

the business travel magazine

MiCEtalk

Meetings • Incentives • Conferences • Events

Volume X Issue 1 January-March 2019 48 pages
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MiCE destinations

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A New Gateway & Getaway in Sentosa opens from April 2019.

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Three new hotel experiences on Singapore's iconic island destination – Village Hotel at Sentosa, The Outpost Hotel and The Barracks Hotel. Situated in the heart of Sentosa on Artillery Avenue and within reach of the attractions and beautiful beaches, the location is poised to be the centre of gravity on the island. Not forgetting that it is only minutes away from the city's hotspots.

Village Hotel at Sentosa

Perfect for families and leisure or business groups, the 606-room hotel captures all that is special about Sentosa's Sun, sand and sea. Decorated in ocean-hue, the hotel's modern architecture juxtaposes against the splendour of the heritage buildings.

Be amazed by an archipelago of four themed pool zones – Children's Play Pool, Lazy River Pool, Adventure Pool, and Pamukkale Pool. Bask in the thematic gardens and relax in its manicured surrounding. From intimate parties to large corporate events, there is always a space suitable, from the cosy Sea View Deck to the 480-people capacity at The Commune.

The Outpost Hotel

Designed for discerning adults and couples, this upscale hotel boasts 193 guest rooms with contemporary industrial chic aesthetics and clean crisp lines inspired by black and white design. The exclusive rooftop Sky Pool and bar is great for cocktail sessions, candlelit dinners and intimate celebrations where you can feast your eyes on picturesque views of the sea and sunset. A unique Land Rover limousine service is at your beck and call to take you to adventures and back.

The Barracks Hotel

Housed in a designated conserved building, you will be transported to its charming past; 40 luxurious guest rooms and suites endowed with exquisite service and attention to every detail await you. All rooms on the ground level allow for direct access to the private pool and jacuzzi. Where heritage comes to life.



Facade of Village Hotel at Sentosa



The Outpost Hotel Room



Village Hotel at Sentosa Room

Visit www.StayFarEast.com/Sentosa to find out more or
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editorial



Dear Reader,

Experiential incentive trips are here to stay! They serve as the perfect opportunity for employees to bond with colleagues while discovering new destinations, cultures, and cuisines. Incentives help keep employees motivated, adding freshness and zest to their ideas. But, how do you get the right answer to the perpetual question of where to go? While budget tops the list of important influencers, connectivity, hotel facilities, visa processes, language barriers, and vegetarian food options are not far behind. India has plenty to offer, but its Southeast Asian neighbours are equally well-equipped. An added advantage that the latter holds is the 'brag factor' that comes with a foreign trip.

Southeast Asia, for centuries, has been at the crossroads of trade routes between India and China as well as the Far East and Europe. Welcoming and interacting with overseas visitors has been part of the social fabric of the region for generations and this has grown further in the different options it offers for MiCE. In our feature, we analyse the pros and cons of both choices.

An important segment that fuels the business of MiCE is that of corporates. Different corporates have different expectations from an incentive or an event, and that's where the catch lies. It becomes increasingly essential for MiCE agents to deliver on each requirement of the corporate client or risk the chance of losing the big bucks! Creativity, innovation, and the will to go the extra mile for a client can seal a deal, especially for vendors like hotels and airlines. Through this edition, we try and uncover what corporates really look for and how best to please them.

We also delve on social etiquette at international events. Our counsellor, **Shivani Misri Sadhoo**, shares some tips on how best to conduct oneself at an international conference or event. In a different section, **Shital Kakkar Mehra**, our etiquette expert, gives us quick pointers on drinking wine with style at social gatherings and not being hesitant while selecting and ordering.

Keep reading and giving your feedback to us at:
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Cover Design
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NEWS

MIDDLE EAST

UAE gets new island destination 'Bluewaters'



■ Meraas aims to pull out all stops to deliver Bluewaters' unique promise of an island luxe vibe, with unparalleled experiences brought to the region for the first time at Caesars Palace Bluewaters Dubai, The Residences at Caesars Palace Bluewaters Dubai and Caesars Resort Bluewaters Dubai. These five-star accommodations will be flanked by The Rotunda at one end and Caesars Forum on the other.

INDIA & MIDDLE EAST

Air India Express launches new route

■ Air India Express has launched its inaugural flight from Kannur International Airport in Kerala, India, to Abu Dhabi International Airport (AUH). With this, it commences three weekly flights connecting the two airports. The non-stop flights from Kannur will arrive at AUH at 11:30am and depart at 12:30pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. Speaking post the inauguration, **Maarten De Groof**, CCO, Abu Dhabi Airports,



said, "India has been one of our top generators of traffic and we are always eager to expand the airport's connectivity to this region."

INDIA & EUROPE



Air Italy launches thrice weekly direct from Delhi to Milan

■ Air Italy has inaugurated its first non-stop flight from New Delhi to Milan. India is the fourth international addition to the airline's expanding network, following the successful commencement of operations to New York (JFK), Miami (MIA), and Bangkok (BKK) earlier this year. Speaking at the launch, **Rossen Dimitrov**, Chief Operating Officer, Air Italy, said, "The launch of our India-Italy sector represents another major step forward for Air Italy and reinforces our commitment to our network expansion plans in Asia. India is a fascinating and dynamic destination and is a significant base for business and tourism. We are delighted to welcome Delhi as part of our global network and look forward to providing more flexibility of travel choices to our customers, contributing to this ongoing growth."

SOUTH INDIA

Kerala inaugurates 4th international airport

■ Kerala has become the first state in the country to have four international airports (Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, and Kozhikode are the other three) with the inauguration of the Kannur airport. Civil Aviation Minister **Suresh Prabhu** and Chief Minister **Pinarayi Vijayan** jointly flagged off the inaugural Air India Express flight carrying 186 passengers to Abu Dhabi, at the airport near Mattannur. The airport is owned and operated by Kannur International Airport Limited through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.



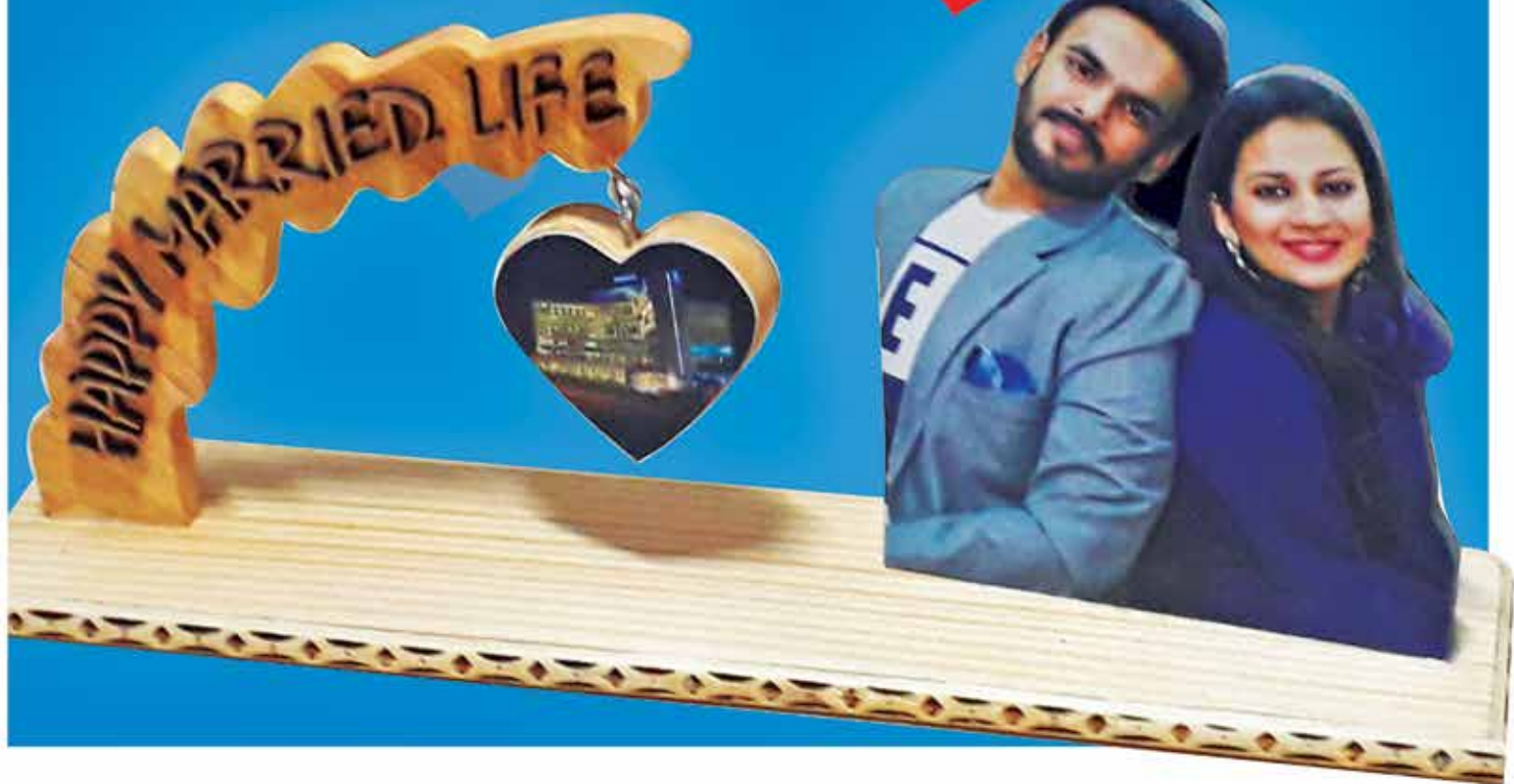


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HOTELS & RESORTS

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NEWS

ASIA

PATA Travel Mart 2019 in Astana, Kazakhstan

■ Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) is set to organise PATA Travel Mart 2019 in Astana, Kazakhstan, in September 2019. The event will be



hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kazakh Tourism National Company JSC. **Mario Hardy**, CEO, PATA, says, "The destination stands at the crossroads between Asia and Europe, making it the perfect venue."

