

LUXURY AND LIFESTYLE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

travel

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SPAN

TITLIS Tower

Redefining Alpine
Luxury in the Heart
of Switzerland

Lapland

in Autumn Finland's
Spectacular Ruska
Season Unveiled

Saudi Arabia

Simplifies Travel with
New Package Visa

Disney Cruise

Line & Sentosa
Singapore's
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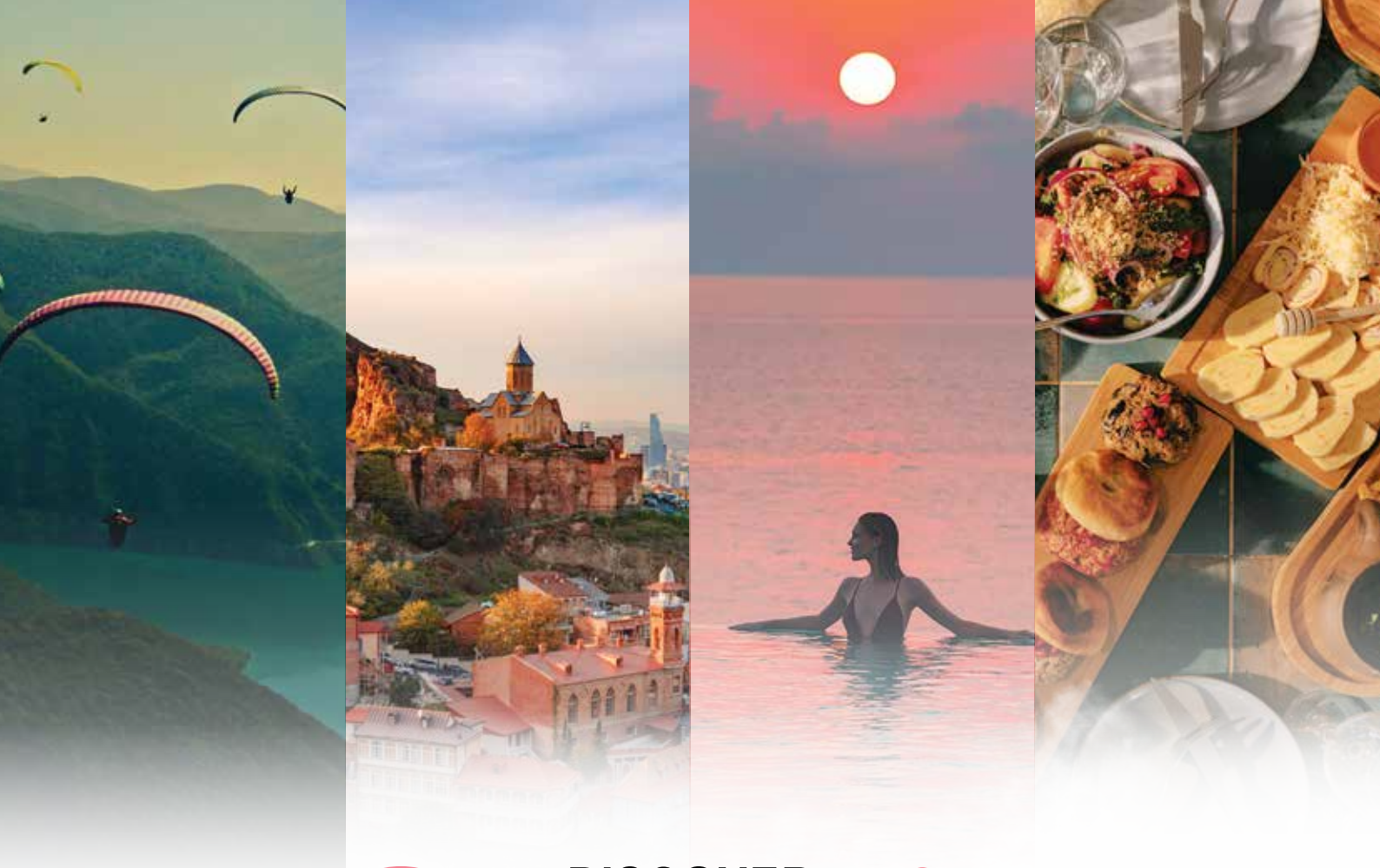
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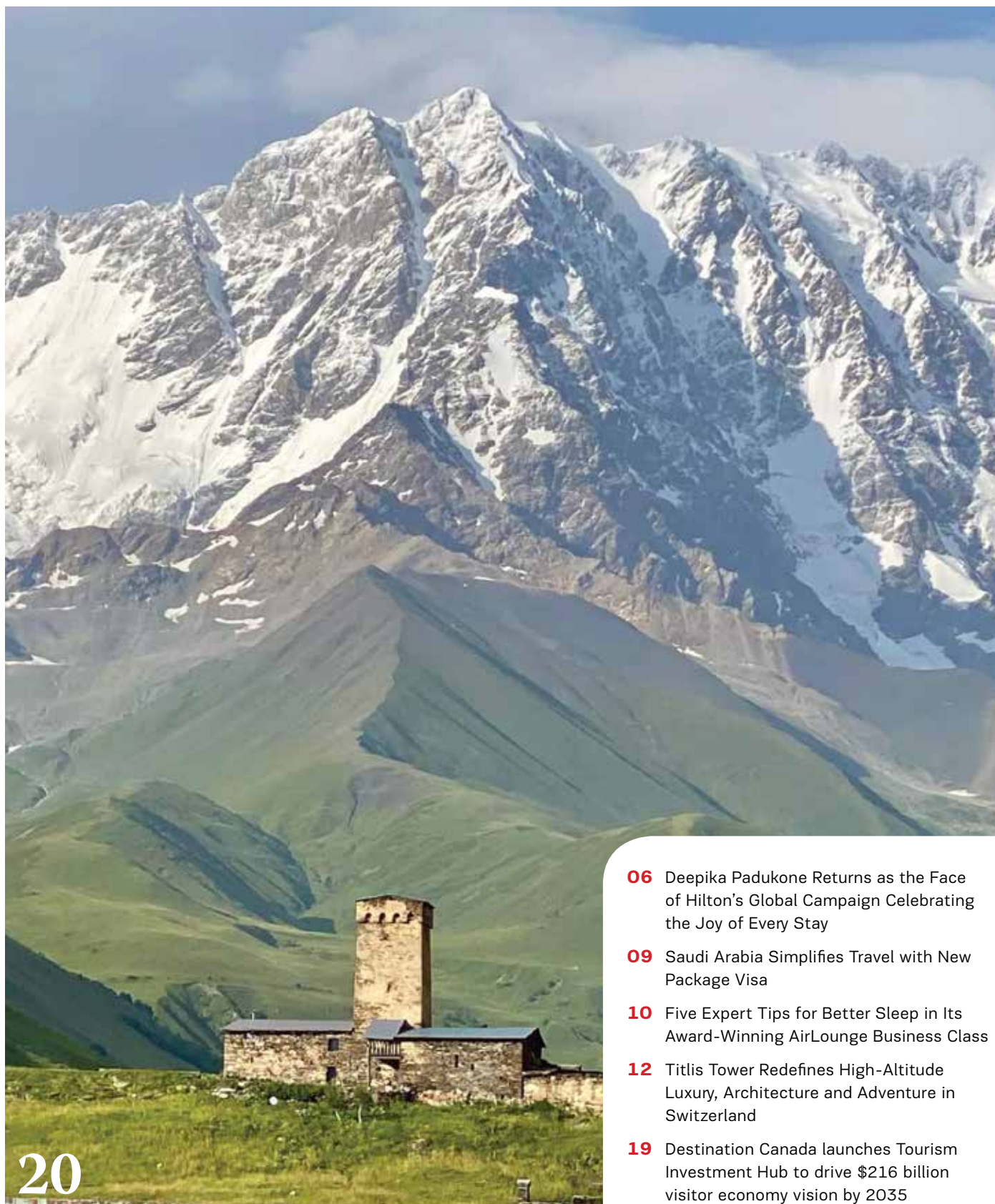


A secret whispered by few,
discovered by you.

 **Georgia**

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Deepika Padukone Returns as the Face of Hilton's Global Campaign Celebrating the Joy of Every Stay

Hilton has unveiled the next chapter of its global **"It Matters Where You Stay"** campaign, once again featuring global brand ambassador Deepika Padukone. Building on the success of last year's campaign, the latest film offers a more personal and playful glimpse into the actor's travel experiences, highlighting how a memorable hotel stay can shape the entire journey. The campaign is rolling out across social media, digital platforms and outdoor advertising worldwide.

Filmed at Conrad Bengaluru,

the campaign shifts the spotlight away from destinations and focuses instead on the comfort, confidence and sense of ease that travellers look for when they are away from home. Through music, movement and understated storytelling, Deepika Padukone is shown embracing a more relaxed and spontaneous side of herself, reflecting the freedom that comes with feeling genuinely looked after while travelling.

The campaign is built around a simple idea: while travellers often spend months choosing where to go, the

experience of where they stay can have just as much impact on the trip itself. A thoughtfully designed hotel, attentive service and seamless experiences allow guests to focus less on logistics and more on enjoying their journey. Hilton's latest creative work captures that feeling through a series of everyday travel moments that are authentic rather than scripted.

Speaking about the campaign, Hilton's Chief Marketing Officer and Head of Luxury Brands, **Mark Weinstein**, said the company wanted to celebrate the role hospitality plays

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

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in making travel more enjoyable. While destinations remain central to every trip, he noted that a great stay provides the comfort and confidence that allows travellers to make the most of every experience.

Deepika Padukone said the campaign resonated with her because it reflected the feeling of staying in a place where everything works effortlessly. She added that when travellers feel genuinely comfortable and cared for, they stop overthinking and are simply able to be themselves—a sentiment that shaped the relaxed and playful tone of the campaign.

Created at Conrad Bengaluru, the campaign brings together

an international creative team, including **GRAMMY Award-winning director Nadia Marquard Otzen**, choreographer **Shay Latukolan**, and music producer **Mikey McCleary**.

An original soundtrack blending contemporary Indian vocals with electronic influences complements the visual storytelling, creating a campaign that is both globally appealing and rooted in Indian cultural expression.

The launch also reflects Hilton's long-term ambitions in India, one of its fastest-growing markets. The hospitality company has outlined plans to expand its presence significantly over the coming years, aiming to operate around **400 hotels** across the

country. As India's travel landscape continues to evolve, Hilton is investing not only in new properties but also in experiences that resonate with a new generation of travellers seeking authenticity, convenience and personalised hospitality.

More than a celebrity campaign, the latest chapter reinforces Hilton's belief that memorable travel begins long before guests explore a destination. It begins the moment they check in. By placing the hotel stay at the centre of the travel experience, Hilton continues to position hospitality as an essential part of every journey—one that helps travellers feel comfortable, connected and ready to embrace the experiences that await them.

Riyadh Air to Launch Daily Mumbai Flights from August 4, Marking Its Entry into India



Saudi Arabia's newest premium airline, **Riyadh Air**, is set to enter one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets with the launch of **daily non-stop flights between Riyadh and Mumbai from August 4**. The new service marks the carrier's first destination in India and signals the beginning of its long-term expansion plans across the country.

The airline will operate the route with its flagship **Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner**, offering passengers a four-class cabin configuration comprising Business Elite, Business, Premium Economy and Economy. The daily service will depart **King Khalid International Airport** in Riyadh at **2:05 p.m.**, arriving at **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport** in Mumbai at **8:35 p.m.** The return flight will leave Mumbai at **10:05 p.m.** and land in Riyadh at **11:50 p.m.**, providing convenient schedules for both business and leisure travellers. Bookings for the new route opened on July 6.

India has long been identified as a priority market for Riyadh Air, and Mumbai's selection as its first destination reflects the strong business, tourism and expatriate links between the two countries. The new route will also provide travellers with onward connections through Riyadh to destinations across Europe and the Middle East, strengthening Saudi Arabia's position as an emerging global aviation hub.

Speaking on the launch, Riyadh Air Chief Executive Officer **Tony Douglas** said India is one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets, and the airline is pleased to offer travellers a new premium travel option while enhancing global connectivity through Riyadh.

Mumbai is expected to be only the beginning of the airline's India strategy. Riyadh Air has indicated that it is evaluating additional destinations, with **Delhi** and **Bengaluru** widely expected to feature in its future expansion plans as the carrier builds

a stronger presence in the Indian market.

The airline enters an already competitive India-Saudi Arabia market, where demand continues to grow steadily. Several airlines currently operate services between the two countries, including **Saudia, flynas, flyadeal, IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express** and **Akasa Air**, reflecting strong demand from business travellers, tourists, religious pilgrims and the large expatriate community. The addition of Riyadh Air introduces another premium choice for passengers travelling between the two nations.

Backed by Saudi Arabia's **Public Investment Fund (PIF)**, Riyadh Air has ambitious growth plans. Since its launch in 2023, the airline has outlined a vision to connect **more than 100 destinations worldwide by 2030**, supported by a rapidly expanding fleet and a focus on delivering a premium travel experience. The Mumbai route represents another milestone in that journey while reinforcing Saudi Arabia's broader ambition to position Riyadh as a major international aviation gateway.



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We are on



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SPAN





Saudi Arabia

Simplifies Travel with New Package Visa

Planning a holiday to Saudi Arabia is about to become much easier. The Kingdom has introduced **Package Visa**, a new digital travel initiative that integrates the tourist visa application with holiday bookings, allowing eligible visitors to arrange flights, accommodation and their visa through a single, streamlined process. The pilot programme is being rolled out through approved travel and tourism service providers in selected international markets before a wider global launch.

The new initiative marks another step in Saudi Arabia's efforts to make

visiting the country more convenient as it continues to expand its tourism sector. Rather than applying for a visa separately after booking flights and hotels, travellers can now complete the entire process as part of one integrated travel package. Depending on the package, visitors can also include sightseeing tours, events and curated tourism experiences, making trip planning faster and more seamless.

The Package Visa builds on a series of travel reforms introduced over the past few years, including the launch of the tourist e-Visa, visa-on-arrival facilities and the Stopover Transit Visa.

Together, these measures have helped fuel Saudi Arabia's tourism growth, with the Kingdom welcoming more than **29 million international visitors in 2025**, reflecting its growing appeal as one of the world's fastest-emerging travel destinations.

Commenting on the launch, **Ahmed Al Khateeb**, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Tourism, said the new initiative reflects the country's commitment to making travel simpler and more accessible. By integrating visa processing directly into travel bookings, the Kingdom aims to provide a smoother visitor experience while strengthening collaboration across the tourism sector and reinforcing Saudi Arabia's position as an increasingly accessible global destination.

The initiative also creates new opportunities for travel companies. Approved travel and tourism service providers will be able to offer fully integrated holiday packages, making it easier for travellers to book complete itineraries while encouraging longer stays and a broader exploration of the Kingdom's diverse attractions. Package Visa is currently available only through qualified travel providers that meet established service standards and provide round-the-clock customer support, ensuring a reliable experience from booking through arrival.

The launch comes as Saudi Arabia continues to invest heavily in tourism under its long-term development strategy, expanding visitor experiences across heritage destinations, modern cities, luxury resorts, entertainment, sporting events and natural landscapes. Simplifying the travel process has become a key priority as the Kingdom seeks to attract a growing number of international leisure travellers.

With the introduction of Package Visa, Saudi Arabia is taking another practical step towards removing barriers to travel. By bringing visa processing, flights, accommodation and experiences together in one booking journey, the Kingdom is making it easier than ever for visitors to discover a destination that continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace.



Five Expert Tips for Better Sleep in Its Award-Winning AirLounge Business Class

As premium travellers increasingly prioritise comfort and wellness during long-haul journeys, Finnair is highlighting how its innovative AirLounge Business Class seat is redefining the inflight sleep experience. Designed to combine Nordic aesthetics with enhanced personal space and flexibility, the AirLounge concept has become a key differentiator in the airline's long-haul

premium offering. Available across Finnair's long-haul fleet, the AirLounge seat departs from conventional reclining business-class designs by adopting a fixed-shell structure that transforms into a spacious fully flat bed. The design offers passengers greater freedom of movement, enhanced privacy and a lounge-like environment intended to improve rest and relaxation on long-haul

flights. Drawing on insights from its cabin crew and customer experience teams, Finnair has outlined five practical ways travellers can maximise comfort and achieve better sleep while flying in Business Class.

1. Find Your Ideal Lounge and Sleep Position

Unlike traditional airline seats, the AirLounge has been designed to function more like a personal living-

room sofa in the sky. Its wide shell structure allows passengers to sit, lounge, stretch or curl up in different positions before converting the seat into a lie-flat bed. The spacious design enables travellers to adjust their posture naturally throughout the flight, helping reduce fatigue during long journeys. Cabin crew recommend experimenting with various seating and lounging positions to find the most comfortable arrangement before settling in for sleep.

2. Make Full Use of the Mattress Pad and Bedding

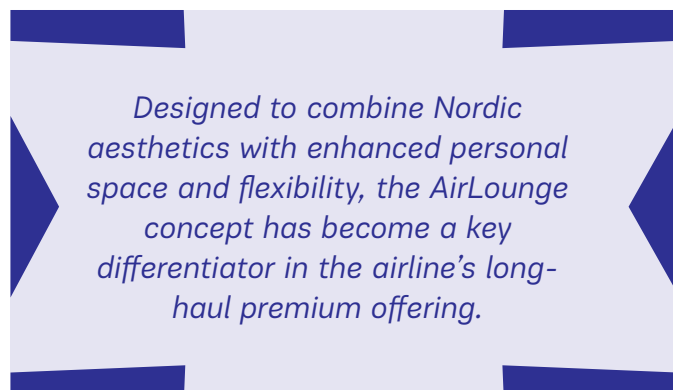
A key element of the AirLounge experience is the premium bedding

package, which includes a dedicated mattress topper, pillows and duvet featuring distinctive Nordic-inspired design elements. Finnair notes that many first-time passengers overlook the mattress topper, despite its significant impact on sleeping comfort. When placed over the sleeping surface, the mattress pad provides additional cushioning and helps create a more bed-like experience, particularly on overnight flights.

The airline's cabin crew also encourage passengers to request additional pillows if required, allowing further customisation based on individual sleeping preferences.

3. Choose the Right Seat for Your Sleeping Style

Seat selection can play a surprisingly important role in sleep quality. Finnair recommends that side sleepers consider their preferred sleeping position



when choosing a seat. Window-side AirLounge seats provide enhanced privacy, while the orientation of specific seats can make sleeping on a preferred side more comfortable. The cocoon-style shell design also helps shield passengers from cabin activity, creating a quieter and more secluded environment conducive to rest.

4. Use the Business Class Amenity Kit

To support inflight wellbeing, Finnair offers a premium Business Class

amenity kit developed in partnership with Finnish design house Marimekko. The kit includes practical sleep-enhancing items such as an eye mask and earplugs, helping passengers minimise distractions from cabin lighting and ambient noise. Additional comfort items, including socks and personal care accessories, are available upon request from cabin crew. These amenities are designed to help travellers create a more restful environment, particularly on overnight and ultra-long-haul services.

5. Activate the 'Do Not Disturb' Function

One of the AirLounge's distinctive features is its integrated "Do Not Disturb" function. By activating the system, passengers can signal to cabin crew that they do not wish to be disturbed during rest periods. The feature illuminates a discreet indicator visible to crew members, helping ensure uninterrupted sleep between meal services and cabin checks. Combined with adjustable lighting and the seat's high privacy walls, the function contributes to a more personalised and restful inflight experience.

Redefining Premium Long-Haul Travel

Finnair's AirLounge concept reflects a broader shift in premium aviation towards passenger wellness, personal space and flexible travel experiences. The airline's innovative seat design has attracted attention across the industry for challenging conventional business-class layouts while focusing on what many long-haul travellers value most: quality rest. With increasing demand for seamless long-distance travel between Asia and Europe, inflight sleep quality continues to be a critical factor in the overall passenger experience. By combining Scandinavian design principles, enhanced privacy, premium bedding and personalised service features, Finnair aims to ensure that travellers arrive at their destinations feeling more refreshed and ready for their onward journey.



The New Icon of the Alps:

TITLIS Tower

Redefines High-Altitude
Luxury, Architecture and
Adventure in Switzerland



A New Architectural Landmark Above the Clouds

Few construction projects anywhere in the world can claim to have been built under conditions as demanding as those found atop Mount Titlis.

Standing at an elevation of **3,020 metres**, the newly opened **TITLIS Tower** represents the first completed milestone of the long-term TITLIS development project, an ambitious

transformation that will continue with the reconstruction of the mountain station into the **new TITLIS Peak Station**, scheduled for completion in **2029**.

