

the business travel magazine

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A DDP Publication



Myriad options for MICE in Thailand

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editorial

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Dear Reader,

According to the fourth annual 2018 Global Travel Forecast, travel prices are expected to rise sharply in the coming year, reaching nearly 4 per cent increase in some sectors. Global airfares are expected to rise 3.5 per cent in 2018; hotel prices are expected to be 3.7 per cent higher; and ground transportation such as taxis, trains and buses are expected to rise by 0.6 per cent - significantly less than the 3.0 per cent inflation forecast for 2018. Geopolitical risks, uncertainties in emerging markets and ever-changing political environments in Europe and the United States mean today's travel professionals have more things to take into account while building their travel programmes.

Thailand remains the top short-haul destination for outbound incentive from India. The friendly destination offers competitive pricing, sheer inventory of hotel rooms, unparalleled hospitality, great shopping and varied options for Indian cuisine. Add to that sustainable initiatives for experiential CSR and you have a plethora of green MICE options. In our cover story, we explore MICE in Thailand. Also, the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) recently unveiled an in-depth business platform known as TIME 2017 (Thailand Incentives and Meetings Exchange) for MICE operators, we bring you highlights of the same.

The customisation of products and services to suit the needs of MICE travellers will be a focus for the industry, and many companies will also try and develop venues near major cities with full facilities. The fluctuation of the macro economy will mean that companies go on cost-cutting mode. For this reason, they are likely to host events in mid-range hotels and also try and reduce transportation costs.

The game of golf can sometimes be a much-needed breather and ice-breaker to close big business deals. The game, however has its own set of gestures which unravels certain sport etiquettes, shares our expert Shital Kakkar Mehra. Meanwhile, our counsellor Shivani Misri Sadhoo throws light on the government initiatives tied up by corporates to elevate women development.

Keep reading and giving your feedback to us at:
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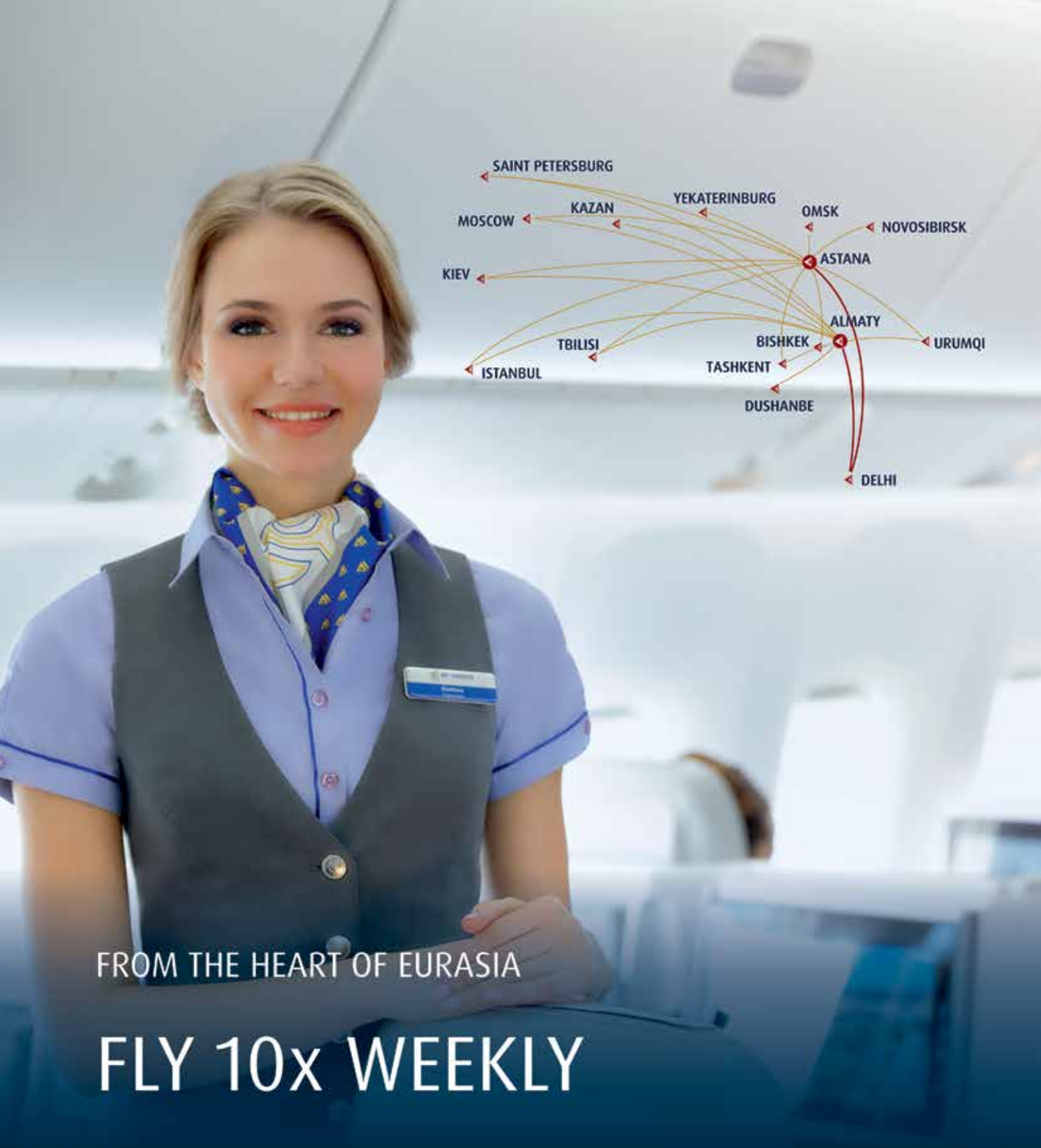
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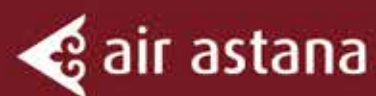
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NEWS

CENTRAL EUROPE



Indian arrivals in Austria surge at 28 per cent

■ Austria witnessed a growth of 28 per cent in Indian arrivals from January-June, 2017, informed Christine Mukharji, Market Manager-India, Austrian National Tourism Office (ANTO). She added that they are hopeful to welcome over 150,000 Indian arrivals by the end of the year. "This also shows that our market share in comparison to our competitors is increasing." Austria saw the maximum increase from the FIT segment but Mukharji also pointed out that the destination witnessed an Indian wedding in the month of May with 700 people which was a huge revenue booster for Austria.

INDIA

Indian domestic aviation climbs 17.7%: IATA

India climbed back to the top of the domestic aviation growth chart in May with a 17.7 per cent year-on-year increase, as per IATA's Air Passenger Market Analysis. This marks the 33rd consecutive month of double-digit RPK growth. However, the very strong upward SA traffic trend has slowed since the unexpected 'demonetisation' in November 2016, in line with the wider impact that this looks to have had on economic activity. Business confidence surveys have recovered somewhat in recent months, particularly on the services side. However, the upward trend in domestic RPKs has slowed to an annualised rate of around 7 per cent over the past six months.



NORTH INDIA

2nd Travel Wedding Show witnessed 2000 B2B meetings

■ The second edition of Travel Wedding Show concluded with over 2000 meetings conducted among 32 exhibitors and nearly 64 buyers from July 8-9, 2017, at Jaipur Marriott Hotel. There were around 2050 pre-scheduled speed meetings. Sarika Rawal Bhambani, General Manager, Travel Show, further informed that the next edition of Travel wedding Show will be held on July 7-8, 2018 in New Delhi. For more, read our supplement on the show.



PAN INDIA

MCI joins hands with GeTS conferences

■ MCI India has entered into a joint venture agreement with GeTS Conferences, the largest conference management and accommodation procurement agency. The new business entity will now operate under the name MCI GeTS India. "GeTS is the perfect partner to accentuate our overall revenue growth and its brand name paves the way for the acquisition of new markets," said Vishal D'Souza, MD & Chief Operating Officer, MCI India.

NORTH INDIA**2nd GMTM 2017 from Sept 14-16**

■ The second edition of the Global MICE Travel Mart (GMTM) organised by FICCI, will be held on September 14-16, 2017. This was announced by Rahul Chakravarty, Senior Director – Tourism, FICCI, on the sidelines of FICCI's Tourism Investors Meet that took place last week. The annual event will be instrumental in putting MICE destinations in India on the itineraries of the foreign tour operators and opinion leaders from India. FICCI introduced GMTM in 2016 where the inaugural edition saw a participation of over 30 buyers from 12 countries.

**NORTH INDIA****ADTOI held GST workshop for members in Delhi**

■ In a bid to prepare its members for the new Goods and Service Tax (GST) regime, Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI) organised a workshop for its members on July 1, 2017. The workshop was conducted at India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. G. D. Lohani, Commissioner, Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC); Shikhar Pant, Assistant commissioner, CBEC; Ashish Gupta, Consulting CEO, FAITH; Gyan Bhushan, Economic Advisor, Government of India and other officials from Ministry of Tourism were present during the meeting to interact with the members and answer their queries on GST.

NORTH INDIA**Vistara's check-in & baggage drop facility at New Delhi station**

■ Vistara has joined hands with the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) and Delhi International Airport (DIAL) to introduce check-in and baggage drop facilities at the New Delhi station of the Delhi Metro Airport Express Line. Phee Teik Yeoh, CEO, Vistara, said, "This partnership adds to the multiple check-in options we offer to our customer and enables smooth functioning in Delhi with the same efficiency as in the airport."

**PAN INDIA****Yatra acquires Air Travel Bureau**

■ Yatra Online, Inc. have announced acquisition of Air Travel Bureau, India's largest independent corporate travel services provider, under definitive agreement, through its subsidiary, Yatra Online.

"This acquisition will allow us to deliver best-in-class experiences to an even wider set of travellers, through our web and mobile app platforms and enhance our reach to cross-sell our entire product suite, including hotels, to this customer base," said **Dhruv Shringi**, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Yatra Online, Inc. "ATB has built a very strong presence over the last 30 years in the corporate travel space," said Sunil Narain, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, ATB.



NEWS

NORTH INDIA

Jewar: NCR's 2nd international airport?

■ Delhi-NCR is all set to have its second international airport, after the government granted in-principle approval for a greenfield airport at Jewar in Greater Noida. Making this announcement, P. Ashok Gajapathi Raju, Union Minister, Civil Aviation, said that the air traffic in the NCR region is growing very fast. From the current level of 62 million passengers per annum, it is expected to reach upto 91 MPPA by 2020 and 109 MPPA by 2024. The Noida International Airport will be located 72kms from IGI Airport and 65 kms from Hindon Air Force station Ghaziabad. Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) is the implementing authority of the project.



GLOBAL

Marriott's personal learning experiences for members



■ Available exclusively for members as a result of Marriott International's unrivalled roster of global brands, property amenities, and partnerships, these one-of-a kind, sought-after learning experiences are designed to be personal interactions with superstars in sports, culinary, entertainment, and lifestyle. The first collection in the ongoing global master class series features hands-on learning experiences with basketball great Dwyane Wade, Hall of Fame golfer Annika Sörenstam, celebrated chef Eric Ripert, and legendary surfer Laird Hamilton. These experiences are in addition to the thousands offered on both Marriott Rewards Moments and SPG Moments platforms.

GLOBAL

Carlson Wagonlit Travel introduces RoomIt by CWT

■ With an aim to create and deliver innovative experience to customer accommodations globally, Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT) launched its new business division,



Scott Brennan

RoomIt by CWT. "RoomIt by CWT simplifies the hotel booking process and puts the most relevant lodging options in one place. It will enable better, more personalised service to our travellers," said **Scott Brennan**, President, Hotels, Carlson Wagonlit Travel. RoomIt is designed to satiate the changing customer needs with increased functionality and personalisation capabilities while equipping companies with the tools to effectively monitor employees' travel schedules, clarity on queries."

