

FOR THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL

TravelBizMonitor

VOL 16 | ISSUE 3 | PAGES 16

AUGUST, 2022

PRICE: ₹40

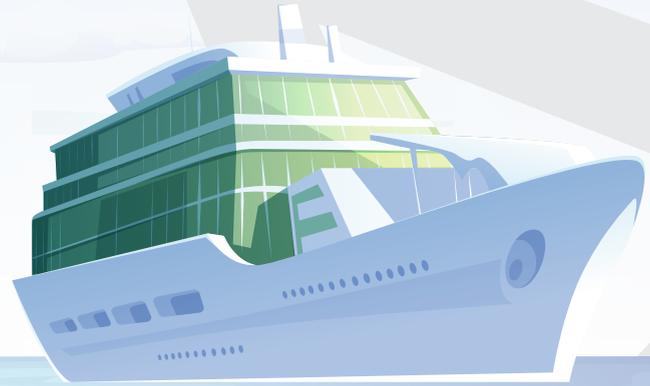
www.travelbizmonitor.com

1

Protecting you 24x7 on air, land & *sea!*

ASEGŌ

Travel Assistance . Insurance



EXCLUSIVE CRUISE COVER BENEFITS



Medical emergency cover including Covid-19



Trip cancellation and interruption



Emergency medical evacuation



Cruise interruption



Unused excursions due to cabin confinement



Missed cruise departures

and much more...



24x7 Worldwide
Medical Assistance



Family
Protection



Roadside
Assistance



Travel
Insurance

For partnership and more details, contact : +91 22 6787 2037 | customercare@asego.in

Insurance is a subject matter of solicitation. Content expressed in this poster does not accept any liability of any sort unless confirmed by an authorized representative of Asego. All Insurance policies are sold under the Corporate Agency of Asego Insurance LLP bearing IRDAI registration no. CA0776, with insurance underwritten by IRDAI authorised Insurer. 24x7 helpline: +91 22 67872 037 | customercare@asego.in | claims@asego.in





CONNECT



**FASTEN
YOUR SEATBELT!**

As we unleash the
new virtual world of
Travel & Tourism.

.....

**Register as an
Exhibitor/ Buyer today!**

<https://bit.ly/3txlbME>

A recurring event platform

- Certified global exhibitors
- Seminars to educate, empower and help grow manifold
- Professionals from across India
- Verified buyer base of over 50k professionals



www.gps-india.com



harmandeep@gps-india.com
madhu@gps-india.com



+919225248070
+919820224272

FOR THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL

TravelBizMonitor

VOL 16 | ISSUE 3 | PAGES 16

AUGUST, 2022

PRICE: ₹40

www.travelbizmonitor.com

3

Swadesh Darshan 2.0 to create jobs, enhance skill development: Reddy

TBM Staff | Mumbai

The Ministry of Tourism has now revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme with an objective to create jobs, including self-employment for local communities, and preserve and enhance the local cultural and natural resources, the government has said.

The Ministry under this scheme provides financial assistance to state governments or Union Territory administrations or central agencies for development of tourism infrastructure in the country.

The projects under this scheme are sanctioned subject to availability of funds, submission of suitable detailed project reports (DPR), adherence to scheme guidelines and utilisation of funds released earlier, among others.

The government under its Swadesh Darshan

Scheme (SDS) has sanctioned 10 projects under the theme of Coastal Circuit, the Ministry said in a statement.

The Ministry of Tourism has now revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0) in order to develop sustainable and responsible destination centric approach with objectives such as enhancing contribution of tourism to local economies; creating jobs including self-employment for local communities; and enhancing skills of local youth in tourism and hospitality.

Other objectives include increasing private sector investment in tourism and hospitality; and preserving and enhancing local cultural and natural resources, officials said.

"In order to harness the potential of cruise tourism in the country, a task force has been constituted with secretary (tourism) as the

chairman and secretary (shipping) as the co-chairman. The task force consists of representatives from the ports, ministries of health, home Affairs, external affairs, customs, CISF, coastal states, among others. The 13th meeting of the Task Force on Cruise Tourism was held on 27.04.2022," it added.

The first Incredible India International Cruise Conference was held on May 14-15, 2022 in Mumbai. It was the first cruise conference to bring all stakeholders together. Further, the Ministry of Tourism undertakes various promotional activities in the international and domestic markets to promote tourism products of the country, including coastal tourism in a holistic manner. This includes release of media campaigns under 'Incredible India' brand-line, promotional events and social media promotions. The Ministry of Tourism is promoting Coastal Tourism through its website, it said.