ASIA

TCEB launches new Thai campaign

■ TCEB has launched a new campaign - Thailand: REDEFINE Your Business Events - to transform its role from a marketer of business events hosted in Thailand to that of a partner, collaborator, and enabler of future solutions within the industry. The campaign will be underpinned by proactive marketing strategies and activities to attract premium groups from long-haul destinations.



Mark your 2019 calendar

Luxury
TRAVEL SHOW

April 6 - 7, 2019
Mumbai

Allied
TRAVEL SHOW

May 18 - 19, 2019
Jaipur

Wedding
TRAVEL SHOW

July 13 - 14, 2019
Delhi

MiCE
TRAVEL SHOW

Nov 30 - Dec 1, 2019
Delhi

Venue to be announced



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NEWS

EUROPE



IFTM Top Resa in Paris from October 1-4, 2019

■ All set to be held in Paris from October 1-4, 2019, IFTM Top Resa will feature 34,000 industry professionals (20 per cent of them being international), 250 destinations from France and overseas, 10 themed villages, and 1700 brands. A total of seven key events are also on the schedule and will include the inaugural lunch, Travel Agents Cup, Startup Contest, Hackathon, Junior Travel Agents Cup, After TO Party, and a new evening event for business travel professionals, organised in partnership with AFTM. The event will also comprise over 150 talks, seminars, workshops, and training sessions for travel agents.

ASIA

GoAir begins international operations from Bengaluru to Male and Phuket

■ GoAir has commenced its international operations from Bengaluru with direct flights to Male and Phuket. The airline's international service is operated by Airbus A320 Neo aircraft and will mark the commencement of a direct service thrice a week between Bengaluru and Phuket, and direct service twice a week between Bengaluru and Male. Speaking on the occasion, **Cornelis Vrieswijk**, Chief Executive Officer, GoAir, said, "Bengaluru is a key market for us and this is the third strategic launch after Mumbai and New Delhi to have commenced international operations on GoAir's network. We are certain that leisure travellers from Bengaluru and neighbouring cities will be delighted by our convenient connections to Phuket and Male."



ASIA



Grand Mercure debuts in Foshan, China

■ AccorHotels' Grand Mercure has opened doors as the first international hotel in Jinshazhou Island, China. Located between Guangzhou and Foshan in southern China's Guangdong province, Grand Mercure Foshan Country Garden offers more than 700 sqm of event space, including a lofty ballroom and five multifunctional rooms. The hotel also boasts of 219 guest rooms and suites with a comprehensive array of in-room facilities. A dedicated professional banquet team is also available to ensure that every event is successful and memorable.



WEST INDIA

ITC Grand Goa Resort & Spa opens doors

■ ITC Hotels has announced the opening of its 13th luxury hotel in India, ITC Grand Goa, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa, formerly known as the Park Hyatt Goa Resort & Spa, on Arossim beach in Cansaulim, South Goa. The 252-key beachside, village-styled resort's architecture draws inspiration from the Indo-Portuguese vintage and comprises six signature dining options, indoor and outdoor meeting and banquet spaces, and Kaya Kalp, The Royal Spa.

SOUTH INDIA

5th edition of Travel Business Show concludes with over 1700 meetings in Hyderabad

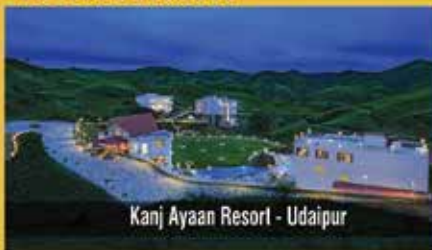


■ The fifth edition of Travel Business Show, an exclusive MiCE B2B event, was held from December 1-2, 2018, at Hyderabad Marriott Hotel. The two-day event witnessed networking and business meetings between approximately 30 exhibitors and 60 buyers from across the country. Over 1700 pre-scheduled meetings took place within two days. The event provided the perfect platform for service providers, destinations, and hotels to connect with selected and specialised MiCE operators and agents participating in the event and build lasting relationships while also partnering over unique business ideas.

Speaking at the fifth edition of the Show, at Hyderabad Marriott Hotel & Convention Centre, **RH Khwaja**, Former Secretary, Tourism, Government of India, revealed that India's capital expenditure was 11 per cent in tourism between 2011 and 2017. He further said that India is growing in the MiCE sector and that there is a need for quality in terms of MiCE services being offered. He also insisted that India needed to work on its domestic products apart from foreign exchange earnings by inbound tourists.



Kanj Hotels & Resorts (I) Pvt Ltd manages Hotels and Resorts in India. The company also operates stand-alone Hotels & Resorts and maintains a strong presence in leisure & business segment. Presently Kanj Hotels & Resorts (I) Pvt Ltd is proud to have a distinctive portfolio that includes ingeniously designed resorts and heritage hotels that merge old world charm with contemporary design and smart, engaging service.



Cashing in on MiCE

Highlights of the discussion on 'MiCE – Dynamics & Expectations', held during Travel Business Show at Hyderabad Marriott Hotel

Kanchan Nath



Moderated by **Homa Mistry**, CEO, Trail

Blazer Tours, the discussion on 'MiCE – Dynamics & Expectations' brought to light some key aspects that make the business of MiCE a creative, thought-provoking proposition. The panel during this day comprised **Shamitha Shetty**, CEO, Success Tours; **Ajay Kapoor**, VP Procurement, HSBC Group and **Tekla Maira**, Director Luxury Sales - India, AccorHotels Luxe.

COLLABORATE, CONNECT & COMMUNICATE

MiCE is a dynamic industry where expectations keep

changing and demands keep growing. Giving an insight into how the dynamics of MiCE have changed over the years, Kapoor said, "First, we need to understand the fundamentals in the execution of any event in which different industries are involved; they need to be synchronised. We definitely need to see how we can meet the expectations of the customer. This can be worked out by the three-C principle which calls for collaboration, connect, and communication. In the MiCE industry, if you want the right end result, you need to engage with all the stakeholders from the initial stage, so that they are the architects of the itinerary to



Croatia is an emerging destination for MiCE from India; it is one of the best kept secrets of Europe"

Shamitha Shetty
CEO, Success Tours

meet the expectations of the end customer." Adding his bit to the discussion, Mistry said, "Dynamics of the industry remain the same, only technicalities keep changing."

NOT REVEALING ALL

Offering her perspective on the hotel space, Maira said, "As a supplier, 60-70 per cent of the entire cost of the itinerary comes from the hotel, 99 per cent of the time. Many a times we don't even meet the end client. As a supplier, there are a couple of things I need to know, including the budget, what the three main things that matter are, and what will determine the decision for the respective group. It takes a lot to get those answers."

Kapoor said that since it was difficult to talk to multiple partners, speaking to only the MiCE agent was easier.

Elaborating on the role of an agent, Mistry said, "The disconnect is there and will remain. As travel agents, we do not open all the cards, as we feel hotels might take the business away directly."

DREAMY EUROPE

Destinations in Europe have always been popular for MiCE. Elaborating on one – Croatia – and why it is a hit for meetings, Shetty said, "Croatia is a well-kept secret of Europe. It has got the sea, the mountains, and also has a 6200 km coastline. It has 1200 islands and 10 national parks. Croatia



Many agents that send large groups use Wetu, so that any change in the event can immediately be made"

Homa Mistry
CEO, Trail Blazer Tours



offers surreal nature. It's an emerging destination for MiCE from India. It also offers Indian food options in almost all of the cities and in the cities where there may not be any, access to the kitchen can get us going. There are countries like Slovenia, Montenegro, or a combination of the two that might work well."

very important; they are the ones to tell us about the new, undiscovered destinations."

TECHNOLOGY IN MiCE

Technology has increasingly been playing a vital role in optimising costs for the MiCE industry. Kapoor explained, "Earlier, company's depended on people for execution of



“An emerging trend is that of babymoon, where numbers are in money spent”

Tekla Maira
Director Luxury Sales - India,
AccorHotels Luxe



“We can meet expectations using the three-C principle which calls for collaboration, connect and communication”

Ajay Kapoor
VP Procurement, HSBC Group

Providing a corporate's perspective, Kapoor said, "Every time we look for a new destination, we see if the expectations of our internal customers are being fulfilled. Based on that, we decide on a destination; sometimes it's a repeat and sometimes it's new. The role of the MiCE agency/DMC is

any job, which resulted in high operating costs and increased error. From people, we then moved to processes. However, post 2010, it has mostly been a digital era, one of Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, blockchain, reverse auction, etc. When you look at an IT partner like Wipro,

IBM, or Infosys and have engaged a regional partner as well, you are requested to come in for the reverse auction process. Usually, the regional partner gets the contract because their operating costs are very low. However, since it lacks a thorough study in terms of scalability, capability, regional offices, support, etc., it may later on result in a bumpy ride in the execution of the project." Mistry said that though technology was here to stay, it needed to be updated constantly. "Many agents that send large groups use Wetu. Every PAX has the itinerary available live, and you do not require the internet for that. Once you have downloaded it, updates can easily be seen," he said.

THE MARKET OF CELEBRATIONS

Weddings are an important part of MiCE. Now this market is expanding to include birthdays, anniversaries, bachelorettes, and other celebrations. "This is an emerging trend. Bachelorettes now happen at exclusive hotels and exotic destinations. Another trend is that of 'babymoon,' where a group of friends go for a holiday before the baby is born. This is not really a numbers game and the budgets are far more generous. Here, numbers are in terms of money spent," concluded Maira.