PAN INDIA

Cathay Pacific offers virtual baggage allowance



■ Cathay Pacific has introduced chat bot Vera – a virtual assistant to address all queries on baggage allowance or extra baggage charges on Cathay Pacific or Cathay Dragon flights. It will assist customers with queries related to check-in and cabin baggage allowance. Rajesh Menon, Regional Sales & Marketing Manager, South Asia, Cathay Pacific Airways, said, "This initiative will give our customers a 24*7 access to seek immediate clarity on their queries."

GLOBAL

'We mean Business' for corporate travellers

Choice Hotels International announced its 'We mean Business' platform, signifying a commitment to partner with corporate travel managers and demonstrate expanded services for business travellers. Transforming upper midscale and midscale brands like Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, and Sleep Inn, the group helps to ensure that corporate managers are recommending the best products in those segments to business travellers. Choice Hotels offer the one-of-a-kind Your Extras benefit as part of the award-winning Choice Privileges loyalty programme. Designed with the corporate traveller in mind, Your Extras lets members digitally select additional instant rewards on every midweek stay.



EAST ASIA

Songdo Convensia to double its size by 2018

Songdo Convensia, a landmark of Incheon Free Economic Zone (IFEZ), located in Songdo, South Korea, will be reopened in July, 2018, with a total floor area of 64,000 sqm, double its current size. It will have 900 exhibition booths, premium ballroom that can accommodate up to 2000 people and 41 meeting rooms, fully ready for its grand reopening. Lee Yeong-Geun, IFEZ Commissioner, said, "The exhibition and conference industry is critical for Songdo International District to be globally competitive."

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CITY OF NIZAMS to greet ICPB convention in August

ICPB's 10th Conventions India Conclave (CIC) will be held from August 29-31 at HICC

Ankita Saxena



Chander Mansharamani

The theme for the 10th annual convention of India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB) is 'Expanding the Boundaries—Mission Possible.' The Conventions India Conclave (CIC) will focus on all segments of the MICE industry, creating an opportunity for its members to look for new avenues of business development. Telangana is the partner state for the Convention. Pre-scheduled B2B meetings and the exhibition will be an important component of the Conclave, informed **Chander Mansharamani**, Vice Chairman, ICPB.

"We are expecting 250-300 delegates during the two day event which includes 50-60 exhibitors and both domestic and international buyers. The Conclave is not only significant for completing

10 years but will also be an opportunity for us to project ICPB as a parent body for marketing India as a preferred destination for international and domestic conventions," he said.

This year, ICPB plans to conduct networking sessions for all associations from scientific and medical fields in India, which are responsible for organising various conventions, large-scale meetings and events in India to interact with the members of ICPB. He further adds that ICPB is working on restructuring and strengthening the association, and CIC will play an instrumental role in the same. The sessions and panel discussions will focus on various aspects of the MICE industry. Topics like technology innovations in the meetings industry, meeting expectations of the corporate sector and synergy between exhibitions and the conference industry, will be deliberated upon. A distinguished panel of international speakers is also expected.

“ We are expecting 250-300 delegates for the two day event, including 50-60 exhibitors ”

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THAILAND

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Thailand says **SAWA**

An aerial night photograph of Bangkok, Thailand. The foreground shows the illuminated, traditional Thai architecture of the Old City, including the Wat Phnom area with its golden stupas and tiered roofs. In the background, the modern city skyline is visible across the Chao Phraya River, with numerous skyscrapers and buildings lit up against a dark blue twilight sky. The Chao Phraya River flows through the middle ground, reflecting the city lights.

Thailand is an optimal destination that offers competitive pricing, sheer inventory of hotel rooms, unparalleled hospitality, meetings with a green touch. MICEtalk unravels more

Kanchan Nath

ASDEE KA to MICE



“ In 2012, Chiang Mai played host to nearly 500 MICE functions and 47,000 overseas travellers ”

SUITABLY CONNECTED

The connectivity to the Kingdom of Thailand is optimal for travellers, who can avail flight connectivity from India from Thai Airways at ease. More than 50 flights fly from India to Bangkok every week. Bangkok Airways also has flights but only from Mumbai. For connectivity with Tier-II cities, Thai Smile have started flights from Lucknow and Jaipur, while more are likely to be initiated. With the cost going up in the long-haul market, Asia is projected to be the real winner.

New corporate high-end events from India are headed mostly to Krabi, Koh Samui,

though smaller in size, they offer professional quality. Thailand's five major MICE cities include Bangkok, Pattaya, Phuket, Chiang Mai and KhonKaen.

BANGKOK

This quintessential Asian metropolis is an eclectic mix of modern and traditional living that offers a lively nightlife, unlimited shopping options, rich history, and an unparalleled variety of activities and attractions.

It offers roomy, award-winning venues like IMPACT Arena (over 150,000 square meters of advanced indoor space) and BITEC (Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Centre, over 50,000 square meters); Bangkok Convention Centre, Royal Paragon Hall, QSNCC or from the never-ending selection of hotels, resorts, outdoors spaces, and cultural meeting venues – like the Royal Thai Navy Hall and the Grand Postal Building – that allow your creative juices to flow. Among the extensive list of venues is the Centara Grand & Bangkok Convention Centre at Central World. It offers L Group (classroom seating of more than 1000).

CHIANG MAI

Chiang Mai has become a favourite destination for international business events. Chiang Mai International Airport allows easy access to the region. In 2012, the city played host to nearly 500 MICE functions and 47,000 overseas business



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Nitin Sachdeva

Thai's myriad MICE offerings

Nitin Sachdeva, Director-India Representative Office, TCEB, shares the lucrative MICE offerings that Thailand has for Indian MICE travellers

How was the year 2016 for you vis-e-vie 2015. How have the first six months of 2017 been for you?

Currently, the MICE sector comprises four main industry categories namely, corporate meetings (25 per cent market share), incentive travel (24 per cent), international conventions (33 per cent) and international exhibitions and trade fairs (18 per cent).

In the 2016 fiscal year (Oct'15-Sep'16), Thailand's business events industry earned 102.5 billion baht (Euro 3.8 million) in revenues, 6.90 per cent up from the revenue in 2015. Thailand welcomed 1,268,560 business event travellers, attracted by Thailand's endless choice of vibrant business destinations, global standards of service, and diverse business opportunities.

The number of business travellers is up to 15.75 per cent from the number in 2015. Asia is Thailand's largest source of business events travellers, especially China which is the top source market arriving in Thailand.

Can you explain the nuances of Indian MICE market for Thailand?

India, the second highest source market following China, has contributed more than 90,000 MICE travellers, generating more than 8 billion baht MICE revenue since 2015. The average length of

stay for a MICE group from India is four nights. We always welcome any sort of business, but we have to consider the accessibility factor - the flight capacity. We have grown in terms of numbers per group. Earlier, we had one or two groups of over 1000 pax. Last year, we saw many such big groups from India, about 10 groups of over 500 pax and three to four groups over 1000 pax.

What kind of incentives do you offer to big corporate groups from India?

We pay a reimbursement based on the number of people, for which there is a minimum cap of 200 people to qualify and if they have booked for a minimum of three nights with either a CSR activity or a green venue, they are eligible for a refund of 100,000 Thai Baht and the subsidy increases in proportion to the number of people. There is a similar subsidy for 200-pax groups in the 'Meet Double Cities' campaign for a minimum of four nights in two different cities and some extra different criteria.

Enumerate the experiential activities offered?

In terms of experiential MICE, we are keen to promote sustainable meetings and have a campaign which was very successful for 2017. There are many examples of CSR activities which reflect the sustainable way to conduct business events. These include Mountain CSR, Beach CSR and City CSR.





travellers. With its 39,000 premium-class hotel rooms and wealth of modern business facilities, the city is well-equipped to handle the high-volume of visitors.

Event organisers can choose from a diverse panorama of venues like the exquisite Rajaphruek Garden Convention Hall, to the recently constructed Chiang Mai International Convention and Exhibition Centre, which features comprehensive tradeshow facilities and is able to accommodate up to 10,000 guests.

PATTAYA

Pattaya is about sea and sun and beachside fun, while its nightlife is a class by itself. This resort town in Chon Buri Province is a 90 minutes' drive from Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi International Airport.

Pattaya is another 'City of MICE' thanks to its incredible variety of accommodations to fit all budgets, the diverse assortment of locations for creative meetings and incentive events, and three convenient and flexible exhibition centers designed with Thailand's distinctive culture.

The Ambassador City Jomtien Hotel & Convention Centre, Eastern National Sports Centre, and Pattaya Exhibition and Convention Hall (PEACH) combine for over 6500 square meters of fully-functional business-event space, providing international organisers versatility and exceptional value for money in a strategic and picturesque location.

Pattaya's push to become a leading MICE destination in Thailand – and in the ASEAN region

“ *Pattaya is another 'City of MICE' thanks to its incredible variety of accommodations* ”

– includes special packages for international guests. This has eventually helped attract major events such as the Asia-Pacific Advertising Festival, Money & Banking Magazine's 'Money Expo', and the World Conference on Health Promotion.

PHUKET

Great geographic diversity exists and perhaps it is best exemplified by the immaculate resort destination Phuket, where the island's verdant jungle interior rolls down to some of the planet's finest beaches. There's something for everyone here, including business travellers. Phuket has become one of Thailand's most celebrated 'MICE cities'.

As one of the country's economic hubs, the island has everything necessary for outstanding business events including over 500 hotels in all budget ranges; an efficient international airport that welcomes direct flights from all over the globe; and a dazzling array of venues, activities, and attractions to ensure fun and fulfilling exhibitions, conventions, and team-building functions.

Phuket is the premier host of domestic and regional business events like the Phuket International Boat Show, the Asia-Pacific Blood & Marrow Transportation Congress, and China's 2012 Amway Meeting. It is poised to become a global leader too. The Thailand Conventions and Exhibitions Bureau (TCEB) continues



DID YOU KNOW?

Chiang Mai is home to Doi Inthanon, Thailand's highest mountain at nearly 8,500 feet above sea level



“*KhonKaen is the center for trade and logistics, and gateway to Indo-China and South China*”

to promote campaigns to expand on the 800 MICE events held on the island in 2012, in which a total of 60,000 international business travellers had participated.

The pristine settings, warm hospitality, and unique culture that Phuket offers visitors enables the Pearl of the Andaman to become the world's 'MICE city of the Andaman'.

KHONKAEN

KhonKaen is where the Thai government operates the "Economic Corridors Development Project". This campaign connects border areas of Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam. KhonKaen is the center for trade and logistics, as well as the gateway to Indo-China and South China. These factors have set the stage for KhonKaen to become another leading MICE destinations from Thailand.

The city has no problem serving large numbers of business events travellers as KhonKaen Airport welcomes them warmly. The KhonKaen University Convention Centre provides flexible, high-quality facilities at an unrivalled value for travellers. In addition, most of the city's 4 and 5-star hotels offer space for smaller, more personalised events. KhonKaen has become not only a regional MICE hub, but a global one as well; one that connects international events participants such as the APEC Ministerial Meeting, the International Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Thai-ASEAN Trade Fair projecting the region's distinctive culture, gracious hospitality, fun and exciting events.

BLEISURE IN THAILAND

TCEB aims to promote Thailand as the Bleisure Destination where it combines business atmosphere and leisure environment with Asia's top business destination, bringing in a sustainable growth. Thailand remains a preferred MICE destination, to continue the trend; following are key attributes:

Destination of Thailand - MICE travellers can enjoy a pre-imagined meeting theme that can transform a usual venue into any theme event, including: fascinating history and culture; treasured team building; outdoor adventures; CSR and green meetings.

Business in Thailand - With strongly backed up by the Government policy, MICE industry of Thailand is gearing towards the brighter future, business event travellers can be rest assured.

People of Thailand - Business event travellers can find it very convenient to stage a successful event in Thailand as industry people are all well-trained to deliver professionalism in every step of doing business.



DID YOU KNOW?