Designed by internationally acclaimed Swiss architects **Herzog & de Meuron**, the tower transforms what was once a technical communications structure into a striking architectural destination

At 3,020 metres above sea level, where glaciers sculpt the landscape and mountain peaks stretch endlessly across Europe, a remarkable new landmark has emerged. The opening of the TITLIS Tower marks not only a defining moment for Mount Titlis but also introduces one of the most ambitious examples of contemporary alpine architecture anywhere in the world. Combining visionary design, world-class gastronomy, unforgettable panoramic experiences and thrilling glacier adventures, the new TITLIS Tower has transformed Central Switzerland into one of Europe's most compelling travel destinations.

*By Devender Grover,
Editor in Chief, Travel Span*

that seamlessly blends contemporary design with the dramatic alpine environment.

Rather than competing with nature, the architecture embraces it.

Glass, steel and carefully selected materials frame the surrounding glaciers, snowfields and jagged peaks, creating an immersive experience where visitors become part of the landscape itself.

The project remains one of Europe's highest active construction sites, presenting extraordinary engineering challenges including severe weather, extreme temperatures, difficult logistics and limited construction windows each year. Despite ongoing work around the summit, nearly all visitor attractions remain fully operational, allowing guests to continue enjoying one of Switzerland's most spectacular mountain experiences.

The Horizon Deck: A View Across Four Countries

Perched approximately **55 metres above the glacier**, the **Horizon Deck** has quickly become the signature attraction of the new tower.

Unlike traditional mountain viewing platforms, the Horizon Deck offers a remarkable 360-degree panorama stretching across much of Central Europe.

On clear days visitors can admire:



- The dramatic peaks of the Swiss Alps

- The Italian mountain ranges
- The Swiss Plateau
- Distant landscapes extending toward Germany
- Mountain horizons reaching into France

The sensation is unlike standing on a conventional observation deck.

Instead, guests appear suspended above an endless sea of mountains,

glaciers and clouds.

For photographers, sunrise and late afternoon provide exceptional lighting conditions, while every season delivers an entirely different visual experience—from pristine winter snowfields to vibrant summer alpine landscapes.

Dining at the Summit: Casual Fine Dining Above 3,000 Metres

Luxury travel today is increasingly defined by memorable culinary



HORIZON DECK

55 meters above the glacier, the view opens in every direction. The Horizon Deck is the new viewing platform on the TITLIS Tower and offers a truly unique perspective on the vastness of the Alps. From here, your view stretches across the peaks towards Italy, over the Swiss Plateau and all the way to Germany and France. A place for wide horizons, powerful images and a moment that stays with you.



ROLEX BOUTIQUE

The Rolex Boutique at the TITLIS Tower combines the grandeur of the alpine landscape with timeless elegance. As the highest Rolex Boutique in the world, it invites guests to enjoy an exclusive brand experience at over 3,000 metres above sea level, framed by striking architecture, refined materials, and breathtaking panoramic views of the Swiss Alps.



ROTAIR

At over 3,000 metres above sea level, the view is truly spectacular: rugged rock faces contrast with deep glacial crevasses and sparkling snowfields. To give you the perfect perspective, the TITLIS Rotair cable car rotates 360 degrees during the ride – so you won't miss a single moment of this breathtaking panorama!

experiences, and the TITLIS Tower introduces one of Europe's highest fine dining destinations.

Joseph's Restaurant

Opened on **3 June 2026**, Joseph's Restaurant offers what TITLIS describes as **"Casual Fine Dining."**

Floor-to-ceiling glass walls frame spectacular glacier views while guests enjoy contemporary cuisine inspired by Swiss alpine traditions and international influences.

Rather than formal luxury, the restaurant embraces relaxed sophistication.

Every table enjoys panoramic mountain scenery, transforming lunch or dinner into a destination experience rather than simply a meal.

Whether visitors arrive after hiking, sightseeing or simply to celebrate a special occasion, Joseph's creates a refined yet welcoming atmosphere unlike any other restaurant in the Alps.

Joseph's Alpine Lounge

Adjacent to the restaurant lies the Alpine Lounge—a relaxed social space designed for travellers wishing to pause over premium beverages, light meals and spectacular scenery.

It serves equally well as:

- A pre-dinner meeting point
- A quiet retreat after exploring the summit



- A comfortable location to appreciate changing mountain weather through expansive windows

Luxury Shopping at the Roof of Europe

Luxury retail has also found an extraordinary new address.

The TITLIS Tower now houses the **world's highest Rolex Boutique**, offering visitors an exclusive retail experience surrounded by snow-covered peaks more than three kilometres above sea level.

The boutique combines elegant

Swiss craftsmanship with equally iconic alpine surroundings, reinforcing Switzerland's global reputation for luxury watchmaking and premium tourism.

Additional shopping experiences across the TITLIS destination include:

- Chocolate boutiques featuring more than 300 Swiss chocolate specialties
- Souvenir stores
- Premium Swiss watch boutiques at Trübsee

Every Season Tells a Different Story

Few mountain destinations reinvent themselves as dramatically as TITLIS.



CLIFF WALK

At 3,041 metres above sea level, Europe's highest suspension bridge stretches across the south face to the Ice Flyer glacier lift station. Take 150 steps above the icy abyss as the wind whistles around you and your heart races with excitement. It's an unforgettable adventure – and your reward is a breathtaking view of the majestic Alpine landscape.



GLACIER CAVE

It feels like travelling back in time: in the turquoise-blue twilight of the Glacier Cave, where ice up to 5,000 years old turns your breath into mist, you enter the very heart of the glacier. Along the 150-metre-long walkway, 10 metres below the surface, you can feel its power beneath your feet and touch it with your hands. An experience that will move you in a truly profound way.



ICE FLYER

Glide over vast snowfields sparkling in the sunlight and gaze into the turquoise depths of crevasses that reach down to the heart of the eternal ice. In winter, the Ice Flyer takes you to the spectacular summit ski slopes; in summer, it carries you to the Glacier Park, where snowtubing and other snow adventures await.



While its glacier remains a year-round spectacle, the experiences surrounding it evolve with the seasons, transforming the mountain into an

ever-changing playground for adventure seekers, families, nature lovers and luxury travellers alike. Whether blanketed in pristine winter snow or

bathed in the colours of an Alpine summer, TITLIS offers an extraordinary collection of experiences that extend well beyond its iconic summit.



CASUAL DINING

Joseph's Restaurant brings Casual Fine Dining to over 3,000 meters. Set within glass, steel and the world of the glacier, it creates a culinary experience shaped by alpine ease, creative cuisine and spectacular views. The atmosphere is relaxed, refined and unmistakably TITLIS: a special table in a special place. High above the glacier, dining becomes a moment that goes far beyond taste.



ALPINE LOUNGE

Joseph's Alpine Lounge is the relaxed meeting point inside the TITLIS Tower. It combines an alpine atmosphere with selected drinks, small bites, and sweeping views of the Alps. Whether before your restaurant visit, after the Horizon Deck or simply for a quiet moment above the Alps, the lounge invites you to arrive, pause and experience the TITLIS Tower at your own pace.



GLACIER PARK

Even in the middle of summer, it's all about snow fun and action at our Glacier Park. Whether you race down the slope on a snow tube or try your skills on the Snake Gliss, Balancer or Zipfelbob – the choice is yours. An unforgettable experience for the whole family!

Winter Wonderland

Winter is when TITLIS reveals its most iconic face. More than **82 kilometres of immaculately groomed ski slopes** attract everyone from beginners to experienced skiers, while untouched powder fields and legendary freeride descents challenge seasoned adventurers seeking an authentic Alpine experience.

Beyond skiing, the mountain has evolved into one of Central Switzerland's most exciting winter playgrounds. At **SnowXPark** on Trübsee, visitors can experience the future of snow mobility aboard the innovative **MoonBike**, the world's first electric snowbike, drift through snowy circuits on an **e-Snowmobile**, or race across the landscape in the futuristic **Bobsia**. Families will find endless entertainment at the **Trübsee Snow Park**, where snow tubes, mini bobs, balancers and magic carpets provide hours of fun, while **Schmuggli's Winterland** introduces young adventurers to skiing, snowboarding and interactive snow play in a safe and welcoming environment. Snowshoe trails, cross-country skiing routes and exhilarating toboggan runs complete a winter experience that celebrates every aspect of mountain life.

Summer Adventures

As the snow retreats from the lower

slopes, TITLIS transforms into one of Switzerland's most dynamic outdoor adventure destinations. Around the picturesque **Trübsee** station, visitors discover a vibrant mountain playground where adrenaline and nature exist in perfect harmony.

The popular **BagJump Tower** challenges visitors to leap from platforms up to six metres high before landing safely on giant inflatable airbags, while **Trampoline2Bag** and dedicated children's play zones ensure excitement for every generation. Scenic hiking trails wind through alpine meadows, forests and panoramic ridgelines, rewarding walkers with breathtaking views of glaciers and surrounding peaks.

For cyclists, the Engelberg–TITLIS region offers an extensive network of mountain biking trails ranging from leisurely rides to technically demanding descents. On the tranquil waters of **Lake Trübsee**, traditional rowing boats invite visitors to slow the pace and appreciate the beauty of the surrounding landscape, while experienced climbers can tackle the spectacular **Graustock Via Ferrata**, ascending to 2,662 metres for unforgettable Alpine panoramas.

New Flavours on the Mountain

TITLIS is also redefining mountain dining with a collection of contemporary culinary experiences that celebrate Swiss hospitality. **Joseph's**

Restaurant, located within the spectacular TITLIS Tower at 3,020 metres, brings Casual Fine Dining to one of Europe's highest dining destinations, pairing refined regional cuisine with extraordinary glacier views.

At Trübsee, **Atelier Hess** showcases modern Alpine cuisine in an elegant yet relaxed setting, while **Nom Nom** offers freshly prepared gourmet snacks, artisan coffee and light meals—perfect for travellers eager to continue exploring the mountain without compromising on quality.

Shopping Above the Clouds

The visitor experience continues beyond adventure with a thoughtfully curated collection of shopping experiences celebrating Swiss



GRAUSTOCK VIA FERRATA

Ascend dramatic rock faces on the Graustock Via Ferrata and experience the thrill of reaching the summit cross at 2,662 metres. It's a rewarding adventure where breathtaking panoramas await every climber.



HIKING

Follow scenic alpine trails where every turn reveals breathtaking mountain vistas, wildflower meadows and the timeless beauty of the Swiss Alps. At TITLIS, the journey itself is every bit as rewarding as the destination.



BAGJUMP

Test your courage at the Trübsee Adventure Park with exhilarating leaps from the BagJump Tower or trampoline onto giant airbags. It's an adrenaline-filled experience that promises fun for families and thrill-seekers alike.



MOUNTAIN BIKING

Ride through spectacular Alpine terrain on trails designed for every level of cyclist, from leisurely scenic routes to challenging mountain descents. Every ride delivers fresh perspectives of Engelberg's remarkable landscape.

craftsmanship and tradition. Chocolate lovers will delight in the new **Chocolate Shop** at Trübsee, where more than **300 varieties of premium Swiss chocolates** offer a delicious introduction to one of the country's most celebrated culinary traditions.

The new **Souvenir Shop** presents carefully selected keepsakes and locally inspired gifts, allowing visitors to take home a lasting reminder of their TITLIS journey. Luxury enthusiasts, meanwhile, can explore the new **Bucherer Boutique**, recognised as the **highest-altitude watch boutique in the world**, where exceptional Swiss watches and fine jewellery complement the prestigious Rolex Boutique located within the TITLIS Tower.

More Than a Mountain Destination

From snow-covered adventures in winter to lakeside escapes in summer, from contemporary Alpine cuisine to world-class Swiss shopping, TITLIS has evolved into far more than a glacier excursion. It is a destination where every season reveals a new dimension of the Alps, inviting visitors to return again and again—each visit offering a fresh perspective on one of Switzerland's most extraordinary mountain landscapes.

The Journey Becomes Part of the Adventure

Reaching the summit is itself

among Switzerland's great travel experiences.

Visitors begin in the charming alpine village of **Engelberg**, located just **30 minutes from Lucerne**.

The ascent takes place in two stages.

First, the modern **TITLIS Xpress** gondola transports visitors from Engelberg via Trübsee to Stand.

From there begins one of Switzerland's most famous aerial journeys aboard the **TITLIS Rotair**.

Rotair: The World's First Revolving Cable Car

The Rotair remains one of the engineering icons of Swiss tourism.

During its approximately **five-minute ascent** between Stand and the summit, the cable car rotates a full **360 degrees**, allowing passengers uninterrupted panoramic views throughout the journey.

The experience reveals:

- Massive glacier formations
- Deep crevasses
- Vertical rock faces
- Endless snowfields
- Alpine peaks stretching to the horizon

The Rotair carries up to **80 passengers** and is included in the standard return ticket between Engelberg and TITLIS.

Adventure on the Glacier

TITLIS is far more than an

observation tower.

It remains one of Switzerland's premier alpine adventure destinations.

Cliff Walk

Europe's highest suspension bridge remains among the mountain's most exhilarating attractions.

Positioned at **3,041 metres**, the bridge stretches across the dramatic south face of the mountain toward the Ice Flyer station.

Visitors cross approximately **150 steps** suspended above a breathtaking alpine abyss while surrounded by glaciers and towering peaks.

The crossing itself takes around one minute, although most visitors spend considerably longer capturing photographs.

Access is included with the TITLIS return ticket.



SNOWXPARK

Experience the excitement of snow in an entirely new way with electric MoonBikes, e-Snowmobiles and Bobsleds at the innovative SnowXPark. It's winter adventure reimagined for visitors of all ages.



SNOWSHOEING

Step into a pristine winter wonderland and explore snow-covered trails that wind through tranquil Alpine landscapes. Snowshoeing offers a peaceful way to experience the untouched beauty of TITLIS.



SKIING

From gentle beginner slopes to exhilarating descents, TITLIS offers over 82 kilometres of immaculately groomed pistes. It's a world-class winter playground for skiers and snowboarders of every ability.



TOBOGGANING

Race down snow-covered slopes and share laughter with family and friends on one of TITLIS's most enjoyable winter experiences. Tobogganing combines pure fun with unforgettable Alpine scenery.

Glacier Cave

Descending ten metres beneath the glacier’s surface, visitors enter an enchanting world of blue ice estimated to be up to **5,000 years old**.

The **150-metre-long Glacier Cave** offers a fascinating journey through ancient frozen landscapes illuminated by soft turquoise light.

Walking through the tunnel provides an intimate understanding of the glacier’s immense scale and geological history.

Ice Flyer

The open-air Ice Flyer chairlift glides gently across the glacier between **2,860 and 3,033 metres**. Travellers enjoy extraordinary aerial views into deep glacial crevasses while travelling toward:

- Summer Glacier Park
- Winter ski slopes
- Snow adventure areas

The round trip lasts approximately five minutes.

Glacier Park

Summer visitors need not miss the excitement of snow.

The Glacier Park offers:

- Snow tubing
- Snake Gliss
- Balancer
- Zipfelbob rides

The park typically operates from late

May until early August, depending upon snow conditions.

Engelberg: The Perfect Alpine Base

While the summit attracts global attention, the surrounding village of Engelberg deserves equal recognition.

This traditional Swiss mountain destination offers:

- Boutique shopping
- Authentic Swiss cuisine
- Alpine hotels
- Regional specialties
- Historic monastery heritage
- Scenic walking trails

Its welcoming atmosphere provides an ideal complement to the dramatic high-altitude adventures awaiting above.

Planning Your Visit

The complete journey from Engelberg to the summit takes approximately **30 minutes**.

Operating Schedule

- First ascent: **8:30 a.m.**
- Last descent: **5:00 p.m.**

The TITLIS complex generally operates throughout the year, although certain lifts may temporarily close due to severe weather or scheduled maintenance.

During the ongoing redevelopment project, visitors may encounter temporary route adjustments or construction activity, but all major attractions continue to remain open.

Looking Ahead: The TITLIS Peak Station

The opening of the TITLIS Tower represents only the beginning of a much larger vision.

Construction has now entered its next phase with the redevelopment of the existing summit station into the new **TITLIS Peak Station**, expected to open in **2029**.

Upon completion, the entire mountain complex will establish a new international benchmark for sustainable mountain tourism, combining cutting-edge architecture, engineering excellence and visitor experiences within one of Europe’s most spectacular natural settings.

A New Era for Alpine Tourism

Across Europe, mountain tourism continues to evolve beyond skiing and sightseeing.

Travellers increasingly seek immersive experiences that combine architecture, gastronomy, sustainability and authentic encounters with nature.

The TITLIS Tower successfully delivers all four.

From the world’s first revolving cable car to Europe’s highest suspension bridge, from glacier adventures to luxury dining and shopping above the clouds, TITLIS now offers one of the continent’s most complete mountain experiences.

For Switzerland, the tower represents more than a new attraction—it symbolizes the country’s enduring ability to unite engineering innovation, architectural excellence and natural beauty into experiences that inspire visitors from around the world.

At over 3,000 metres above sea level, the new icon of the Alps has truly arrived.

Fact Box

Feature	Details
Location	Mount TITLIS, Engelberg, Central Switzerland
Summit Elevation	3,020 metres
Horizon Deck	55 metres above glacier
Architecture	Herzog & de Meuron
Signature Dining	Joseph’s Restaurant
Luxury Retail	World’s highest Rolex Boutique
Main Access	TITLIS Xpress + TITLIS Rotair
Rotair	World’s first revolving cable car
Cliff Walk	Europe’s highest suspension bridge
Glacier Cave	Ice up to 5,000 years old
Next Milestone	TITLIS Peak Station opening in 2029

Travel Information

For opening hours, ticket reservations, seasonal updates, live mountain conditions and visitor information, visit the official TITLIS website: *TITLIS Official Website*.

Key Facts - From Engelberg, take the 8-seater TITLIS Xpress gondola via the Truebsee mid-station up to Stand. From there, the world’s first revolving cable car, the TITLIS Rotair, carries you to the summit at 3,020 metres above sea level. The entire journey from Engelberg to TITLIS takes around 30 minutes.

Destination Canada launches Tourism Investment Hub to drive \$216 billion visitor economy vision by 2035

New national platform connects investors, communities and tourism businesses with investment opportunities, funding programmes and market intelligence



In a strategic move to accelerate the future growth of Canada's tourism industry, Destination Canada has launched the **Tourism Investment Hub**, a new national platform designed to connect investors with tourism opportunities, funding resources and critical market intelligence across the country.

The initiative supports Canada's ambitious goal of growing its tourism economy to **USD 216 billion in annual revenue by 2035**, reinforcing the sector's importance as a major contributor to economic development, job creation and community prosperity.

According to Destination Canada, tourism contributes more than **USD 364 million to the Canadian economy every day**, supporting over **5,000 communities nationwide**.

In 2024 alone, the industry generated approximately **USD 32.7 billion in municipal, provincial and federal tax revenues**, highlighting its significant role as one of Canada's leading service export sectors.

As global competition for tourism investment intensifies, Destination Canada believes achieving its long-term growth targets will require greater investment in tourism infrastructure, visitor experiences, accommodation, attractions and destination assets. The newly launched Tourism Investment Hub aims to address this need by creating a centralised gateway that brings together investors, local communities, tourism operators and development partners.

The digital platform provides access to a wide range of investment resources, including detailed tourism

market intelligence, industry insights, investment-ready projects submitted by partners across Canada, and direct connections with communities and project proponents seeking capital support. It also offers a comprehensive overview of available grants, incentive programmes, tax credits and financing opportunities.

A major feature of the Tourism Investment Hub is its **AI-powered Funding Identification System**, developed in partnership with **Fundica**. The intelligent tool helps investors and tourism stakeholders navigate Canada's complex funding landscape by identifying relevant grants, tax incentives and financing programmes available at national, provincial and local levels.

By simplifying access to financial support and increasing visibility for tourism projects, the platform is expected to encourage greater private and public investment in the sector while enabling communities to unlock new tourism development opportunities.

Destination Canada stated that the Tourism Investment Hub represents an important step towards strengthening Canada's national tourism investment proposition, improving competitiveness and ensuring sustainable long-term growth of the visitor economy.

As Canada looks towards its 2035 tourism ambitions, the new platform is expected to play a pivotal role in connecting capital with innovative tourism projects that enhance visitor experiences, support local communities and further elevate Canada's position as a leading global travel destination.

GEORGIA

The Luxury of Authenticity

Where Timeless Traditions Meet Extraordinary Journeys

*A Land Where Ancient Traditions, Dramatic Landscapes and Warm Hospitality
Create One of the World's Most Rewarding Journeys*
By Devender Grover

At the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Georgia is a destination where history, culture and nature come together with remarkable harmony. Once a vital link along the ancient Silk Road, this small Caucasian nation has spent centuries welcoming travellers, traders and cultures, creating a heritage that feels both timeless and refreshingly authentic.