For more from the show, turn to page 20



Where goes MICE? India vs SE Asia

While India offers the whole package for incentive trips, its neighbouring countries are equally equipped. We take a look at the different aspects that both regions have to offer

Kanchan Nath



Karan Anand
Head - Relationships
Cox & Kings

A PERFECT LAST-MINUTE OPTION

In the last couple of years, hotels and resorts have realised the importance of MiCE, more specifically incentive movement, and have tailored their offerings to match requirements. New hotels that have come up in the last five years have huge banquet spaces, coupled with a large room inventory, which makes them ideal incentive venues. Places like Goa, Kochi, Jaipur, as well as metros like Hyderabad, Delhi, and Pune

are the new magnets that attract domestic incentive movement. Also, with domestic airlines connecting airports in metro cities with those in Tier-II destinations,



You can customise, give quick solutions, and cater to every last-minute whim



connectivity is sorted. Today, we have flights from Lucknow to Vizag; similarly, we have direct flights from Indore to Goa. This connectivity that has emerged in the recent past has opened up possibilities to organise incentive movements within India. The most important element is that one does not have to make an extra effort to arrange Indian food. Finally, you can customise and provide quick solutions and cater to every whim of the corporate, who anyway plans at the last minute.

Manpreet Bindra

Head - MiCE
FCM Travel Solutions

INCREDIBLE MiCE

MiCE is one of the fastest growing segments in the travel and tourism industry in India. This growth is driven by advancement in technology and improved infrastructure and services. As a potential MiCE destination, India has everything a modern conference organiser could expect, with a rich heritage and a vibrant culture for tourists to explore. It also offers state-of-the-art accommodation at five-star hotels. On an operational level, India has a lot of advantages over other popular MiCE countries such as those in Southeast Asia. For instance, there are no visa formalities; lesser costs involved; and Indian cuisine, a popular demand of MiCE travellers, available everywhere. A high

rate of exchange for some of the Southeast Asian countries also means that conducting MiCE internationally could be more expensive. Some of the MiCE hotspots in India include Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Kochi, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Chennai, Bengaluru, Goa, and Agra.

DEVELOPING LOGISTICS

When business visitors come to India to attend MiCE events, they spend



A high rate of exchange for some SE Asian countries means costly MiCE



large amounts of money on accommodation, food and beverage, in-city transport, venues, leisure activities, etc. With the government focusing on better infrastructure and elevating domestic tourism with strategic aggressive marketing and proactive incentives, India will be well-equipped to compete with neighbouring countries.



Meera Charnalia

Senior Vice President, MiCE
Thomas Cook (India)

COST ANALYSIS

The major expense an organisation has to bear when organising a MiCE event in any Southeast Asian country is airfare and added cost of visa, which can be eliminated by holding a MiCE event in India. This also eliminates

the requirement of having a passport, which in turn increases the volume of the group, bringing down cost, too.

The host company organising its event in India will get great value when it comes to Indian



The only benefit for MiCE in India is from hotels, in the form of a cash subsidy



culture-specific meals and beautiful venues. Besides the package of F&B and banquet charges in a Southeast Asian

countries, the host company also has to bear an added cost of room accommodation, whereas in India a gala dinner/ MiCE event can be done in just a day, which becomes economical for the host. At some occasions, transfers can be eliminated completely. Accordingly, there are many venue options in India which can be explored by great road and train connectivity.

QUICKER DELIVERY

The turnaround time to organise a MiCE event in India is lesser compared to any Southeast Asian country. In India, transfers (coach or car rental companies) are way more flexible compared to the Southeast Asian countries, when it comes to their service hours. Language, too, is not a barrier.





SD Nandakumar
President – B2B
SOTC Travel

In recent years, India has emerged as one of the most sought-after MiCE destinations. India provides an impressive combination of cultural experience, accommodation, and other conference support facilities to hold a successful conference. High-tech facilities matching global standards are offered at conference and meeting venues in India.

For cost-conscious Indian organisations, hosting MiCE events within India proves especially beneficial in multiple ways.

One of the major expenses an organisation has to bear when organising a MiCE event in a Southeast Asian country is



India offers high-tech facilities matching global standards



the airfare, which can be done away with by hosting the event in India. Moreover, other documentation processes like passport and visa can also be

done away with by hosting events within the country.

INDIA FOR MiCE

The 'Incredible India' campaign has given a huge boost to MiCE tourism. The government has also been providing financial support for developing international convention centres and tourism-related infrastructure, which has given a huge impetus in making India a preferred MiCE destination.




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Sanjay Sondhi

Country Manager

Visit Indonesia Tourism Office, Delhi

COMPARATIVE COSTS

The USP of travelling to Indonesia is that one can experience all activities, be it adventure, nightlife, casinos, pristine beaches or the tropical climate, in a single trip. It is also equipped to handle the needs of MiCE events such as easy connectivity, free visa on arrival, availability of Indian food, and affordable experiences. It is always desirable to conduct an event in a new overseas destination rather than a destination back home when the cost of the event in both the places is the same.

INITIATIVES & INDONESIA

The Indonesian government has set up a number of strategic initiatives for its improvement and promotion

as a MiCE destination, including continuous support in the development of new MiCE venues. The Ministry is also focusing on promoting 10 new tourist destinations as the 'new Bali,' through the diving havens of Wakatobi in South Sulawesi, Morotai in Maluku, Labuan Bajo in East Nusa Tenggara, Mandalika in West Nusa Tenggara, Tanjung Kelayang



The Ministry is promoting 10 new tourist destinations as the 'new Bali'



in Bangka Belitung, the beach enclaves of Tanjung Lesung in Banten, Thousand Islands in Jakarta, as well as the UNESCO heritage site of Borobudur Temple.



Datuk Zulkefi Hj Sharif

Chief Executive Officer

MyCEB

MALAYSIA HAS IT ALL

Over the years, Malaysia has made a name for itself as a preferred destination for MiCE. The country's location in the heart of Southeast Asia makes it accessible from all corners of the world through its excellent air, rail, and sea connectivity. It is also a very cost-effective destination as prices for most goods and services are reasonable, making it very attractive for visitors. The country also has world-class convention centres, hotels, and infrastructure that boast of state-of-the-art facilities at strategic locations across the country.

Malaysia has built various convention facilities that fully meet the international requirements of world



conferences, including Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KL Convex), Malaysia International Trade Exhibition Centre (MITEC), Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC), Borneo Convention Centre Kuching (Sarawak), Setia SPICE Convention Centre, Sabah International Convention Centre, and many more. India is one of the top 10 market sources for Malaysia. MyCEB will also be launching the new Malaysia Twin Deal (MTD) rewards programme in Q2



MyCEB will be launching Malaysia Twin Deal (MTD) in Q2 2019



2019. MTD comprises two programmes - Deal 1 and Deal 2 - that provide value-added support for international corporates, depending on group size.





Adrian Kong
Area Director - South Asia
(Mumbai)
Singapore Tourism Board
CONVENIENT FOR BUSINESS

Singapore is a leading world-class business city and MiCE destination, complemented by iconic infrastructure, multicultural experiences, and top-notch entertainment that enables new possibilities. The World Bank has recognised Singapore as one of the most convenient places in the world for doing business (Doing Business 2018 Report).

The city offers an array of unconventional jaunts and picturesque meeting locales for team building exercises and leisure outings.

There are various programmes and experiences such as



BEiS (Business Events in Singapore), INSPIRE (In Singapore Incentives & Rewards), and SMAP (Singapore MICE Advantage Programme).



We offer programmes such as BEiS, INSPIRE, and SMAP



There are also a plethora of unconventional venues in Singapore that can meet MiCE needs through interesting and exciting experiences outside of the conventional boardroom or hotel meeting facilities. Unique spaces that incorporate MiCE facilities include ArtScience Museum, Gardens by the Bay, Cruise Centre Singapore, Night Safari, Royal Albatross, SEA Aquarium, Singapore Flyer, and Singapore Sports Hub. Singapore's neighbourhoods can add an off-the-beaten-track feel to events.



Seema Datt
Account Director
Philippines Tourism Office - India
DISCOVERING PHILIPPINES

As Asia's pioneer in conventions, the Philippines can easily host an international event with expertise and a creative approach. More importantly, it offers the added incentive of discovering 7,107 island experiences, including breathtaking natural wonders that range from the golden sunset of Manila Bay to the virgin rainforests and mysterious underground rivers of Palawan; from historic

Intramuros and Vigan to the graceful mosques and indigenous tribes of Muslim Mindanao; from golfing greens to 44,097 sqm of coral reef dive sites teeming with marine life; from innumerable pristine white-sand beaches to the wonder that is the Banaue Rice Terraces. However, for each visitor experience in the Philippines, what shines through is the genuine warmth and gracious hospitality that comes naturally from the heart

of every Filipino. This is the heart ware, the extra touch that adds a special, welcoming spark to each guest's stay. It is an added perk that makes any convention or incentive trip to the Philippines a memory that will last a lifetime. Philippines is a perfect destination for weddings and Indians love to head here for their honeymoon.

The MiCE industry in Philippines is not only attracting neighbouring countries in the ASEAN region, but is also appealing to the global market due to the lower costs it offers. The demand for MiCE facilities also includes entertainment events such as rock concerts and sports events.