Thailand used to be known as Siam, and it is the country where Siamese cats originated from. Giving a pair of Siamese cats to a bride on her wedding day is considered good luck

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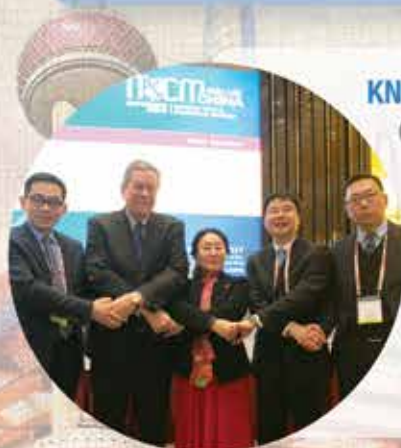
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Come, spend some **'TIME'** in Thailand

TCEB recently unveiled an in-depth business platform known as TIME 2017 (Thailand Incentives and Meetings Exchange) for MICE operators from June 29-July 4, 2017

Jessy Iype from Chiang Mai

The second edition of the TIME 2017, themed as 'India In-depth' ensured that the bespoke MICE offerings of the Kingdom be showcased in the typical Thai hospitality on a platter for MICE agents and travel operators. In the almost week-long programme, about 40 select travel agents from India witnessed richness and diversity of the Lan Na Land and Chiang Mai.

The delegation was hosted at the Bangkok Marriott Marquis Queen's Park on the first two days. Situated in close proximity to the city's bustling shopping and entertainment hubs, the hotel has 1360 rooms and suites and 35 rooms for hosting meetings. The largest ballroom in the hotel is of 1261 sqm in size and covers 13,000 sqft in area.

LET'S TALK BUSINESS

TIME 2017 projected three key segments,

namely Knowledge Exchange, Business Exchange and Experience Exchange. These segments let the buyers and sellers engage in a fruitful business exchange while attaining knowledge about the destination. There were experiential exchange for the participants to get allured with the picturesque Kingdom.

The Knowledge Exchange was a learning forum that helped Thai MICE operators to understand the Indian market better. The session began with a keynote and presentation by **Sushil Shamlal Wadhwa**, Founder & CMD of Platinum World Group. He threw light on the India market potential and suggested the need for the Thai industry to communicate and convince the Indian travellers, who have aspirations from the Kingdom, that there is more to Thailand than just Bangkok, Pattaya and Phuket. The panel discussion on 'Understanding the Corporate Buying Power' elucidated information on the decisions of corporate buyers when choosing venues for meetings and incentives travel by representatives of leading multinational companies.

“TIME projected 3 key segments: Knowledge, Business and Experience Exchange”



TIME 2017

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Voice of MICE

TIME 2017 delegates share their experience about the event and their views on the scope of Thailand as a MICE market



“Although Thailand is the top MICE destination for Indians, there is need for the Thai industry to communicate and convince Indian customers that there is more to Thailand than just Bangkok, Pattaya and Phuket. The lead time for planning is getting shorter. Destinations need to be prepared to work on shorter lead time and last minute changes. Hotels should constitute Advisory Boards with senior management representative from leading corporate and MICE companies to update them about market trends on regular intervals.”

Sushil Shamlal Wadhwa
Founder & CMD of
Platinum World Group



“TIME has introduced us to a new facet of Thailand, largely different from the normal Thailand itineraries. Thailand already has a good proximity to India and is attractive in terms of fare and ease of visa. With the new experiential offering, the revenue and the experience for the client can both rise. The products showcased to us will make us share newer destinations, properties, and event locations for our MICE groups and incentives.”

Anil Kalsi
Managing Partner
Ambe World Travels



“TIME is a key instrument of Thailand business travelling showcase. TCEB has the best connection among key players of the world's MICE market which is an ideal business opportunity for Thai MICE service providers community. Earlier, Thailand was reduced to Bangkok, Pattaya, and Phuket. But now the presence has extended to Chiang Mai for Indian market. With its charming art and culture, world-class hotels, international airport, convenient transportation service, 5-star convention centre, advanced MICE technology, Chiang Mai has myriad offerings.”

Khun Noi
Managing Director
Indeed Creation (DMC)



“Events like TIME are strategically conceptualised to showcase Thailand as being fully outfitted in accordance with international MICE requirements and standards, and readily primed to welcome sector visitors. Indian MICE industry players can be assured of gaining a whole new perspective on their events in Thailand. From our diversity, different geography and varied cuisine, to unique destinations and activities can be tailor-made to accommodate any group size and preference -the spectrum of choices available here is both extensive, cost-effective and beneficial.”

Teerapat Khianthong
Chief Planner/ Managing Partner
IDEXT MICE



Nitin Sachdeva, India Representative, TCEB, moderated the session with key corporate representatives in the panel to communicate to the Thai industry the expectations and aspirations of the Indian corporate traveller. **Neena Kaul**, Associate Director –Sales Operations & CIS, GoodYear India, said that while Thailand maintains as a sought after MICE destination because of its closeness and accessibility, the recent changes in Business Visa regime is a concern. She stressed that at a time when destinations like Indonesia are giving Visa waiver and others offering long-term visas, such restrictive regime could hamper Thailand's prospects. **Vikas Khokha**, Director-HR & Admn., Zimmer India, felt that with the advent of social media the corporate travel industry is well informed and therefore, it is vital to engage incentive groups with right team-building activities, and CSR activities. **Subhash Sidhwani** of Sun Pharma said that direct connectivity and ease of visa processes are crucial for MICE planners globally.

Sachdeva says, "India has been a constantly fast growing market and the potential for the future is very high, looking at the dynamic changes in the market on the economy front which encourages ease of business for the corporations."

The other panel discussion deliberated upon 'Leveraging Connections and Conversations through Intermediary Relations' among Thai and Indian destination management companies to help identify marketing strategies for the Indian MICE market.

Ajay Seth, Senior VP – MICE, Cox & Kings, urged the Thai industry to be innovative because the Indian meeting and incentive organisers are constantly on the lookout for unique venues. **KD Singh**, Founder & President, TravelBullz, suggested that the



Thai travel industry should invest in training and education which will enable them to respond to queries with required information swiftly. **Manpreet Bindra**, Vice President & Head - MICE, FCM Travel Solutions, supported the need for closer and better communication between industry partners in both countries as corporate travel is set to grow in coming times. **Rajesh Nair**, Business Development Director for Asia & Middle East, Destination Asia Thailand, opined that the Thai service providers need to comprehend the changing customer requirements.

The Business Exchange featured a table-top session with 80 participants, offering business opportunities, while connecting Thai MICE operators with meetings and incentives travel organisers from India, and representatives from alliance partners.

A 'TIME' TO EXPERIENCE

The Experience Exchange brought together conglomeration of Indian MICE agents and international media to experience the Mega Familiarisation Trip to Chiang Mai, from July 1-4, 2017. TCEB holds the notion about the Kingdom of Thailand of being ahead of the game compared to its key competitors in the ASEAN region, especially with the Indian MICE segment. **Khun Nooch Homrossukhon**, Director of Meetings and Incentives Department, TCEB, says, "Today, Indian visitors are not just talking about Thailand as a whole but talk about specific cities like Bangkok, Chiang Mai or Pattaya,"

"As far as meetings and incentives are concerned, we are going to launch a marketing and promotional campaign next year, which would be more customer-centric but I cannot reveal any more information at this point in time," she concluded.

Voice of MICE

Thai sellers express their views about the event and elucidate on the scope of Thailand as a MICE market for India



“This is an opportunity for us to showcase what Chiang Mai can offer as a destination, delegates of this event were able to see and experience what each hotel can extend for MICE. With the strong presence of Tourism Authority of Thailand in the market, Chiang Mai can be the alternative solution for MICE business. With an average of 50 daily flights from Bangkok, stopover in main hubs like Singapore, Malaysia, HK, Shanghai, Beijing, Chiang Mai can be a suitable choice.”

Alex Pasion
Director of Sales
Le Meridien Chiang Mai



“TIME 2017 allowed us to meet the MICE buyers and showcase what the property can offer for MICE from India and allowed the buyers to actually experience it. We had learned from the buyers about Indian market and understood more how to accommodate their needs. India is growing in many ways, so does its MICE industry. TIME 2017 was a good chance for them to know more about the destinations that is not so far and with an easy travelling access.”

Sasinipa Duangsuwan
Conference Services Manager
Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai



“We have a conference resort for MICE. TIME 2017 was a very effective event. TIME was not only a business exchange but also a place to gain knowledge about MICE trends or how to adapt your company and tips to working with that market. Chiang Mai is a new destination that offers dynamic cultures, an ideal place to conduct CSR activities or doing the Green sustainable Meetings concept. At our resort, we present the new definition of meeting in the Botanical Garden- a Green meeting idea in itself.”

Nantanittaya Sesaweeth
Assistant Managing Director
Chiang Mai Horizon Village Resort



“TIME 2017 has generated a platform to map the capabilities of our target customer's needs with excellent service strategy. We increasingly look at Thailand as a new destination with good connectivity, activities and easy Visa procedures for the Indian MICE traveller. Bangkok has the biggest MICE facilities, including IMPACT Exhibition and Convention Center, BITEC and the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center. At IMPACT, we offer our customer with a modern and technologies advanced facilities. The centre is readily accessible and a short 30-minute drive from the heart of Bangkok.”

Kwandao Ketsamuth
Assistant Business Development Manager
Business Development Department
IMPACT Exhibition Management



Khun Nooch Homrossukhon

Thailand for 'SMART' MICE

Khun Nooch Homrossukhon, Director - Meetings & Incentives Department, TCEB, in a tête-à-tête enumerates new MICE strategies

How does technological procurement help elevate MICE event? Does TCEB included an app for its events?

Thailand 4.0 Policy aims to develop the country into an innovation driven economy, with a vision of stability, prosperity, and sustainability. Playing a vital role to drive, strengthen, and further enhance economic and social development sustainably, the MICE industry also helps promote trade, exchange, investment, and business matching while serving as an effective platform for knowledge and technology exchange, underlining the need to drive growth and drive the capabilities of the Thai MICE industry to compete in the world marketplace. Apart from industry focused, upgrading and developing MICE events by using digital and technology platform are very important. SMART MICE event plays a key role in drawing more MICE visitors to Thailand. The sample of MICE Tech are as follows:

- Event registering via mobile application
- Virtual Event and Live Experience of Virtual Meetings
- Location Based technology, Geofencing
- Mobile technology and wearable computing
- Social media applying such as online Facebook Live or Snapchat, live stream session via Video Social Wall Display

What kind of augmented reality elements have TCEB used for the events? Like a drone camera or a GPS system, kindly enumerate its relevance.

By enhancing some new technology to create the better experience of trade show visitors in

Thailand Pavilion, TCEB applies VR360 as the key components for Thailand Pavilion in all trade shows that we have participated. Another example is the usage of mobile application.

How can MICE market in India benefit from TCEB in the coming years?

Indian MICE market will mutually benefit with the knowledge sharing and educational aspect which TCEB will be disseminating to the market through their seminars and events in India in the coming months and years.

Do you see any change in the trends in the MICE events industry?

The MICE industry trend can be summarised into: the growth of the economy in Asia and MICE events in Asia with more focus on attracting events from the regions. Secondly, the industry has started to emphasis the sustainable development, while the organisers have also responded to seeking out sustainable MICE capabilities, events or know-how. Building alliances and creating a collaboration network between public and private sectors will be the main mechanism in developing sustainable industry. The customisation of products and services to MICE travellers' needs. The fluctuation of the macro economy will mean that companies will try to save costs. For this reason, they are likely host the events in middle-class hotels and reduce transportation costs. Digital technology plays a critical role. Leading countries have applied technology to analyse the trend of travellers' demands to host new events.