From the snow-capped peaks of the Greater Caucasus to the vineyards of Kakheti and the subtropical shores of the Black Sea, Georgia offers an

extraordinary diversity of landscapes within a relatively compact country. Medieval monasteries crown mountain ridges, centuries-old villages preserve enduring traditions, and vibrant cities blend historic architecture with contemporary creativity.

What truly distinguishes Georgia, however, is its people. Hospitality is more than a cultural tradition—it is a way of life. Visitors are welcomed not simply as tourists, but as honoured guests, invited to experience the country's rich cuisine, ancient

winemaking traditions and enduring sense of community. In an age when many destinations have become increasingly commercialised, Georgia remains refreshingly genuine.

For travellers seeking culture, adventure, gastronomy or simply meaningful experiences, Georgia offers a journey that lingers long after the return home.

Tbilisi: A Capital with Timeless Character

Georgia's capital effortlessly





balances nearly 1,500 years of history with the energy of a modern European city. Set along the banks of the Mtkvari River, Tbilisi charms visitors with its winding cobbled streets, colourful wooden balconies and lively café culture.

The city's skyline reflects centuries of cultural influences. Medieval churches stand alongside elegant Art Nouveau buildings, while contemporary landmarks such as the Peace Bridge symbolise Georgia's confidence as a modern nation. Overlooking it all is the ancient Narikala Fortress, offering sweeping views across the historic city.

One of Tbilisi's most iconic experiences is Abanotubani, the historic sulphur bath district whose natural thermal springs gave birth to the city itself. These distinctive brick-domed bathhouses continue to offer one of Georgia's oldest wellness traditions.

As evening falls, rooftop restaurants, wine bars and family-run eateries come alive, showcasing regional cuisine accompanied by wines produced using techniques that have remained virtually unchanged for millennia. Tbilisi is a city best discovered slowly, where every neighbourhood reveals another layer of history, creativity and hospitality.

The World's Oldest Winemaking Tradition

Wine is woven into Georgia's identity like nowhere else on earth. Archaeological discoveries confirm that the country has been producing wine continuously for more than **8,000 years**, making it the birthplace of winemaking.

At the heart of this remarkable heritage is the ancient **Qvevri** method, recognised by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage. Large clay vessels buried underground continue to be used by families and boutique wineries to ferment and age wine naturally, preserving techniques that predate many of the world's great wine regions.

The celebrated region of **Kakheti**

"At the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Georgia has preserved a remarkable balance between ancient traditions, contemporary culture and extraordinary natural beauty."

remains the centre of Georgian wine culture. Rolling vineyards, historic monasteries and family-owned estates invite visitors to discover wines paired with local cheeses, freshly baked bread and traditional cuisine.

Yet wine in Georgia is far more than a beverage. It represents friendship, celebration and community, becoming an essential part of family gatherings and everyday life.

The Supra: Georgia's Celebration of Hospitality

Few traditions capture the spirit of Georgia better than the **Supra**, the country's legendary feast.

A Supra is not simply a meal but a celebration of friendship, family and togetherness. Tables overflow with freshly baked breads, artisan cheeses, colourful salads, slow-cooked meats, dumplings and regional specialities, accompanied by generous pours of Georgian wine.

Guiding every gathering is the **Tamada**, or toastmaster, who leads a series of thoughtful toasts honouring family, peace, friendship and hope. Conversations flow as freely as the wine, while traditional songs often transform an ordinary dinner into an unforgettable cultural experience.



For travellers, participating in a Supra offers far more than exceptional food. It provides a genuine insight into Georgian life, where generosity, storytelling and shared moments remain among the country's greatest traditions.

The Mountains That Touch the Sky

The Greater Caucasus Mountains form the dramatic backdrop to much of Georgia's identity. Stretching across the country's northern frontier, these snow-covered peaks, glacier-fed valleys and alpine meadows create some of Europe's most spectacular landscapes.

One of Georgia's most iconic landmarks is **Mount Kazbek**, rising above the breathtaking **Gergeti Trinity Church**, a 14th-century monastery perched high above the valley. Few places combine spiritual heritage and natural beauty with such quiet magnificence.

Further west, the UNESCO-listed region of **Svaneti** reveals another side of mountain life. Medieval stone towers, built centuries ago to protect local communities, continue to dominate villages that have changed remarkably little over time. Nearby **Ushguli**, one of Europe's highest permanently inhabited settlements, offers visitors an extraordinary glimpse into a way of life shaped by the mountains for generations.

Whether exploring scenic hiking trails, photographing dramatic landscapes or simply admiring the panoramic views, the Caucasus offers an unforgettable encounter with nature at its most inspiring.

Where Heritage Lives

Georgia's greatest cultural treasure is that its heritage remains part of everyday life.

Its unique alphabet—one of the world's few original writing systems—is recognised by UNESCO, while centuries-old monasteries, cathedrals and churches continue to serve as living centres of faith and community. Historic landmarks such as **Svetitskhoveli Cathedral** and **Gelati Monastery** reflect the country's rich spiritual and architectural legacy.

"With more than 8,000 years of continuous winemaking, Georgia offers not only one of the world's oldest wine cultures but one of its most authentic travel experiences."



Music and dance are equally woven into Georgia's identity. Traditional polyphonic singing, another UNESCO-recognised cultural heritage, has echoed across the Caucasus for centuries and even earned a place on NASA's Voyager Golden Record as one of humanity's cultural treasures.

From religious festivals and folk music to craftsmanship and family traditions, Georgia preserves its cultural identity with remarkable authenticity, offering visitors far more than monuments—it offers a living civilisation.

Four Seasons of Wonder

Few destinations reinvent themselves as beautifully throughout the year as Georgia.

Spring transforms vineyards and valleys into colourful landscapes filled with blossoms, making it an ideal season for exploring Tbilisi, Kakheti and the country's historic monasteries.

During **summer**, the Caucasus becomes a paradise for hikers, horse riders and outdoor enthusiasts, while Batumi's Black Sea coastline offers beaches, seaside promenades and vibrant festivals.

Autumn is perhaps Georgia's most celebrated season. Vineyards glow in shades of gold and crimson as the annual **Rtveli** grape harvest brings communities together in celebration.

Visitors can join wine harvests, tour family wineries and experience the country's legendary hospitality at its most vibrant.

In **winter**, snow blankets the mountains, transforming resorts such as Gudauri and Bakuriani into popular ski destinations, while Tbilisi's cosy cafés, wine bars and historic bathhouses provide the perfect urban escape.

Every season offers a different perspective, making Georgia a destination that rewards repeat visits.

Nature's Greatest Playground

Georgia's remarkable geography makes it one of Europe's most diverse adventure destinations.

The Greater Caucasus offers exceptional hiking, trekking, horse riding and mountain biking through valleys, forests and alpine meadows. Regions such as **Kazbegi, Tusheti, Khevsureti** and **Svaneti** reward adventurous travellers with breathtaking scenery and centuries-old villages.

National parks including **Borjomi-Kharagauli, Lagodekhi** and the UNESCO-listed **Colchic Rainforests and Wetlands** protect ancient ecosystems rich in biodiversity, while rivers and mountain lakes provide opportunities for rafting, fishing and wildlife observation.

To the west, the Black Sea coast presents an entirely different landscape, where botanical gardens, cycling trails and coastal resorts complement mountain adventures just a few hours away.

What makes Georgia exceptional is not simply the variety of experiences, but their authenticity. Nature has remained wonderfully unspoilt, allowing visitors to experience landscapes that feel both pristine and timeless.

From ancient monasteries to dramatic mountain scenery, Georgia offers far more than postcard views. Its landscapes, traditions and people combine to create a destination that is as culturally rich as it is naturally beautiful.

"Few destinations offer such remarkable diversity—medieval monasteries, alpine wilderness, ancient vineyards and vibrant cities—all within a single journey."

The Luxury of Authenticity

Luxury in Georgia is defined less by extravagance and more by authenticity. Across the country, beautifully restored heritage hotels, boutique vineyard estates and elegant mountain lodges offer refined experiences deeply rooted in local culture.

In **Tbilisi**, historic mansions have been transformed into stylish boutique hotels where traditional architecture blends seamlessly with contemporary design. In **Kakheti**, exclusive wine estates welcome guests for private cellar tours, vineyard dining and tastings of handcrafted wines produced using the ancient Qvevri method. Meanwhile, luxury retreats in the Caucasus provide breathtaking mountain views, wellness experiences and the tranquillity of nature.

Georgia's culinary scene is equally compelling. Award-winning chefs reinterpret traditional recipes using seasonal local ingredients, while family-owned wineries continue to preserve centuries-old winemaking traditions. Whether enjoying a candlelit dinner in a historic monastery setting or a leisurely lunch overlooking rolling vineyards, every meal reflects the country's rich culinary heritage.

For couples, Georgia offers a naturally romantic setting. Sunrise over Mount Kazbek, sunset walks through the cobbled streets of Old Tbilisi, and peaceful evenings among Kakheti's vineyards create unforgettable moments that feel genuine rather than staged.

What truly distinguishes Georgia is its sincerity. Hospitality is instinctive,

traditions remain authentic, and every experience feels personal. It is a destination where refined comfort and cultural richness exist in perfect harmony.

Why Georgia Stays With You

Some destinations impress with famous landmarks. Georgia leaves a lasting impression through its people, traditions and unforgettable moments.

It may be the warmth of a family welcoming strangers to a traditional **Supra**, the haunting beauty of ancient polyphonic songs echoing across a mountain valley, or the sight of centuries-old monasteries overlooking vineyards where wine has been made for more than 8,000 years. Often, it is these simple experiences that remain in memory long after the journey has ended.

Georgia possesses a quality increasingly rare in modern travel—it feels genuine. History has not been recreated for visitors, traditions have not become performances, and hospitality continues to be an instinctive expression of generosity. Every region tells its own story, every season offers a different perspective, and every encounter deepens the traveller's understanding of this remarkable nation.

As global travellers seek destinations that offer meaning as well as beauty, Georgia stands apart. It is a country where Europe and Asia meet without borders, where ancient traditions continue to shape contemporary life, and where mountains, monasteries, vineyards and vibrant cities come together in extraordinary harmony.

The finest destinations are those that invite visitors to become part of their story. Georgia does exactly that. It offers more than a holiday—it offers an experience shaped by authenticity, resilience and timeless culture.

Long after the final toast has been raised, the mountain roads have disappeared beyond the horizon and the journey home has begun, Georgia remains.

Not simply as a destination visited, but as a place remembered.



Georgia Deepens Its India Outreach as ‘Yeh Dil Phir Jeene Laga’ Campaign Inspires a New Generation of Travellers

Destination showcases culture, wine, adventure and hospitality through successful travel trade roadshows in Chennai and Bengaluru

Georgia is strengthening its position as one of the world's most promising emerging tourism destinations with a renewed focus on the rapidly expanding Indian outbound travel market. The **Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA)** has successfully concluded its two-city travel trade roadshow in **Chennai and Bengaluru**, reinforcing

India's strategic importance while showcasing the country's extraordinary blend of history, culture, nature and hospitality to one of the world's fastest-growing travel markets.

Held under the evocative campaign theme **“Yeh Dil Phir Jeene Laga”** (My Heart Has Come Alive Again), the roadshows reflected Georgia's ambition to position itself not merely

as another European destination, but as a country where authentic experiences, centuries-old traditions and breathtaking landscapes come together to create journeys that resonate long after travellers return home.

Situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Georgia has steadily emerged as an increasingly attractive destination for Indian travellers looking beyond conventional European itineraries. From the snow-capped peaks of the Caucasus Mountains and the vineyards of Kakheti to the cobbled streets of Tbilisi, UNESCO World Heritage Sites and one of the world's oldest wine cultures, the country offers a remarkable diversity of experiences within a relatively compact geography.

The Chennai and Bengaluru events brought together leading travel agencies, tour operators, destination specialists and tourism stakeholders, providing an important platform for networking, destination presentations and one-to-one business meetings. More than a promotional exercise, the roadshows created opportunities for meaningful dialogue between the Georgian tourism industry and India's

travel trade, allowing both sides to exchange market insights, discuss evolving traveller preferences and identify new avenues for long-term collaboration.

The events were attended by **H.E. Vakhtang Jaoshvili, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to India**, along with **Counsellor Ketevan Lagvilava**, who both highlighted the growing tourism partnership between the two countries and underscored India's increasing significance within Georgia's international tourism strategy.

A strong delegation representing Georgia's tourism industry participated in the roadshows, including **Travel Vibes Georgia, Georgian Travel Group, Travel Door, Arrival DMC, Vector Travel, Kazin DMC, Georgian BUS, Georgia by Car, Nomads of Georgia**, and **Turalux Holiday Travel Company**. Through a series of dedicated business meetings, Indian travel professionals were introduced to a wide range of tailor-made itineraries, luxury experiences, adventure holidays, wine tourism, cultural journeys and bespoke travel programmes designed specifically for the Indian market.

Speaking on the occasion, Rozalia Jomidava, Chief Specialist, Brand Development Department, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Georgian National Tourism Administration, said, *"India remains one of Georgia's most promising tourism markets. With a remarkable 40% growth in Indian visitor arrivals last year, we are witnessing increasing interest in Georgia among Indian travellers. We are encouraged by the response received in Chennai and Bengaluru and remain committed to strengthening our engagement with the travel trade while showcasing the experiences that make Georgia a year-round destination."*

The impressive increase in visitor numbers reflects broader shifts in India's outbound travel landscape. Indian travellers are increasingly seeking destinations that combine cultural authenticity with contemporary comforts, offering immersive



experiences rather than traditional sightseeing itineraries. Georgia's rich heritage, spectacular natural beauty, acclaimed gastronomy, adventure tourism and warm hospitality have positioned it as a destination that aligns perfectly with these evolving travel aspirations.

Munmun Marwah, Chief Operating Officer of MMGY Think Strawberries, which represents Georgia Tourism in India, said the enthusiastic response from the travel trade demonstrated the destination's growing momentum.

"The enthusiasm witnessed across both cities reflects the growing demand for unique international destinations among Indian travellers. Through a strategic combination of trade engagement, marketing initiatives, training programmes and partnerships, we have been actively building awareness and preference for Georgia in the market. With strong momentum already in place, we are confident that Georgia will continue its growth trajectory and welcome even more Indian travellers in the coming year," she said.

The successful conclusion of the Chennai and Bengaluru roadshows marks another significant step in GNTA's long-term strategy to expand its footprint in India. With sustained marketing initiatives, closer engagement with the travel trade and increasing awareness among Indian consumers, Georgia is steadily building its reputation as a destination that offers far more than picturesque landscapes.



Today, the country appeals to a wide spectrum of travellers—from honeymooners and luxury holidaymakers to adventure seekers, wine enthusiasts and families looking for authentic cultural experiences. Whether exploring medieval monasteries, tasting wines crafted using an 8,000-year-old winemaking tradition, hiking through the majestic Caucasus Mountains or discovering the vibrant energy of Tbilisi, visitors encounter a destination where history, nature and modern hospitality exist in remarkable harmony.

As global travellers continue to seek destinations that are authentic, immersive and emotionally enriching, Georgia is carving out a distinctive identity on the international tourism map. For Indian travellers in particular, the campaign's message—**"Yeh Dil Phir Jeene Laga"**—captures the essence of a destination that promises not just a holiday, but an experience capable of rekindling curiosity, creating lasting memories and inspiring a genuine emotional connection.

Air India Introduces New Boeing 787-9 on Mumbai–London Heathrow Route with Premium Economy and Redesigned Cabins



Air India has commenced operations of its newest **Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner** on the **Mumbai–London Heathrow** route, bringing its latest-generation onboard product to one of the airline's flagship international services.

Effective immediately, flights AI131/AI130 between Mumbai and London Heathrow will be operated by the airline's new Boeing 787-9 aircraft featuring all-new cabin interiors designed exclusively for Air India and installed directly on Boeing's production line. These line-fit aircraft are the first Boeing 787s purpose-built for Air India, embodying the airline's new standards of comfort, technology, and customer experience.

The deployment also introduces Premium Economy Class on the route, offering customers a broader range of travel choices across Business, Premium Economy, and Economy cabins.

Air India's second daily service between Mumbai and London Heathrow will continue to be served by its upgraded Boeing 777-300ER aircraft, featuring First Class, ensuring customers on both services enjoy an enhanced onboard experience.

Elevated onboard experience

Air India's brand-new Boeing 787-9 aircraft feature a three-class cabin configuration with 30 Business Class suites, 28 Premium Economy seats, and 238 Economy seats, blending contemporary design, advanced technology, and Indian-inspired aesthetics.

Guests travelling on Air India's Mumbai–London Heathrow route will now enjoy a wide range of enhancements, including:

- Luxurious Business Class suites, direct aisle access, 79 inches fully flat beds, wireless charging, generous personal storage and immersive inflight entertainment on a large 17-inch 4K QLED HDR touchscreen – all designed to provide a comfortable and restful long-haul experience.
- A dedicated Premium Economy cabin with wider seats in a 2-3-2 layout, 38-inch pitch providing ample legroom, generous recline, adjustable headrests, adjustable leg and calf rests, 13.3-inch 4K QLED HDR touchscreen, offering enhanced comfort and personal space.
- Economy Class experience, with ergonomically designed seats designed for long-haul travel, 11.6-inch 4K QLED HDR touchscreen, and improved

comfort and thoughtfully integrated personal electronic device holders.

- Next-generation inflight entertainment, powered by the Thales AVANT Up system with high-definition touchscreens, Bluetooth audio connectivity, USB-A and USB-C charging ports, AC power outlets and an intuitive user interface across all cabins.

- Bluetooth headphone pairing, enabling guests to enjoy an entertainment content library of over 3,000 hours on board using their own Bluetooth-enabled headphones.

- New mood lighting in the cabins inspired by ancient Indian wellness traditions.

- A refreshed onboard product, including thoughtfully curated menus showcasing Indian and international flavours, premium chinaware, glassware and tableware, plush bedding, redesigned amenity kits and other signature touches that together deliver a more refined and consistent onboard experience.

Connecting India with the UK and beyond

The United Kingdom is one of Air India's most important international markets, with strong demand from business and leisure travellers as well as the Indian diaspora. Air India currently operates 57 weekly non-stop flights between India and the UK, connecting Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad and Amritsar with London Heathrow, London Gatwick and Birmingham.

Air India's UK services provide customers with greater choice, convenient schedules and seamless onward connectivity via Air India's hubs in India to and from destinations across the Indian Subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and Australia.

Air India Upgrades Delhi–Melbourne Service with Refurbished Boeing 777-300ER and First Class Introduction

Air India will deploy its B777-300ER aircraft featuring upgraded cabin interiors on flights between Delhi and Melbourne, effective 1 July, replacing the existing aircraft. This marks a significant enhancement in premium seat capacity on the route, comfort, and on-board experience, including the introduction of First Class on the route.

Configured in a three-class layout, Air India's upgraded Boeing 777-300ER features 08 First Class suites, 40 fully flat Business Class beds, and 280 Economy Class seats, representing a substantial increase in premium capacity compared to the existing B787-8 on this route, which features 18 Business Class and 241 Economy Class seats.

The deployment brings a more consistent and elevated long-haul product to Air India's Melbourne services, aligned with the airline's ongoing transformation into a world-class global carrier.

Elevated Onboard Experience

Air India guests to Melbourne will now benefit from a wide range of enhancements including:

- Luxurious private suites in First Class, offering leather-upholstered seats that convert into fully flat beds, privacy doors, an elevated on-ground and dining experience, and personalised service.
- Significantly upgraded Business Class product, with fully flat beds offering enhanced comfort, space, and privacy, alongside improved soft product elements.
- Wi-Fi internet connectivity, introduced on this route for the first time, enabling guests to stay connected with work or loved ones throughout their flight.



- Refreshed food & beverage offering, including thoughtfully curated menus featuring the best of global cuisine alongside Indian favourites, complemented by a selection of premium wines and spirits.

- Enhanced inflight entertainment, with a richer and more diverse content library across movies, TV shows, music, and more, catering to global tastes

Seamless experience on ground and in air

The aircraft upgrade complements Air India's broader investments in elevating the end-to-end customer journey. This includes access to the airline's new flagship Maharaja Lounge at Delhi Airport for eligible premium customers, offering a refined pre-flight experience with upgraded dining, seating, and service.

Together, these enhancements reflect Air India's continued focus on modernising its fleet, upgrading its product offering, and delivering a seamless, high-quality experience across touchpoints.