What shines through is the genuine warmth and hospitality of the Filipinos



Hong Kong aims high

Through its brand message 'Discover Hong Kong Like A Local', HKTb has introduced a number of programmes for the trade to promote the country's offerings among Indians

Manas Dwivedi

Over the years, Hong Kong has developed strong capabilities and infrastructure to attract and organise world-class events, making the country a popular MiCE destination. According to **Puneet Kumar**, Senior Manager, Market Development – India, Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb), there are very few places around the globe that provide the gold standard in service, and Hong Kong is equipped with a similar skill set and experience to deliver a high-quality event, not just an incentive or a board meeting, but also large conferences and exhibitions.

"In a way, we have earned that reputation and overall, Hong Kong as a brand, not just from a tourism perspective, is very strong in the minds of business, corporates, and consumers. I think, tourism is leveraging that platform and this is the reason we are one of those destinations that is progressive and keeps on reinventing the experience as well as the destination. Even the repeat traveller will find something new, something interesting in Hong Kong," explains Kumar.

HIGH ON MICE

To promote MiCE in Hong Kong, HKTb has a division called Meetings and Exhibitions Hong Kong (MEHK). Under MEHK, the board has special schemes, which not only promote Hong Kong as a MiCE destination but also work on



incentive programmes and reward programmes that enhance the visitor's arrival and experience in Hong Kong. MEHK also works hand-in-hand with the trade, not just with MiCE agents but also professional conference organisers, event management companies, and corporates to facilitate the event successfully and achieve the planned return on investment.

Kumar feels that all these combinations play a big role in the growth and success of Hong Kong. "In 2018, our Meetings & Incentives (M&I) numbers grew by about 18 per cent over the previous year, which was quite encouraging. We hope that with LCCs like SpiceJet and IndiGo now starting direct flights to Hong Kong, the number will grow further. This will help us open a whole new segment in our business. Those groups, corporates, and incentives that never thought of Hong Kong because of the price point can include that in their budget plans. So, we are very excited



Puneet Kumar

In 2018, M&I numbers grew about 18 per cent over the previous year

about the development and we are looking to work very closely with both the LCCs to launch consumer-friendly campaigns to drive awareness about the launch of their flights.

Also, we will create packages and tactical promotions with some of the regional agents in India to drive consumer awareness and conversions for Hong Kong. The next few

months will be very exciting for us," he says.

MiCE ON A CRUISE

There are probably a handful of destinations in the whole of Asia that can qualify as cruise hubs, and Hong Kong is really proud to be one. HKTb is helping the whole marketing business development and industry development work to promote MiCE on cruises. Kumar thinks that the trade is also very keen to promote fly cruise packages.

"We see huge potential for leisure travellers as well as corporates. We are working with international cruise brands to drive tactical promotions. We are also working with fly cruise agents who specialise in selling cruises. So, we are educating and supporting them. We also have an incentive programme for corporates, where we offer them rewards and offers. We are doing a whole lot of things and will continue to invest in such segments in 2019 as well," he concludes.

Travel Business Show

A barometer for events

The show was held from Dec 1-2 at Marriott, Hyderabad



“HealthCare Global Enterprises is one of India’s largest cancer hospitals. When I started interacting with the people at the show, I started recollecting where our units were and how we could actually join hands with them and sign on corporate deals. The event was really helpful, I was able to generate a couple of leads as well. The show was a great experience! The exhibitors were all very professional. It was a healthy, friendly environment and that is what we always want.

Chinmaya Ganesh Suryavamse
Senior Executive - Administration
HealthCare Global Enterprises



“I am grateful that the show was conducted in Hyderabad. The event was great and I got the chance to interact with several exhibitors. I also got to know more about destinations like Croatia, Korea, and the Philippines. The format of the show was also good. Meetings were crisp and that’s the way it should be so we do not waste any time.

Siva Sankara Ala
Manager - Travel & Hospitality
Dr. Reddy's Laboratories

“We are the apex body for the gem and jewellery industry in India. At the event, I was pleasantly surprised by the number of participants and met several companies that we could work with. I met a lot of new people and also reconnected with old friends. There were also many new partnerships in the making. The event was very well organised and offered crisp meetings. What makes the show unique is that it is time-bound and vendor selection has been done thoughtfully, which is very important.

Vikrant Pradhan
Assistant Director - Exhibitions
Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council



“This was the second time I attended the show and as always, I was delighted to be a part of it. We always get different ideas and are introduced to new properties here. The event was well planned and logistics for the event had been managed very well, being seamless from end-to-end. Travel Business Show is a fantastic platform for buyers as well as sellers. The format and time slots were perfect. There was a good variety of sellers and I would want this show to be continued.

Mayur Pawar
Senior Executive - Administration
Bajaj Allianz



“Travel Business Show is a great event and this was the third time I attended it. You get to meet people from different destinations, DMCs, and hotels at the event. It’s a place where you can indulge in direct buying. The quality of exhibitors was also excellent; all were premium exhibitors and we are premium buyers, so we were a good match. Other events are mostly exhibitions, while here you have carefully-selected participants and that makes all the difference.

Dilip Kumar
Manager - Administration
EuroKids



“Travel Business Show is an amazing platform. What I find is that the whole idea of meeting people table-by-table in a personalised format makes all the difference. It improves your relationship with the team; we may or may not have business for them today, but you immediately think of them whenever you do have offers for them and then, all you need to do is just pick up the phone and talk to them. It’s easier to connect and the show really helps grow that connection; that is what I love. Also, meetings were timed to perfection.

Madhu Vachhani
Senior Manager
Khaitan & Co



“The format of the show was very clear and specific, one-on-one meetings are very much needed. For both sellers and buyers to understand each other better, the show was the perfect platform. Also, the destinations that were here provided some good information to help plan the future.

Jigar Joshi
Assistant Vice President - Administration
Samsara Capital



“I have attended few other travel shows, however, this was different and allowed buyers and exhibitors to come together, sit, talk, and build relations. Also, the exhibitors had really been hand-picked and the whole event was a unique experience. I met few exhibitors that I hadn't ever heard of, so this was good exposure. The concepts they suggested were new and it made the show all the more worthwhile.

Suresh Pulgam
Senior Manager - CREM
Kotak Mahindra Bank



“The show was well-organised and meetings were timed perfectly. We got information and solutions to all our queries on the spot. It was very informative for people like us who are handling this profile. One-on-one interactions really helped us in building relationships.

Meena Rawat
Deputy Manager
Tenova India

“The event was superb! You got to meet old colleagues and at the same time, you got to see what was new in the market in terms of hospitality, travel, and destinations. The best part was that you could meet the MiCE facilitators together, under one roof, and learn so much. Hats off to the team, the show was conducted so systematically. If there is seriousness and sincerity, things are balanced very well. Results, therefore, were very good.

Gerard D'mello
Vice President
ECL Finance



“This was a great show and it was very nice interacting with all the exhibitors. It was a win-win situation for us. The stand-alone properties that were present among the exhibitors were really amazing. The rates that they gave were almost the same and so, quality-wise there was no compromise. I am glad that we could go ahead and meet them and plan something. I also think that I can now build a good relationship with them in terms of business. Meeting the participants helped clear several doubts regarding rates, budgets, surface transportation, etc.

Kishore Dolas
Manager - Administration
Zycus Infotech



“Being a selective process, the quality of exhibitors was very good. As a corporate, the primary aspect we look out for is cost. There are also certain related things such as venue, convenience, and where I am getting people from that come into play. This show delivered on each aspect.

Roland Kinny
Travel Desk
Cipla

Where the best



converge

We bring to you glimpses of Travel Business Show 2018, where premium buyers got a chance to network with hand-picked sellers and explore unique MiCE propositions



Decoding what corporates need

Everybody wants to woo corporates to help grow their own business. In such a competitive scenario, it becomes extremely difficult for vendors to secure corporate events, incentives, conferences, and more. We try to find what it is that corporates look for



ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Jigar Joshi, AVP - Administration, Samsara Capital, says, "The main criteria to choose a destination remains accessibility to the destination and the property where MiCE is being set up. It should be convenient to travel to from the destination's airport. Long, tiresome travelling hours can break a deal. All in all, convenience is key. At times, the property is good but far off. In such a case, it would not be advisable to go to that particular destination. After all, it's not leisure travel, it's corporate travel where time is of essence."

LOCATION CHALLENGES

It is safe to say that each corporate, depending on the clients it deals with, has different needs, and vendors need to consider this before sharing their offers. **Madhu Vachhani**, Senior Manager, Khaitan & Co, one of India's oldest and full-service law firms, says, "Being a law firm, our major focus is on the category of the hotel, the



quality of service it offers, and the security it provides. Security is the most critical factor for us. Apart from that, when planning for groups, a key aspect we look into is how far the hotel is from the airport, since we do not want to waste too much time on travel. Cost-effectiveness is another aspect we concentrate on."

MORE THAN JUST A BRAND

Vachhani adds, "For a group of 200-300 people, we really need to focus on activities at the hotel. It should be able to take care of all activities rather than people going out and segregating. A property must be a one-stop shop for all banqueting needs, creativity and innovative ideas, and what we want the hotel to offer to our clients. The hotel room, spa, and pool are always there, but what more they offer to us is also important."



RELATIONSHIP AND FLEXIBILITY

Getting a large group to reach a destination is one of the first aspects that corporates want taken care of seamlessly. **Dennison Joseph**, Regional Manager - MICE, dnata, says, "In MiCE, it is equally challenging to arrange a hotel or an airline. In most destinations, you have a single airline that enjoys a monopoly. Somewhere down the line, as a planner, you are looking to get their expectations in line with what you want to deliver. At the end of the day, even if two hotels give you the same kind of costing, you are looking for that relationship and the flexibility that the two are going to give you, so that is the key. So, if you have got something going with them, the only objective is to be keep it going as is."