This information was given by Union Minister of Tourism G Kishan Reddy in a written reply in Lok Sabha, the statement said. ♦



G KISHAN REDDY
 Minister of Tourism,
 Government of India

Kempinski Hotels mulling to re-enter India: Amanda Elder

Prasenjit Chakraborty | Mumbai

"Kempinski Hotels want to come to India," this was stated by Amanda Elder, Member of the Management Board & Chief Commercial Officer, Kempinski Hotels, while speaking to **TravelBiz Monitor** in Mumbai. "We truly love to find some owned properties and want to offer similar experiences that we provide in Europe and other places. We are looking for good opportunities and right locations," said Elder.

Citing reasons for organising roadshows in Delhi and Mumbai, she said that there is a pent up demand for travel in India and the Indian travellers love to stay in Kempinski properties. "Indian guests are very much aware of the brand Kempinski unlike their counterparts in other countries. We absolutely love that recognition," said Elder. And added, "Officially, we are doing roadshows in Delhi and Mumbai this time. But

some of our colleagues are going to other parts of India exploring the potential of those markets. I believe Bangalore, Pune etc. are the cities which also offer tremendous scope for us."

Talking about target segment, she said that besides family, wedding and MICE are also their focus areas from this market. "We have beautiful properties and strongly feel that Indian customers trust Kempinski for their most beautiful day in life," she pointed out.

On MICE front, they are looking for both large and small incentive groups from India. "We are also looking for corporate meetings and will deliver what the organisers want to achieve," she said.

Throwing light on business prospects, Elder said that she is pretty sure that things will be much better in this year. "Our management is excited to sign deals in Malaysia, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Dubai and China. In this, we

may take over some properties and others to come up in two years time," she said.

On sustainability, Elder said that Kempinski is very active on this front and made all its properties plastic-free. "We even made sure our bathroom amenities are sustainable. We also make sure that food wastages across our properties is minimum.

Terming India as one of the most important markets for Kempinski, Elder said, "One of the fastest growing demographics before the pandemic. India would be around about the eighth or ninth country in terms of the number of room nights. For us, India ranks immediately after US, China, Germany, Middle East and UK. We are excited about India market," pointed out Elder. ♦



AMANDA ELDER
 CCO, Kempinski Hotels



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & CEO

Sheldon Santwan

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Prasenjit Chakraborty

prasenjit.chakraborty@saffronsynergies.in

+91 9819263364

EDITORIAL TEAM

MUMBAI

CHIEF SUB-EDITOR: Disha Shah Ghosh

disha.shah@saffronsynergies.in

SR.REPORTER: Asmita Mukherjee

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in

CONTRIBUTORS

Hugh & Colleen Gantzer, Anurag Yadav,

Hector D'souza & Amala Dantas

MARKETING TEAM

MUMBAI

HEAD - SALES & MARKETING

Ajay Wadode

+91 8087127814

ajay.wadode@saffronsynergies.in

GOA

HEAD - GOA

Harshad R. Bhonsle

+91 8999047490

harshadrhonsle@gmail.com

COORDINATION, SUBSCRIPTION & DATABASE

Gauri Sawant: +91 8369080796

gauri.sawant@saffronsynergies.in

*Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act



Saffron Synergies

Sterling House, 5/7 Sorabji Santuk Lane,
Opp. Dr. Cawasji Hormasji Street, Dhobi Talao, Marine Lines (E),
Mumbai 400 002
Tel: 91-22-6101 1700/701 Fax: 91-22-6712 1854

PLEASE, NO MORE MONKEY BUSINESS AGAIN!

Since we are once bitten we should be twice shy and if at all, err on the side of caution.

The prevarication and hesitancy in the approach seem as obvious as false bravado under threat. The overall attitude towards the latest virus on the block leaves the field open to all sorts of pitfalls and glitches.

Reports state WHO had cautioned that by the first week of August, 27,000 monkeypox cases could well be full-blown in 88 countries. It has also placed a caveat that making predictions beyond that is complex. As if this isn't confusing enough, we are told that there is likely to be sustained transmission for several months and possibly longer before the full heat of the monkeypox virus unleashes itself on the world.

Fits and starts in communication about the virus can confound an already tremulous business community. After three cases in Kerala, headlines were flashed about a young man in Delhi who had no history of foreign travel. The media report's insinuating subtext was quite obvious in adding that 'he had recently attended a 'stag' party at a resort in Manali. It also implied the possibility the virus has moved into the mode where it's spreading within the community and not from contact with those arriving from foreign shores.

In other words, with stock images of blistered hands accompanying reports about the virus, it is surprising that panic isn't as widespread yet.