Connecting India with Australia and beyond

Australia remains a key international market for Air India, with strong and growing demand for both business and leisure travel. The introduction of the Boeing 777-300ER on the Delhi–Melbourne route underscores the airline's commitment to strengthening connectivity while offering a more competitive and globally benchmarked product.

Air India currently operates 4x weekly non-stop flights between Delhi and Melbourne and is scheduled to operate 7x weekly services on the route from 01 September 2026. The airline's Delhi–Melbourne service also provides travellers with convenient, same-terminal connections via Delhi to destinations across Europe, including London Heathrow, Frankfurt, Paris, Rome, Milan, Zurich, among others.

Air India also operates non-stop flights between Delhi and Sydney, enabling similar seamless onward connections to and from destinations in the UK and rest of Europe.

Oceania Cruises®

Reveals Destination-Rich 2027 Specialty Cruises



Oceania Cruises® announced its 2027 Specialty Cruises, bringing together destination-rich itineraries and hosted experiences where cuisine, culture and personal connection take center stage.

The line's 2027 Specialty Cruises offer guests unique opportunities to engage with renowned guest hosts and celebrated experts while exploring some of the world's most evocative regions. From the sun-drenched Mediterranean and historic Baltic shores to captivating Japan, these thoughtfully crafted voyages offer fresh insights and memorable experiences inspired by culture, cuisine and history. Through exclusive events, expert insights and distinctive experiences, every journey is designed

to go far beyond the expected.

"Our 2027 Specialty Cruises represent the pairing of port-rich itineraries with hosts who bring true depth, access and perspective," said Jason Montague, Chief Luxury Officer of Oceania Cruises. "Each voyage has been created to connect guests more meaningfully with the cultures they're exploring through experiences that are only available on these specialty sailings."

Select voyages will once again be hosted by celebrated culinary icons

and beloved television personalities, such as Claudine Pépin, daughter of patriarch chef, Jacques Pépin, and the likes of renowned television host Sara Moulton, alongside Oceania Cruises' own Executive Culinary Directors and lauded Master Chefs of France, Chef Alexis Quaretti and Chef Eric Barale.

Through intimate culinary experiences, cooking demonstrations, dinners and engaging conversations, travelers are invited behind the scenes of global cuisine, discovering not only remarkable flavors, but the stories and cultures that define them.

Select sailings will also feature travel experts who provide insights on distinctive Mediterranean ports, designed to bring travelers closer to the region's culture, people and experiences. Samantha Brown's Specialty Cruise, sailing from Trieste to Barcelona, is hosted by the popular television personality, who will share her insights, adding an extra layer of connection in select ports. Later in the season, the Reunion Cruise, aboard *Oceania Aurelia™*, offers an end-of-year celebration hosted by senior Oceania Cruises executives, where loyal and first-time guests alike can come together.

2027 Specialty Cruise Highlights

• **Culinary Luminaries Specialty Cruise: 13 days from Athens to Rome, departing June 2, 2027, aboard *Oceania Vista®***

Celebrate global cuisine inspired by the flavors, traditions and culinary heritage of the Western Mediterranean. Guests will enjoy enriching onboard programming, including specially crafted menus, tastings and culinary demonstrations with Executive Culinary Directors Chef Alexis Quaretti and Chef Eric Barale, alongside notable guest chefs.

• **Sara Moulton Specialty Cruise: 14 days roundtrip London, departing June 8, 2027, aboard *Oceania Marina™***

Set sail on an in-depth culinary journey through the Baltic region with Sara Moulton, renowned chef, author and television personality, formerly of



Oceana cruise 1 Left Chef Eric Barale, Right Chef Alexis Quaretti



oceana cruise 3 Samantha Brown

the Food Network and current host of “Sara’s Weeknight Meals” on PBS. This sailing celebrates the flavors and culinary heritage found along the shores of the Baltic Sea. Throughout the voyage, guests can look forward to specially crafted menus, culinary demonstrations, exclusive events and a gala brunch, led by Sara, whose approachable style and deep culinary knowledge have made her a trusted voice in kitchens around the world.

• **Claudine Pépin Specialty Cruise: 11 days roundtrip Tokyo, departing September 30, 2027, aboard *Oceania Riviera*™**

Discover the heritage and culinary traditions of Japan alongside Claudine Pépin, James Beard Award winner, president of the Jacques Pépin Foundation, and godmother of *Oceania Sirena*™. Throughout the voyage, guests can look forward to onboard experiences celebrating regional flavors and culinary storytelling, including live cooking demonstrations and a special gala brunch. Claudine will also join guests on select shore excursions, offering opportunities to connect Japan’s cultural traditions with its rich culinary landscape.

• **Samantha Brown Specialty Cruise: 10 days from Trieste to Barcelona, departing November 7, 2027, aboard *Oceania Allura*™**

Hosted by beloved travel expert



oceana cruise 2 Claudine Pepin

and television personality Samantha Brown, this Mediterranean voyage offers a fresh way to experience Europe’s iconic cities. Bringing destinations to life through personal insights and engaging conversations, Samantha encourages guests to connect more deeply with the history and character of the ports visited. Designed for curious travelers, this specialty cruise is framed by the timeless beauty of the Adriatic and Western Mediterranean.

• **Reunion Cruise: 12 days from Trieste to Athens, departing December 6, 2027, aboard *Oceania Aurelia*™**

Join this special end-of-year sailing



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aboard the newly launched *Oceania Aurelia*, bringing together Oceania Club™ members and guests embarking on their first Oceania Cruises voyage for a festive celebration of travel, cuisine and shared experiences. Join Jason Montague, Chief Luxury Officer, and Neli Arias, Head of the Oceania Club, on this special voyage exploring the treasures of the Mediterranean through elegant events and immersive excursions. Open to Oceania Club members and discerning travelers new to Oceania Cruises.

Featured hosts and special guests are planned to participate in these specialty sailings; however, appearances and programming are subject to change.

Air India Launches 'Easy Connect' Flights, Pioneering Seamless International Travel from India's Heartland



New Hub-and-Spoke Model Aims to Transform Global Connectivity for Millions of Indian Travellers

In a landmark development for India's aviation sector, Air India has launched its first 'Easy Connect' flight under the Government of India's newly introduced hub-and-spoke framework, marking a significant step towards redefining international travel accessibility for passengers across the country.

The inaugural service, flight AI1111, departed from Varanasi's Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, officially operationalising the government's vision of creating a more integrated, efficient, and globally competitive aviation ecosystem. The initiative is designed to enable travellers from non-metro and emerging cities to seamlessly access international destinations through major Indian hubs, eliminating the need to transit through foreign airports.

The launch ceremony was led by Shri Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu, Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation, Government of India, who described the initiative

as a transformative moment for Indian aviation.

"Today we take a major step forward towards realising our vision of making air travel more accessible and building a future-ready, self-reliant Indian aviation industry that is efficient, inclusive, and globally competitive. Our new hub-and-spoke model paves the way for a monumental shift in how our citizens travel—where regardless of the city one lives in India, one can begin their international journey from their home city and travel across the globe with ease and confidence, on India's own wings," he said.

Varanasi Becomes the First Spoke City

The inaugural Easy Connect flight connected Varanasi with Delhi, enabling international passengers to seamlessly continue their journeys onward to destinations including Dubai, Colombo, Jeddah, Riyadh, Kathmandu and Phuket.

Passengers travelling on the service benefitted from a streamlined travel process that included through check-in to their final international destination, baggage transfer without re-checking, and immigration clearance completed at the origin airport rather than at the hub.

The launch event also witnessed the presentation of a commemorative boarding pass to the first passenger checking in for the inaugural flight. Senior government officials and aviation industry leaders in attendance included Samir Kumar Sinha, Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation; Puneet Kansal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation; Vipin Kumar, Chairman, Airports Authority of India; Campbell Wilson, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Air India; and P. Balaji, Group Head – Governance, Risk, Compliance & Corporate Affairs, Air India.

Nationwide Expansion Planned

As the first airline to operationalise the hub-and-spoke model, Air India is embarking on a phased nationwide rollout that will extend the Easy Connect concept beyond Varanasi.

Over the coming months, the airline plans to introduce services from 11

additional cities, including Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Chennai, Goa, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kochi, Mumbai, Patna, Vadodara and Visakhapatnam.

These spoke cities will connect seamlessly through Air India's major hubs in Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru, enabling travellers from across India to access an extensive international network with significantly greater convenience.

The initiative is expected to play a crucial role in democratising international travel, particularly for passengers residing outside India's major metropolitan centres.

Reducing Dependence on Overseas Transit Hubs

According to Air India, the introduction of Easy Connect services addresses a long-standing challenge within Indian aviation.

Nearly 25 million passengers travel on long-haul international routes to and from India every year. Of these, approximately 20 million are connecting passengers, and nearly 85 percent currently transit through foreign hubs rather than Indian airports.

Campbell Wilson, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Air India, highlighted the strategic importance of the initiative.

"India is a major force in global aviation, and yet, for decades a meaningful share of Indian travellers flying abroad have routed their journeys through overseas transit

points—often at the cost of comfort and convenience. Air India's Easy Connect flights are a response to that reality, and we are grateful to the Government of India for its vision and support in enabling this framework," Wilson said.

He added that the new system empowers travellers from cities such as Varanasi, Amritsar and Visakhapatnam to begin their international journeys within India's own aviation ecosystem, offering a more comfortable and familiar travel experience.

Simplifying the International Travel Experience

The Easy Connect model has been designed to significantly reduce travel complexity and improve passenger convenience.

Key features include:

- Through check-in from the origin city to the final international destination.
- Immigration formalities completed at the departure airport.
- Seamless transit through major Indian hubs without baggage re-check.
- Reduced connection stress and shorter transit procedures.
- Enhanced passenger experience through integrated domestic and international journeys.

For Indian nationals, participation requires enrolment in the DigiYatra platform and uploading boarding passes before departure. Passengers are also required to comply with

specified transit procedures to ensure a smooth travel experience.

Strengthening India's Position as a Global Aviation Hub

The launch of Easy Connect aligns closely with the Government of India's broader objective of positioning Indian airports as preferred international transit gateways.

By increasing passenger flows through domestic hubs such as Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru, the initiative is expected to boost airport utilisation, support airline growth and strengthen India's role within the global aviation network.

The Varanasi-Delhi Easy Connect service currently offers connections to 17 international destinations within four hours of arrival in Delhi, including major global cities such as London, Rome, Milan, Frankfurt, Zurich, Dubai, Riyadh and Jeddah.

As additional spoke cities are integrated into the programme, the network is expected to provide millions of Indian travellers with easier access to international destinations while simultaneously enhancing the competitiveness of India's aviation sector.

With the launch of Easy Connect, Air India and the Government of India have taken a decisive step towards reshaping the country's international travel landscape—bringing the world closer to every Indian and strengthening India's emergence as a major global aviation hub.

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India: The World's Next Tourism Opportunity

IATO President on Rebuilding Inbound Tourism, Policy Reforms and India's Global Growth Story

As India strengthens its position on the global tourism map, the focus is shifting from recovery to long-term growth. Improved air connectivity, rising international interest in experiential travel, and the country's unparalleled diversity have created fresh opportunities to attract visitors from around the world. Yet, to compete with leading global destinations, India must address key challenges ranging from international marketing and visa facilitation to infrastructure development and policy reforms.

In this exclusive interview, **Ravi Gosain, President of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO)**, shares his vision for the future of Indian tourism. He discusses the industry's priorities, the need for stronger government support, the revival of the **Incredible India** campaign, the importance of international trade engagement, and how the upcoming **IATO Annual Convention 2026 in Visakhapatnam** aims to shape the next phase of inbound tourism. He also outlines why responsible tourism, product diversification, and public-private collaboration will be critical in positioning India among the world's leading tourism destinations by 2030.

From policy advocacy to global competitiveness, this conversation offers valuable insights into the roadmap for unlocking India's immense tourism potential and reinforcing its place as one of the world's most compelling travel destinations.

- By Devender Grover, Editor in Chief

1. The Current State of Indian Tourism

India's inbound tourism is steadily regaining momentum, supported by improved air connectivity, growing global interest in experiential travel, and India's unmatched cultural and

natural diversity. Demand for wellness, spirituality, heritage, wildlife, luxury, and adventure tourism continues to rise. However, international arrivals are yet to reach their full potential compared to competing destinations. Key challenges include limited overseas

promotion, high travel costs, visa-related concerns in certain markets, and inadequate tourism infrastructure in some destinations. The opportunity lies in positioning India as a year-round, multi-experience destination through stronger government-industry collaboration, sustained marketing, seamless visitor experiences, and policy support for tour operators.

2. Government Support and Policy

The tourism industry requires stronger policy support to unlock India's immense inbound tourism potential. We seek enhanced funding for global destination marketing under the Incredible India campaign, revival of overseas roadshows, familiarisation trips, and participation in international travel marts. Rationalising GST, recognising inbound tourism as an export earning sector, simplifying regulatory processes, improving infrastructure, and strengthening last-mile connectivity will significantly enhance competitiveness. Greater investment in destination development, digital promotion, skill development, and sustainability initiatives is equally important. Tourism generates employment across every segment of society, and increased government support will deliver substantial economic returns while strengthening India's global tourism brand.

3. International Marketing and the Incredible India Campaign

A strong and sustained global marketing campaign is essential if India is to compete effectively with destinations investing heavily in international promotion. Incredible

India remains one of the world's most recognised tourism brands and must be revitalised through year-round campaigns across digital platforms, travel trade, media, and consumer markets. Government and industry should jointly undertake roadshows, B2B networking, influencer partnerships, and destination promotions. Consistency is critical because tourism decisions are influenced by continuous visibility rather than one-time campaigns. Together, we can showcase India's diversity, authenticity, and transformative travel experiences to inspire international travellers and generate higher inbound tourism.

4. Visa Reforms and International Connectivity

Visa facilitation and international connectivity are among the most important factors influencing destination choice. Timely announcements on e-Visas, simplified visa procedures, expansion to additional countries, and efficient processing provide overseas tour operators with confidence to market India well in advance. Similarly, increased direct international flights and improved regional connectivity make destinations more accessible and competitive. Regular dialogue between government agencies, airlines, embassies, and industry stakeholders can ensure coordinated planning and timely communication. Such collaboration enables international tour operators to develop packages, launch marketing campaigns, and build traveller confidence, ultimately increasing foreign tourist arrivals to India.

5. International and Domestic Trade Shows

International travel exhibitions, overseas roadshows, and domestic tourism fairs remain among the most effective platforms for building business relationships and promoting destinations. Tourism is a relationship-driven industry, and face-to-face interactions continue to



Ravi Gosain

generate long-term partnerships. India should maintain a strong presence at leading global travel exhibitions while organising focused roadshows in priority markets. Greater promotional emphasis should be placed on North America, Western Europe, Australia, Japan, South Korea, ASEAN, the Gulf countries, and emerging markets in Eastern Europe and Latin America. Domestic tourism fairs also help states showcase new products and

encourage collaborative destination development.

6. IATO Annual Convention 2026

The IATO Annual Convention in Visakhapatnam will provide an important platform for industry leaders, policymakers, state tourism departments, and international stakeholders to deliberate on the future of inbound tourism. Our theme **India: The World's Next**

Tourism opportunity will focus on policy advocacy, destination development, sustainable tourism, digital transformation, investment opportunities, and strengthening public-private partnerships. It will also showcase Andhra Pradesh's tourism potential and encourage business networking among tour operators from across India and overseas. We expect meaningful policy recommendations, stronger industry collaboration, increased destination promotion, and renewed momentum towards positioning India among the world's leading tourism destinations in the coming years.

7. Responsible Tourism and Industry Standards

Responsible tourism is fundamental to the long-term sustainability of India's tourism industry. The Code of Practice developed jointly by IATO and FHRAI, the Code of Conduct for Safe and Honourable Tourism, and the Ministry of Tourism's guidelines provide an important framework for ethical, inclusive, and environmentally responsible tourism practices. These standards encourage protection of cultural heritage, respect for local communities, environmental conservation, and high service quality while ensuring traveller safety and dignity. Responsible tourism also strengthens India's global reputation and meets the expectations of increasingly conscious international travellers seeking authentic, sustainable, and socially responsible travel experiences.

8. Developing New Tourism Products

India's future tourism growth will be driven by diversification beyond traditional circuits. Wellness and medical tourism, spiritual and Buddhist tourism, adventure tourism, MICE, cruise tourism, eco-tourism, rural tourism, culinary experiences, luxury rail journeys, and experiential travel all offer significant opportunities. Today's travellers seek immersive experiences that connect them with local culture,

nature, cuisine, and communities. India possesses exceptional strengths across each of these segments. By investing in infrastructure, destination readiness, skill development, and targeted international marketing, India can create year-round tourism opportunities, increase visitor spending, extend average length of stay, and distribute tourism benefits more widely.

9. Building a Globally Competitive Tourism Industry

Achieving global leadership in tourism requires long-term policy consistency and close collaboration between government and industry. Priority reforms include higher investment in international marketing, seamless visa policies, improved infrastructure, enhanced air connectivity, simplified regulations, destination management, digital transformation, and skill development. Tourism must be recognised as a strategic economic sector because of its employment generation and foreign exchange earnings. Public-private partnerships should drive

destination development while ensuring sustainability and community participation. With coordinated planning, competitive policies, quality standards, and continuous promotion, India can significantly increase international arrivals and become one of the world's leading tourism destinations.

10. Looking Ahead

Over the next five years, I envision India emerging as one of the world's most sought-after tourism destinations, offering diverse, authentic, sustainable, and unforgettable experiences. With coordinated efforts from government, industry, airlines, and state tourism boards, we can substantially increase foreign tourist arrivals and tourism's contribution to the economy. To international tour operators, I invite you to partner with India in showcasing its extraordinary diversity. To travellers across the world, I say: India is not just a destination—it is an experience that enriches, inspires, and transforms. We look forward to welcoming you with warmth and unmatched hospitality.

Rapid Fire

One word that best describes Indian tourism today?

Transformative. Every journey through India leaves visitors with memories that last a lifetime.

India's most underrated tourism destination?

The North-East of India. It offers pristine landscapes, rich tribal cultures, biodiversity, and authentic experiences waiting to be discovered.

One policy reform you would implement immediately?

A significantly enhanced global marketing budget for inbound tourism. India must compete consistently in international markets through sustained promotion.

One international market with the biggest growth opportunity?

The United States. It remains a high-value market with strong interest in culture, wellness, luxury, and experiential travel.

One tourism product India should promote globally?

Spiritual and Wellness Tourism. No other destination combines ancient wisdom, yoga, Ayurveda, meditation, and living spirituality as authentically as India.

Your vision for Indian tourism by 2030?

To position India among the world's top five tourism destinations. A globally competitive, sustainable, and inclusive tourism sector that creates jobs, strengthens communities, and showcases the very best of India.

FitsAir Partners with Amadeus to Expand Global Distribution and Strengthen International Growth



Sri Lanka's privately owned international carrier, FitsAir, has entered into a global distribution agreement with Amadeus, a move designed to enhance the airline's international visibility and provide travel sellers worldwide with easier access to its flight inventory.

The partnership marks an important milestone in FitsAir's expansion strategy, enabling the airline to distribute its full range of fares and services through the **Amadeus Travel Platform**, one of the world's leading travel distribution systems used by travel agencies and corporate travel sellers across global markets.

Enhancing global market access

Under the agreement, travel agencies connected to the Amadeus Travel Platform will be able to search, book and manage FitsAir flights through a single integrated system. The enhanced connectivity is expected to improve the airline's visibility among international travel professionals while offering travellers greater choice and easier access to its growing network.

The collaboration supports FitsAir's long-term strategy of strengthening its indirect distribution channels as it continues to expand its international footprint and attract passengers from

key overseas markets.

Commenting on the agreement, **Ammar Kassim**, Executive Director of FitsAir, said:

"This agreement with Amadeus is an important step in our international distribution strategy. By making our content available through the Amadeus Travel Platform, we can connect more effectively with travel sellers worldwide and offer customers greater access to our services."

Supporting airline growth through technology

The agreement enables FitsAir to leverage Amadeus' extensive global distribution network, connecting the airline with thousands of travel agencies, tour operators and corporate travel management companies worldwide.

By improving access to its flight content through a widely used travel booking platform, FitsAir aims to strengthen brand awareness, expand sales opportunities and stimulate demand across its international route network.

For travel advisors, the partnership simplifies the booking process by providing seamless access to the airline's schedules, fares and reservation services within their existing workflow.

Javier Laforgue, Executive Vice President, Travel Unit & Managing Director, Asia Pacific at Amadeus, said:

"We are pleased to welcome FitsAir to the Amadeus Travel Platform. This agreement supports FitsAir's growth ambitions by expanding its global reach, while enabling travel sellers to easily access and book the airline's content through a trusted and efficient distribution environment."