EXPERIENCE IS PRIME

The charm of international travel is a sure-shot incentive for most corporates. **Siva Sankara Ala**, Manager - Travel & Hospitality, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, says, "For MiCE, destination is prime and then we look at the number of hotels in that destination. First we check whether all the facilities are available at the destination or property, followed by banqueting facilities, and then comes in the budget. If the property is good and so is the destination, we do not mind spending a bit more. Experience is most important!"

A CHANCE TO BRAG

Giving a holistic perspective on the requirements of MiCE, **Gerard D'Mello**, Vice President, ECL Finance, comments, "The Indian traveller does not mind paying a premium in case you have something new to offer that he can talk about. Also, the destination needs to be convenient; there are many destinations where people cannot travel to for various reasons. Visa norms, flight connectivity, time taken for visa issuance, etc., are all aspects of the whole package that one has to look into. I am open to spending ₹5,000 more on an employee if it will help motivate him/her and keep them encouraged in contributing to the growth of the business."

To this, **Kishore Dolas**, Manager – Administration, Zycus Infotech, adds that the main thing is that most corporates go for brands or stand-alone properties that have not been heard of, so people get an opportunity to brag there as well.



INNOVATION, THE GAME CHANGER

With so many destinations to choose from and repeat destinations coming up with innovative marketing strategies, corporates are spoilt for choice. **Suresh Pulgam**, Senior Manager - Corporate Real Estate Management (CREM), Kotak Mahindra Bank, says, "Choosing a destination depends on requirement. How far they can go for a particular event or whether they need a location close by are few aspects to be considered. Innovation is the name of the game in MiCE."

SPACIOUS ROOMS HELP

Edna Martis, Office Manager, Alvarez & Marshal India, concludes, "The hotel must have the number of rooms we need. It should be a luxury property that meets all offsite requirements. Rooms should be spacious, there should be activities for people to do, etc. There should also be a good banqueting venue. Food should be good because a lot of people like different cuisines. We often have international travellers coming in from overseas and so, a hotel must be able to cater to all their requirements."





Business, Balinese-

What are the main MiCE facilities at your resort?

The Bali International Convention Centre (BICC), managed by The Westin group and adjacent to The Westin Resort Nusa Dua, is the island's most comprehensive meeting facility. It features a ballroom, auditorium, an exhibition space, and 26 function rooms. All this is enhanced by high-tech audio-visual equipment and

wireless internet access. BICC caters to diverse meeting requirements, from small presentations to international conferences for global leaders.

There is a separate side entrance to BICC along with two VIP holding rooms to accommodate heads of state and other important dignitaries. The elegantly-appointed Bali Room is a formal setting



Oriol Montal

with a private kitchenette. As an alternative, the newly-launched Nusa Dua Room is slightly smaller in size and exudes warmth with glimpses of Indonesian *batik* and locally-inspired furnishings.

Public areas throughout BICC provide extra space to gather before and after events. Club chairs together with designer seats are strategically positioned in clusters for business delegates to network in comfort. The entire centre incorporates accessible hallways, wide doors and elevators, making it a wheelchair-friendly facility.

SPACE-WISE AND SPACE WISE

Mangupura Hall has been tastefully refreshed with



customised carpeting, wall panels, and an acoustic ceiling. At almost 2000 sqm in size, this spacious venue has a built-in stage and accommodates 2500 meeting delegates in a theatre-style setup.

BICC's auditorium, with its 506 built-in seats, has also been given a smart update and is the only tiered theatre of its kind in Bali. Anticipating international and domestic business needs, BICC now has a total of 26 revitalised meeting rooms.

A large exhibition hall, also on the ground floor, overlooks a manicured stretch of garden. This multi-functional space covers 1363 sqm and has an internal

staircase that provides access to a gallery on the upper floor. Just next door is The Cafe, a contemporary-styled spot to indulge in light bites and refreshments.

More meeting rooms with varying layouts and table configurations can be found on the level above. Each takes on the name of a major Indonesian city and is styled to further highlight local creativity through the use of traditional textiles and uplifting colours. There is also a decorative stone wall carved by Balinese artisans to depict scenes from ancient Hindu mythology.

Another brand-new facility is The Lounge, located on the second floor of BICC. This modern space has

QUICK STATS

In 2018, business from India accounted for five per cent of the total business at the property, mainly from the leisure segment.



Our occupancy and RevPAR increased by more than 15 per cent from 2017



full-length windows, a lively décor, and relaxed ambience for the pleasure of in-house delegates. It has a fully-stocked bar and an assortment of table settings.

How was 2018 in terms of occupancy and RevPAR? What's the target for 2019?

The year 2018 was extremely productive, as we proudly hosted the International Monetary Fund – World Bank, Annual Meetings 2018. Our occupancy and RevPAR increased by more than 15 per cent in comparison to 2017. Our target for 2019 would be to maintain an optimal occupancy level and RevPAR performance. In 2019, we also expect to welcome several major corporate and association group meetings.

style

Oriol Montal, General Manager, The Westin Resort Nusa Dua in Bali and Bali International Convention Centre (BICC), talks in detail about the MiCE venues there



Mövenpick KLIA, a one-stop shop

Mövenpick Hotel and Convention Centre KLIA is an ideal property for business guests, with proximity to the airport and expansive meeting facilities topping the charts

Tripti Mehta



Hairul Maharis



Situated at a short distance from both KLIA and KLIA2 airports in Kuala Lumpur is Mövenpick Hotel and Convention Centre KLIA, a 333-room property that offers modern facilities and a state-of-the-art convention centre. The hotel is a perfect stop for leisure guests and MiCE travellers to the Malaysian capital. Speaking about the uniqueness of the property, **Hairul Maharis**, General Manger, Mövenpick Hotel and Convention Centre KLIA, says, “The overall architecture has an Islamic influence. The property is

the first international brand in Malaysia to adhere to Islamic law. The unique shape of the building attracts onlookers as well as guests. The cocoon-shaped spa pods located at the centre of the hotel, on the ground floor, provide relaxing foot and shoulder massages. The hotel also has its own herb garden.” Rooms at Mövenpick Hotel and Convention Centre KLIA are categorised under Royal Suite, Superior Room, Deluxe Room, Executive Room, Suite, and Presidential Suite.

Post its soft opening in July 2018, Maharis says,

The unique shape of the building attracts onlookers as well as guests

the property has picked up on bookings. It has also received immense support from the government, the corporate sector, and the transient business sector.

MULTIFARIOUS VENUES

The open exhibition space at Mövenpick Hotel



WHAT'S AROUND?

- Masjid Sultan Abdul Samad KLIA
- Mitsui Outlet Park KLIA Sepang
- Sepang International Circuit
- Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA & KLIA2)



& Convention Centre KLIA covers up to 1287 sqm of floor space and accommodates 17 meeting rooms that can host up to 1800 people. Maharis says, "The Convention Centre stretches across 2386 sqm on the ground floor, offering clients the possibility of using mobile stages, lighting rigs, and the latest audio-visual technologies. It can be sub-divided into two 1193 sqm Mentari halls or four halls ranging from 393 to 1193 sqm." The Mentari ballroom accommodates up to 2800 attendees in theatre-style seating and up to a maximum of 1500 in a sit-

down dinner format when divided into four break-up rooms. There are six meeting rooms on the first floor ranging from 24.3 sqm to 87.8 sqm (Bintang Room 1 to 6) and 10 Bayu seminar rooms on the first floor sized between 35 sqm and 45 sqm (Bayu 1 to 10). The hotel also houses the 777 sqm Astaka Circular Hall, an ideal venue for an exhibition or a pre-wedding event. A committed event planner will also help guests every step of the way.

TAILOR-MADE SERVICES

Proximity to the airport and a huge ballroom that is ideal for weddings of scale

The convention centre stretches across 2386 sqm on the ground floor of the hotel

bring in a lot of international guests. The hotel is fully-equipped to cater to each of their specific food needs. "The hotel has six outlets and our menus range from local to international foods. Besides that, we also provide vegetarian food in our menus. To cater to specific dietary requirements of guests, our chefs provide tailor-made menus," says Maharis. Food and beverage outlets at the hotel include Beranda, ideal for grab-and-go sandwiches and power lunches; Redup, the lobby lounge where guests can savour fragrant teas and coffees along with snacks of



We are planning to participate in tradeshows that involve Indian travellers

and Social Sustainability, with education being the common thread. We believe that even the smallest act can make the biggest difference,” he adds.

FACING CHALLENGES

The price war from competitors and the over-supply of rooms inventory from budget hotels surrounding the area are a challenge for the hotel. However, being a huge convention facility, the hotel utilises its merits to the T. Malaysia has several events running round-the-year and Mövenpick Hotel and



Asian and Middle Eastern origin; Bara, a barbeque haven known for its fun-to-eat kebabs inspired by Southeast Asia, Korea, Japan, and the Middle East; Sira, where guests can taste the authentic Teh Tarik and refuel with a quick snack; and Temasya, the all-day diner with live cooking and a fusion of international flavours for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Guests at the hotel, whether attending a wedding or simply staying at the property for business, can also utilise the tour desk service the hotel provides.

Though operated by an external company, this service is ideal for those wanting to make the most of an idle day with sightseeing tours and itineraries that give them a glimpse of the Malaysian capital, or those who are in the mood to take advantage of customised experiences that the desk can arrange.

GREEN OPERATIONS

The white expanse of the structure gives guests coming in from all over the world a sense of tranquillity and freshness. Sustainability also tops the hotel's list of priorities and it ensures

its operations, including F&B, are as eco-friendly as they can be. “Use of emails as a communication tool, downgrading the size and weight of materials, planting a herbal garden, and use of energy-saving products are some of the basic practices we follow,” says Maharis. “Our global sustainability programme, SHINE, aims to positively impact the environment, our people, and the local communities where we operate. It is one of our core corporate values and we divide our sustainability practices into three key pillars – Environment, Employer

Convention Centre KLIA plans to leverage the MiCE/ business crowd visiting Kuala Lumpur. “Our hotel is only about seven kilometres from Sepang International Circuit; we are targeting the racetrack venue as a potential market to attract those visiting Kuala Lumpur for various motor sports.” The hotel also aims to attract travellers from India. “We are planning to participate in tradeshows, which involve travellers from India, and are also working closely with our international sales office in India for wider coverage,” concludes Maharis.