Get set to shop in **THAILAND**

From quirky little handicraft stalls to mega shopping malls, shopping in Thailand is a must to help all travellers unwind

SHOPPING HOURS

Most shops, including those in malls and departments store complexes, are generally open from 10 am to 10 pm, though opening hours are typically longer in tourist areas than in smaller local towns. Furthermore, some shops close on Sundays, though most major stores in Bangkok and those in tourist towns are normally open seven days a week. Night markets typically begin at dusk and close around midnight. Wet markets, where local Thais purchase food, open around 4 am and close around 9 am.

PRICES AND BARGAINS

Usually, fixed prices are the norm in department stores, while bargaining is expected at most other places, particularly at night markets and local central markets. Generally, the price in Thailand is variable and you can obtain a final figure of between 10-40 per cent lower than the original asking price. Much depends on your skills and the shopkeeper's mood. A good strategy is to casually inquire about an item the first time you see it in order to get a ballpark estimate of the price.

VAT REFUND

Visitors entering the Kingdom on a tourist visa are entitled to a 7 per cent VAT refund on goods purchased at registered retail outlets and Thailand duty free stores. The VAT refund may be claimed on a minimum total of purchases worth 5000 Baht from receipts totaling no less than 2000 Baht/receipt/day. At the airport, paperwork must



be presented to customs officers before passing through immigration at the VAT refund office; at Suvarnabhumi airport, the VAT refund office is near the entrance to Domestic Departures.

BUYERS BEWARE

There are many counterfeit goods in Thailand of varying quality, some more convincing than others. Unless you purchase a handbag at a Louis Vuitton store in one of Bangkok's finer shopping malls, you are undoubtedly buying a fake, the quality of which cannot be guaranteed. Just as obvious as that sounds, all goods purchased in Thailand, such as gems or electronic items, should be examined closely before purchase. Be wary of purchasing expensive items from a new "friend" that happens to know someone who can get you a great deal. Ask stores for return policies and always ask for a receipt. And if things ever get frustrating, just maintain composure and realise in the end, you are on a holiday, so, just chill!!!



Visitors on a tourist visa are entitled to a 7 per cent VAT refund at registered retail outlets





Reminiscing **TIME 2017**







KOREA ups its MICE ante

Korea ranks number one for global congresses hosted in 2016, according to the latest International Meetings Statistics Report by the Union of International Associations (UIA)

MT Bureau



Kapsoo Kim

The result is a reflection of a strong growth by established Korean meeting cities such as Seoul, as well as the rising destinations like Busan, Jeju, and Incheon contributing to the country's increasingly diverse business events portfolio.

Kapsoo Kim, Executive Director, Korea MICE Bureau, says, "These latest findings are a strong reflection of Korea's broad growth not only across the country's meetings section, but across the country itself. Established event destinations like Seoul are continuing to show their prowess, while an increasing number of regional capitals are giving global meetings planners an increasing variety of options, and so boosting Korea's appeal for congresses."

Korea has worked hard in its effort to be synonymous with MICE for the rest of the world. From building world-class infrastructure, training manpower and ensuring smooth service to corporate groups, South Korea has arguably managed to do it all.

But there is surely space for improvement, specially when it comes to the Indian market and its unique requirements.

Korea Tourism Organisation (KTO) recently hosted the nation's leading business events trade show along with its 11 Regional Convention Bureaus titled 'Korea MICE Expo 2017' – or KME 2017.

This year's 18th Korea MICE Expo was considered the largest ever expo with over 3,000 attendees from all over the world. This reflected a 21.6 per cent increase in attendance over the previous year.

The two-day expo held at Incheon's Songdo Convensia between 15-16 June, 2017 brought together 298 domestic sellers across 399 booths and more than 255 buyers from at least 29 countries, including five from India.

The Indian delegation had six hosted buyers from Mumbai, New Delhi, Gurugram and Noida and included one corporate buyer and four travel agents.

KOREA'S POPULARITY RISES

The findings show Korea as a country rising from 891 meetings in 2015 to 997 in 2016, reflecting almost a 12 per cent increase over the previous year. Making up the national equation, Seoul, maintained its third place city ranking and hosted 526 meetings in 2016, up from 494 in 2015. Now ranking in 14th place, the port city of Busan hosted 152 meetings in 2016 (increase of 1.33 per cent) and Jeju, which increased its ranking from

“Seoul, maintained its third place city ranking and hosted 526 meetings in 2016”



19th to 17th place, held 116 meetings in 2016 - four more than 2015.

Nationwide infrastructure growth continues to bolster Korea's industry competitiveness, including new facilities such as the Paradise City integrated resort next to Incheon International Airport (itself due to open a second passenger terminal later in the year) and expansions to existing facilities such as Songdo Convensia, which are expected to finish in 2018. South Korea's tallest building, the new 555m-tall Lotte World Tower, recently opened in Seoul. The tower is also home to the luxury-brand 235-guestroom Signiel Hotel. A raft of new boutique hotels are also opening up across Korea, boosting budget accommodation options for business visitors. Meanwhile, operational services are growing in new regional hotspots, such as convention bureau established for Cheongsong in Gyeongsangbuk-

MICE FIGURES

- **Meetings in Korea:** 891 in 2015 to 997 in 2016.
- **Seoul:** 526 meetings in 2016, up from 494 in 2015.
- **Busan:** 152 meetings in 2016.
- **Jeju:** 116 meetings in 2016 - four more than 2015.

do Province, and establishment of the Gangwon Convention Bureau in response to the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics, set to take place from February 9-25 next year. Event planners have also been able to enjoy an expanded range of services and support for locally-hosted events from the Korea MICE Bureau.

Heralding MICE with Marriott

In an exclusive interview, **Jatin Khanna**, Multi- property VP, Bengaluru, talks of the expansion of Marriott International in Bengaluru, introduction of new brands and more

Kanchan Nath



Jatin Khanna

How is the state of Karnataka and specifically Bengaluru developing as a destination for MICE?

Bengaluru has long been perceived as an IT hub. And as the major influx is of people visiting the city for meetings and conferences, the MICE segment has a lot of scope to grow. As a brand, Marriott is focusing on becoming the preferred destination for all big city wide events with the largest meeting and convention space to offer in the city.

Which hotels does Marriott offer in Bengaluru, especially after the Starwood merger? What are your future plans there?

Post the merger, Marriott has 10 brands and 12 hotels operating in Bengaluru. These include Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield, ITC Windsor Bengaluru, ITC Royal Gardenia Bengaluru, le Meridian Bengaluru, Aloft Bengaluru Whitefield, Four Points by Sheraton

Bengaluru, J.W. Marriott Bengaluru, Courtyard Bengaluru Outer Ring Road, Fairfield by Marriott Bengaluru Outer Ring Road, Fairfield by Marriott Bengaluru Rajajinagar, Sheraton Grand Bangalore Hotel at Brigade Gateway and The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore.

The hospitality industry in Bengaluru is upbeat and we expect the market to continue growing at a steady pace. Within Bengaluru, Marriott holds 24 per cent market share with a diverse portfolio across brands and categories which ensures that we continue to grow at a fast pace.

Has there been any lay-offs post the merger? What are your policies on retention and growth of talent?

Across all our Marriott hotels we follow our parent company's philosophy which focuses on putting people first. We believe that if we take





“

Within Bengaluru, Marriott holds 24 per cent market share with a diverse portfolio across brands and categories

”



care of our associates, they will take care of the customers and that will have the customer keep coming back. We believe that our employees are our brand ambassadors and we give our associates opportunities to grow and succeed with the brand.

Setting the right culture and instilling our core values in everything we do, are the two pillars to ensuring each and every associate who walks through the doors, each morning is felt as a sense of ownership and pride in their lives. Embracing what makes each of us unique as well as providing opportunity for personal fulfilment and growth is all part of our Putting People First culture.

Which were your previous brands, enumerate the new development in the pipeline?

As mentioned before, we have 10 operating brands of Marriott and 12 managed hotels in Bengaluru. Our outlook towards the future is to continue striving towards providing our guests with better and unique experiences. We will continue refining our customer strategies keeping

in mind the evolving nature of the customer. Today's traveller is tech savvy and enjoys unique tailor made experiences. With that in mind, we are focusing towards our loyalty programmes, namely Marriott Rewards and Starwood Preferred Guest (SPG) to continue creating these experiences for our guests.

What has been the average occupancy, ARRs and RevPAR for your hotels in Bengaluru?

Being established in a city where at present the hospitality industry is witnessing a double digit RevPAR growth driven primarily through ADR we have never really seen a dip in the occupancy rates. On an average, the occupancy rate is consistent annually at Marriott.

With so many hotels in Bengaluru, which are the local vendors that you connect with?

We engage with a lot of local vendors when it comes to fresh, seasonal ingredients as these initiative's truly help and support livelihoods in the society we serve in.

A 'FORT' to unwind

The 16-key Ayana Fort Kochi allows corporate groups to relax and rejuvenate while also providing the perfect setting to inspire clear thought and creativity

Hazel Jain



Akhil Behl

Blending history with modern comfort, Ayana Fort Kochi is a 200-year old courthouse that has been restored and renovated to its rightful glory. Appropriately named 'Ayana' which means a resting place in Sanskrit, Ayana Fort Kochi is located on Bazaar Road, the oldest international trading market in India. The historical court room has been painstakingly preserved, with each wooden plank restored and treated to create a grand lounge and welcome area for our guests.

The extremely large sloping roof is supported by an intricate mechanism of iron tubes that is representational of the ingenious architecture during the Portuguese occupation of Fort Kochi. The flagship property of Ayana Hospitality, this luxury boutique hotel in Kerala offers yoga classes on its rooftop, a gymnasium as well as a rooftop

pool. The art deco interiors are complemented by one of the largest and finest collection of contemporary art.

With large public spaces, the property lends itself well to showcase art and the Ayana team endeavours to make the hotel a platform to build awareness towards Indian contemporary artists. Ayana's commitment towards art was confirmed by it being selected to host the inaugural breakfast talk for the third edition of the Kochi Muziris Biennale in 2016.

Speaking about the kind of events that the hotel is more popular for, **Akhil Behl**, Chief Executive Officer, Ayana Hospitality, says, "Being a luxury boutique hotel, companies looking to do top management meets with smaller group sizes would mostly opt for our hotel. Ayana





Room details

Ayana Fort Kochi has 16 rooms: four suites and 12 deluxe rooms, including two twin-bedded rooms

- Suite Room #107 & 108: 640 sqft
- Suite Room #106 & 206: 540 sqft
- Deluxe Rooms: 280 sqft
- Twin room: 360 sqft

Fort Kochi is ideal for resident conferences, training programmes for top management level employees or board meetings. However, we can also do events for larger groups whereby we can get additional rooms with hotels nearby we have tie-ups with."

CHOICE OF THREE VENUES

Ayana Fort Kochi has three major venues for events:

Restaurant: 'The Old Court' is a 50-cover all day dining. It can accommodate a floating crowd of 80 to 120 pax since it makes use of an adjoining room for a buffet if the main restaurant is being used for an event. The restaurant area is 1,670 sqft.

Courthouse: The main courthouse area is big and can accommodate 100 pax in theatre style, 35 pax in cluster style and 15 pax in boardroom format.

Rooftop Café: This is an ideal venue for evening parties and cocktail dinners as it is al fresco. With an area of 510 sqft, it can accommodate a moving crowd of 40 pax and 12 pax in boardroom style.

“Companies look to do top management meets with smaller group sizes at Ayana Fort Kochi”

The hotel also offers special services and discounts for big groups. Behl shares details about this and says, "Generally, we block the entire property and create an exclusive experience for the group. Requests for special dietary requirements and curated experiences around the town are expertly handled. We understand that bespoke services are very important to MICE groups and we ensure that they get their privacy, seamless Wi-Fi, state-of-the-art meeting facilities, leisure activity choices, multiple F&B choices and dedicated concierge services with a dependable team."