Strengthening the global travel ecosystem

The partnership also reinforces Amadeus' continued focus on supporting airlines of all sizes through flexible distribution solutions that connect airlines, travel sellers and travellers within an increasingly digital travel ecosystem.

As airlines seek broader international reach and more efficient retailing capabilities, global distribution systems remain an important channel for expanding market presence and improving accessibility for both leisure and business travellers.

*Headquartered in Spain, Amadeus is one of the world's leading travel technology providers, delivering solutions for airlines, airports, hotels, travel agencies and other industry partners. Its technology platform powers reservations, distribution, retailing and operational systems across the global travel industry while integrating emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, biometrics and advanced data capabilities. Operating across more than 150 nationalities, Amadeus continues to invest in digital innovation that enhances connectivity throughout the travel value chain, helping suppliers and travel sellers respond to evolving traveller expectations. The company is listed on the Spanish Stock Exchange as part of the **IBEX 35** index and has been recognised in the **Dow Jones Best-in-Class World Index** for 14 consecutive years. The agreement with FitsAir further expands Amadeus' portfolio of airline partners and reflects the growing importance of technology-driven distribution in supporting international airline growth.*

JNTO Unveils 'Japan' Unforgettable' Global Campaign to Drive Year-Round Tourism and Expand International Reach

Record 42.68 Million International Visitors in 2025 as Japan Targets New Travellers Across Key Global Markets, Including India



The Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) has launched an ambitious new global tourism campaign, “**Japan. Unforgettable,**” designed to position Japan as a destination that can be experienced and enjoyed throughout the year while encouraging a broader and more diversified mix of international visitors.

The campaign, officially launched on April 28, 2026, represents a significant milestone in Japan’s tourism promotion strategy and aligns with the country’s Fifth Tourism Nation Promotion Basic Plan. By showcasing the country’s rich cultural heritage, breathtaking natural landscapes, regional gastronomy and

authentic local experiences across all four seasons, JNTO aims to inspire a new generation of global travellers to discover the many dimensions of Japan.

India has emerged as one of the campaign’s key focus markets, reflecting the rapid growth of outbound travel from the country and the increasing popularity of Japan among Indian leisure, family and experiential travellers.

Japan Records Historic Tourism Growth

The launch comes on the back of another record-breaking year for Japan’s tourism industry. According to

JNTO, the country welcomed **42.68 million international visitors in 2025**, surpassing the previous record of 36.87 million arrivals achieved in 2024.

Inbound tourism spending also reached unprecedented levels, with foreign visitor expenditure climbing to **¥9.5 trillion in 2025**, generating an estimated economic ripple effect of approximately **¥19 trillion** across the Japanese economy.

The remarkable growth underscores Japan’s strengthening position as one of the world’s most desirable travel destinations and highlights the success of ongoing efforts to expand tourism beyond traditional source markets.

India Emerges as a High-Growth Tourism Market

Among the standout source markets, India recorded its strongest performance ever.

Between January and December 2025, **315,100 Indian travellers visited Japan**, marking the first time arrivals from India crossed the 300,000-visitor milestone. The figure represented a substantial **35.2 per cent year-on-year increase**, underlining the growing appeal of Japan among Indian tourists seeking cultural immersion, scenic beauty, culinary experiences and family-friendly travel.

JNTO noted that Indian travellers often travel in family groups or with friends, making them an important audience segment for the new campaign, which highlights a variety of

travel styles and experiences tailored to diverse traveller preferences.

Showcasing the Many Layers of Japan

At the heart of the campaign is the concept of revealing the many facets of Japan that extend far beyond its globally recognised landmarks.

Under the theme **“Showcasing the Many Layers of Japan — Exceptional Discoveries, All Year Round,”** the campaign presents Japan as a destination where every season offers unique opportunities for exploration and memorable experiences.

From vibrant spring cherry blossoms and colourful autumn foliage to snow-covered winter landscapes and lively summer festivals, the initiative emphasises that Japan can be enjoyed at any time of the year.

The campaign seeks to encourage visitors to venture beyond major gateway cities and discover regional destinations that offer distinctive cultural traditions, local cuisines, outdoor adventures and authentic community experiences.

A Strategic Shift Towards New International Audiences

JNTO's latest campaign reflects changing global travel patterns and evolving visitor demographics.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, travellers from Asia accounted for approximately 83 per cent of all inbound visitors to Japan. By 2025, that share had fallen to 77 per cent, while arrivals from Europe, the Americas and Oceania continued to increase steadily.

Recognising this shift, JNTO has strategically focused the new campaign on travellers who have never visited Japan but already consider it a potential future destination. These audiences, particularly in Europe, North America, Oceania and the Middle East, are characterised by higher travel spending and a strong interest in long-haul experiential travel.

Unlike previous campaigns that aimed to build basic awareness of

Japan as a tourism destination, “Japan. Unforgettable” is designed to provide prospective travellers with the final inspiration needed to choose Japan for their next international journey.

Seasonal Storytelling Takes Centre Stage

A key feature of the campaign is a series of cinematic seasonal videos that bring Japan's diverse experiences to life.

JNTO has already released the **autumn and winter editions**, while **spring and summer versions** are scheduled for release later this year.

The videos feature families, couples, groups of friends and solo travellers experiencing Japan's natural scenery, outdoor adventures, cultural attractions and regional food culture across different parts of the country.

To ensure authenticity and global appeal, JNTO adopted the philosophy of presenting “Japan as overseas visitors want to experience it” rather than solely from a domestic perspective. An international director led the production process, while JNTO Special Advisor David Atkinson provided strategic guidance.

The promotional films will be distributed through an extensive international marketing campaign across digital channels, including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and digital out-of-home advertising platforms.

Research-Driven Global Marketing Strategy

The campaign was developed following extensive consumer research conducted across ten strategic markets, including the United Kingdom, Germany, France, the Nordic countries, the United States, Australia, India, the Middle East, Thailand and South Korea.

Insights gathered from the research helped shape the campaign's creative direction, messaging and content strategy to better align with the interests and travel aspirations of prospective visitors.

The central campaign message, **“Japan. Unforgettable,”** was chosen

to capture the emotional impact of the country's landscapes, traditions, hospitality and culinary diversity. JNTO believes the slogan effectively conveys the memorable experiences travellers take home long after their journey ends.

Digital Platform Inspires Travel Planning

Supporting the campaign is a dedicated multilingual website designed to provide inspiration and practical travel information for prospective visitors.

Available in six languages—English, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Arabic—the platform features destination guides, regional travel suggestions, seasonal highlights, sample itineraries and planning resources.

The website will continue to evolve throughout the year, with additional content and seasonal videos being added as new campaign phases are launched.

Supporting Sustainable Tourism Development

Beyond increasing visitor numbers, the initiative also supports Japan's long-term tourism sustainability goals.

By promoting year-round travel and encouraging exploration of regional destinations, JNTO aims to distribute tourism benefits more evenly across the country, reduce pressure on heavily visited locations and generate greater economic opportunities for local communities.

The campaign also seeks to increase visitor spending, diversify source markets and strengthen tourism's contribution to regional development while preserving the cultural and environmental assets that make Japan unique.

As international travel demand continues to grow, the launch of “Japan. Unforgettable” marks a significant step in Japan's efforts to attract a broader global audience and reinforce its reputation as a destination offering extraordinary experiences in every season.

India Emerges as Australia's Fifth-Largest International Tourism Market as Visitor Spending Climbs 16%

Australia's international tourism sector has continued its strong post-pandemic recovery, with overseas visitor expenditure reaching a record **AUD 57.6 billion (approximately USD 39.7 billion)** in the year ending **31 March 2026**, according to the latest **International Visitor Survey (IVS)** released by **Tourism Research Australia (TRA)**.

For India, the figures underscore its growing importance as one of Australia's most valuable inbound tourism markets. Indian travellers ranked as the country's **fifth-largest international source market by visitor spending**, contributing around **5% of total international visitor expenditure** during the period.

The latest data highlights not only the resilience of Australia's visitor economy but also the strengthening travel relationship between Australia and India, driven by growing leisure, education, business and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) travel.

Australia's inbound tourism reaches new milestone

According to Tourism Research Australia, total international visitor spending increased **16%**



year-on-year, reflecting sustained demand across most major source markets despite ongoing global economic uncertainty and operational challenges affecting international aviation.

The report noted that visitor spending rose across every major inbound market compared with the previous year, while international arrivals increased across all key markets except Vietnam.

Australia welcomed **8.5 million international trips** during the year ending March 2026, representing a **10% increase** over the previous year. International visitors spent

a combined **321.9 million nights** across the country, up **9%**, while spending within Australia alone reached **AUD 40.9 billion**, an increase of **20%**.

The overall expenditure figure of AUD 57.6 billion includes spending made before and after travel, international airfares and connecting flights in addition to expenditure within Australia. Tourism Research Australia

India cements position among Australia's highest-value markets

India maintained its position as Australia's **fifth-largest international**

market by visitor spending, highlighting the country's expanding contribution to Australia's tourism economy.

The ranking places India behind four traditional powerhouse markets:

- New Zealand
- China
- United Kingdom
- United States

China remained Australia's largest international spending market, accounting for **29%** of total visitor expenditure. The United Kingdom contributed **7%**, while both the United States and New Zealand each represented **6%** of overall

international spending. India followed with **5%**, underlining its growing significance for Australia's tourism sector.

The results reinforce India's emergence as one of Australia's fastest-growing long-haul visitor markets, supported by expanding air connectivity, strong education links, business exchanges and increasing leisure travel.

Strong growth across major international markets

Several Asian and European markets recorded particularly strong growth during the reporting period.

Among visitor spending, **Hong Kong** recorded the highest proportional increase at **47%**, followed by:

- United Kingdom: **35%**
- Malaysia: **34%**
- China: **30%**

Visitor arrivals also showed impressive gains, with Hong Kong, Taiwan and China each registering **22%** growth in trips, while arrivals from the United Kingdom increased **19%**.

The data reflects Australia's continued appeal across diverse international markets as airlines restore capacity and travellers resume long-haul journeys.

March quarter maintains positive momentum

The positive trend continued during the **March quarter of 2026**, with visitor expenditure within Australia reaching **AUD 13.0 billion**, representing a **15% increase** compared with the same period in 2025.

International arrivals totalled **2.3 million trips**, up **9%**, while visitors spent **98.2 million nights** in Australia, an increase of **10%**.

Including international airfares and spending outside Australia, total visitor expenditure for the quarter reached **AUD 17.8 billion**, up **12%** year-on-year.

Tourism Research Australia noted that these gains were achieved despite flight disruptions during the early stages of conflict in the Middle East, demonstrating the resilience of international travel demand.

Education-related expenditure rose by **15%**, adding **AUD 768 million**, while holiday travel spending increased **17%**, contributing an additional **AUD 562 million**.

Chinese tourism continues strong recovery

China continued to play a major role in Australia's visitor recovery during the March quarter.

Chinese visitor arrivals increased by **25%**, equivalent to approximately **71,000 additional trips**, while visitor nights rose **34%**, adding **6.1 million nights**.

Spending by Chinese visitors within Australia climbed **14%**, representing an increase of **AUD 556 million** compared with the March quarter of 2025.

Holiday travel from China recorded particularly strong performance, with visitor numbers rising **48%** and expenditure increasing **53%**, supported by the longest

Lunar New Year holiday period on record.

Education remains Australia's highest-value travel segment

Holiday travel remained Australia's largest travel purpose, generating **3.7 million international trips** during the year, an increase of **14%**, while holiday visitors spent **AUD 13.5 billion**, up **22%**.

Travel to visit friends and relatives accounted for **2.8 million trips**, increasing **8%**, with spending reaching **AUD 5.5 billion**.

Business travel remained relatively stable, recording **776,000 trips**, up **1%**, alongside expenditure of **AUD 2.0 billion**.

Education continued to be Australia's highest-value travel segment.

International students generated **554,000 trips**, representing **9% growth**, while contributing **AUD 15.3 billion** in visitor spending—an increase of **23%** and the highest expenditure among all travel purposes.

The report also highlighted distinct spending patterns across traveller categories.

Education visitors allocated **78%** of their expenditure within Australia to accommodation, food and beverages. Holiday travellers devoted **57%** of their spending to those categories and **13%** to organised tours—the highest share among all visitor groups.

Visitors travelling to see friends and relatives spent a larger proportion

on shopping and entertainment, reflecting reduced accommodation costs while staying with family or friends.

Growth recorded across Australia's states and territories

Every Australian state and territory recorded higher international visitor spending during the year ending March 2026.

Tasmania led the country with a **36% increase**, followed by:

- Queensland: **35%**
- Northern Territory: **27%**
- New South Wales: **18%**
- Victoria: **17%**
- South Australia: **16%**
- Western Australia: **12%**
- Australian Capital Territory: **12%**

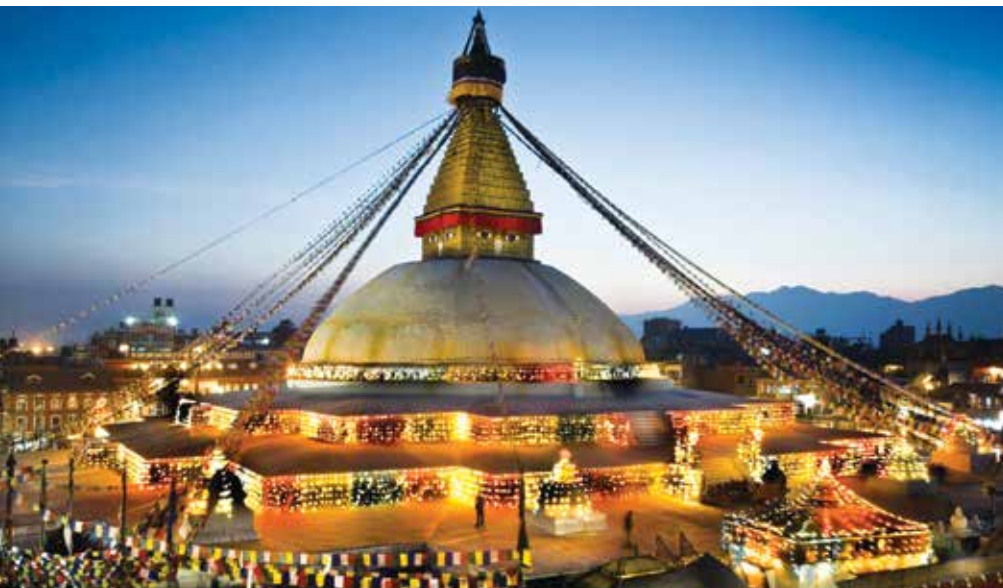
Visitor arrivals also increased across almost every destination.

Western Australia recorded the strongest growth in arrivals at **20%**, followed by the Northern Territory at **16%** and Queensland at **13%**. The Australian Capital Territory was the only jurisdiction to record a decline in arrivals, falling **11%**.

Outlook

The latest International Visitor Survey highlights Australia's continued momentum as one of the world's most sought-after long-haul destinations. With India firmly established among the country's top five international tourism markets, the outlook points to further opportunities as aviation capacity expands, tourism partnerships deepen and demand for premium leisure, education and business travel continues to grow.

India Retains Top Position as Nepal's Largest Tourism Market, Accounting for 46% of June Arrivals



Nepal continues to strengthen its appeal among Indian travellers, with India maintaining its position as the country's largest source market for international visitors by air in June 2026. According to the latest figures released by the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Indian arrivals surged by **28% year-on-year**, helping Nepal welcome more than **91,000 international visitors** during the month.

The strong performance reflects Nepal's growing popularity as a short-haul international destination, supported by favourable travel conditions, seasonal demand, competitive pricing and increasing interest in pilgrimage, nature and adventure tourism.

Indian visitors account for nearly half of international arrivals

The Nepal Tourism Board reported that **91,363 international tourists arrived by air in June 2026**, with **41,809 visitors coming from India**. This represented **approximately 46% of all international arrivals** for the month and marked a significant increase from **32,662 Indian visitors** recorded in June 2025.

The figures reaffirm India's importance as Nepal's largest inbound tourism market, a position it has consistently held owing to close cultural ties, visa-free travel arrangements for Indian citizens and excellent air and road connectivity between the two neighbouring countries.

First-half arrivals continue upward trajectory

The positive momentum extended

through the first half of the year.

Between **January and June 2026**, Nepal welcomed **177,159 Indian visitors by air**, representing a **19.27% increase** compared with **148,540 arrivals** during the corresponding period in 2025.

Overall, Nepal received **620,426 international visitors by air** during the first six months of 2026, reflecting a **7% year-on-year increase**, underscoring the country's continued recovery and growing appeal among global travellers.

Diverse international source markets

While India dominated inbound arrivals, several other international markets also contributed significantly to Nepal's tourism sector in June.

The **United States** ranked as the second-largest source market with **11,836 visitors**, followed by **China** with **9,995 arrivals**. **Bangladesh** contributed **4,322 visitors**, while the **United Kingdom** recorded **2,500 arrivals**, highlighting Nepal's broad international appeal across Asia, Europe and North America.

Seasonal demand and regional travel drive Indian growth

According to the Nepal Tourism Board, multiple factors contributed to the sharp increase in Indian visitor numbers.

Exceptionally high summer temperatures across many Indian cities encouraged travellers to seek cooler mountain destinations, while school and college holidays generated additional family travel demand. The board also noted that initiatives by the Government of India promoting domestic and regional tourism helped stimulate outbound travel to neighbouring destinations.

Another important factor was the increase in international airfares on many long-haul routes following disruptions linked to geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. As overseas travel became more expensive, Nepal emerged as an attractive and accessible alternative

for Indian holidaymakers seeking international experiences without lengthy travel times or high costs.

The tourism board further credited sustained destination marketing campaigns, social media promotions and travel content produced by Indian bloggers, digital creators and influencers for enhancing Nepal's visibility among younger and first-time travellers.

Road tourism remains a significant contributor

Beyond air arrivals, the Nepal Tourism Board highlighted that **hundreds of thousands of Indian**

visitors also travelled to Nepal by road during the year, reflecting the unique cross-border mobility shared by the two countries.

Popular destinations included the lakeside city of Pokhara, the revered pilgrimage site of Muktinath Temple and the scenic Himalayan village of Ghandruk. These destinations continue to attract Indian visitors seeking spiritual journeys, mountain landscapes, trekking experiences and adventure tourism.

The ease of overland travel, combined with Nepal's diverse tourism offerings, has helped sustain year-round demand from the Indian market.

Outlook

The latest tourism data reinforces Nepal's growing position as one of the most accessible and attractive international destinations for Indian travellers. With nearly half of all international air arrivals in June originating from India, the country remains central to Nepal's tourism growth strategy.

As demand for short-haul international holidays continues to rise and connectivity between the two countries expands, Nepal is well positioned to attract even greater numbers of Indian leisure, pilgrimage and adventure travellers in the months ahead.

Air India Inks Agreement with SIA Engineering Company for Collaboration on MRO



Air India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SIA Engineering Company Limited (SIAEC) to explore a strategic collaboration in Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO), reinforcing India's ambition to emerge as a leading global aviation maintenance hub.

The MoU was signed in Mumbai on 3 July 2026 by Air India Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Campbell Wilson, and SIAEC Chief Executive Officer, Chin Yau Seng.

This follows Air India's earlier collaborations with SIAEC to strengthen maintenance and component support for its

growing fleet and network expansion:

- Signing of a 12-year Inventory Technical Management (ITM) agreement with SIAEC for extensive component support coverage for Air India's current fleet of Airbus A320 family aircraft on 21 February 2024;
- Appointment of SIAEC as Air India's Base Maintenance strategic partner for the development of the airline's Base Maintenance facilities located in Bangalore on 11 May 2024.

The latest MOU aims to deepen the partnership between both parties by tapping on SIAEC's MRO and technical expertise to bolster Air India's established airline operations network by jointly developing a world-class MRO ecosystem in India. This collaboration could include the potential formation of an MRO Joint Venture in India, serving the increasing needs of the Indian and regional aviation markets.

Campbell Wilson, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, Air India, said: "India's rapid aviation growth is driving the need for a stronger, more self-reliant MRO ecosystem within the country. As fleet sizes expand and operations scale up, developing local maintenance capacity will be important to support efficiency, resilience and long-term growth. Partnerships such as this can play a constructive role in enabling that broader direction and developing India as a global aviation hub."

Chin Yau Seng, Chief Executive Officer SIAEC, said: "India is one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets, and the continued development of its MRO capabilities will be an important step in strengthening its position within the global aerospace ecosystem. Through this MOU, we look forward to exploring how SIAEC's technical expertise can support the progressive build-up of capabilities and capacity in India, alongside our ongoing partnership with Air India."