MiCE in Khon Kaen



PATA Destination Marketing Forum, with the theme 'Growth with Goals', took place at Khon Kaen, Thailand, from November 28-30. The event received close to 300 delegates

PATA Destination Marketing Forum 2018 (PDMF 2018) was hosted by Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) and Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), with the support of Khon Kaen Province. It brought together delegates from both public and private sectors for inspiring and insightful discussions on some of the major issues in marketing and managing growth of tourism to lesser-known destinations.

Addressing delegates at AVANI Khon Kaen Hotel & Convention Centre, **Mario Hardy**, CEO, PATA, said, "This event stems from the need to help secondary



The forum shines the spotlight on new and emerging destinations



and tertiary areas grow and develop into widely recognised, bucket-listed tourism destinations. Aligning with our advocacy theme of tourism dispersal, the Forum shines the spotlight on new and emerging destinations, introducing delegates to lesser-known yet attractive corners of the world. It is designed to assist communities economically in these destinations by encouraging dispersion of tourists to new frontiers."

Stressing on the importance of holding such events, he added, "As travel and tourism becomes a greater contributor to the economic well-being of a destination, plans for responsible development and sustaining those elements generating growth must be taken into consideration."

PATA Destination Marketing Forum received delegates from all corners of the globe including Australia, Canada, China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong SAR, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Palau, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, USA, and Vietnam.

Speaking at the occasion, **Dr. Somsak Changtragul**, Governor of Khon Kaen Province, said, "I am delighted that Khon Kaen was selected to represent the north-eastern or Isan Thai local culture. This is the first time that you will touch the charm of Isan that is awaiting to be discovered."

Speaking about the uniqueness of Khon Kaen, **Supawan Teerarat**, Senior Vice President - Strategic





Business Development & Innovation, TCEB, said, “Khon Kaen is definitely a rising star in both tourism and MiCE. This province, however, is a member of Thailand north-eastern region, the most populated and poorest region, but rich in nature, culture, and history. This is the reason TCEB has highlighted Khon Kaen as one of the country’s cities for MiCE, along with Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Pattaya, and Phuket.”

Srisuda Wanaphinyosak, Deputy Governor for International Marketing (Europe, Africa, Middle East and the Americas), Tourism Authority of Thailand, said, “This PATA event is complied with TAT’s latest campaign of ‘Amazing Thailand Go Local’, which is a landmark project to promote the kingdom’s emerging generation of lesser-known destinations as well as the hub-and-hook strategy, with the main city acting as a hub and hook to the nearby lesser-known

(L-R) **Srisuda Wanaphinyosak**, Deputy Governor for International Marketing (Europe, Africa, Middle East and the Americas), TAT; **Dr. Somsak Changtragul**, Governor of Khon Kaen Province; **Supawan Teerarat**, Senior VP - Strategic Business Development & Innovation, TCEB and **Mario Hardy**, CEO, PATA.

'Amazing Thailand Go Local' promotes lesser-known destinations



destinations. Khon Kaen is a great example of a hub city and hook to Udon Thani, Nong Khai, and Kalasin. Also, through our technical tour earlier today, Khon Kaen has shown its charm of unique culture, passed-on tradition, tasty cuisine, and the true hospitality of the local people.”

Among the many topics discussed during the conference were ‘Status of Destination Management Around the World’, ‘The Role of Local Experiences in Destination Marketing’, ‘Managing the Disconnect between Destination Organisations and Communities’, ‘Transborder Marketing: Case Studies of GMS’, ‘Fighting Undertourism Through Innovative Storytelling’, ‘Calculating our Impact as Destinations’, and ‘Leveraging Technology to Revolutionise the Travel Space.’

Delegates also got the chance to meet industry

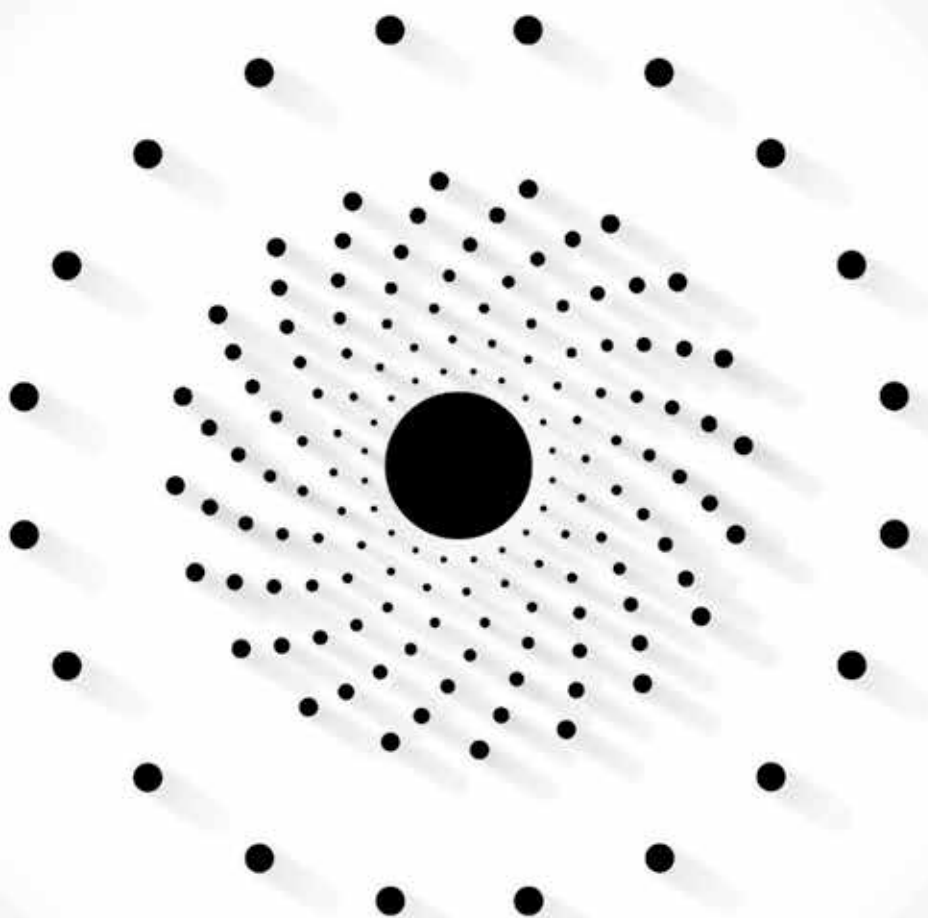
professionals representing Art Inspire Company, Capilano University, E-Tourism Frontiers, Forte Hotel Group, Go Beyond Asia, Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office, Resonance, Swisscontact, USAID, Venture Republic, and Yaana Ventures.

They also had the opportunity to join the Technical Tour and Tourism Marketing Treasure Hunt. Delegates were challenged to discover the gems of Khon Kaen and the surrounding area by engaging with the culture and people of Khon Kaen, taste their food, admire the landscape and savour their history, while leveraging digital tools to identify, collect, and promote their new-found travel ‘treasures’. The activities during the day were incorporated into the interactive digital marketing workshop that took place during the conference.

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Innovation is integral to MiCE

Veena World offers professionally-planned holidays with a personal touch. In an interview, **Sunila Patil**, Director, Veena World, talks about the company



Kindly tell us about the USP of the company.

Veena World believes in making the world affordable with continuous innovation in the world of tourism. We aim to create a community of happy travellers and develop an empowering culture that inspires team members, partners, and associates to strive for higher levels of achievement and growth. With 1000-plus team members, our team is truly our biggest strength. Moreover, with innovation being at the core of Veena World, we constantly strive to explore new destinations and touring concepts, be it in India or around the world. With 200-plus preferred sales partners, 1000-plus associates worldwide and more than 350,000 guests in just five years, we believe that at Veena World, although numbers count, people matter.

Could you elaborate on the recently-launched inbound tours for India?

With Veena World's team comprising about 450 experienced tour managers, there couldn't have been a better time to explore the inbound market. With tours across popular and offbeat destinations in India, from Rajasthan and Kerala to Leh, Ladakh and the Northeast, Veena World has been taking its thousands of guests on a rendezvous with the soul of the country. We thought it was time we took a step ahead to serve our guests from across the globe and show our incredible India to the world. Even before we officially launched our inbound division, we had inbound guests travelling with us, be it NRIs or foreign nationals. We have arranged Bollywood dance sessions for them, have had trails

With 1000-plus team members, our team is truly our biggest strength

that introduce them to the ancient culture of India, and have also catered to an international yoga group, comprising more than 150 members, who travelled across Maharashtra. Veena World also participates in the World Travel Market (WTM) every year.

MiCE is all about innovation. How have you applied the same to different segments of MiCE in your company?

Each corporate travels with a different purpose – be it an annual general meeting, dealer incentives, conferences, or exhibitions. They may or may not approach us with a particular destination in mind, but we put our experience and expertise to suggest to them destinations befitting their needs and even design bespoke touring programmes for them.

Recently, Veena World successfully executed its very first destination wedding at a palace in Jaipur. All arrangements were made just as the bride, groom, and their families wanted. The NRI families flew in from Australia, with their friends and relatives arriving from the various parts of the world and India. In the past, we have arranged a valentine's special tour for a group of doctors, a Japan tour for a corporate, which included many authentic and local experiences such as sumo wrestling, etc.

