters to modern travelers. The route is designed to be easily accessible, with excellent infrastructure that allows for easy exploration by car or train. Whether you're staying in cozy boutique hotels, quaint inns, or even a fairytale castle, the journey offers a variety of accommodations to suit every traveler. For eco-conscious tourists, there are plenty of options for sustainable travel, including EV charging stations and opportunities to explore the route by bike or e-bike.

The route's connection to nature is one of its most compelling aspects. As travelers journey through eight nature parks, low mountain ranges, and peaceful rivers, they will discover that the fairytale landscapes are more than just myth. These are real places of breathtaking beauty, waiting to be explored on foot or by bicycle. The dense forests and scenic paths bring the magic of the Grimm brothers'

tales to life in the most tangible way possible.

Unmissable Experiences for Indian Travelers

The allure of the German Fairytale Route is particularly strong for Indian travelers, who are becoming increasingly interested in experiencing new destinations that blend culture, history, and adventure. Germany, known for its rich cultural heritage, offers something unique for those looking to experience both the old-world charm and modern amenities. With a range of special events lined up for 2025, there's never been a better time to explore the route. From enchanted dinners set in fairytale castles to scenic hikes through mystical forests, every moment promises to be memorable.

Whether you're a family looking for a fun, immersive experience or a solo traveler seeking the magic of the Brothers Grimm's tales, the German Fairytale Route

offers something for everyone. The events of 2025 promise an unforgettable journey through the heart of one of the world's most iconic literary legacies.

A Future Full of Fairytales

As the German Fairytale Route celebrates its 50th anniversary, its growing appeal reflects the increasing demand for unique, experience-based travel. The route not only preserves the cultural heritage of the Brothers Grimm but also adapts to the needs of modern travelers. With sustainable travel options, exceptional infrastructure, and a rich calendar of events, the German Fairytale Route is poised to become an even more significant draw for global travelers.

For Indian travelers, this is an exciting opportunity to explore a destination that blends history, culture, and fairy-tale fantasy. Don't miss the chance to step into the pages of your favorite fairytales and experience Germany like never before.



Etihad Airways welcomes 20 million passengers and over 100 aircraft

- Etihad has flown more than 20 million passengers in 12 months, for the first time in its history.
- Etihad gifted a couple travelling from New Delhi to visit their children in Canada, with surprise upgrades to The Residence to celebrate the milestone.
- Etihad's fleet reaches more than 100 aircraft.

Etihad continues to soar with a record-breaking year, reaching new milestones for the first time in the airline's history.

Antonoaldo Neves, Chief Executive Officer at Etihad Airways, commented, "The last 12 months have seen Etihad flying high, breaking records and achieving new milestones at an astonishing rate. Following a record Q1, with AED 685 million profit and our highest ever customer satisfaction scores, Etihad has now welcomed more than 20 million guests in the last year, for the first time in the airline's history.

"We continue our upward trajectory as part of a broader growth story that has seen our annual passenger numbers more than double from 10 million to 20 million in just two and a half years. This sustained growth is driven by expanding demand, a dynamic global network, and a clear strategic focus." He added, "We are the only airline in the region growing at this pace and we have no intention of slowing down. 2025 is proving to be our biggest year yet."

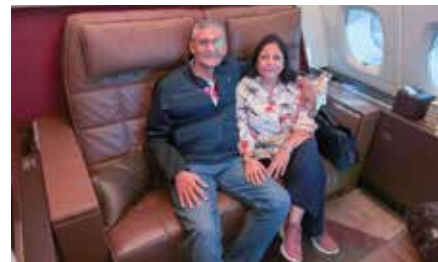
To celebrate flying 20 million passengers across the world, Etihad surprised one lucky couple travelling from New Delhi to visit their daughters in Toronto with a series of surprises. Mr and Mrs Chopra were surprised with upgrades throughout their trip which began with a lie-flat Business class experience on Etihad's A350 from New Delhi to Abu Dhabi. "We have never travelled in Business or First before [...] It's a lifetime experience – a once in a lifetime achievement [for us]!" exclaimed Mr Chopra.