According to WHO, it is for the first time that chains of transmission are being reported without known epidemiological links. Experts advocate the adoption of a coordinated multidisciplinary 'One Health' approach to effectively and efficiently tackle spread of such diseases. As of now, most government departments — human health, veterinary, agricultural, and environmental agencies work in isolation with separate mandates and budgets.

We must remember India's handling of Covid was quite exceptional despite tremendous odds yet disruption in life and business was enormous. Travel has just started limping back to normal so the industry and the government must level with each other.

Anurag Yadav
Industry Expert

Anurag Yadav is a travel author and columnist, writing on hospitality and design. An avid traveller, he has published five books and divides his time equally between Delhi and London.

The views expressed in the column are of the author, and may or may not be endorsed by the publication.

FOR THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL TravelBizMonitor EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD



Paramjit Bawa
Founder & CEO
Auxilia Networks



Carl Dantas
Chairman Emeritus
ETAA



Rakshit Desai
CEO
TPCconnects



Rajiv Duggal
Director
Travel Specialists LLP



Manoj Gursahani
President
Visit USA Committee



T C Guruprasad
Managing Director &
Board Member, EbixCash



Zubin Karkaria
CEO
VFS Global Group



Dev Karvat
CEO
Karvat Group



Jehangir Katgara
CMD
Trail Blazer Tours India Pvt Ltd



Kapil Kaul
CEO - India & Middle East,
CAPA



Mark Mendes
Industry Consultant



Iqbal Mulla
Chairman, Treasure Tourism
Corporation Ltd



Sheetal Munshaw
Director
Atout France, India



E M Najeeb
Chairman
ATE Group of Companies



Ankush Nijhawan
MD, Nijhawan Group &
Co-Founder, TBO Group



Ajay Prakash
Chief Executive, Nomad
Travels & President - IIPT India



Sriram Rajmohan
CEO & MD
Club7 Holidays Ltd.



Naresh Rawal
Vice President - Sales & Marketing,
Resorts World Cruises



Dhananjay Saliakar
Head - Sales & Marketing,
Fortune Hotels



Arjun Sharma
Chairman, Le Passage to India
& MD Select Group



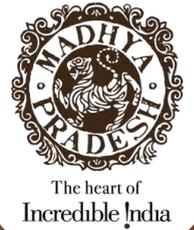
Vasudha Sondhi
Managing Director
OMPL Group



Sheema Vohra
Managing Director
Sartha Global Marketing



Kiran Yadav
VP
IIPT India



Experience safe, sustainable and responsible tourism in MP

Are you a woman traveller and want to explore many beautiful places and adventure activities without fear? Are you the one who wants to witness the making of beautiful keepsakes with locals and take it with you as a memory to cherish? Or you are a person who wants to soak into the tribal or rural culture? Then Madhya Pradesh is the place for you.

To experience what has been mentioned above, it is important to keep these places safe, friendly, and beautiful along with preserving their culture and traditions. All these responsibilities are being done by the natives for ages. Hence, Madhya Pradesh understands its responsibilities not only to its tourists but also to the local people who have been preserving the beautiful ancient culture of the state.

Madhya Pradesh Tourism is intensely working on its Responsible Tourism Mission, which is being run with an aim to preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the state. The mission aspires to provide an additional income and a better livelihood to locals, traditional artisans, and marginalized people along with creating social and environmental stability.

Responsible Tourism is a vital part of a state to maximize the benefits to local communities and minimize negative social or environmental impact, helping local people to preserve fragile cultures and habitats.

For this, the state tourism department has signed MOU with Responsible Tourism mission- Kerala, International centers for responsible tourism UK and UN women.

The major components that taken under the umbrella of Responsible Tourism Mission are, community development, economic development, cultural protection and exchange, conservation of environment, promotion of arts and crafts, empowering human capital and building talents through skilling and training, public health and hygiene, peace building and happiness, stakeholders promotion programs etc.

There are many projects being implemented under this:

- Rural Tourism
- Safe Tourism Destinations for Women in Madhya Pradesh
- Responsible Souvenir
- Solid waste management- clean destination
- Project Humsafar – Accessible for all
- Skilling of youths

Let's have a look at a few projects:

Rural tourism: Madhya Pradesh Tourism (MPT) brought together gram stays, farm stays, and homestays as safe and culturally rich stay options. It is being run with the objective of economic development and social



development of the local community associated with the tourism sector. This project is being implemented in 100 selected villages of Madhya Pradesh that represent the culture of various parts of the state. The major components, of the project, are a convenient stay in the village, local excursions, local cuisines and culture, art and crafts, and skill and training. The department has initiated work in 60 villages by partnering with some NGOs. The department is also focused to benefit the rural communities by holding their hands for agri-based tourism. The aim of this project is to provide direct and indirect livelihood opportunities to 10 thousand families. Six villages have already started hosting the guests.