Ayana places a high priority on food and offers fresh local produce and authentic flavours. The all-day dining, 'The Old Court' overlooks the courtyard garden and offers a menu based on organic vegetables and fresh local catch. It also offers craft teas and specialty coffee at its 'Tea Lounge'.



Availing MICE in PARADISE

J&K is offering a slew of MICE initiatives. **Farooq Ahmad Shah**, Former Secretary Tourism, Govt of J&K, and **Shahnawaz Shah**, Manager Marketing, SKICC, reveal more

Kanchan Nath



Farooq Ahmad Shah



Shahnawaz Shah

The pristine air, the picturesque valleys, endowed with nature's numerous gifts, Jammu & Kashmir is a indeed a tourist's delight. Growth of tourism in the state has recently slowed down due to various reasons. Despite of it all, Jammu and Kashmir has numerous offerings on its platter for MICE.

Elaborating on the initiatives taken to encourage tourism in the state, **Farooq Ahmad Shah** says, "Our tour operators and hoteliers are already offering 50 per cent discount. From the Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation (JKTDC), we offer 600 rooms with 60 per cent discount. For the golf courses, we offer the most affordable fee."

CONNECTING J&K

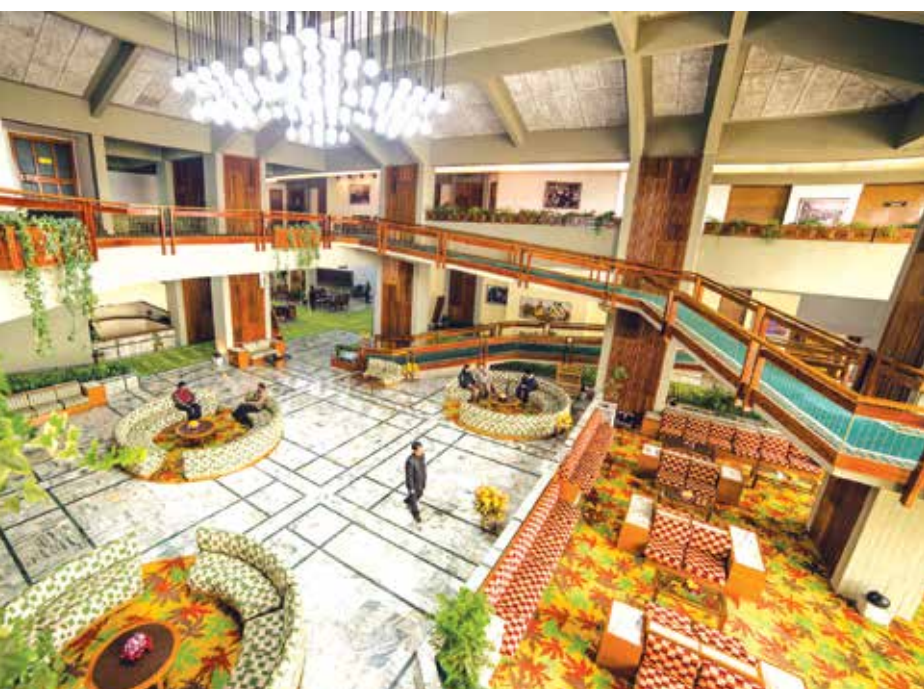
Though many initiatives have been taken for tourism, negative news has been impacting

arrivals. The state continues to battle with its image as a 'safe' destination.

Shah adds, "Tourism industry is the backbone of the economy of our state. We can generate employment to 70 per cent of our population if tourism runs smoothly. We are grateful to the tourists that are coming to the state, mostly from the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and West Bengal. In Ladakh, we had almost 10 per cent increase; however in Kashmir valley, though there was a decline, now it is picking up. We are the first hill station in the country to get 32 flights. Jammu is connected via 22 flights, while almost all airlines are operating to Leh."

SERVING THE MICE PLATTER

Elaborating on the MICE initiatives he says, "We have the world class MICE centre like SKICC, Srinagar, conference facilities at Pahalgam



“

We have the world class MICE centre like SKICC, Srinagar, conference facilities at Pahalgam and Gulmarg

”

and Gulmarg. In Ladakh, we are building a convention centre. There are a lot of facilities for MICE tourism. There is golfing, shopping. MICE is becoming a serious focus of the state. Throughout the world, MICE is being given priority. Most MICE delegates are considered to be high spending tourists.” Giving an overview on the state, he adds, “As a tourist destination, it’s the best in the country. You name any tourism product and we have it. We are the best golfer’s, adventure, shopping and pilgrimage destination. Mata Vaishno devi is a famous pilgrimage destination in the country. Last year, we had 80 lakh pilgrims, going to the Mata Vaishno devi shrine. There are some amazing destinations like Patnitop, Bhaderwah, Rajouri, and Punch. Kashmir is paradise on Earth and it still holds true. It has natural tourist spots, waterways and flora and fauna. Ladakh, is famously also called as Moonland. It is one of the best adventure destinations in the country. We are concentrating on good connectivity, facilities at the tourist resorts. Some international chains are already in the state. We encourage the private investors to invest in this sector.”

SURGE IN TOURISM DESPITE UNCERTAINTY

Terrorist threats have seen a rise in many

destinations around the world. But tourists still pour in to those places as one cannot predict uncertainty. The state of Jammu and Kashmir too has seen the same. Commenting on whether tourism with terrorism, has become a norm, **Shahnawaz Shah**, Manager Marketing, SKICC, says, “Violence wherever it happens is anti-human. But even then, the tourism has never had a halt.”

PROCURING MICE

Imagine holding your conference in a picture perfect destination, Jammu and Kashmir imitates the same. Chalking out the MICE facilities available in Jammu and Kashmir, Shah said, “We have one of the best conference centres in Srinagar, and have extended conference facilities to Pahalgam and Gulmarg also, we have a state-of-the-art Pahalgam club, in the government sector. The private sector has also built infrastructure for conferencing or MICE tourism. Currently, conferences are held at SKICC in Kashmir. Per day, we have atleast one event/ conference at our convention centre. There are mainly domestic conferences, but, we do avail international participation from medical conferences. There are visitors from European countries and the Gulf.”

ENSURING SAFETY NET

For recreational activities after the events or conferences, tourists are ensured utmost security, reveals Shahnawaz Shah. “We ensure three ring security protection. For post event indulgence across the road, one can unwind at the golf course. In the stretch of three kilometers there are Mughal gardens, to go for a stroll. For accommodation, there are a lot of options like The Lalit and The Taj, which are just a stone’s throw from the convention centre. Inside the complex of SKICC we have Centaur hotel,” he states. Golf course are a unique yet popular sport among the tourists. Talking about the infrastructure available for golf, Shah concludes, “In Srinagar we have three golf courses. One is the best in Asia, the Royal Springs golf course in Srinagar. Similarly in Pahalgam, there is the picturesque Lidder valley golf course. Gulmarg has one of Asia’s oldest golf courses. In Jammu also we have added a golf course. In Leh, we will be initiating a high altitude golf course soon.”

Travel

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HONEYMOONERS' FIJIAN LOVE

If ever there was a cozy spot for newly-weds, hidden from watchful eyes and allowed them to indulge in carefree indolence, it would definitely be the Royal Davui Island Resort, Fiji



Hazel Jain

What could be more exclusive than being tucked away on its own, secluded island? Very few places, certainly, and one of them is this luxurious, all-inclusive resort, Royal Davui Island Resort that is a 30-minute speedboat ride from Pacific Harbour in Fiji.

Surrounded by dive sites, the Royal Davui Island Resort is an exclusive adults-only sanctuary situated in Fiji's Beqa Lagoon. It offers honeymooners and couple a level of Fijian luxury, elegance and privacy not found in most large resorts. This one can accommodate only a few guests at a time ensuring complete privacy and freedom

or in the simple pleasures of doing nothing on a private beach. Royal Davui's resort activities provide multiple ways to enjoy the lagoon.

With the resort's island catamarans, paddle boards or sea kayaks couples can snorkel to explore the fringing coral reefs. For the more active guests, the waters near the resort offer deep-sea fishing and some of the Pacific's most spectacular dive sites.

LUXURY VILLA & SUITES

Each villa (or vale (vah-le) the Fijian word for home) has been superbly appointed with stylish modern features while maintaining the Fijian tradition of thatched roofs



to be secluded in one's own tropical oasis. This boutique luxury island resort has 16 villas spread across 10 acres of tropical landscape with private plunge pools in each of the villas. Wishing to keep the island as natural as possible, the owners designed the villas, buildings and amenities to blend into and around existing vegetation and ancient trees. The reef surrounding the island has been declared sacred and no fishing is allowed within a mile of the island, creating a stunning marine reserve with countless species of fish, clams and coral for guests to enjoy.

Couples can indulge in spa treatments here designed by Pure Fiji, Champagne breakfast on a deserted sandbar,

and wooden construction. Each stunning vale features its own heated private plunge pool, spa bath, separate lounge room, sun deck and wet bar. With superb views out over the surrounding reefs and neighbouring islands, guests can watch dolphins and turtles moving through the lagoon, follow the wind path of a frigate bird, or just wallow in the barefoot Fiji luxury from their vale's private plunge pool.

With proximity to Pacific Harbor (Fiji's soft adventure capital) Royal Davui offers a wide range of excursions to keep guests busy. In order to share their unique culture with the world, a number of excursions focused on the local Fijian culture are also available here. Bula Vinaka!

Roaring applause for maiden Arabian Travel Awards in Dubai

The first edition of Arabian Travel Awards captivated over 150 travel, tourism and hospitality partners from the Middle East at the JW Marriott Hotel Dubai on July 4, 2017. Arabian Travel Awards is Durga Das Publications' first-ever international initiative. Over 46 award winners were recognised and applauded for the efforts undertaken over the years



FACE OF THE FUTURE Kulwant Singh, Founder and MD, Lama Group



BEST CRUISE PROFESSIONAL Lakshmi Durai



BEST GENERAL MANAGER Dominic Sherry, JW Marriott Hotel Dubai



BEST TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL Praveen Gandhi



BEST TRAVEL AND TOURISM CONSULTANT Ashwin Singh



MOST ENTERPRISING SALES AND MARKETING HOSPITALITY PROFESSIONAL Sona Rawal, JW Marriott Hotel Dubai



BEST GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM Travelpoort



BEST B2B TRAVEL PORTAL TBO Holidays



BEST VISA FACILITATION COMPANY VFS Global



BEST ARABIAN TOURISM BOARD Ras al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority



BEST GREEN HOTEL Gloria Hotel



FASTEST GROWING HOTEL BRAND Nihal Hospitality



BEST CITY HOTEL Time Grand Plaza Hotel



BEST TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY PROVIDER TI Infotech



BEST LUXURY HOTEL BRAND The Address Hotels and Resorts



BEST OTA Musafir.com



BEST AIRLINE-SOUTH ASIA Air India



BEST TRAVEL MANAGEMENT COMPANY Royal Arabian Tours LLC



BEST DESERT RESORT Tilal Liwa hotel



BEST DESTINATION MANAGEMENT CO. STHI Group



BEST BUSINESS HOTEL JW Marriott Hotel Dubai



BEST TOURIST ATTRACTION Dubai Parks and Resorts



BEST FAMILY FRIENDLY HOTEL Jood Palace Hotel Dubai



EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE North Tours



BEST AIRPORT HOTEL Millenium Airport Hotel Dubai



BEST TRAVEL INSURANCE FACILITATOR Tune Protect



BEST BUDGET HOTEL BRAND Citymax Hotels



BEST DHOW CRUISE COMPANY Al Wasl Dhow



BEST LEISURE RESORT Mercure Grand Jebel Hafeet



BEST GOLF DESTINATION Tourism Authority of Thailand



BEST DEBUT MID MARKET HOTEL Royal Continental Hotel Dubai



FASTEST GROWING OTA SkySouq.com



BEST 5 STAR FAMILY HOTEL Atlantis The Palm



BEST 4 STAR HOTEL Ramada Plaza Jumeirah Beach



MOST PROMISING AIRLINE Ethiopian Airlines



BEST 4 STAR BUSINESS HOTEL Holiday Inn Dubai - Al Barsha



BEST DEBUT HOTEL Best Western Plus Pearl Creek Hotel



BEST MICE TOUR OPERATOR Red Apple Travel



BEST WEDDING & MICE HOTEL Pullman Dubai Creek City Centre Hotel



BEST MID MARKET HOTEL BRAND TIME Hotels



BEST ROOF TOP LOUNGE Level 43, Four Points by Sheraton
Sheikh Zayed Road



BEST CONTEMPORARY HOTEL Melia Hotel



BEST HOTEL APARTMENT BRAND Golden Sands Hotel Apartments



MOST INNOVATIVE TRAVEL MANAGEMENT COMPANY Arabian Explorers

Breaking the glass ceiling



Shivani Misri Sadhoo
Founder
Saarthi Counselling
Services



Through the e-commerce and the ministry, a major portion of the profit goes to the women directly



To untap the potential of corporates, the government has undertaken departmental tie-ups with corporates for women's development

Women have been regarded as the nuclei of nation and builder and moulder of its destiny. This is well understood by Indian policy makers and the government is practising various development programmes under the departments of:

- a) National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD)
- b) National Commission for Women (NCW)
- c) National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)
- d) Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA)
- e) Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) and Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)

ONE STOP, E-SHOP

In recent times, we have seen how the women in contemporary times are ahead and breaking the glass ceiling, while the government too has undertaken measures to help them feel empowered.