When they touched down at Zayed

International, the couple were delighted with an upgrade to Etihad Guest's Gold tier status at the First Lounge by Mark Potter, Managing Director of Etihad Guest. Saving the best for last, Mr and Mrs Chopra were gifted upgrades to The Residence, Etihad's unique three-room suite in the sky, on their A380 flight from Abu Dhabi to Toronto. "Oh wow – thank you very much! This is an excellent surprise, unforgettable! Thank you, Etihad – we feel like celebrities right now, thank you!" The couple shared as they were welcomed in to The Residence by crew.

Achieving another milestone, Etihad has introduced three more aircraft into its expanding fleet, bringing the operational fleet size to more than 100 aircraft. The airline welcomed back its seventh Airbus A380 to service and received a brand-new Boeing B787-9 delivered from Charleston, US, with an all-Emirati flight crew. Etihad also received the first of three brand-new Airbus 350-1000s delivered today (18 July).

Boasting one of the youngest aircraft fleets in the industry, Etihad continues to make strategic investments to meet the overwhelming demand from guests. The airline is expecting to receive 18 additional new aircraft in 2025, including the delivery of its new A321LR fleet which will enter into service from 1 August. Refining luxury, the new A321LR fleet will offer First Suites, fully lie-flat Business seats, 4K screens and high-speed super Wi-Fi in all cabins, allowing guests to stay connected via messages, calls and stream while in the air. Earlier this year, Etihad announced the order



of 28 wide-body aircraft from Boeing to support its plans for growth and connectivity, operational efficiency and guest experience.

Following the airline's recent announcement of seven additional destinations, Etihad will have added 27 new routes this year, a remarkable milestone that reflects its ambition and commitment to increase the number of visitors to Abu Dhabi. Flying to almost 90 destinations worldwide by the end of 2025, leveraging its strategic geographical advantage connecting Europe and Asia, this expansion is part of Etihad's ongoing strategy to support the economic growth of Abu Dhabi.

These achievements are a huge step toward the goals the Etihad set out in its ambitious growth strategy which would see the network grow to more than 125 destinations, fleet to more than 170 aircraft, and passenger numbers to 38 million per year, by 2030. With rapid growth in every direction, the airline is set to exceed the expectations of its seven-year growth plan, a reflection of demand and extraordinary customer satisfaction. Etihad's success is a reflection of Abu Dhabi's strong aviation sector which continues to demonstrate robust growth and strategic momentum, underscoring its position as a leading global gateway for passengers and cargo.



Georgia Beckons

A European Escape for Indian Travelers with Scenic Beauty, Rich Culture, and Affordable Charm

Georgia is emerging as a standout alternative — especially for **Indian passport holders**, who can now visit this captivating country *visa-free* with a valid visa or residence permit from select countries, including the **U.S., UK, UAE, or Schengen states**. Tucked between Europe and Asia, Georgia offers all the cultural richness, natural grandeur, and culinary delights of Western Europe — without the overwhelming crowds or steep price tags.

In 2025, Georgia is rapidly gaining recognition among Indian travelers for its **seamless entry policies, dramatic landscapes, ancient heritage, and budget-friendly travel options**. Whether you're looking

for high-altitude adventure, historic cities, or world-class wine, Georgia is an underrated gem that delivers a full European experience — at a fraction of the cost.

A Destination That Delivers More for Less

For those yearning for Europe without the expense, Georgia is proving to be the **ideal value destination**. Accommodations, food, transport, and experiences are **significantly more affordable** than in most European capitals. A hearty, authentic Georgian meal, often served with a glass of local wine, can cost under **500** — a fraction of what it would cost in Paris or Rome. Meanwhile, intra-country travel is efficient and inexpensive,

making it easy to explore multiple regions in a single trip.

Tbilisi to Kazbegi: A Tapestry of Culture and Landscape

Georgia's **capital, Tbilisi**, charms visitors with its cobbled streets, pastel-hued architecture, eclectic cafes, and old-world-meets-modern vibe. The city's fusion of East and West is evident in its cuisine, customs, and skyline — all wrapped in a warmth that makes travelers feel immediately at home.