The potential collaboration, which is legally non-binding, is likely to be progressively firmed up with material developments in future.



Saudi Arabia Unveils New Tourism Investment Roadmap as Hospitality Growth Accelerates

Saudi Arabia has reinforced its position as one of the world's fastest-growing tourism investment destinations with the unveiling of a new report highlighting the Kingdom's expanding hospitality sector, increasing global investor confidence, and rapidly evolving tourism ecosystem.

The announcement was made during the recently concluded Future

Hospitality Summit Saudi Arabia 2026 in Riyadh, where the Saudi Ministry of Tourism launched its latest Global Investments in Saudi Tourism Report, providing fresh insights into the Kingdom's tourism transformation and the scale of opportunities emerging under the Vision 2030 programme.

The report underscores Saudi Arabia's ambition to become a leading global tourism and hospitality hub,

supported by significant public and private sector investment, large-scale destination development projects, enhanced connectivity, and a business-friendly investment environment designed to attract international capital. According to the Ministry of Tourism, more than 50 global hospitality brands are actively expanding their presence across the Kingdom, while tourism investments

have surpassed US\$120 billion, supporting a development pipeline expected to deliver over 200,000 new hotel keys by 2030.

Tourism Transformation Gains Momentum

Saudi Arabia's tourism sector has undergone remarkable growth over the past few years, becoming one of the central pillars of the Kingdom's economic diversification strategy. The newly released report highlights how strong domestic and international travel demand has positioned Saudi Arabia as the largest tourism development market in the Middle East and among the most dynamic globally in terms of hospitality expansion and luxury accommodation supply.

The Ministry noted that the Kingdom's tourism investment ecosystem has been strengthened through regulatory reforms, simplified licensing procedures, digital services, investment incentives, and dedicated business support centres aimed at accelerating project development and reducing barriers to entry for investors.

Speaking during the summit, tourism officials emphasised that Saudi Arabia's opportunities extend far beyond its headline-grabbing mega projects. Investors are increasingly being encouraged to explore opportunities across a broad range of tourism segments, including cultural tourism, luxury hospitality, adventure travel, entertainment, destination management, visitor experiences, tourism technology, and related service industries.

Building a More Investor-Friendly Market

As part of its strategy to attract global investment, the Ministry of Tourism highlighted several initiatives designed to simplify market access and support tourism developers throughout the investment cycle.

Among the key programmes are the Tourism Investment Enablers Programme (TIEP) and the Hospitality Investment Enablers (HIE) initiative,

both aimed at streamlining approvals, facilitating investment opportunities, and supporting project implementation across the Kingdom.

These initiatives form part of a broader government effort to create a transparent and competitive investment environment capable of supporting long-term tourism growth while increasing private sector participation in the industry.

The Ministry's report also points to improved infrastructure, expanded air connectivity, talent development programmes, and a growing pipeline of tourism projects as major factors driving investor confidence in the Saudi market.

Hospitality Development Reaches New Heights

The Future Hospitality Summit has become one of the Middle East's most

ongoing improvements in aviation infrastructure.

The Kingdom's Vision 2030 strategy has set a target of welcoming 150 million visitors annually by the end of the decade, positioning tourism as a major contributor to economic diversification, job creation, and sustainable development. As visitor numbers continue to rise and new destinations come online, the hospitality sector is expected to remain a key driver of growth across the Saudi economy.

Vision 2030 Driving Global Interest

Industry leaders attending the summit noted that Saudi Arabia's tourism transformation is creating opportunities across the entire value chain, from accommodation and attractions to transportation, technology, entertainment, and



The report underscores Saudi Arabia's ambition to become a leading global tourism and hospitality hub, supported by significant public and private sector investment, large-scale destination development projects, enhanced connectivity, and a business-friendly investment environment designed to attract international capital.



influential platforms for hospitality investment announcements and industry collaboration. This year's edition brought together investors, developers, hotel operators, tourism authorities, and policymakers to discuss the future of tourism development across the Kingdom and the wider region.

Saudi Arabia continues to attract some of the world's leading hotel groups and tourism brands as demand grows across both leisure and business travel segments. Hundreds of hotel projects are currently under development, supported by ambitious destination initiatives and

destination services.

With substantial investment commitments, a rapidly expanding tourism infrastructure, and growing international interest, Saudi Arabia is increasingly positioning itself as one of the most significant emerging tourism and hospitality markets globally.

The newly released report serves as both a snapshot of current progress and a roadmap for future investment, reinforcing the Kingdom's determination to establish itself among the world's leading tourism destinations while creating long-term opportunities for global hospitality investors and tourism stakeholders.



Europe's Largest River Cruise Ship, AmaRudi, to Redefine Luxury Sailing on the Danube in 2027

Luxury river cruising in Europe is set to enter a new era with the launch of **AmaRudi**, the newest vessel from **AmaWaterways**, which is poised to become the **largest river cruise ship in Europe** when it begins sailing on the Danube River in **April 2027**.

Designed to elevate the standards of inland cruising, the innovative double-width vessel combines expansive accommodation, exceptional culinary experiences, wellness-focused facilities and immersive entertainment, reflecting the growing demand among discerning travellers for slow, experiential journeys through Europe's cultural heartland.

The ship's inaugural voyage is

scheduled to depart on **11 April 2027**, marking another milestone in the evolution of premium river cruising.

A New Flagship for European River Cruising

Named in honour of **Rudi Schreiner**, co-founder and President of AmaWaterways and widely regarded as one of the pioneers of modern river cruising, AmaRudi builds upon the success of the company's acclaimed double-width flagship, **AmaMagna**.

Accommodating just **196 guests** across **98 spacious staterooms and suites**, the vessel has been designed to offer significantly more personal space than traditional European river

cruise ships while preserving the intimate atmosphere that has made river cruising increasingly popular among luxury travellers.

Its innovative design allows for wider public areas, larger suites and an expanded range of onboard amenities more commonly associated with luxury ocean liners.

Spacious Suites and Elevated Comfort

AmaRudi places comfort at the centre of the guest experience, with elegantly appointed balcony suites ranging from **355 to 710 square feet**, making them among the most generous accommodations available on

Europe's inland waterways.

Contemporary interiors, refined furnishings and panoramic river views create an atmosphere that blends boutique luxury with residential-style comfort, allowing guests to fully immerse themselves in the ever-changing scenery along the Danube.

A Culinary Journey on the Water

Dining is expected to be one of AmaRudi's defining highlights.

Guests will have access to **four distinctive dining venues**, including the signature **Journey's Restaurant** and **The Chef's Table**, where expertly crafted tasting menus showcase regional flavours alongside international cuisine.

Wine enthusiasts can also enjoy the newly introduced **Rudi's Wine Bar**, featuring an expanded collection of more than **30 complimentary wines** served during lunch and dinner, reinforcing AmaWaterways' long-standing reputation for exceptional culinary experiences.

Wellness Meets Active Travel

Responding to the growing

popularity of wellness-focused travel, AmaRudi introduces one of the most comprehensive recreational offerings ever seen aboard a European river cruise vessel.

Passengers will have access to a dedicated **Zen Wellness Studio**, a fully equipped fitness centre, massage treatment rooms and beauty services designed to encourage relaxation throughout the journey.

Adding a distinctive touch is a **full-sized pickleball court**, reflecting the cruise line's commitment to active lifestyles while travelling.

For evening entertainment, the ship will feature an exclusive social venue complete with a cinema, karaoke lounge, billiards and a classic jukebox, creating a lively atmosphere after days spent exploring Europe ashore.

Exploring the Heart of Europe

AmaRudi's maiden voyage will depart from **Vilshofen, Germany**, sailing along the iconic **Danube River**, one of Europe's most celebrated waterways.

The itinerary will connect guests with picturesque riverside villages, imperial capitals and UNESCO

World Heritage sites while offering opportunities to experience centuries-old traditions, local gastronomy and the rich cultural heritage that has long made the Danube one of the world's premier river cruise destinations.

Raising the Bar for Luxury River Cruising

The introduction of AmaRudi comes at a time when demand for luxury river cruising continues to grow, with travellers increasingly seeking smaller ships, personalised service and deeper cultural immersion over conventional mass-market holidays.

By combining spacious accommodation, innovative design, exceptional dining and wellness-led experiences, AmaWaterways is positioning AmaRudi as a new benchmark for European river cruising.

When the vessel enters service in 2027, it is expected not only to become the continent's largest river cruise ship but also one of its most luxurious, offering travellers a refined new way to discover the timeless beauty of the Danube.



Sentosa and Disney Cruise Line Launch 'A Magical Island Adventure' in Singapore's Biggest Island-Wide Family Experience Yet



Sentosa is set to transform into a spectacular world of Disney magic this summer as the Sentosa Development Corporation (SDC), in collaboration with Disney Cruise Line, unveils **“A Magical Island Adventure: Let’s Set Sail with Disney Cruise Line”**—a first-of-its-kind island-wide celebration running from **24 June to 20 September 2026**. Inspired by the seven themed lands aboard the Disney Adventure cruise ship, the three-month event promises an immersive day-to-night journey blending storytelling, entertainment, interactive attractions, and stunning visual installations across

Singapore’s premier leisure island.

Designed to extend the Disney Cruise Line experience beyond the ship and onto Singapore’s most iconic resort destination, the collaboration transforms Sentosa into a vibrant playground where guests can explore beloved Disney, Pixar and Marvel-inspired worlds while enjoying the island’s beaches, attractions and natural landscapes. The initiative further strengthens Singapore’s appeal as a leading family tourism destination in Asia.

A Day-to-Night Adventure Across Sentosa

Unlike traditional themed events

confined to a single venue, “A Magical Island Adventure” spans multiple locations across Sentosa, creating an expansive exploration trail that encourages visitors to discover the island at their own pace.

Guests can collect an event passport and embark on a journey through themed experiences located at the Singapore Cable Car – Sentosa Line, Sentosa Sensoryscape, Central Beach Bazaar, Palawan Beach, The Palawan @ Sentosa and the Southernmost Point of Continental Asia. Along the way, visitors can collect commemorative medallion stamps representing the seven signature themed areas found

aboard the Disney Adventure.

The seven immersive zones draw inspiration from:

- Disney Imagination Garden
- Disney Discovery Reef
- Town Square
- Wayfinder Bay
- San Fransokyo Street
- Toy Story Place
- Marvel Landing

Together, they create a seamless narrative journey that blends Sentosa's natural environment with Disney storytelling.

The Magic Begins Before Arrival

The experience starts even before visitors reach Sentosa.

Beginning in early July, the iconic Sentosa Express monorail will be transformed into a moving Disney attraction featuring Captain Mickey Mouse and Captain Minnie Mouse on its exterior. Travellers boarding from VivoCity will immediately step into the spirit of the event, creating anticipation

for the adventures awaiting them on the island.

Adding another dimension to the experience, the Singapore Cable Car – Sentosa Line will feature specially themed cabins inspired by Disney Adventure spaces such as Toy Story Place and Disney Discovery Reef. Guests can also enjoy photo opportunities with Disney character installations located at the Sentosa Sensoryscape, Imbiah Lookout and Siloso Point cable car stations.

Southernmost Point of Continental Asia Shines After Dark

One of the most anticipated highlights of the event is the transformation of Sentosa's iconic Southernmost Point of Continental Asia into a dazzling illuminated attraction.

For the first time, the landmark will remain open until **10:00 PM**, allowing visitors to experience a dedicated after-dark programme featuring glowing ocean-inspired installations and

immersive storytelling environments.

Inspired by Disney Discovery Reef and Wayfinder Bay, the attraction will bring beloved stories such as *Finding Nemo*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Lilo & Stitch* and *Moana* to life through vibrant lighting effects, glowing manta ray sculptures and interactive discovery experiences. Ocean-themed pathways, navigation motifs and celestial-inspired designs will create a unique coastal atmosphere that celebrates exploration and adventure.

Visitors purchasing dedicated night admission tickets will also enjoy a gamified exploration activity featuring embossed stamp collection opportunities and exclusive Disney Adventure-themed keepsakes.

Palawan Beach Becomes the Heart of the Celebration

Palawan Beach serves as the central hub of the island-wide festivities, welcoming guests with a striking six-metre inflatable anchor installation





accompanied by sand-sculpted figures of Captain Mickey Mouse and Captain Minnie Mouse.

The beach will host several immersive zones inspired by Disney Adventure experiences:

San Fransokyo Street

Inspired by Disney's *Big Hero 6*, this zone features a giant Baymax inflatable, themed relaxation areas and an energetic beachfront atmosphere enhanced by food trucks and rotating retail experiences.

Toy Story Place

Families can enjoy oversized toy-themed installations featuring Woody, Buzz Lightyear, Jessie and Bullseye. The area includes playful inflatables and a splash-themed shoreline attraction centred around a giant shower-head structure that comes alive with neon illumination after sunset.

Marvel Landing

At The Palawan @ Sentosa, Marvel fans will encounter attractions inspired by Disney Adventure experiences such as Ironcycle Test Run and Groot Galaxy Spin. The area transforms into a neon-lit entertainment space in the evening, adding a futuristic dimension to the beach environment.

Sensoryscape and Central Beach Bazaar Reimagined

At Central Beach Bazaar, visitors

will discover the 3.5-metre "Magical Compass", a centrepiece installation representing the seven themed areas of Disney Adventure and serving as a navigational landmark throughout the event.

Meanwhile, Sentosa Sensoryscape will evolve into a royal promenade inspired by Town Square, featuring 13 hammock installations dedicated to iconic Disney princesses and heroines including Ariel, Belle, Cinderella, Merida, Mulan, Raya and Snow White.

As daylight fades, sophisticated lighting technology featuring more than 100 programmed effects transforms the venue into a kaleidoscopic wonderland, reinforcing the event's emphasis on immersive night-time experiences.

Another standout attraction within Sensoryscape is a five-metre Disney Cruise Line logo topiary inspired by Disney Imagination Garden, combining floral artistry with themed storytelling.

Extending Disney Cruise Line Beyond the Ship

According to Sentosa Development Corporation, the event represents a new benchmark in destination-based storytelling and experiential tourism.

Thien Kwee Eng, Chief Executive Officer of Sentosa Development Corporation, described the collaboration as a transformative initiative that demonstrates the potential of large-scale partnerships built around strong narratives and

immersive visitor experiences.

Disney Cruise Line's Southeast Asia leadership highlighted the activation as an extension of more than a century of Disney storytelling, allowing guests to experience the magic of Disney, Pixar and Marvel beyond the cruise ship while discovering Singapore's most iconic island destination.

The Singapore Tourism Board has also endorsed the initiative as a significant addition to the city-state's family tourism offerings, reinforcing Singapore's reputation as a destination capable of delivering innovative, world-class visitor experiences.

Exclusive Merchandise and Guest Benefits

Visitors can take home a collection of limited-edition merchandise created exclusively for the event, including customised tumblers, eco-bags, towels and keychains featuring both Sentosa and Disney Cruise Line branding. UOB cardholders will also have access to exclusive promotional merchandise, including glow-in-the-dark collectible medallion pins.

Guests sailing aboard the Disney Adventure between 24 June and 1 October 2026 will enjoy additional perks, including complimentary access to selected Sentosa attractions and discounts on Southernmost Point night admission tickets and Sentosa Fun Discovery Pass bundles.

A New Annual Tourism Platform

Beyond its immediate summer appeal, "A Magical Island Adventure" signals the launch of a new annual experiential platform for Sentosa. Organisers have confirmed that future editions will introduce new stories, collaborations and attractions, ensuring visitors have fresh reasons to return year after year.

By blending world-renowned entertainment brands with destination-wide storytelling, Sentosa is creating a new model for experiential tourism—one that transforms an entire island into a living, evolving attraction and further elevates Singapore's standing as one of Asia's leading leisure and family travel destinations.

MICHELIN Guide Launches 'MICHELIN Grape', Expanding Its Global Recognition to Wine Estates

The MICHELIN Guide is broadening its influence in the world of gastronomy with the introduction of the **MICHELIN Grape**, a new distinction that recognises exceptional wine producers and vineyards for the first time.

The initiative marks a significant evolution for the globally renowned guide, extending its acclaimed rating system beyond restaurants and hotels to honour the craftsmanship, consistency and terroir of wine estates. The inaugural selection will be unveiled on **7 July 2026** in Côte-d'Or, one of the world's most celebrated wine regions.

The launch places the spotlight on Burgundy's legendary vineyards, offering wine enthusiasts and travellers a new way to explore destinations renowned for their viticultural heritage.

A new milestone for the MICHELIN Guide

For more than a century, the MICHELIN Guide has shaped global travel through its prestigious restaurant recommendations. Since awarding its first restaurant Stars in 1926 and introducing the **MICHELIN Key** distinction for outstanding hotels in recent years, the guide has steadily expanded its role within luxury travel and hospitality.

With the introduction of the MICHELIN Grape, the organisation is recognising wine producers directly for the first time, celebrating the expertise, dedication and heritage that define exceptional wines.

Rather than evaluating restaurants or sommeliers serving wine, the new recognition honours the estates and winemakers responsible for producing each bottle.



Independent assessment focused on quality and terroir

According to the MICHELIN Guide, wine estates will be evaluated through an independent assessment process designed to identify producers that consistently demonstrate excellence while expressing the unique characteristics of their vineyards and terroir.

The distinction aims to help travellers and wine enthusiasts discover outstanding wineries, encouraging deeper exploration of some of the world's most renowned wine-producing regions.

The inaugural selection will focus on Burgundy's prestigious appellations, including:

- Côte de Beaune
- Côte de Nuits
- Côte Chalonnaise

These regions are internationally recognised for producing some of France's finest Pinot Noir and Chardonnay wines and are among the country's leading wine tourism destinations.

Four levels of recognition

The MICHELIN Grape introduces a four-tier classification system based on quality, consistency and expression of terroir.

Three Grapes represent the highest distinction and are awarded to

producers whose wines consistently achieve exceptional quality across multiple vintages.

Two Grapes recognise estates known for sustained excellence and a strong representation of their unique terroir.

One Grape honours producers crafting high-quality wines with distinctive character, particularly during outstanding vintages.

A **Selected** designation acknowledges reliable producers whose wines consistently offer quality, balance and an enjoyable tasting experience.

The tiered system is intended to provide travellers with a trusted reference when planning vineyard visits and wine-focused itineraries.

Boosting wine tourism

The introduction of the MICHELIN Grape reflects the growing importance of wine tourism as a major segment of global experiential travel.

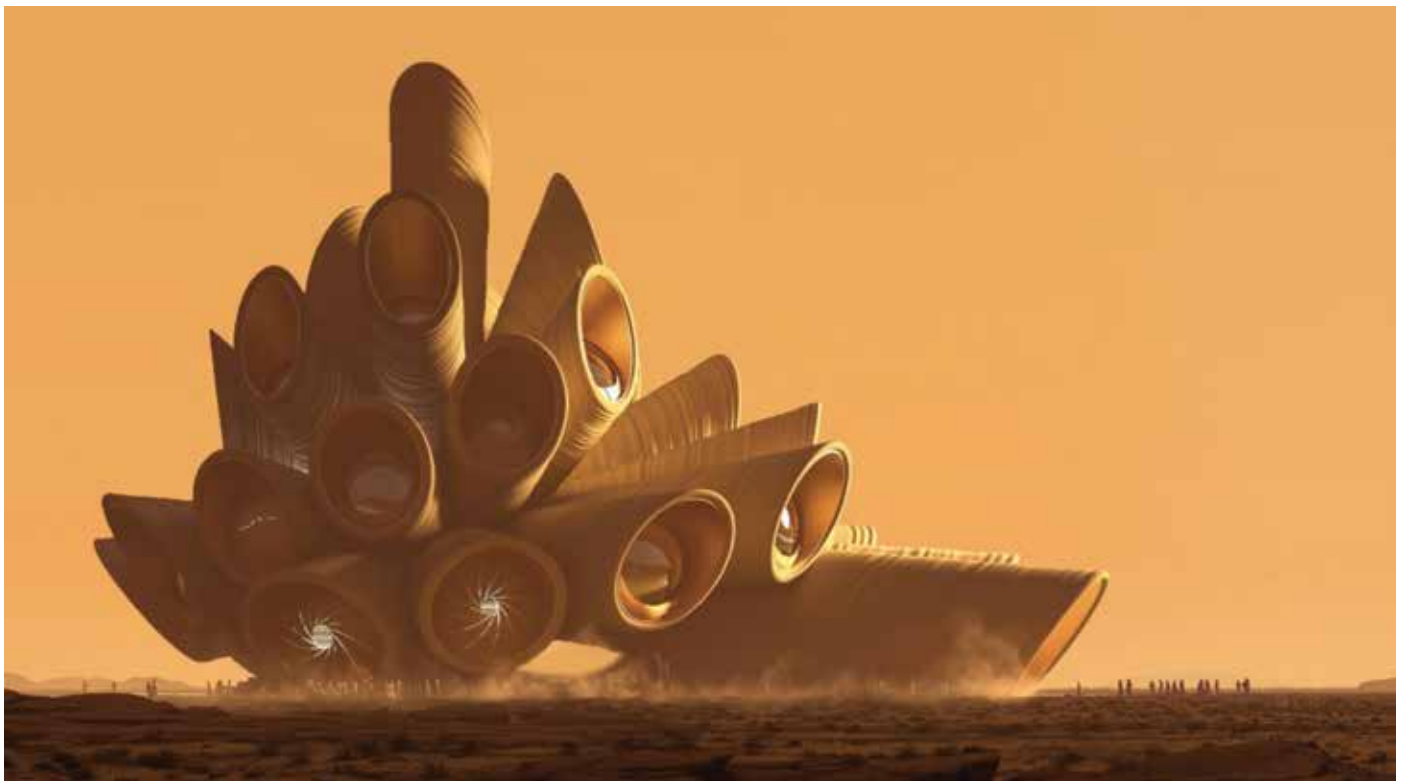
Across Europe and other wine-producing regions, travellers are increasingly seeking immersive experiences that combine vineyard tours, cellar tastings, regional cuisine and cultural heritage.