One such initiative was taken by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, to equip women entrepreneurs to open their own "e-Shop" to sell products online across the globe. The ministry in association with eBay India, organised the training programmes to teach the women entrepreneurs about the branding, competitive pricing and designing of their hand-produced products and how to leverage e-commerce. All products

prepared and uploaded for sale will carry 'Women of India' unique identification. Conventionally, women entrepreneurs from Indian villages have to go through a lot of intermediaries. Through the e-commerce and Ministry of Women and Child development, a major portion of the profit goes to the women directly which boosts their confidence and income.

MAHILA E-HAAT

Similarly, in another such initiative, the Women and Child Development Ministry has tied up with India Post and State Bank of India to offer more payment options to buyers and simplify shipping of products bought from 'Mahila e-haat', an online marketing platform for women entrepreneurs.

Mahila e-haat, is an online marketing platform for India women, where participants can display their products. It is an initiative for women across the country as a part of 'Digital India' and 'Stand Up India'.

Mahila e-haat aims to strengthen the socio-economic empowerment of women as it will mobilise and provide better avenues to them. More than 10000 Self Help Groups (SHGs) and 1.25 Lakh women beneficiaries would be benefited from the day of launch of the site itself. The Mahila e-haat portal can be accessed at <http://mahilaehaat-rmk.gov.in>.



INDONESIA B2B MEETING	Ahmedabad	1
INDONESIA B2B MEETING	Pune	3
GLOBAL PANORAMA SHOWCASE (GPS)	Kochi	3-5
AMAZING THAILAND ROADSHOW	Kochi	7
AMAZING THAILAND ROADSHOW	Bengaluru	8
AMAZING THAILAND ROADSHOW	Chandigarh	9
GLOBAL PANORAMA SHOWCASE (GPS)	Pune	10-12
AMAZING THAILAND ROADSHOW	Lucknow	11
GBTA INDIA CONVENTION	New Delhi	18
ACTE CONFERENCE	Tokyo	22-23
CHINA CIBTM	Beijing	23-24
ICPB CONVENTION	Hyderabad	29-31
LACITA USA	Florida	29-31

SEPTEMBER 2017

MEETINGPLANNERS RUSSIA	Moscow – Russia	4-5
IBTM LATIN AMERICA	Mexico	6-7
FUTURE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE – GLOBAL	Las Vegas, USA	6-8
IATO CONVENTION	Bhubaneswar	7-10
BUSAN INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL FAIR	Busan, South Korea	8-11
OTOAI CONVENTION	Ras Al Khaimah	12-15
PATA TRAVEL MART	Macao SAR	13-15
FHRAI CONVENTION	Bengaluru	14-16
MICE ASIA PACIFIC EXPO	Singapore	21-22
JATA TOURISM EXPO	Tokyo	21-24
ILTM (INT'L LUXURY TRAVEL MARKET) AMERICAS	Mexico	25-27
IT&CM ASIA	Bangkok	26-28
CTW2017	Bangkok	26-28

OCTOBER 2017

INDIA CARGO AWARD - WEST & SOUTH	Ahmedabad	10
WEST INDIA TRAVEL AWARDS	Ahmedabad	11
WORLD MICE INDUSTRY DAY	Qingdao, China	25-27

India Travel Awards heads East

East India Travel Awards now travels to Radisson Blu Hotel Guwahati for its fourth edition

Like every year, the Awards aims to honour the stalwarts of the tourism industry in the eastern region. Renowned as India's first regional awards which honour the achievers of the tourism industry, India Travel Awards has made a mark in the industry to



Vikas Ray

recognise those who have gone above and beyond to make a difference in the travel fraternity. **Gunjan Sabikhi**, Convener, India Travel Awards, elaborates that these are the first and only regional awards which recognise and reward the efforts of travel companies from every nook and corner of India.

"These awards set a company apart from its competition and differentiate the quality of its achievements from others, thus placing the awardees at the forefront of the industry. It is very heartening to see that every year the number of nominations received for East India Travel Awards keep increasing manifolds, which is a proof of the fact that winning this award is very prestigious and it bestows immense credibility to the winning company or individual. We have seen that being nominated or shortlisted for any category has proven to be helpful for an individual or a company in their business as it places them at the forefront of their genre and industry and is accompanied by increased awareness about the brand," says Sabikhi.

According to **Vikas Ray**, General Manager, Radisson Blu Hotel Guwahati, the event and meeting space at the property covers more than 4,180 square meters. It provides versatile options, from an outdoor banquet lawn to a classic boardroom, so that the hotel can accommodate a wide range of events with style and ease. The 196-key hotel offers various facilities to aid all kinds of meetings and events. He says that set in a peaceful section of Assam, the elegant Hotel provides its guests with stellar amenities and a restful location in the bustling city of Guwahati in north-eastern India. Guests can also go for interesting outings to the freshwater lake, Deepor Beel, or to cultural sites like Sankardev Kalakshetra.



Teeing off...

The game of golf is associated with much aplomb. The game has its own set of gestures which unravels certain sport etiquettes, shares etiquette expert **Shital Kakkar Mehra**



Shital Kakkar Mehra
Practitioner of Corporate
Etiquette and International
Protocol in India

“
The golf attire serves the dual benefit of showing respect for the game and for your fellow golfers
”

Golf is a game where you're not only judged by your golf handicap but also by your understanding of golf etiquette. I guess that explains why the word etiquette is associated with golf but not with football. After all, in golf there's no referee whistling or gesticulating wildly every time you default! Pay attention to the following:

1. Shhh...: As golf is a game of concentration, keep your voice down on the course and switch-off your cell phone/Blackberry. Reserve shouting or complimenting your client / fellow golfers for exceptional shots only. Arguing, bragging, whining about the prohibitive cost of the game or telling loud jokes will negatively impact your image. Leave all analysis for later, maybe, over a mug of chilled beer!

2. Keep your movements: On the teeing ground to the minimum, as even the slightest movement on the periphery may distract the golfer hitting a shot.

3. Golf course maintenance: Stay off the ball path, as the depression created by your feet may steer the ball in another direction, upsetting your fellow golfers. While flying "divots" make for a great photo, replace them instantly. Retain the

natural habitat of the bunker by raking the sand smooth before exiting and replace the flagstick without damaging the sides of the hole.

4. Respect your fellow golfers:

Focus on your personal safety and that of your fellow golfers. Wait for your client to suggest "play through". Remember, it's "only a game" – allow your client a mulligan and without making a big deal of it, allow your client to win.

5. Golf Attire: As golf is an ancient

game, the attire serves the dual benefit of showing respect for this traditional game and for your fellow golfers. While plaid and Argyle are classics, the image of golf has moved from being style-challenged to being sophisticated. Wear a smart collared t-shirt with cotton trousers/ knee-length shorts in solids (navy blue, khaki or black), a leather belt, cap/hat, shoes with soft spikes and an all-weather jacket (if teeing off early). Strictly, no denims.

6. After the game: Thank your

client and stay back, if invited, to enjoy a drink and indulge in some analysis of the game. Use this precious time to get to know your client better in a social setting, when his guard is down.

Visa Requirements



Thailand

- ✓ **Passport:** Original Passport with the validity of minimum six months and minimum two blank pages for visa stamping.

Please Note:

- a) Attach all old passports (if any).
- b) Evidence of permanent residence in India(non- Indian passport holder)

- ✓ **Visa Application Form:**

One Visa application form to be duly filled and signed by the applicant.

- ✓ **Photo Specification:** Two recent passport size photographs with matt or semi matt finish, 60 per cent-80 per cent face coverage, white background and without border (Size: 35mm x 45mm)

Please Note:

A Photograph should not be more than three months old, scanned/stapled and should not be used in any of the previous visas.

- ✓ **Cover Letter:** Covering-Letter from applicant stating his name, designation, passport number, purpose & duration of visit and to be duly signed by the applicant. The letter should be duly signed by the authorized signatory & addressed to – The Visa Officer, The Royal Thai Embassy, New Delhi.

- ✓ **Proof of Accommodation:** Evidence of confirmed hotel/accommodation reservation in Thailand with address and contact number under applicant's name. If travel in group, must provide a cover letter stating all names with passport numbers, plan of travel, and place(s) to stay

Please Note:

- a) If intend to stay with Thai relatives or Thai friends, must provide invitation letter along with a copy of their Thai ID proof. In case they are not Thai, must provide their copies of visa and work permit, valid at least six months along with a copy of passport.

- ✓ **Financials:**

- a) Original Bank Passbook or Bank statement(six months)(must be attested by the bank) having a minimum balance equivalent to \$700.
- b) Evidence of occupation and of the monthly income.

Please Note:

- a)Proof of funds must cover all expenses including accommodation.

- ✓ **Guarantor:**

- a) Name and address of local guarantor
- b) Name and address of guarantor in Thailand must provide name, address , telephone number, and fax numbers of the partnered travel agent/ company or group/ personal tour-guide in Thailand.

- ✓ **In case of Incentive Tour:**

A cover letter from both company and travel agency stating all names with passport numbers, plan of travel and place(s) to stay, and company's bank statement attested by the banks, company's business registration.



Fiji

- ✓ Visa will be issued on arrival in Fiji on the condition that the bearer holds:

1. A passport that is valid for at least six months from intended date of arrival into Fiji.
2. Return or Outbound tickets;
3. Proof of funds to sustain duration of stay. e.g Bank statements and or for visa cards – recent bank statements for past three months.
4. Confirmation of a pre-booked hotel accommodation.

Please Note:

- ✓ a) Re-entry/entry visa to a country other than their own (for example: passport holders of countries listed above residing in India must produce a valid re-entry visa for India).
- b) Indian nationals are granted a visitor permit valid for up to (4) months on arrival.

Extensions to the permit may be granted on application/payment of fees for a maximum of two (2) more months, provided applications are made before the expiry of the initial permit.

Source: Udaan



movements



Michael Kwon
Director
Korea Tourism
Organisation, India

Michael Kwon has been appointed as the new Director of Korea Tourism Organisation, India Office. He will be heading the India office for next three years. Previously working as the Director of International Tourism Strategy team at Korea Tourism Organisation head office, he has all-round exposure across different verticals of KTO like HR, Planning & Coordination, Inbound Marketing & Performance Evaluation. Kwon has been associated with KTO for 25 years. He is also a certified Public Labor Attorney in Korea.