Head north and you'll encounter the **Caucasus Mountains**, where regions like **Kazbegi, Gudauri, and Stepantsminda** reveal breathtaking views and outdoor adventures. Hiking trails, scenic road trips, and ancient churches perched on misty cliffs offer

endless opportunities for photography, reflection, and exploration.

For those seeking peace and nature, Georgia's **forests, lakes, and alpine meadows** provide a serene backdrop, far removed from the hustle of tourist-saturated destinations.

The Cradle of Wine Culture

Wine lovers will find themselves on sacred ground in **Kakheti**, Georgia's premier winemaking region. Often credited as the **birthplace of wine**, Georgia boasts an 8,000-year-old viticulture tradition. Visitors can tour picturesque vineyards, learn about **qvevri** winemaking (using clay pots buried underground), and sample unique Georgian varietals like **Saperavi** and **Kindzmarauli**.

Beyond tastings, traditional Georgian **"supras"** — lavish feasts with flowing wine, toasts, and folk music — offer an

unforgettable cultural immersion. This is a place where food, wine, and storytelling come together in celebration.

Easier Access for Indian Passport Holders

A major draw for Indian travelers is Georgia's **liberal entry policy**. Indian citizens holding valid visas or residence permits from the **U.S., UK, UAE, or Schengen zone** are **eligible to enter Georgia visa-free** for up to 90 days. Discussions are also underway to further ease access through **e-visas or visa-on-arrival options**, positioning Georgia as one of the most accessible European destinations for Indian tourists.

As always, travelers are advised to consult the **Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs** or official consular websites for the most up-to-date entry requirements before planning their trip.

Why Now Is the Time to Visit

While Europe remains a perennial favorite, Georgia is carving out a niche for travelers seeking **authenticity, value, and discovery**. With its **dramatic natural landscapes, deep cultural roots, renowned hospitality, and cost-effective travel experience**, Georgia is fast becoming a top choice for Indian tourists looking to avoid the crowds without compromising on quality.

As global travel evolves, destinations like Georgia offer what many are now seeking: **a meaningful journey, easy access, and immersive experiences** — all without the logistical or financial strain of traditional European hotspots.

Georgia isn't just an alternative to Europe — it's Europe, reimaged. And for Indian travelers, it's now more inviting than ever.





An Architectural Gem

with Contemporary Design Marks the Beginning of a New Era at Badrutt's Palace Hotel in St. Moritz

The extension designed by ACPV ARCHITECTS Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel comprises 25 contemporary, luxurious guestrooms and suites

Badrutt's Palace Hotel is delighted to announce the opening of the largest hotel extension in its 129-year history, the Serlas Wing. The extension designed by ACPV ARCHITECTS Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel comprises 25 contemporary, luxurious guest rooms and suites as well as an innovative underground pedestrian tunnel system that includes the longest hotel escalator (18,79 meters) in Switzerland. Serlas Wing gives hotel guests discreet and exclusive access to the village square of St. Moritz and to Chesa Veglia, the oldest farmhouse in St. Moritz, which houses four Palace restaurant concepts and a bar.

"With the debut of the Serlas Wing, we open a completely new chapter in the hotel's history, one that architecturally creates a bridge between tradition and the future," notes **Richard Leuenberger, Managing Director of Badrutt's Palace Hotel**. *"The new accommodation, which has been crafted through a unique collaboration with Loro Piana Interiors, enables our highly discerning guests to enjoy the timeless*

and uncompromising hospitality for which Badrutt's Palace Hotel has been famous since its opening in 1896."

ACPV ARCHITECTS Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel

Serlas Wing was designed by Milan-based architecture firm ACPV ARCHITECTS Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel. The six-storey building blends seamlessly into the existing local architecture. *"The Serlas Wing project was inspired by the hotel's location, the surrounding natural landscape, and the spirit of Badrutt's Palace Hotel,"* says architect **Antonio Citterio, Chairman and co-founder of ACPV ARCHITECTS**. *"The building has been conceived to offer a unique guest experience through spaces where people can gather and enjoy time together, and interiors that enhance and frame panoramic views of the surroundings."*