By recognising leading wine estates through a globally respected rating system, the MICHELIN Guide aims to strengthen connections between gastronomy, hospitality and destination experiences, offering visitors a curated pathway to some of the world's most celebrated vineyards.

The debut selection in Burgundy is expected to set the foundation for future editions covering additional wine-producing regions worldwide, further reinforcing the MICHELIN Guide's expanding role in inspiring culinary and experiential travel.

AlUla Unveils Manara, a Landmark Astrotourism Destination

Combining Science, Heritage and Dark Sky Experiences



Saudi Arabia's historic oasis destination of AlUla has revealed the design of **AlUla Manara**, an ambitious astronomy and astrotourism destination that will combine scientific research, immersive visitor experiences and conservation-led development within one of the world's largest certified Dark Sky Parks.

Designed by internationally renowned Heatherwick Studio, the project has received approval from the Board of Directors of the Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU) and represents another major milestone in the destination's transformation into a global centre for culture, heritage, nature and experiential tourism.

Aligned with **Saudi Vision 2030**, AlUla Manara is expected to strengthen Saudi Arabia's position in astronomy, scientific research and sustainable tourism while offering visitors an entirely new way to explore the region's extraordinary natural and cultural landscape.

A new chapter in astrotourism

Located within the world's **third-largest Dark Sky Park**, AlUla Manara has been conceived as a destination where astronomy, education, scientific discovery and tourism converge.

The project draws inspiration from AlUla's long-standing relationship with the night sky, where stars once

guided traders, travellers and local communities across the Arabian Peninsula. That heritage will now be interpreted through a contemporary visitor experience that combines advanced scientific facilities with engaging educational attractions.

The development reflects the growing global popularity of astrotourism, offering travellers opportunities to experience some of the clearest and darkest night skies on Earth while learning about astronomy and space sciences.

Immersive visitor experiences meet scientific research

At the heart of AlUla Manara will be

a purpose-built visitor centre designed to make astronomy accessible to travellers of all ages.

The facility will feature:

- Immersive interactive exhibitions
- Astronomy galleries
- A state-of-the-art planetarium
- Scientific research facilities
- A restaurant overlooking the surrounding landscape
- A rooftop observation deck for stargazing

Unlike traditional observatories, visitors will also be able to witness aspects of live scientific research, creating a unique experience where tourism and science intersect.

Situated between the Gharameel Nature Reserve and the Harrat Uwayrid Reserve, the destination offers exceptional conditions for astronomical observation thanks to its remarkably low levels of light pollution.

Architecture inspired by the cosmos

The architectural vision by Heatherwick Studio takes its inspiration from the spiralling forms found throughout nature and the universe.

The design incorporates interlocking telescope-inspired structures whose flowing geometry echoes galaxies, planetary rings, stars, shells and fossils. Clad in textured stone that mirrors AlUla's iconic sandstone formations, the buildings are intended to blend naturally into the surrounding desert landscape while maintaining a visual dialogue between Earth and the cosmos.

According to **Stuart Wood**, the project seeks to transform the traditional observatory experience by making cutting-edge astronomy more engaging and accessible to the public.

He noted that the design creates an immersive environment where visitors can experience the wonder of the universe while remaining closely connected to ongoing scientific discovery.

Sustainability at the heart of the design

Environmental conservation has

*Located within the world's **third-largest Dark Sky Park**, AlUla Manara has been conceived as a destination where astronomy, education, scientific discovery and tourism converge.*

been integrated into every aspect of the project.

The building's tubular architectural forms incorporate advanced shading systems that regulate sunlight during the day while preserving dark-sky conditions at night. Operable windows respond to changing weather conditions, improving energy efficiency and maintaining uninterrupted views of the surrounding desert environment.

According to the Royal Commission for AlUla, the project has been carefully designed to operate in harmony with its natural setting while safeguarding one of the destination's most valuable environmental assets—its pristine night skies.

Protecting one of the world's darkest skies

AlUla's skies rank among the **top five per cent globally** for natural darkness and astronomical visibility, making the destination one of the world's premier locations for stargazing.

Several protected areas, including the Gharameel Nature Reserve, Sharaan National Park and Wadi Nakhl Nature Reserve, have received official certification from DarkSky International.

To preserve these conditions, the Royal Commission for AlUla has introduced a comprehensive Astrotourism Policy that includes lighting controls, visitor management

guidelines and zoning regulations designed to minimise light pollution while protecting wildlife and natural ecosystems.

Expanding AlUla's tourism portfolio

AlUla Manara forms part of a broader strategy to diversify the destination's tourism offering beyond archaeology and heritage.

Alongside globally recognised attractions such as the UNESCO World Heritage Site Hegra and the iconic mirrored concert venue Maraya, the new astronomy destination is expected to position AlUla as an international centre for scientific exploration, experiential travel and nature-based tourism.

Phillip Jones, Chief Tourism Officer at the Royal Commission for AlUla, said the project reflects the region's historic relationship with the stars while creating a new visitor experience centred on discovery, learning and inspiration.

He added that Manara has the potential to become an internationally recognised landmark for astronomy and scientific tourism, much as Maraya has become a global icon for architecture and culture.

Supporting Saudi Vision 2030

The project also supports Saudi Arabia's wider ambitions to become a regional leader in science, innovation and sustainable tourism under **Saudi Vision 2030**.

According to **Naif AlMalik**, the development demonstrates how conservation and tourism can work together to protect natural heritage while creating opportunities for education, research and innovation.

Through advanced observation technologies, scientific research facilities, interactive exhibitions and immersive visitor experiences, AlUla Manara is expected to become a global platform for astronomy, public engagement and international collaboration while inspiring future generations of scientists, researchers and explorers.

Blacksand and Marriott International Sign Landmark Agreement to Develop 10 Hotels Across Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's rapidly expanding hospitality sector received another major boost with Riyadh-based Blacksand and Marriott International announcing a landmark agreement to develop ten hotels across the Kingdom over the next four years. The multi-brand partnership, unveiled during the Future Hospitality Summit Saudi Arabia in Riyadh, will add more than 1,300 rooms to the country's growing hospitality pipeline and further support the Kingdom's ambitious tourism and urban development objectives.

The agreement marks a significant milestone for both organisations and reflects the increasing confidence of global hospitality players in Saudi Arabia's transformation into one of the world's fastest-growing tourism destinations. The projects, which are currently in the design and early construction phases, are scheduled to open in stages through 2030, with the first property expected to debut in Riyadh.

Multi-Brand Portfolio to Serve Diverse Traveller Segments

The partnership spans a broad spectrum of Marriott International's hospitality brands, covering luxury, premium, select-service and extended-stay segments. Planned developments will include globally recognised brands such as St. Regis Hotels & Resorts, Marriott Hotels, Autograph Collection, Moxy Hotels, Courtyard by Marriott, Residence Inn by Marriott and Apartments by Marriott Bonvoy.

The diverse brand mix is designed to cater to a wide range of traveller profiles, from luxury leisure guests and business travellers to long-stay visitors and younger lifestyle-focused



consumers. Industry observers note that this multi-segment approach aligns closely with Saudi Arabia's tourism diversification strategy, which aims to attract a broader mix of domestic and international visitors.

Supporting Saudi Arabia's Tourism Vision

The announcement comes as Saudi Arabia continues to accelerate investments in tourism infrastructure under its long-term economic diversification plans. Major hospitality developments, enhanced connectivity, large-scale tourism projects and international events are driving demand for hotel accommodation across multiple destinations within the Kingdom.

Commenting on the agreement, Omar Alabdullatif, Chief Executive Officer of Blacksand, described the partnership as a defining milestone for the company.

"This agreement marks a defining milestone for Blacksand and reflects the scale of our ambition. Our collaboration with Marriott International brings globally recognised brands together and a shared commitment to creating exceptional hospitality offerings in the Kingdom.

An agreement of this calibre supports the shaping of the future of an already ambitious nation, and we are proud to be there setting the benchmark for quality, experience and long-term value."

Jerome Briet, Chief Development Officer, Europe, Middle East and Africa at Marriott International, highlighted the strategic importance of the Kingdom within Marriott's regional growth plans.

"This landmark deal with Blacksand reflects Marriott's continued focus on diversifying our portfolio across Saudi Arabia to deliver meaningful hospitality experiences in line with the country's tourism priorities. From immersive resort



escapes and design-led stays to vibrant social hubs and extended-stay living, we look forward to introducing a range of experiences tailored to meet the evolving needs of travellers visiting the Kingdom.”

Economic Impact and Employment Generation

Beyond expanding hotel capacity, the development programme is expected to create substantial economic value and employment opportunities across Saudi Arabia. Upon completion, the ten hotels are projected to generate more than 6,000 full-time jobs, with at least 60 percent of positions earmarked for Saudi

nationals, supporting the Kingdom’s workforce development and localisation objectives.

The projects will also contribute to wider economic activity through construction, supply chain development, tourism spending and hospitality services, reinforcing the sector’s role as a key pillar of Saudi Arabia’s non-oil economy.

Long-Term Strategic Collaboration

Both Blacksand and Marriott International have indicated that the agreement represents the beginning of a broader strategic relationship rather than a standalone development programme. The companies intend

to continue exploring opportunities to expand their joint portfolio across Saudi Arabia as demand for high-quality hospitality infrastructure continues to rise.

With international visitor arrivals, business travel, entertainment tourism and major event-driven demand continuing to grow, Saudi Arabia remains one of the most dynamic hospitality investment markets globally. The new partnership underscores the confidence of international hotel operators in the Kingdom’s long-term tourism trajectory and further strengthens its position as a leading destination for hospitality investment in the Middle East.



Centara Enhances Guest Experience

with New Signature Brand Touchpoints
Across **Global Portfolio**

*Thai Hospitality Group Introduces Curated Experiences Designed
to Deliver More Meaningful, Memorable and Personalised Stays*

As competition intensifies across the global hospitality industry and travellers increasingly seek immersive and experience-driven journeys, Centara Hotels & Resorts has unveiled an enhanced Centara Brand Experience, introducing a series of signature guest touchpoints designed to elevate every stage of the travel journey and create deeper emotional connections with guests.

The initiative is being rolled out across all properties operating under the Centara brand, reinforcing the company's commitment to delivering hospitality experiences that extend beyond traditional accommodation and focus on meaningful engagement, personalised comfort and authentic local connections.

Currently comprising 25 hotels and resorts across Thailand, Vietnam, the Maldives, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, the Centara portfolio continues to expand internationally. The introduction of the new brand experience framework aims to ensure consistency across the growing network while celebrating the unique character of each destination.

One of six hospitality brands operated by Centara Hotels & Resorts, Thailand's leading hotel operator, the Centara brand is positioned within the upscale hospitality segment and is recognised for blending contemporary comfort with the warmth and hospitality traditions of Thailand.

Hospitality Beyond Accommodation

At the heart of the enhanced Centara Brand Experience is a belief that modern hospitality is no longer defined solely by accommodation standards or service delivery. Instead, travellers increasingly value experiences that create emotional connections, foster memorable moments and encourage deeper engagement with destinations.

The new programme introduces a carefully curated collection of guest touchpoints designed to transform everyday moments into meaningful experiences. Whether at a beachfront



resort, a city-centre hotel or a nature-inspired retreat, each touchpoint has been created to deliver a sense of discovery, comfort and connection.

The framework is built around three key pillars: **Reliable Comfort**, **Local Character**, and **Inviting All Occasions**.

Together, these pillars form the foundation of a hospitality strategy that seeks to combine consistency with individuality, ensuring guests experience both the trusted standards of the Centara brand and the unique identity of each destination.

Reliable Comfort: Redefining the Art of Rest

Recognising that quality rest remains one of the most important elements of any hotel stay, Centara has introduced a comprehensive approach to wellbeing through its "Art of Sleep" concept.

Designed to promote relaxation and rejuvenation, guests are offered opportunities to personalise their sleeping environment according to their preferences. Features may include a selection of pillow scents, calming herbal teas, mindfulness playlists curated by wellness experts, and guided

relaxation techniques designed to support better sleep quality.

The initiative reflects a growing trend within luxury and upscale hospitality towards wellness-focused travel experiences that prioritise physical and mental wellbeing.

Beyond guest rooms, the Reliable Comfort pillar extends to thoughtfully designed communal spaces aimed at enhancing relaxation and social interaction.

Through the "Memory Maker" initiative, hotels incorporate carefully positioned swings, hammocks, loungers and scenic relaxation areas that encourage guests to pause, appreciate their surroundings and create lasting memories. These visually appealing spaces also cater to the growing demand for shareable travel moments and experiential storytelling.

Inviting All Occasions: Experiences for Every Generation

Centara's new guest experience framework also acknowledges the evolving needs of multi-generational travellers, families and leisure guests seeking meaningful shared experiences.

The "Inviting All Occasions" pillar has been developed to ensure guests

of all ages feel welcomed, engaged and valued throughout their stay.

A key component is the introduction of **Centara Juniors**, a dedicated programme designed specifically for younger travellers. Upon arrival, children receive a special welcome experience, including a personalised check-in process and a Centara Juniors wristband that grants access to a range of age-appropriate activities and experiences.

Dedicated children's spaces, interactive character encounters, themed breakfast offerings and special rewards programmes help create a sense of adventure and discovery for younger guests while enhancing the overall family travel experience.

For adult guests, the "Treat & Treasure" initiative introduces unexpected moments of delight throughout the day. These may include complimentary local delicacies, artisanal snacks, refreshing treats by the pool, sunset refreshments or wellness-inspired experiences that reinforce the spirit of Thai hospitality.

Such gestures are designed to create memorable moments and strengthen the emotional connection between guests and the brand.

Local Character: Celebrating Destination Authenticity

One of the defining features of the enhanced Centara Brand Experience is its focus on showcasing the unique identity and cultural heritage of each destination.

Under the "Local Character" pillar, guests are encouraged to engage more deeply with local traditions, communities and cultural experiences from the moment they arrive.

The arrival experience itself incorporates the "Welcome Wishes" ritual, inspired by traditional Thai customs. Guests are invited to make wishes symbolising happiness, prosperity and wellbeing, creating a meaningful and culturally inspired introduction to their stay.

The initiative aims to establish an immediate emotional connection while providing an authentic glimpse into Thailand's rich cultural heritage.

Further enriching the guest experience is the "Local Heroes" programme, which partners with regional artisans, performers, chefs and cultural experts to offer immersive destination-based activities.



These may include cultural workshops, culinary demonstrations, craft exhibitions, live performances and storytelling experiences that allow travellers to gain deeper insight into the traditions, history and communities that define each destination.

By connecting guests with local talent and authentic cultural experiences, Centara seeks to create journeys that are not only enjoyable but also educational and enriching.





Strengthening Brand Differentiation in a Competitive Hospitality Landscape

The introduction of these signature touchpoints comes at a time when the global hospitality industry is witnessing growing competition and shifting traveller expectations.

Guests increasingly seek personalised experiences, authentic cultural engagement and wellness-focused offerings that extend beyond

conventional hotel stays. As a result, hospitality brands are investing heavily in experiential programmes that differentiate their products and foster stronger guest loyalty.

Centara's enhanced brand experience reflects this broader industry evolution, positioning the company to meet changing traveller demands while strengthening its identity as a provider of warm, Thai-inspired hospitality.

As the company continues its

international expansion, the new guest experience platform is expected to play a significant role in reinforcing brand consistency across markets while preserving the individuality of each destination.

With a combination of personalised comfort, authentic cultural immersion and memorable moments designed for every generation, Centara aims to ensure that every stay leaves a lasting impression long after guests return home.

Hyatt Launches World of Hyatt Brand Explorer Campaign Across Asia Pacific, Rewarding Guests for Discovering More Brands

Hyatt Hotels Corporation has unveiled a new **World of Hyatt Brand Explorer** campaign across Asia Pacific, encouraging travelers to discover the company's diverse portfolio of hospitality brands while earning valuable rewards. The initiative highlights Hyatt's expanding footprint across the region and reinforces its commitment to offering personalized experiences for every type of traveler, from luxury seekers and business guests to long-stay residents and lifestyle explorers.

At the heart of the campaign is

the **World of Hyatt Brand Explorer Award**, a distinctive loyalty benefit that rewards members for experiencing different Hyatt brands. Under the program, members earn **one Free Night Award at a Category 1–4 Hyatt hotel after staying at five different Hyatt brands**. The reward structure continues throughout the lifetime of membership, with guests receiving an additional Free Night Award for every five new Hyatt brands experienced.

According to Hyatt, the initiative is designed to inspire members to broaden their travel horizons while

discovering the breadth of experiences available across the company's global portfolio.

"The Brand Explorer Award is unique to the World of Hyatt program and is designed to reward guests as they discover the breadth of experiences across our brands. Whether traveling for leisure, business, or special occasions, guests can explore 36 unique brands under World of Hyatt, including 17 in the Asia Pacific region, catering to different travel needs and preferences," said



Tammy Ng, Vice President of Brand & Marketing, Hyatt Asia Pacific.

Showcasing Hyatt's Expanding Brand Portfolio

The campaign shines a spotlight on Hyatt's growing collection of hospitality brands, each tailored to different travel motivations, guest preferences and destination experiences.

Luxury Experiences for Discerning Travelers

Hyatt's luxury portfolio continues to attract travelers seeking elevated and highly personalized experiences.

Park Hyatt hotels are known for their sophisticated residential-style environments, combining elegant architecture, world-class art collections, immersive culinary offerings and highly personalized service.

Alila Hotels & Resorts focus on sustainability, cultural immersion and holistic wellbeing, enabling guests to connect deeply with local communities and natural environments.

Meanwhile, **The Unbound Collection by Hyatt** brings together distinctive independent properties ranging from historic landmarks and architectural icons to secluded retreats, offering experiences rooted in storytelling and authenticity.

Lifestyle Brands Inspired by Culture and Creativity

For travelers seeking vibrant, immersive and culturally connected stays, Hyatt's lifestyle portfolio delivers experiences inspired by local communities and creative energy.

Andaz hotels embrace the spirit and character of their destinations through locally inspired design, cuisine and experiences.

Thompson Hotels offer stylish urban hospitality experiences designed for modern travelers who value culture, sophistication and design-led environments.

The Standard has built a reputation for bold creativity, dynamic social spaces and entertainment-driven experiences that challenge conventional hospitality norms.

Its sister brand, **The StandardX**, translates that distinctive personality into a more streamlined and accessible hotel experience while maintaining its signature sense of style.

JdV by Hyatt celebrates individuality and spontaneity, with independent hotels reflecting the unique culture and character of their local neighborhoods.

Trusted Hospitality Through the Classics Collection

Hyatt's Classics portfolio continues to serve travelers seeking dependable service, premium amenities and memorable experiences.

Grand Hyatt properties are positioned in major gateway cities and leading resort destinations, offering upscale accommodations, innovative dining concepts, wellness facilities and extensive event spaces.

Hyatt Regency hotels focus on bringing people together through welcoming environments, destination dining and versatile meeting and event facilities.

Hyatt Centric hotels cater to explorers who want to be at the center of the action, providing locally inspired experiences, modern accommodations and insider knowledge of the destination.

Flexible and Convenient Stays for Modern Travelers

Recognizing the changing needs of today's travelers, Hyatt's select-service portfolio emphasizes flexibility, convenience and comfort.

Caption by Hyatt combines community-driven programming with social spaces such as the Talk Shop, where guests can work, socialize, dine or relax throughout the day.