Chema Basterrechea
Executive Vice President &
Chief Operating Officer (COO)
The Rezidor Hotel Group

The Rezidor Hotel Group has announced the appointment of Chema Basterrechea as Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer (COO). Chema Basterrechea has been Chief Operating Officer at NH Hotel Group, prior to his appointment with Rezidor. Chema has worked for NHHG for more than 23 years, as Chief Operating Officer, Managing Director of different Business Units, Senior Vice President Food & Beverage, Director of Integration, Merger Integration Officer and General Manager. He will also identify new market segments and help expand the existing customer base of the hotel group.



Geeta Jain
Strategic Programme Vice
President
CWT

Geeta Jain has moved to the position of Strategic Programme Vice President from her previous role as CEO at Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT). Jain has also held the post of COO of CWT India in the past. She has a successful international track record of over 18 years in various industries, including senior management positions at American Express India. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Social Sciences from Punjab University and a Post Graduate degree in management from the IIM Ahmedabad.



Vishal Sinha
Chief Executive Officer
CWT India

Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT) has appointed Vishal Sinha as Chief Executive Officer of CWT India. Reporting to Kai Chan, CWT's President for Asia Pacific, Sinha will be a member of CWT's Asia Pacific leadership team. He has more than 20 years of experience in the travel industry. Most recently, he was the Chief Operating Officer of TUI India. He has also worked with British Airways in India, the UAE, Hong Kong and China. Sinha holds a Master of Arts degree from Delhi University, as well as a Diploma in Marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing in the UK.



Debashish Bhowmik
Senior Vice President
Clarks Shiraz Agra

Debashish Bhowmik has been appointed as Senior Vice President for hotel Clarks Shiraz, Agra. Bhowmik has 30+ years of rich experience in the hospitality industry, with major hotel groups out of which his association with Clarks groups of hotels has been 14 long years. He returns after being associated with an academic management company as Head of their Melbourne unit in Australia. He will be responsible for taking a fully renovated and new look hotel Clarks Shiraz, Agra, through his strong acumen in Hotel Operations, Business Development and Relationship Management.



Nikita Gonsalves
Director of Sales
and Marketing
JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar

JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar has promoted Nikita Gonsalves as the Director of Sales and Marketing. Prior to this elevation, she was the Director of Sales with the hotel. Gonsalves has worked with prestigious brands such as Marriott International Inc., Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces and Hilton Hotels & Resorts. With over 10 years of experience in the hospitality industry, she brings on board expertise in developing strategies for driving revenue through weddings and catering, MICE, groups and transient business segments. Gonsalves is well networked with the Travel Trade, EMC and Corporate fraternity and joins the leadership role with the ability to develop and nurture talent under her.

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Travel

WEDDING SHOW

JAIPUR | JULY 8-9, 2017

A DDP PUBLICATION



Wedding SHOW



Travel Wedding Show:

Wedding planners tie the business knot

The 2nd Travel Wedding Show, held from July 8-9, 2017, at Jaipur Marriott Hotel, brought together exhibitors and buyers in a B2B speed-meeting format to transact business and promote the destination wedding market from India.

Ankita Saxena

The second edition of the Travel Wedding Show saw a total of nearly 2000 meetings conducted amongst 32 exhibitors and nearly 64 buyers. Representatives from various hotels like The Oberoi Hotels and Resorts, Taj Hotels Palace Resorts and Safaris, Shangri-La Hotels, Rotana Hotels, Alila Hotels and Resorts, AccorHotels, Marriott Hotels India, Samode Hotels, etc. showcased various properties that can cater to Indian weddings. Various tourism boards,

like Austrian National Tourist Office, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism, Tourism Fiji, Holland Tourism, Abu Dhabi Tourism and Cultural Authority, also participated at the Travel Wedding Show to inform the buyers about various offerings of the destination particularly suited to cater to Indian weddings abroad. On the first day, the exhibitors interacted with travel agents specialising in wedding tourism, and on day two, prominent event managers and wedding planners from across the country came under one roof to discuss business opportunities with the exhibitors.

“The wedding market is growing at an exponential rate; it is estimated to grow at least by 20-25 per cent in the next 2-3 years”

Rajeev Jain, Director, Rashi Entertainment, said, “It is a privilege to be a part of this Travel Wedding Show for two consecutive years. It is a very good initiative

Business SHOW

ia Partner

WEDDING AFFAIR

ERIDIEN
H BEACH RESORTS
FLORIAN

folly
N SIYAM

the Business travel magazine
MICETalk

HOSPITALITY
Talk

TRAUTALK

TALK

CARGOTALK

Working News



“

All the buyers and exhibitors adhered to the time slot given to each of them and had fruitful meetings”

Over 2000 meetings

and is the need of the hour. The wedding market is growing at an exponential rate; it is estimated to grow at least by 20-25 per cent in the next 2-3 years. The market has become competitive with multiple players entering the industry, and we need such shows to bring together the suppliers and buyers of this segment to create a better business module, grow partnerships and increase the revenues out of it.”

Hema Hariramani, Director, National Sales- India, Marriott Hotels India, complimented the quality of buyer turnout at the show and also informed that the hotel chain managed to receive highly potential leads for further business opportunities. She said, “We are targeting the wedding segment in India very aggressively and for that we have launched ‘Shaadi by Marriott,’ a one-stop shop for all the needs of this industry. We have also rolled out a package called ‘Honeymoon On Us,’ which awards the partners who do weddings with us. I feel a lot of Indian weddings are moving out of India, which is

a challenge. India has amazing experiential destinations and we need to educate the audience to contain the revenues within India and grow our economy.”

According to **Hemant Mediratta**, Senior Vice President-Sales, The Oberoi Hotels and Resorts, the table-top format of the show was very cost effective, crisp and precise, and also, resulted in better return on investments. “The coordination at the show was fantastic; the quality of buyers was well monitored and the show was a fruitful investment of time for us,” he said.

In the words of **Saurabh Bhargava**, AVP Sales-North, The Taj Hotels Palace Resorts and Safaris, Indian weddings are increasingly moving towards experiential destinations and have become more intimate. Now, instead of 600-700 guests, the wedding size has reduced to 150-300 invitees and it is expected of the venue to offer an experiential element to the once-in-a-lifetime event. “The challenge is that the

wedding dates are limited, and multiple bookings have to be catered to during this period.”

Sarika Bhambani Rawal, General Manager- DDP Exhibitions said, “It was a very successful show for us and we would like to thank the travel trade and the wedding planners for their support. All the buyers and exhibitors adhered to the time slot given to each of them for meetings and had fruitful meetings.”

Punam Singh, Associate, Travel Show, further added that the feedback received from the show was very positive as all the stakeholders appreciated the format as well as the organisation of this show. “The next shows in the pipeline are Travel Business Show- Beyond MICE to be held on December 2-3, 2017 followed by next edition of Travel Experiential Show-Beyond Luxury, on April 7-8, 2018 and the third edition of Travel Wedding Show, which is scheduled for July 7-8, 2018.

Decanting **weddings** through **B2B** meetings

Exhibitors and buyers of the Travel Wedding Show express the suitable opportunity availed through serious meetings for illustrating the potential of the wedding industry.

Exhibitors



Hemant Mediratta
Senior Vice President - Sales

The Oberoi Hotels

“I think the show is focused and well executed. It brought together the hoteliers, travel agents and wedding planners, all on one platform to synergise and conduct proper business. The format was crisp, as the time slot, allotted to each of us was for concentrated meetings.”



Tekla Maira
Director Luxury Sales-India, AccorHotels LUXE

AccorHotels

“We were able to connect with wedding planners, apart from travel agents, who, exercise influence in suggesting new and unusual destinations. We were pleased to see the level of awareness amongst the buyers and the success they have had during previous events.”

Taj Hotels Palaces Resorts and Safaris

“The show is instrumental to know about newer buyers and educate them about what can be offered. It was encouraging to see an increased interest about our products among buyers from smaller cities like Ahmedabad and Pune.”



Saurabh Bhargava
AVP Sales - North

Austrian National Tourist Office (ANTO)

“It was a well-organised show and we met really serious buyers. Most of the buyers were well educated about Austria which was very encouraging. This platform is very apt for the kind of products we are trying to market in India.”



Christine Mukharji
Director - India



Shannon Creado
Area Director of Sales and Marketing

Anantara-Kalutara Luxury Resort

“The show ensured that we meet serious buyers who are focused on the wedding travel segment. The format of the show presents itself for interactive discussions and the time slot is sufficient to explain the product with no disturbance. We also received some potential leads from the show.”



Barun Gupta
Director of MICE,
National Sales-India
Marriott Hotels India

Marriott Jaipur

“I would like to congratulate the organisers of the show to have put up such a well-organised show. The format of this show is its highlight, allowing us to meet many buyers in a very short time under one roof. We met different vendors from across the country and hope to participate in future editions of this show.”

Destination Canada

“Canada usually doesn't appear in the list for destination weddings. However, this show provided an opportunity for the planners to go beyond the regular locations. It was an interesting forum for us to engage with travel and wedding specialists and showcase Canada as a potential dream wedding destination.”



Pooja Sabharwal
Account Director

DoubleTree by Hilton Resort and Spa Marjan Island

“The show is very intensive. I prefer this format over an exhibition which takes multiple days. Being one of the biggest property, we see a lot of potential in the weddings business from India. We offer tailor fit packages and seasonal offers to the travel trade.”



Dennis de Winter
Assistant Sales Manager-
MICE and Groups

Buyers



Vinod Bhandari
Director

Wedding Xtraordinaire

“After a very long time, we met the entire wedding industry under one roof and the show was instrumental in bringing all of us together. It is a unique event which is educative, network oriented and also a platform to exhibit all the products that are emerging in the market for weddings in India.”



Shaini Shah
Director

Lilac Events

“The show opened new networking opportunities and knowledge gathering sessions for players like us. It is a great way to meet the hoteliers from across the world under one roof. It has helped us to increase the comfort level with the hoteliers as we have faced communication challenges earlier with them.”

Rashi Entertainment

“This is our second time at the show and the format of the show in particular is its highlight. Well-timed meetings allowed us to interact with every exhibitor without the fear of missing anyone. Ras Al Khaimah, Canada, Fiji and Austria showcased some very interesting opportunities for Indian weddings.”



Hardik Khanna
Assistant Manager –
Marketing

Rudra Events and Wedding Planners

“We met different tourism boards and connected with fellow buyers and suppliers from across the country under one roof. The show allowed for effective communication amongst the stakeholders which is a stimulant to growth of any business. I would like to thank the organisers for the opportunity.”



Rohit Saini
Director



Rakesh K Harjai
Founder and CEO
Indian Wedding Planners

Harjai's Indian Wedding Planners

“The show is instrumental in building personal connections with various suppliers which is very helpful for future business opportunities. The knowledge and experience we take from this show is going to be very useful in our business. Earlier Indians hosted weddings more like family affairs, but, now with time they have started to experiment and scout for newer and exotic locations for weddings.”



Serrao Francis Socorro
Managing Director

Cross Craft

“Never before did we get such a platform where we could meet a variety of destinations that could be endorsed for Indian weddings. This show acts as a bridge between the wedding industry, travel and hospitality industry. I feel this is the only show which has adopted the format of offering one-to-one interaction between the stakeholders beautifully in a timely manner, giving each one of us an opportunity to interact with every exhibitor.”

Dream Weddings

“The show is a good platform for us to learn about new destinations and products for Indian weddings. Coming from Ludhiana, this show provided us an opportunity to connect with the bigwigs of the industry and understand the market better. The panel discussion at the show was very apt as it touched upon the challenges faced by the wedding planners and how we can synergise better with the hospitality industry for future growth and development.”



Sarthak Sood
Director

Kakatiya Events

“A show like this is an important platform for us. In half a day's time, we are able to meet key players from the wedding travel industry, learn about new products, hot-selling destinations, packages and deals that we can offer to our clients. The meetings were very smooth and the enthusiasm amongst both the buyer and exhibitor community regarding the show was very encouraging for us. We hope to gather good business from this show.”