"We were excited to partner with ACPV ARCHITECTS for the development of our new Serlas Wing, as they echo our commitment to marrying the historic charm of our iconic building with the highest level of contemporary





design,” adds **Leuenberger**. *“This initiative directly caters to the evolving preferences of our multigenerational clientele, enhancing our accommodation offerings and forging a natural link between Chesa Veglia and the entire hotel complex. We believe this development reaffirms Badrutt’s Palace Hotel’s position as the pinnacle of luxury and elegance in St. Moritz.”*

Wool-fabric wall-paneled corridors and upholstery by Loro Piana Interiors. Each of the 25 rooms and suites is characterized, above all, by two significant features: their expansive size and their contemporary design. All rooms and suites have an above-average amount of space and include wool-fabric wall-paneled corridors and upholstery by Loro Piana Interiors for the curtains, headboards, bed skirts, and chairs.

The chosen fabrics utilize natural materials that are strongly representative of the Loro Piana

Interiors philosophy, such as wool and cashmere, and which are presented in a way that enhances their extraordinary, intrinsic characteristics. The building features lighting design that highlights the quality of both external and internal spaces and emphasizes the richness of the materials, while the interiors feature furniture by B&B Italia and Flexform. Guests discover the new Serlas Wing through the triple-height lobby, crossed by a sculptural bridge, lit by a large arched window from above.

“The architecture and the interiors of the new Serlas Wing were designed by imagining how people would experience and perceive the space inside,” adds architect **Antonio Citterio**. *“In the guestrooms and the suites, window openings are placed in positions that create intimate connections between guests and the surrounding landscape. The placement of the windows adds a special quality to the facade, which references the traditional architectural*

volume of the Chesa Planta house in Samedan (Switzerland).”

“We are honored to be part of this project, perfectly blending exclusivity, contemporaneity, excellence and comfort. All these elements are in complete harmony with Loro Piana Interiors’ philosophy,” it is explained at **Loro Piana Interiors**. *“Moreover, for the Serlas Wing we developed special colors and special fabrics, building on our flexibility thanks to our 100% in-house production. To be able to respond to the needs of prestigious architects is always a stimulating challenge. Moreover, our presence in the suites and rooms seals a long-term relationship between our brand and the Badrutt’s, a relationship going back more than 20 years, when our first store in St. Moritz was located within the hotel’s premises.”*

The ground floor of the Serlas Wing is home to luxury shops, such as Sabadini, Miu Miu and Yves Saint Laurent.



Amalfi Coast & Capri

Italy's Summer Icons Balance Beauty, Popularity, and Sustainability





As summer travel surges across Europe, few destinations evoke the timeless romance and natural beauty of **Italy's Amalfi Coast**. With its cascading cliffs, vibrant seaside villages, and Mediterranean charm, this UNESCO-listed stretch of coastline is once again making headlines as the **ultimate summer escape** — particularly for travelers in search of cultural richness, visual drama, and authentic Italian hospitality.

In 2024, the Amalfi Coast continues to deliver an immersive blend of relaxation and exploration. From **Positano's postcard-perfect facades** to the historic grandeur of **Amalfi** and the music-filled hilltop town of **Ravello**, the region offers a layered experience that transcends the typical beach holiday.

And just offshore, the island of **Capri**—with its world-famous **Blue Grotto**—adds an extra layer of glamour and intrigue. Yet, even as these destinations captivate with their natural and architectural splendor, they are increasingly navigating the complexities of growing tourism,

raising important questions around safety, sustainability, and preservation.

Coastal Majesty: The Amalfi Allure

The Amalfi Coast has long enchanted visitors with its kaleidoscope of colors, cliff-hugging roads, and terraced lemon groves. Here, every twist of the **Amalfi Drive (SS163)** offers panoramic views of turquoise waters and centuries-old stone towns.

In **Positano**, narrow lanes weave through boutiques and cafes, leading down to a lively pebble beach framed by steep cliffs. Nearby, **Amalfi's cathedral and piazzas** provide a glimpse into the region's storied past as a powerful maritime republic. Ravello, perched high above the sea, hosts internationally acclaimed music festivals in lush villa gardens overlooking the Gulf of Salerno.