Which trends, according to you, are going to influence the MiCE industry in 2019?

Outbound as well as inbound travel is here to grow. At the same time, even domestic travel is on the rise. The new hotel properties and airports coming up in India and around the world will only add to a stronger infrastructure required for smooth MiCE operations. The mega-project of an exhibition-cum-convention centre, which will also include a commercial complex and service apartments coming up in Mumbai's BKC, will certainly overcome the dearth for world-class convention centres in Mumbai and be a feather in the cap of the financial capital of India. Moreover, Central Europe and Central Asia, which are gradually rising above their nascent stage for MiCE travel, will only get more impetus in the near future and will establish themselves as prime destinations for MiCE.



A toast to those who lead the way

India Travel Awards & India MiCE Awards, in their latest edition, felicitated the best of the best from every segment of the fraternity

Nisha Verma

A name to be reckoned with, India Travel Awards & India MiCE Awards concluded its latest edition at Hotel Clarks Shiraz, Agra. In attendance were stalwarts of the MiCE, hospitality, and travel industry from across the country. The chief guest for the evening, **Satyajeet Rajan**, Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, felicitated and congratulated the winners for their contribution.

Addressing the audience, he said, "Being an entrepreneur in India is difficult, and I must congratulate everyone for being a part of the MiCE and travel business and achieving so much. We, at Ministry of Tourism, have always tried to help entrepreneurs with finding solutions to problems. The tourism sector has contributed greatly to generating employment." Claiming that those who focus on experiential tourism will be the game changers in the travel industry, Rajan added, "Those who create trends or bring

in innovation are going to succeed. I wish India Travel Awards & India MiCE Awards success. The way awardees have been chosen is very participative, and the selection process is very good and involves the industry at large." The award ceremony was also graced by **Manvinder Sandhu**, first runner-up at Gladrags Mrs India.

Attended by 150 guests from the MiCE, tourism and hospitality industries, the award ceremony acknowledged achievers in various fields. **Sanjeet**, Mentor, India Travel Awards & India MiCE Awards, said, "It is our aim to recognise, felicitate, and reward outstanding contribution in the MiCE industry. These awards are powered by TravTalk and MiCEtalk, India's leading travel and MiCE publications, respectively."

Talking about the industry, he said, "The Indian MiCE industry is currently pegged at ₹25,000 crore and is expected to double in the next





two years. The potential is huge! These awards have been convened to recognise excellence, hard work, and success. Today, the industry is synonymous with progress and opportunity." He also said that these awards aimed to celebrate global players, both big and small.

The awards are divided into four categories: personal awards are for the legends of today and tomorrow, business awards are for organisations that have set benchmarks in their respective field and consistently exceeded expectations, trending awards are decided by critics and finally, partner awards for those who have contributed to making the event a grand success. Winners are selected through an online nomination process, followed by online voting, and finalised after a jury verdict.

Thanking the team and members of the jury for bestowing this honour upon him, **PS Duggal**,

Director, Minar Group, who entered the Gallery of Legends, said, "I am happy to receive this award and hope to continue working for the industry with the same vigour." Demonstrating his enthusiasm, **Himanshu Patil**, Director, Kesari Tours, who was chosen as DDP Trailblazer for his contribution in the growth of the company and the industry at large, said, "The team behind the awards has set very high standards, right from selection to execution. It was a great show."

The Face of the Future award went to **SMA Sheeraz**, Managing Director, Sheeraz Tours, who thanked the team and said, "We started our business in 2007, and now it's the main market because every tourism board and airline is focusing on Tier-II cities. We are working very hard to improve tourism in our state and this award would certainly encourage us to do more."



Celebrating excellence in **Travel & MiCE**

India Travel Awards & India MiCE Awards were attended by the who's who of the industry. The black-tie award ceremony was a celebration of achievers and their resolve. With tourism in India growing exponentially, there is an even greater need to celebrate these achievements



GALLERY OF LEGENDS PS Duggal, Director, Minar Group



DDP TRAILBLAZER Himanshu Patil, Director, Kesari Tours



FACE OF THE FUTURE SMA Sheeraz, Managing Director, Sheeraz Tours



BEST MICE ORGANISER Mach Conferences



BEST ORGANISER OF CONFERENCES - DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL Ice Group India



BEST MICE COMPANY Concept Travel & Conferences



BEST VENUE FOR LAUNCHES – TIER II Paradise Village Beach Resort, Goa



LEADING MICE OPERATOR dnata



BEST MICE OPERATOR SOUTH EAST ASIA TravelBulz



FASTEST GROWING MICE TRAVEL AGENCY SKIL



BEST DEBUT BUSINESS HOTEL Fern Goregaon, Mumbai



BEST ORGANISER OF INCENTIVE PROGRAMMES – INTERNATIONAL Ambassador Express Holidays



BEST MICE EXPERIENCE & INNOVATION Adiona Travels



FASTEST GROWING HOTEL BRAND Best Western Hotels & Resorts



BEST LUXURY WEDDING & MICE RESORT Ananta Udaipur



BEST MICE OPERATOR – EAST Icon Planners



BEST WEDDING & MICE HOTEL – WEST Sayaji Hotel Kolhapur



BEST MICE OPERATOR – WEST Altair Holidays



BEST LEISURE & MICE RESORT AND BEST WEDDING RESORT – NORTH Hotel Clarks Shiraz, Agra



BEST BUSINESS HOTEL – NORTH The Suryaa New Delhi



BEST MICE OPERATOR – DOMESTIC Cox & Kings



BEST DEBUT HOTEL – NORTH Aloft New Delhi Aerocity



Glimpses of the Event



SIP, swirl, SWALLOW!

Shital Kakkar Mehra, our etiquette expert, shares tips on drinking wine with panache at social gatherings and not letting the hullabaloo around wine selection get to you



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

With international wines making an entry into the Indian market, ordering red wine can be a daunting task for today's executive. Luckily, a few old rules have been relaxed - the concept of matching the colour of wine with the colour of meat has been junked. Today, you drink the wine you enjoy!

When ordering wine in a restaurant, follow these simple steps:

- The wine steward, sommelier, or maitre d'hôtel will hand over the wine menu to you.
- If you are not a wine connoisseur, play it safe by calling the sommelier and asking him/her for a recommendation. However, indicate the price range non-verbally by discreetly pointing to the wine that fits your budget and asking the sommelier for his/her opinion. Don't ask your guests or the sommelier to recommend one without indicating your price range, as they may recommend one that does not fit your budget. Consider the price before you order, as you may need more than a bottle during the course of the evening - a

simple rule of thumb is a bottle for every two wine drinkers.

- The sommelier will bring the chosen bottle of wine wrapped in a white napkin and present it to you. There are two things to look for on the wine label - the name and the vintage (date). Make sure it matches the wine you chose on the wine menu. If it does, acknowledge with a smile and a polite nod.
- The sommelier opens the wine bottle and hands the cork to you. Touch it and check for moistness. In the case of red wines, a red stain shows wine and cork contact, too.
- Next, sniff the cork. If it smells of vinegar or doesn't smell right, bring it to the attention of the sommelier. The bottle can be returned at this stage. If it smells of wine, politely nod your approval.
- The sommelier will pour a tiny sip into your glass - you swirl it and sniff the wine. Then, take a small sip, swirling the wine in your mouth and nod your approval.
- The wine will be poured first to your guests and last to you (the host).

“The concept of matching the colour of the wine with the colour of the meat has been junked”





India International Travel Mart (IITM)	Kochi	3-5
Adventure & Travel Show India	New Delhi	4-6
India International Travel & Tourism Exhibition	Mumbai	10-12
ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF)	Ha Long Bay, Vietnam	14-18
Global Aviation Summit	Mumbai	15-16
SATTE	Delhi-NCR	16-18
14 th ATOAI Annual Convention	Araku Valley	17-20
Business & Luxury Travel Mart (BLTM)	New Delhi	18-19
Outbound Travel Mart (OTM)	Mumbai	23-25
FITUR	Madrid, Spain	23-27

FEBRUARY 2019

National Aviation Infrastructure Show	Moscow, Russia	6-7
Tourest Travel Trade Fair	Tallinn, Estonia	8-10
TTF Chennai	Chennai	8-10
Hoteliers European Marketplace (HEM)	Seville, Spain	11
PATA Adventure Travel and Responsible Tourism Conference and Mart 2019 (ATRTCM)	Rishikesh	13-15
TTF Bengaluru	Bengaluru	15-17
AIME (Asia Pacific Incentives & Meetings Event)	Melbourne, Australia	18-20
Business Travel Show	London, UK	20-21
Ace of MICE	Istanbul, Turkey	20-22
India International Travel Mart (IITM)	Kolkata	22-24

MARCH 2019

ITB Berlin	Berlin, Germany	6-10
AMOUR Asia Pacific	Langkawi, Malaysia	13-16
IT&CM CHINA	Shanghai, China	19-21
IBTM Arabia	Abu Dhabi, UAE	25-27



FITUR 2019 adds new MiCE event

FITUR is to be held from January 23-27 in the fairgrounds of IFEMA

FITUR 2019 has broadened business opportunities in its new B2B event, FITUR MITM – MICE & Business. This new B2B space is focused on MiCE tourism. FITUR MITM – MICE & Business, co-organised with MITM Events – GSAR Marketing, will offer the opportunity to form business ties among a selection of professionals and exhibitors attending the 2019 edition of FITUR that is to be held from January 23-27 in the fairgrounds of IFEMA.