Responsible Souvenir: Madhya Pradesh is not only a state to explore its heritage, culture, adventure, wildlife,

Madhya Pradesh understands its responsibility not only toward its tourists but also to those who have maintained the beauty and preserved the ancient culture of the state



spiritual, food, rural, and wellness destinations but it is also a hub to experience amazing arts and crafts. To prepare such beautiful souvenirs, MPT is promoting the local artisans by developing handloom and handicrafts through responsible souvenirs development projects. MPT has also hand-hold the artisan for designing and is developing market linkages for them. Two art and craft centers have already been started in Madla and Dhamna villages, where the community learns and produces new crafts at fair prices.

Safe tourism destination for women in MP

This vibrant state offers destinations where travelling alone is not just comfortable but one can also get to taste of freedom and fun without fear. With an aim to create women-friendly environment especially at the tourism destinations with the support of the local community, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board is implementing the project 'safe tourism destinations for women in Madhya Pradesh'. The main objectives of this project are coordination among stakeholders for developing women-friendly public infrastructure, community participation and awareness of women safety and building community-based institutions. As many as 50 districts are being focused under this project. To make tourist destinations women friendly, the state tourism body is maximizing women participation through trainings in e-riksha or taxi driving, scout leader, city explorer, location manager, security guard, cook etc. ♦



TAAI's maiden cruising Convention to boost cruise tourism prospects of India

With over 7,000 km of coastline and a vast untapped network of lakes and rivers, India's potential in cruise tourism is quite evident. TAAI's decision to organise its 66th convention on cruise is a step in right direction.

Several attractions along its 7,500 km long coastline and vast river systems, India's potential to emerge as an ideal cruise destination is quite pertinent. Taking due note, the TAAI (Travel Agents Association of India) has decided to organise its 66th Convention on a cruise ship, Spectrum of the Seas in Singapore.

According to TAAI, early 18th century, forward thinkers and kings, introduced people to commercial cruise ship services. Although, some historians say that it started before that; however, the most essential part is that human beings realised the importance of cruising way long back. The 20th century saw an uprising in cruise tourism, and the corporate sector ventured into it to help develop a niche form of tourism that is now famously known as Cruise Tourism. Like a small town in itself, these large vessels give access to travellers to all major activities

which one may participate in and enjoy on land. And, perhaps, that's the reason the cruising businesses have picked up well lately.

Referring to developing the Cruise Tourism market in India, Jyoti Mayal, President shared that TAAI decided to organise its first-ever cruising Convention because of the reason that there is a huge untapped potential in the sector. "Niche in terms of value and services, Indian travellers, we are sure would be keen to get on to the vessels like Spectrum of Seas, to enjoy the fun-filled journey in the ocean," said Mayal.

Asia will be the market leader in the coming years in cruise tourism, apprised Mayal. According to her, regional tourism is picking up, and travellers now look at covering nearby destinations, and cruising could be the one-stop solution for them. The sector has witnessed exponential growth in the last decade, however, have gone through

a major slump too due to the pandemic. "But, now that travellers' confidence is high and all modes of travel are operational, we expect steady growth in tourism, especially cruising. With over 7,000 km of coastline and a vast untapped network of lakes and rivers, India's potential in cruise tourism is quite evident. However, due to a lack of infrastructure, India ranks quite low on the cruise tourism map of the world & we need to invest in building a home hub," pointed out Mayal.

Jay Bhatia, Vice President, TAAI, citing the vast coastline India has and therefore cruising could be the next big business for travel agents, said that given the number of travellers and gauging demand, Cruise Tourism can witness multi-fold growth within a few years. "India is witnessing a paradigm shift in terms of the development of modes of transport, be it roads, highways, air or railways and lately the ferry services, river cruise, etc. We are thankful to the

government for extensively promoting tourism and developing infrastructure and perhaps that's the reason a specific policy to promote all such modes has been charted out in the last few years. It is now the duty of the private sector, in collaboration with the travel trade, to come forward and bring cruising to India," Bhatia explained.

In addition, Bettaiah Lokesh, Hon. Secretary-General, TAAI said, "We wanted all our members to meet and greet, especially post-pandemic, and celebrate TAAI's convention to take forward the existing business relationships to new levels. We are thankful to the Royal Caribbean for extending the support and are eagerly looking forward to exploring the opportunities to bring such experiences to India."