Summer is peak season here — and for good reason. The weather is ideal for **sailing, hiking the Path of the Gods**, or lingering over seafood pasta on a sun-drenched terrace. Yet, the increasing influx of travelers brings



with it a new urgency to balance visitor experience with environmental protection and infrastructure capacity.

Capri: Elegance with a Blue Glow

Just a short ferry ride away, the island of **Capri** has become synonymous with Mediterranean elegance. While its upscale boutiques and exclusive resorts attract a glamorous crowd, the island's most famous feature remains the **Blue Grotto (Grotta Azzurra)** — a sea cave illuminated by an ethereal blue glow created by sunlight filtering through underwater rock formations.

The **Blue Grotto** draws thousands each year, its surreal beauty widely shared on social media. Entering the cave is no small feat: small rowboats must navigate a **narrow sea-level opening** just large enough for one vessel at a time. Inside, the stillness, glow, and echoing voices create an almost spiritual experience.

Yet, this natural wonder is facing growing challenges. In recent months, **unusually high tide levels** have complicated access to the grotto, sometimes making it difficult or dangerous for boats to enter. In one recent incident, a near-capsize raised

alarms about safety, especially during periods of heavy demand.

Local authorities and tour operators are now under pressure to **better manage traffic and improve safety protocols**, without diminishing the once-in-a-lifetime nature of the experience.

Beauty Meets Responsibility: The Push for Sustainable Tourism

As the Amalfi Coast and Capri grow in popularity, the need for **sustainable tourism** has never been clearer. Officials are increasingly focused on strategies to **control visitor numbers, protect delicate marine ecosystems, and maintain cultural integrity** in the face of overtourism.

Initiatives under consideration include:

- **Timed entries** to high-traffic sites like the Blue Grotto
- **Limits on private vehicle access** along the coast
- **Expanded public transport** and ferry schedules to ease congestion
- **Educational campaigns** to encourage responsible behavior among tourists

Residents, too, are advocating for change, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding the very elements

— serenity, authenticity, and natural beauty — that have made these destinations so iconic.

A Timeless Destination, Rethinking Its Future

There is no denying the magic of the Amalfi Coast and Capri. From the **cultural depth and culinary riches** of Campania to the **natural grandeur of the Tyrrhenian Sea**, this region offers travelers an evocative escape where history and hedonism coexist. Whether sipping limoncello in a sunlit piazza or drifting through glowing waters beneath a cliffside cave, the experiences are as unforgettable as they are photogenic.

But as global travel rebounds, Italy's coastal treasures are at a crossroads — tasked with protecting their allure while reimagining what **sustainable, meaningful tourism** can look like in the 21st century.

For those planning a summer sojourn, the Amalfi Coast and Capri remain **essential European experiences** — radiant, rich in story, and increasingly aware that their future depends on a thoughtful balance between **welcoming the world** and **preserving their soul**.



Saudi
Welcome
to Arabia

At the ocean's edge,
a new world begins.
Welcome to the Red Sea.



tboacademy®
Marketing | Conversion | Education


Saudi Red Sea
www.VisitSaudi.com

For any queries, please email us at info@tboacademy.com

Discover India with Expert

Domestic Travel Protection



**20+ high-risk
adventure sports
activities covered**



**Emergency medical
expenses & personal
accident cover**



Trip cancellation
cover for medical &
non-medical reasons



**Trip interruption,
trip delay & missed
connection benefits**



**Real-time
baggage tracking**
with TrackMate



**Includes Asego
Pilgrim Protect
& much more**



**24/7 Emergency
Medical Assistance**



**Domestic Roadside
Assistance**



**Pan India
Presence**



**Customisable
Travel Insurance**



For partnership or more details, scan the QR code

Note: Assistance services are provided by Asego Global Assistance Private Limited. Please note that insurance is underwritten by an IRDAI authorised underwriter and is a subject matter of solicitation. The content expressed in this poster is for information purpose only and it does not accept any liability of any sort unless confirmed by an authorized representative of Asego. All Insurance policies are sold under the Corporate Agency of Asego Insurance LLP bearing IRDAI registration no. CA0776.

24x7 helpline: +91 8448582205 | customersupport@asego.in | claims@asego.in