Santosh Kumar Chunduru
Managing Director



Glimpses of the **SHOW**





Exhibitors



Angad Deo Mandawa
Director

Mandawa Hotels

“Since Rajasthan is already a hot spot for Indian destination weddings, Mandawa Hotels presents itself as a favourable property to experience the local and cultural aura of this state. The format of the show is focused meetings, which enables participants to know what they are looking for. We have received three

very promising leads and hope to convert them to business soon.”



Tanushree Joshi
Regional Sales and
Marketing Manager- India
and Australia

Sun Siyam Resorts

“This is our second time at the show where we gained an opportunity to connect with the perfect audience for our products. We are trying to drive in more Indian weddings into Sri Lanka, while Maldives is being promoted as a destination for landmark events. We are offering a variety of promotional offers to the travel trade partners for the upcoming

season as well as the current low season.”

Tourism Fiji

“The best part about the show is that no matter what, we stick to schedule and that is what we as exhibitors, seek from any show of this scale. The schedule makes the show very productive as the meetings are focused and demands everyone to be at the top of their game. We realised that there is a lot of curiosity among the buyers regarding Fiji and we feel that this destination has a huge scope for Indian weddings.”



Vijayanthi Kari
India Representative

W Goa

“We are participating for the second time at the show which has grown over from its last edition. We conducted over 60 one-on-one focused meetings over a very short period of time and received many potential leads as well. The show acts as a space where we get to meet new players, organisations, of whom we were unaware about earlier. We believe in doing things differently and offer great value to our partners.”



Rohan Bhasin
Associate Director of Sales



Mamta Pall
Director of Sales &
Marketing – India, Rotana
Hotel Management
Corporation PJSC

Rotana Hotels

“The quality of buyers at the show was good, most of them, were well versed with the wedding segment in the Indian market and a couple of them had already managed and executed weddings in India as well as overseas. We showcased some of our key properties which are most suitable for the Indian weddings segment, for example The Cove Rotana Resort Ras Al Khaimah, Saadiyat Rotana Resort and Villas

Abu Dhabi and Beach Rotana Abu Dhabi.”



Soma Bhattacharya
Trade and MICE
Executive- India

Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority

“It has been a fruitful experience. We received many potential leads and got an opportunity to connect with travel agents and wedding planners, who already have a few wedding projects planned for Abu Dhabi. We were very happy to see that Abu Dhabi has already made space in the destination weddings

market from India and we hope to increase this and support the trade.”

Centara Grand Mirage- Centara Hotels and Resorts

“The show has exceeded my expectations and has been the perfect platform to showcase our property, which is the number one for Indian weddings in Thailand and ranked 12 in Asia. In 2016, we did 12 Indian weddings and will close business for the fourth wedding for 2017.”



Moumita Mukherjee Paul
Head- Marketing (India)

Radisson Blu Resort Temple Bay, Mamallapuram

“The show was brisk and well thought of. We met a lot of key clients who were interested to explore new destinations within India, moving away from the North to South. It was a great opportunity to explore the wedding travel market and interact with buyers from across the country.”



Shubhangi Nandagopalan
General Manager- Sales
and Marketing, GRT Hotels
and Resorts





Buyers



Samina Munshi
Managing Director

N Chirag Travels

“The show gave us the opportunity to be educated and informed about the various properties and destinations opening for Indian destination weddings, both in India and abroad. The exhibitors were well versed with the products and the exposure and knowledge gathered from each meeting will instill in us more confidence to pitch for Indian weddings.”



Manish Kriplani
Director

Baywatch Travel and Tours

“This is my second time at the show. Like the last edition, this time too, I was very excited about the meetings and connections that one makes at this event which helps in business at a later stage. We all know that the wedding travel segment from India is booming and this is just the beginning. In fact, we have seen a large number of enquiries from Tier-II and Tier-III cities for destination weddings abroad.”

STHI Holidays

“I feel this type of a show is a very good platform for organisations like ours, which is debuting into the wedding travel industry. The meetings were very educative and we could gauge the intensity of this market through this show. I feel more such shows will enrich us with knowledge about the various facets of the market. In terms of destinations, I feel Rajasthan tops the charts for Indian weddings in India.”



Lalit Singh
Chief Operations Officer

Trav-n-Tours International

“I came to the show with many queries regarding the wedding travel segment and it was heartening to see that almost everything was well answered by the exhibitors present at the show. The exhibitors are well versed with their products. A well-organised show like this allows for crisp and informative meetings in a short time frame and leads to a fruitful experience.”



Ranjana Sharma
Chief Executive Officer



Maitreyee Patel
Director

Pathfinders Holidays

“This is the first time I am attending such a show and it has been a great experience. Though I found the concept of a time slot for each meeting very fruitful, I would have hoped for an extra five minutes for a proper discussion. The show was very well-organised and has been a value addition to upgrade

our knowledge about various products for the Indian destination weddings market.”



Ekta Sharma
Managing Director,

Khyaath Design Holidays

“Coming to the show like this is a great advantage as it is very high on education quotient for us. The show has offered us a variety of new products, newer hotels and convention spaces. The presence of various tourism boards gives us the direct connect for our business. The format is very useful as over a short period of time we were able to gather lot of quality information about a variety of products.”

Vibrant Holiday Destinations

“This is my second time at the show and like last year, this year too, I have managed to develop a great connect with the exhibitors during the time slot given for each meeting and over the networking sessions. The format allowed me to interact with everyone and also understand new products and destinations that are emerging for destination weddings.”



Sangita Marda-Agarwal
Business Head

Tamarind Global Services

“This show provided me with exposure and knowledge about a variety of products in the wedding industry in India. This is my first time at the show and I hope to participate in its next editions as well. The format of speed meetings is very systematic and allows interaction between all buyers and sellers.”



Karishma Shah
Senior Consultant- MICE

Exhibitors



Shelly Chadha
Destination Vice President,
Philippines Tourism
Marketing Office-India

Philippines Tourism

“During the two-day event, we conducted 60 meetings with travel agents and wedding planners from across India and our experience of representing the destination as both, travel and wedding destination, was overwhelming. We were able to convince the buyers to boost Philippines as a wedding destination among the potential clients.”



Vivek Yagnik
Assistant General Manager

Samode Hotels

“It is a great platform which is both productive and informative and we were very happy that we got an opportunity to exhibit our properties at the show. The show was very well-organised and we had a large number of good meetings. We have also received some potential leads for future business opportunities which we will capitalise on soon.”

Le Meridien Al Aqah Beach Resort and Spa, Fujairah, UAE

“The show is very well-organised and the format of the show lends itself to speedy interactions and a good understanding of the buyers during the networking sessions. Le Meridien Al Aqah Beach Resort and Spa is an ideal property for Indian destination weddings in Fujairah with 208 rooms, nine restaurants, a ballroom with seating capacity for 350 pax and six outdoor venues.”



Sudhagar Subramaniam
Complex Director of
Corporate Sales
Le Meridien

Holland Tourism

“The show was a great platform for NBTC Holland Marketing to meet a niche genre of tour operators and wedding planners from across India. There was a distinct interest shown in the Netherlands as a wedding destination. Both the tour operators and wedding planners said that they were espousing new destinations for their clients and felt that Holland would be a game changer in the destination wedding market.”



Sonia Prakash
Destination Vice President,
NBTC



Dhruv Aima
Business Development
Manager- Weddings

Shangri-La Hotels

“We would summarise day one of the show as a focus on travel agents who are new to the industry or are entering in the wedding travel space. We found day two better as it was focused on the wedding planners and key players of the market with a lot of prospective customers. At present, the wedding market is booming in India with more and more people looking at destination weddings.”



Ritu Bakshi
Director of Sales (India),
ONYX Hospitality Group

Amari Hotels

“This is our second time at the show where we exhibited two beautiful resorts - Amari Water Gate Bangkok and Amari Galle Sri Lanka. It was a well-managed show and quality of the buyers was good in comparison with last year. It was ensured that all clients visit all the exhibitors in a time-bound fashion. People are exploring new destinations. Recently, even Maldives is being considered for weddings.”

Jewels of Romantic Europe

“We met a lot of potential travel agents and wedding planners who showed interest in our product and are looking at Munich as a new destination for Indian weddings and MICE activities. Jewels of Romantic Europe as a product resonated with the buyers which was very encouraging and we hope to offer the perfect destination for Indian weddings.”



Minoti Gupta
Destination Manager

Drukair

“This is our first time at this show where we met over 60 buyers from across travel agents, wedding planners and corporate group managers. Connectivity is a major challenge for the wedding travel space and we tried to address this issue by elaborating on the various flights and ground arrangements that can be managed in Bhutan for an Indian weddings.”



Lokesh Thakral
Regional Manager- India





Buyers



Varender Anand
Managing Director

Upasana Wedding Planners

“The platform introduced us to a variety of suppliers and helped us to network with them. I would like to thank the organising team for inviting us to such an educative forum which will not only help us learn about the new destinations and products but also build a network for future opportunities.”



Surinder Kumar Dewan
Managing Director

Dewan Travels

“The benefit of this show was that we could have focused interactions with different suppliers from DMCs, hotels and even tourism boards which would help us to promote weddings in India. Indian weddings are a booming business, growing by 30–40 per cent every year.”

Gainwell Travel & Leisure

“We were hoping to find out more about new destinations for Indian weddings and MICE related activities and the show turned out to be the perfect platform for this. We connected with the hoteliers and enquired about various products so that when we do business, we have a niche and a better understanding of what we are offering to the clients. The format helped us in conducting fruitful meetings in a timely manner.”



Madhulika Saraf
Director

Sherif Travel & Tours

“One of our company’s divisions, Tie the Knot, is focused on destination weddings. We attended a show like this for the first time. The format of the show is very crisp and focused with its time slotted meeting schedule. This allows us to understand the product and in return help the exhibitors scale up the destination wedding platform from India. Countries like Greece, Turkey, Jordan, South Africa are some of the key destinations for Indian weddings abroad.”



Rizwan Sherif
Managing Director

Exhibitors



Ashish Brahmawar
General Manager

KK Royal Hotels and Convention Centre

“The show exceeded our expectations. We did not expect such a smooth flowing affair. We found that the B2B meetings were focused and the quality of buyers was well thought of by the organising team. This platform gave us the opportunity to educate the agents and planners about

the venue and also the commissionable structure we have for this segment.”



Alok John
Sales Head- North India

Leonia Holistic Destination

“As our first time at the show, we were able to showcase Leonia Holistic Destination to a large number of key travel agents and wedding planners. The format of the show was better than an exhibition where we meet many stakeholders over 2-3 days, but, here we were able to connect with a focused audience over a short period of time. We offer special rates and many deals for the travel trade partners.”

Alila Hotels and Resorts

“The Alila Fort Bishangarh boasts of 59 stately rooms and suites individually designed to capture the stunning views of the Aravalli hills. The hallmark of Alila is the combination of innovative design and luxury in unique locations. To stay at any of Alila’s Hotels and Resorts is to embark on a destination experience in terms of recreating flavours of local cuisine, enhancing well-being or the thrill of adventure sports.”



Rachna Mehra
Director of Sales

Sahara Star/ Aamby Valley

“The show has been very useful for us as we could learn about a new set of wedding planners as well as meet many travel agents who want to explore our property for destination weddings. The weddings market has not only grown but also evolved as more number of people are looking at doing weddings at exotic locations over the regular weddings.”



Himanshu S. R
Assistant Manager- Client Servicing

Save the dates for our next Wedding Show

Travel

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Delhi NCR

Travel
BUSINESS SHOW

December 2-3, 2017 (Sat - Sun)
Delhi NCR

Travel
EXPERIENTIAL SHOW

April 7-8, 2018
Delhi NCR

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