Unscripted by Hyatt offers a collection of independent hotels focused on spontaneity, flexibility and local authenticity.

Hyatt Place continues to appeal to multitasking travelers through thoughtfully designed guestrooms featuring dedicated zones for sleeping, working and relaxing, alongside round-the-clock conveniences.

Hyatt House provides residential-style accommodations with spacious

living areas and home-inspired amenities, making it ideal for both short and extended stays.

For the rapidly growing Chinese market, **UrCove** has been specifically developed to meet the expectations of domestic business and leisure travelers seeking premium comfort and seamless service.

Encouraging Exploration Across Asia Pacific

The Brand Explorer campaign spans destinations throughout the Asia Pacific region, including **Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Mainland China, India, Australia and Southeast Asia**, encouraging travelers to discover new destinations while experiencing different Hyatt brands.

Every eligible stay at a new Hyatt brand brings members closer to unlocking additional rewards, making the journey itself part of the loyalty experience.

The campaign arrives at a time when travelers are increasingly seeking more personalized and diverse hospitality experiences, with loyalty programs playing a greater role in influencing travel decisions.

Limited-Time Savings Enhance the Offer

To further encourage travel across the region, Hyatt has introduced a special promotional offer for World of Hyatt members. Guests can enjoy **discounts of up to 20 percent on club and suite rooms and up to 15 percent on standard rooms at participating Hyatt hotels across Asia Pacific**.

The offer is available for bookings made through **August 17, 2026**, for qualifying stays through September 30, 2026. Hyatt has also highlighted the Brand Explorer Award as a key benefit available to members seeking additional value from their stays.

With a growing portfolio of brands and an increasingly experience-driven traveler base, Hyatt's latest campaign positions the World of Hyatt loyalty program as a platform not only for earning rewards but also for discovering the diversity of hospitality experiences available across Asia Pacific.



Beyond the Crowds:

N Finnair Showcases Northern Europe's Hidden Summer Gems for Indian Travellers



As European travel continues to evolve beyond the traditional hotspots of Paris, Rome and Barcelona, a growing number of travellers are seeking quieter, more authentic experiences that combine nature, culture, heritage and wellness. Responding to this trend, Finnair is highlighting a collection of lesser-explored destinations across Northern Europe, offering Indian travellers an opportunity to discover a different side of the continent during the summer season.

With direct connectivity between Delhi and Helsinki, alongside Finnair's extensive regional network across the Nordic and Baltic regions, travellers can seamlessly access some of Northern Europe's most rewarding destinations. From Finland's pristine lake district and Estonia's enchanting island landscapes to Sweden's medieval treasures and Poland's Baltic coastline, these emerging destinations provide an appealing alternative to Europe's increasingly crowded summer tourism centres.

Finnish Lakeland: A Journey into Finland's Natural Soul

Stretching across central and eastern Finland, the Finnish Lakeland region, known locally as Järvi-Suomi, represents one of the country's most iconic and picturesque landscapes. Characterised by thousands of interconnected lakes, dense forests and scattered islands, the region offers visitors an immersive experience in Finland's renowned outdoor lifestyle.

Beyond its stunning scenery, Finnish Lakeland has emerged as a leading destination for wellness tourism and culinary exploration. Visitors can enjoy traditional lakeside saunas, stay in boutique waterfront lodges and historic manor houses, and savour locally sourced cuisine featuring fresh fish, wild berries, mushrooms and seasonal produce harvested from the surrounding forests and waters.

The region embodies the essence of the Finnish summer experience, where nature, wellbeing and sustainability converge. Finnair's domestic network provides convenient access from





Helsinki to key gateways including Kuopio, Joensuu and Jyväskylä, making exploration of the region both convenient and accessible.

Saaremaa: Estonia's Island Escape

For travellers seeking a combination of history, wellness and coastal charm, Saaremaa offers one of the Baltic region's most captivating summer escapes.

As Estonia's largest island, Saaremaa is renowned for its unspoiled landscapes, peaceful atmosphere and rich cultural heritage. At its heart lies Kuressaare, a picturesque seaside town home to one of the best-preserved medieval castles in the Baltics.

Visitors can explore dramatic coastlines, centuries-old lighthouses, dense pine forests and traditional villages while enjoying the island's celebrated wellness offerings. Saaremaa's spa culture has made it a favourite destination for relaxation and rejuvenation, attracting visitors from across Northern Europe.

The island also hosts a vibrant calendar of cultural events during the summer months, including the renowned Saaremaa Opera Festival and maritime-themed celebrations that showcase the island's seafaring heritage.

Further enhancing accessibility, Finnair will operate a seasonal Helsinki-Kuressaare service between June and August 2026, offering up to four weekly flights and making this Baltic retreat easier to reach than ever before.

Visby: Sweden's Medieval Masterpiece

Situated on Sweden's largest island, Gotland, the historic town of Visby is widely regarded as one of Scandinavia's most enchanting destinations.

Recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Visby captivates visitors with its remarkably preserved medieval city walls, cobblestone streets, centuries-old church ruins and colourful rose gardens. During the summer season, the town comes alive with outdoor cafés, cultural festivals and vibrant public spaces that create an inviting atmosphere for both domestic

and international travellers.

Visitors can spend their days wandering through historic alleyways, exploring medieval landmarks, cycling along coastal routes or relaxing on nearby beaches overlooking the Baltic Sea.

The destination offers an exceptional blend of heritage, culture and seaside leisure, making it an attractive addition to any Nordic travel itinerary. Finnair's regional connections through Helsinki allow travellers to combine Visby with multiple Scandinavian and Baltic destinations in a single journey.

Gdańsk: Poland's Baltic Treasure

On Poland's northern coast, Gdańsk is increasingly gaining recognition as one of Europe's most compelling city-break destinations.

Combining rich maritime heritage with vibrant contemporary culture, Gdańsk offers visitors a distinctive alternative to more traditional European urban destinations. The city's colourful Old Town, historic waterfront promenades and beautifully restored architecture provide a fascinating backdrop for exploration.

History enthusiasts can delve deeper into Europe's modern history through visits to the European Solidarity Centre and the Museum of the Second World War, both internationally acclaimed institutions that offer valuable insights into pivotal moments of the twentieth century.

Just a short distance from the city lies Sopot, one of Poland's most popular seaside resorts, known for its sandy beaches, elegant promenade and relaxed coastal atmosphere.

Convenient Finnair connections via Helsinki make Gdańsk an attractive option for travellers looking to combine cultural discovery with a Baltic coastal experience.

Northern Europe Emerges as a Summer Alternative

As travellers increasingly prioritise authentic experiences, sustainable tourism and destinations away from overcrowded tourist centres, Northern Europe is emerging as a compelling alternative for summer holidays.

Through its extensive network connecting Asia with the Nordic and Baltic regions, Finnair is positioning Helsinki as a gateway to some of Europe's most rewarding yet often overlooked destinations. Whether exploring Finland's serene lakes, Estonia's island heritage, Sweden's medieval history or Poland's Baltic coastline, travellers can experience a side of Europe that offers both cultural depth and natural beauty without the crowds often associated with traditional summer destinations.

For Indian travellers seeking new European experiences, these hidden gems represent an opportunity to discover a quieter, more immersive and increasingly sought-after dimension of summer travel.



Lapland in Full Colour:

Why Finland's Ruska

Season Is Emerging as
Europe's Most Spectacular
Autumn Escape



As travellers increasingly seek off-season experiences that combine nature, adventure and wellness, Finland's northernmost region is drawing growing attention for one of Europe's most breathtaking seasonal spectacles. Known locally as "Ruska," the Finnish autumn colour season transforms the landscapes of Lapland into a vivid tapestry of gold, crimson, amber and orange, creating a compelling alternative to traditional summer and winter travel.

Peaking between September and October, Ruska marks the period when Lapland's forests, fells and tundra burst into colour before the arrival of winter. The phenomenon is particularly striking in the Arctic north, where changing daylight patterns and cooler temperatures create an intense display of autumn foliage across vast wilderness areas. Unlike the snowy landscapes that have made Lapland famous among winter travellers, autumn offers milder temperatures, fewer visitors and mosquito-free outdoor conditions, making it an increasingly attractive season for international visitors seeking active and immersive travel experiences.

Beyond Hiking: Adventure Tourism Flourishes During Ruska

While hiking remains one of Finland's most cherished autumn traditions, Lapland's growing adventure tourism sector now offers a diverse range of outdoor activities that allow visitors to experience the region's spectacular seasonal transformation from multiple perspectives. Mountain biking has emerged as one of the most popular ways to explore the region during Ruska. Extensive trail networks around Lapland's ski resorts cater to both beginners and experienced riders, offering everything from gentle forest routes to challenging off-road terrain. Among the region's most renowned cycling destinations is the Pallas-





Yllästunturi National Park, where riders can follow scenic mountain biking trails along the Aakenus Fell. Other notable routes include Kulmakuru in Saariselkä and Ruuhitunturi in Salla, both offering dramatic autumn scenery framed by vibrant foliage and Arctic landscapes. For thrill-seekers, the renowned Ylläs Bike Park provides lift-assisted downhill routes featuring steep descents and varying difficulty levels, allowing riders to experience the region's colourful terrain at speed. Water-based adventures also gain popularity during autumn. Canoeing and kayaking excursions through the lakes and rivers of the Muonio area offer a unique perspective on the seasonal colours, while destinations such as Inari and



Saariselkä provide opportunities for paddling, rafting and other water sports suitable for both beginners and experienced adventurers.

Wildlife Encounters Amid Arctic Autumn Landscapes

Ruska season is also considered one of the best times to observe Lapland's wildlife against a backdrop of extraordinary natural colour. A leading attraction is the Ranua Wildlife Park, home to more than 50 Arctic species and approximately 200 animals. Designed to replicate natural habitats as closely as possible, the expansive wildlife park offers visitors opportunities to observe native Arctic fauna while enjoying the surrounding autumn scenery. For travellers seeking encounters in the wild, guided wildlife safaris departing from Rovaniemi provide opportunities to spot moose and other native species within their natural environments. These excursions combine wildlife observation with immersive experiences in Lapland's colourful forests and wilderness areas.

Luxury, Wellness and Culinary Experiences Enhance Autumn Travel

While outdoor adventures remain central to the Ruska experience,

Lapland's hospitality sector has expanded significantly in recent years, offering travellers a blend of comfort, wellness and gastronomy. Among the region's most distinctive accommodation options are its famous glass igloos. Traditionally associated with Northern Lights tourism during winter, these unique properties are increasingly attracting autumn visitors who wish to experience Ruska's vibrant colours from the comfort of their beds. Glass-roofed accommodations across Lapland provide uninterrupted views of forests, fells and colourful landscapes throughout the season. Lapland's culinary scene has also evolved into a major tourism attraction, with restaurants increasingly showcasing locally sourced ingredients and Indigenous Sámi traditions. In the northern municipality of Utsjoki, the acclaimed Deatnu combines traditional Sámi heritage with contemporary Nordic cuisine, offering guests panoramic views of the surrounding wilderness. Meanwhile, in Inari, Aanaar has earned recognition for menus built around local ingredients and scenic views overlooking the Juutua River rapids.

A Growing Season for Northern European Tourism

With growing demand for authentic nature experiences, wellness-focused travel and sustainable tourism, Ruska season is increasingly positioning Lapland as a compelling year-round destination rather than solely a winter attraction. The combination of colourful Arctic landscapes, adventure activities, wildlife experiences, luxury accommodations and regional gastronomy offers travellers a different perspective on Northern Europe—one that blends outdoor exploration with relaxation and cultural discovery. For international visitors seeking a quieter and more immersive alternative to Europe's crowded summer destinations, Lapland's autumn transformation provides a rare opportunity to experience one of the continent's most spectacular natural phenomena in relative tranquillity. Finnair continues to connect multiple Lapland destinations through its Helsinki hub, making the region increasingly accessible for global travellers.



Is Travel Assistance the New Essential for Every Journey?



Dev Karvat, Founder
and CEO - ASEGO

In today's fast-moving travel landscape, disruptions are no longer the exception — they're an expected part of the experience. According to a recent Global Airline Performance Report, over 25 million bags were reported mishandled globally, and more than 35% of all flights faced delays exceeding 60 minutes. While travel demand has bounced back post-pandemic, the quality of the journey often hasn't kept pace. Travellers are facing longer wait times, more lost luggage, and higher levels of uncertainty at every step.

This is where the gap between travellers' actual needs and travel reality becomes clear. Insurance

coverage may reimburse financial loss after an incident, but it doesn't show up when a bag goes missing, when a connection is missed, or when travellers are stranded at a foreign airport with no immediate assistance.

What travellers need today isn't just reimbursement. They need real-time help. They need assistance.

Recognising this shift, ASEGO has structured **ASEGO BOLT**, a powerful new travel assistance bundle created by combining real-time baggage tracking and lounge access during flight delays. Together, they deliver rapid response and real protection, exactly when and

where customers need it most.

It enables global, real-time baggage tracking across all airlines and routes, with guaranteed compensation of up to ₹66,000 per checked-in bag (up to two bags) if the luggage isn't recovered within 96 hours.

Similarly, it automatically activates premium lounge access if a flight is delayed by more than 60 minutes—offering travellers comfort instead of frustration. Coverage extends across up to four flight segments in a single trip and includes access to over 1,300 lounges across more than 100 countries.

This isn't just a service upgrade — it's a mindset shift. Travel assistance is no longer an add-on; it's becoming a baseline expectation. As a travel advisor or booking partner, offering BOLT is more than an upsell — it's about being proactive, customer-centric, and aligned with what modern travellers truly value: peace of mind and dependable support.

ASEGO BOLT empowers travel agents to move beyond selling destinations and start offering dependable journeys. It's time to think beyond insurance and give your customers a protection layer that actually travels with them. Whether it's a family vacation, a corporate itinerary, or a solo international trip, assistance like this transforms stress into trust.

Disclaimer: The information provided is for general awareness and promotional purposes only. ASEGO BOLT and its services are value-added offerings subject to specific terms, conditions, and eligibility. Services are delivered via third-party providers and may be governed by their respective terms. This is not an insurance product or legal advice. Travellers should review full-service details before purchase. ASEGO reserves the right to modify or discontinue services without prior notice.

Marriott Mauritius Appoints Patrick Lan as Vice President – Sales & Marketing to Accelerate Luxury Resort Growth



Lan brings a broad commercial skill set spanning sales, marketing, revenue management, distribution strategy and hotel operations. His experience includes managing multi-property portfolios, developing international sales teams, strengthening relationships with travel trade partners and optimising performance across business-to-business, online travel agency and direct distribution channels. Industry observers regard this combination of commercial and operational expertise as increasingly valuable in today's competitive luxury hospitality landscape.

Academically, Lan holds a postgraduate qualification in **International Transport and Logistics** with a tourism specialisation from **Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University**, providing a strong strategic foundation for understanding international travel flows, destination marketing and tourism development.

His immediate priorities include building a high-performing commercial team, expanding partnerships with international tour operators and travel advisors, and enhancing the visibility of Marriott Mauritius across key global source markets.

Marriott Hotels Mauritius has strengthened its commercial leadership with the appointment of **Patrick Lan as Vice President – Sales & Marketing**, reinforcing the group's strategic focus on expanding the market presence of its luxury resort portfolio in one of the Indian Ocean's most sought-after destinations. The appointment comes as Mauritius continues to attract growing demand from luxury leisure travellers, honeymooners, destination wedding guests and high-end international holidaymakers.

A seasoned hospitality

executive with more than two decades of international experience, Lan joins Marriott Mauritius after spending ten years with **Radisson Hotel Group**, where he held senior leadership positions, including **Regional Director of Sales** and **Cluster Deputy General Manager**. During his tenure, he was responsible for driving commercial performance across multiple resorts in Mauritius, Africa and the Indian Ocean region, combining strategic sales leadership with operational excellence.

In his new role, Lan

will oversee the sales and marketing strategy for Marriott's luxury resorts in Mauritius, including The St. Regis Le Morne Resort, The Westin Turtle Bay Resort & Spa and Le Méridien Ile Maurice. Together, these properties represent some of the island's most prestigious hospitality addresses, catering to affluent leisure travellers and the global luxury travel market. The St. Regis Le Morne Resort enjoys a particularly distinctive setting on the Le Morne Brabant peninsula, a UNESCO World Heritage Site recognised for its cultural and historical significance.

Korea Tourism Organization Appoints Cho Yoonmi as Director of India Office to Strengthen Market Growth

The Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) has appointed **Cho Yoonmi** as the new Director of its New Delhi office, effective **30 June 2026**, reinforcing its commitment to one of its fastest-growing international tourism markets.

Bringing more than **25 years of experience** with the Korea Tourism Organization, Cho assumes leadership of KTO's India operations at a time when demand for South Korea among Indian travellers continues to gain momentum. Her appointment reflects KTO's strategy to deepen engagement with the Indian travel trade and expand awareness of South Korea as a year-round destination.

Strengthening Korea's presence in India

In her new role, Cho will spearhead KTO India's initiatives to further strengthen South Korea's position in the Indian outbound travel market. Her priorities include expanding the organisation's outreach across key Indian cities, reinforcing partnerships with travel industry stakeholders and introducing campaigns that showcase Korea's diverse tourism experiences.

Beyond traditional destination marketing, KTO plans to focus on immersive and experience-driven travel, responding to evolving preferences among Indian travellers who are increasingly seeking authentic cultural, culinary, wellness and lifestyle experiences.

Commenting on her appointment, Cho said:

"With 25 years at KTO, I've seen India become one of the most important and fastest-growing markets for Korea tourism. The bond

between India and Korea has only grown stronger over the years, and I'll be working closely with industry partners to take Korea closer to becoming the ultimate destination for Indian travellers."

Her extensive experience within the organisation is expected to support KTO's long-term strategy of building stronger relationships with tour operators, airlines, travel advisors, media partners and digital content creators across India.

India emerges as a strategic outbound market

India has become an increasingly important source market for South Korea, driven by growing disposable incomes, improved air connectivity, rising interest in Korean popular culture and expanding demand for international experiential travel.

The popularity of Korean entertainment, cuisine, beauty, fashion and heritage has significantly enhanced destination awareness among Indian consumers, encouraging more travellers to explore South Korea beyond its major metropolitan centres.

Under Cho's leadership, KTO India is expected to broaden promotional activities aimed at highlighting South Korea's diverse tourism offerings, from historic palaces and UNESCO World Heritage sites to nature-based experiences, festivals, wellness tourism and luxury travel.

KTO's role in promoting South Korea

The Korea Tourism Organization serves as the official National Tourism Organization of South Korea and



operates under the country's Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. The organisation promotes South Korea globally through a network of **30 overseas offices**, including its regional office in New Delhi.

Established in **May 2008**, the New Delhi office is responsible for promoting South Korea across India and neighbouring markets. It works closely with travel trade partners, airlines, tourism stakeholders and media organisations to increase destination awareness and encourage outbound travel to South Korea.

As competition intensifies among Asian destinations for Indian outbound travellers, KTO's renewed leadership in India is expected to further strengthen tourism cooperation between the two countries while positioning South Korea as an increasingly compelling destination for leisure, cultural and experiential travel.



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Nature Positive Travel - Driving Conservation, Empowering People

TOFT announces the **9th TOFT Nature & Wildlife Tourism Awards**. Under the theme “**Nature Positive Travel: Driving Conservation, Empowering People.**” The Awards recognise eco-lodges, wildlife guides, tourism operators, community initiatives, photography & documentary experts and Climate guardians in India and Nepal for their leadership in sustainable tourism and conservation. **With over 250 global supporters**, TOFT continues to advance a vision in which tourism actively supports the preservation of wildlife and natural heritage.

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2. The John Wakefield Award for Quality PUG Certified Lodge
3. The John Wakefield Award for Outstanding Footprint Certified Lodge
4. The John Wakefield Award for Quality Footprint Certified Lodge
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6. Wildlife Promotion Company
7. International Wildlife Tour Operator
8. Wildlife Harmony Homestay Award

TOFT Wildlife Awards

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2. Community Initiative
3. Wildlife and Tourism Initiative
4. Sustainable Homestay Award
5. Wildlife Conservation Photography
6. Wildlife Conservation Documentary

TOFT Jury Awards

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For Further information, visit:
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Krish Chowdhry (Head - TOFT Campaign)
+91 8076 003 994 / +91 11 4100 6608
krish.chowdhry@toftindia.org
awards@toftindia.org

Nominations closing midnight 7th August 2026.

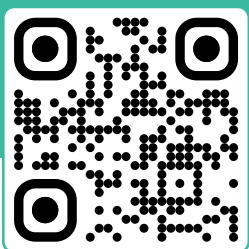
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