International exhibitors at AIME

Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME) is set for Feb 2019



Melbourne's Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event

(AIME) has announced that a series of international exhibitors are returning to showcase at the 2019 event. Leading the comeback are Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) and Dubai Business Events & Convention Bureau (DBE), both identifying the opportunity to connect with the richest pool of quality international buyers attending AIME over the years. This comes as a result of the refreshed vision, which has overhauled the way exhibitors take part in the event. Endorsing AIME's pre-eminence in the MiCE market, TCEB Australia Representative, **Nicole Tingey** from Clockwise Consulting, commented, "Australia and the broader APAC region have strong ties with the Kingdom of Thailand, and AIME presents the perfect opportunity to promote Thailand as a key destination for business events due to its excellent reputation for service, aviation links, high quality hotels, convention centres, and appealing choice of experiences for incentive groups."

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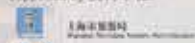
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FROM FROWNS TO SMILES

How to conduct yourself well

It is essential to maintain decorum when attending an event. Counsellor **Shivani Misri Sadhoo** shares tips on how best to conduct oneself at an international conference



Shivani Misri Sadhoo
Founder
Saarthi Counselling
Services

An international conference or seminar offers attendees an opportunity to demonstrate professionalism, skill, and knowledge. So, it may be helpful to keep some pointers in mind while you are there.

PLAN IN ADVANCE

Many conference or seminar planners have a list of things you need to carry along. You need to include a cellphone, laptop, pens, business cards and ID cards, and sometimes all these. Keep in mind to keep conference-related material that has been sent ahead. Jot down the names and something about the people you need to address.

PROPER ATTIRE

When deciding on your conference wardrobe, make sure you understand the dress code of the event. Usually, it could be a suit, tie, or dark socks for men, and hose and closed-toed shoes for women. Men can wear a suit, while women may wear formals with coordinated slacks, tops, and jackets.

REPUTATION AND CONDUCT

Safeguard yourself as well as your country's reputation at all times. Speak in a polite and positive manner. While listening, pay attention - you never know who may be addressing! Beverages may be served at the conference so know your limit.

BEHAVIOUR TIPS

- Be on time
- During speeches, focus and listen
- Don't get flustered or nervous
- Jot down your questions; do not interrupt the speaker
- Greet and thank everybody after you deliver a speech

ELECTRONIC GADGETS

Although it's usually expected that you'll carry your electronics gadget(s) with you, keep the laptop on if you bring it to the seminar, so you don't have to hurry to check anything. Ensure your cellphone is on silent mode.

CARRY YOUR BUSINESS AND ID CARDS

It is always better to carry your business or ID card when you are at any international seminar/conference because you never know when you may need to leave the hall.

RESPECT OTHERS

While at an international conference/seminar, chances are very high that you will meet people from different cultures. Show respect to everyone!

“

Safeguard yourself as well as your country's reputation at all times. Be polite and positive

”

movements



Michelle Frymire
Executive VP & CFO
Carlson Wagonlit Travel

Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT) has appointed Michelle Frymire as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Based in Minneapolis, Frymire will report to Kurt Ekert, President & CEO of CWT, and serve as a member of the CWT Executive Leadership team. Prior to this appointment, she was CFO at a portfolio company of private equity firm Kohlberg & Co. Frymire has also previously held senior finance roles at ServiceMaster, Delta Air Lines, Continental Airlines, and American Airlines.



Ranju Singh
Complex General Manager
Novotel Goa Shrem Hotel and
Novotel Goa Resort & Spa Hotel

Ranju Singh has been appointed as Complex General Manager for Novotel Goa Shrem Hotel and Novotel Goa Resort & Spa Hotel. A seasoned hotelier, Singh brings with him over 25 years of rich hospitality experience with several brands including Taj and Hyatt Hotels. Prior to joining AccorHotels, he was the General Manager at Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa. In the new role, Singh will be responsible for overall management, strategic direction, and leading the two established properties while continuing to delight guests.



Piyyush Kapoor
General Manager
JW Marriott Mussoorie Walnut
Grove Resort & Spa

Piyyush Kapoor has been appointed as the General Manager for JW Marriott Mussoorie Walnut Grove Resort & Spa. A seasoned hotelier, he brings close to two decades of proficiency in the hospitality industry. Through his career, he has been associated with leading domestic and international brands holding key positions. Kapoor's journey as a leader in the industry began in 2007 with Holiday Inn, Manali, followed by Crowne Plaza, Mussoorie and The Lalit, Jaipur. He takes over from being GM at Radisson Blu Udaipur.



Anmol Ahluwalia
General Manager
Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa and Taj Holiday Village
Resort & Spa, Goa

Anmol Ahluwalia has been promoted as General Manager - North Goa, in charge of Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa and Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa. Ahluwalia is known for his passion and commitment to see his vision through. With IHCL since 2005, he has almost two decades of experience in luxury hospitality. Over the years he has had a rich and varied experience and spearheaded the housekeeping and accommodations for various hotels across IHCL, including Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa, Taj Bengal, Taj Chandigarh, Taj Lands End, and Vivanta Panaji before being appointed as General Manager of Taj Wellington Mews (Mumbai) in 2015.



Puneet Chaudhry
General Manager
Radisson Blu Hotel New
Delhi Paschim Vihar

Puneet Chaudhry has been brought on board as the new General Manager of Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Paschim Vihar. He is a seasoned hotelier with over 19 years of experience in the industry and has been associated with Radisson Hotel Group for more than nine years. In the new role, Chaudhry will spearhead the growth and development of the hotel, aided by his core expertise in delivering successful outcomes by empowering teams and building seamless and efficient processes.



Sumit Gogia
General Manager
Heritage Village Resort & Spa, Manesar

Sumit Gogia has been appointed as the General Manager at Heritage Village Resort & Spa, Manesar. In the new role, he will be responsible for all aspects of the hotel's operational functions along with sales, marketing, and revenue management. Gogia's experience as a hotelier spans over 18 years. While more recently he was the Director of Events with Hyatt Regency Delhi, he has previously worked with prominent brands like The Leela Palace, Hotels & Resorts; Shangri-La Hotels; and The Imperial New Delhi.



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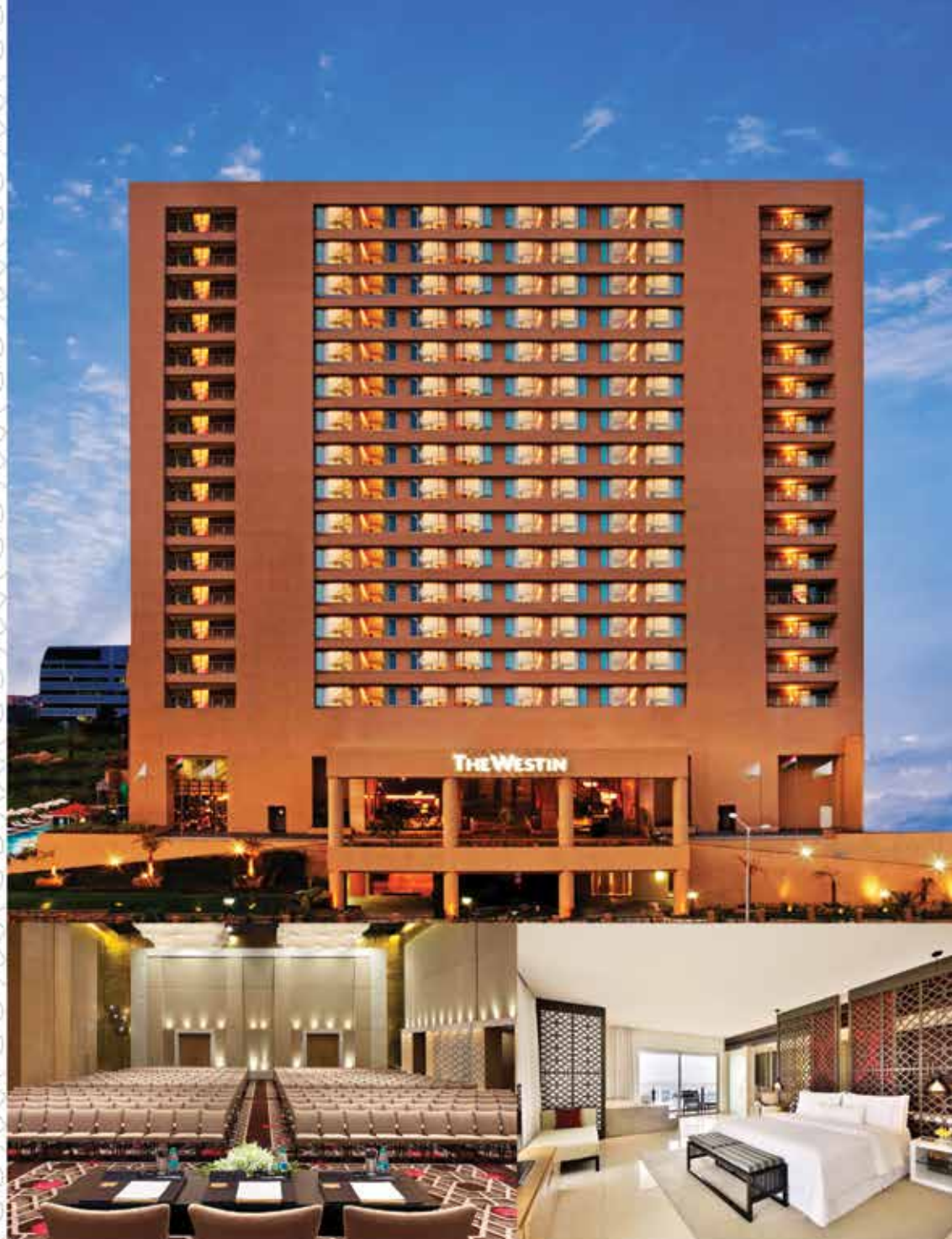
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