From the cost perspective too, cruising is an affordable option, and therefore caters to tourists from all walks of life, supplemented Shreeram Patel, Hon Treasurer, TAAI. "Like any star hotel, it offers various options to choose from for accommodation. And, like a destination or a waterpark or from an entertainment perspective, the cruise offers everything at a reasonable cost. Be it travelling with friends, family or business partners, cruise addresses the needs and wants of all kinds of travellers," said Patel.

The moment TAAI has announced its 66th convention on a cruise in Singapore, the members and other stakeholders have shown tremendous interest to attend the event after a long time. TAAI is organising the event after a gap of two years and looking at the response the organisers believe that event is going to be a very successful one.

The Association said that they have already book 140 cabins for the convention and also talking to Royal Caribbean International for more cabins to accommodate the delegates. TAAI is expecting 300 delegates to participate in the event.

There will be lot of activities during the event shows, dance, music, casino experience etc that a cruise offers. "But our convention

industry," said TAAI.

The aim of the association is to promote cruise tourism in and from India along with giving impetus to regional tourism in the region among industry stakeholders. TAAI believes that the country has huge opportunities and it is high time to encash and pave the path for growth. During the event, there will be some interesting sessions. One such session -Ocean Chat – War Peace & Tourism. Aashish Gupta, CEO, FAITH, will moderate it. The other panelists are retired ambassadors Anil Wadhwa and Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa. The session will take place on August 23.

There is another session on the same day dubbed as-Connected Traveller. Prominent personalities like Kapil Kaul, CEO, CAPA India, Rodney D'Cruz, Assistant Director, Passenger and Cargo Services, India, Nepal & Bhutan, IATA, Ratna Chadha, CEO, TIRUN, Gresh Bindra, Vice President Operations, The Suryaa, Vinay Malhotra, Head of Global Sales, Indigo, will participate.

On August 24, there will be two important sessions-Partnerships Beyond Borders and Evolved Traveller. The first session Partnerships Beyond Borders will be moderated by Jay Bhatia, Vice President, TAAI, the other participants are G. Kamala Vardhana Rao, Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Chalaka Gajabahu, Chairman, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), Talgat Amanbayev, Chairman, Kazak Tourism and Dr. Dhananjay Regmi, Chief Executive Office, Nepal Tourism Board.

The second session-Partnerships Beyond Borders will also be moderated by Bhatia. The other panelists are Richard Roberts, Vice President - Strategic Solutions and Partnerships APAC, Travelport,

Amit Shukla, Vice President - B2B & Affiliates, MakeMyTrip, B Hariharan, Vice President, ITC Hotels.

Royal Caribbean International is also gearing up to extend warm welcome to delegates. Varun Chadha, CEO, Tirun Travel Marketing, which represents Royal Caribbean International in India, said that they are getting a bunch of the trade people together for 3 days to enjoy and experience their product. "Through this, we are getting the benefit of hosting more than 200 members of TAAI. To make their experience of a lifetime, we have made elaborate arrangements in terms of planning and designing the programme for the TAAI members," he said. ♦



Jyoti Mayal
President, TAAI



Jay Bhatia
Vice President, TAAI



Bettaiah Lokesh
Hon. Secretary-General,
TAAI



Shreeram Patel
Hon Treasurer,
TAAI

is all about meeting, networking, sharing knowledge of each other's experiences. We are sure that after attending the sessions our members will gain knowledge about the



Soaking in the endless beauty of South Africa

Asmita Mukherjee | Durban

While boarding the flight from Hyderabad to start off my journey to Durban at the invitation of South African Tourism, I was bombarded with a multitude of thoughts and emotions, and had adrenaline rushes just thinking about the time that I was going to spend over the next 10 days in the Rainbow Nation. I had read and heard much about the country's famed wildlife, culture, adventure sports, and of course, the food & wine. No wonder, I was expecting a lot from my next few days of bliss.

The flight from Hyderabad dropped me off in Mumbai, from where I boarded connecting flight to Dubai, and then hopped onto another one that finally reached me to Durban via Johannesburg. Upon landing at the King Shaka International Airport, I was instantly amazed by the glittering sunlight in the beautiful winter of the KwaZulu-Natal province. Friendly host Fundi and driver cum guide Nthato welcomed me at the airport, and the adventurous trip to explore the country slotted into first gear. The crystal clear blue sky filled with fluffy, white cotton ball clouds accompanied us on our journey to the Capital Zimbali Hotel.

Day 1- A first date with the golden beach, Zimbali

After a 30-minute drive filled with mesmerising views of the country, I reached the first stay of my trip - The Capital Zimbali, located at Ballito town in KwaZulu-Natal. The property had a vast and expansive backdrop of the golden beach and the deep blue Indian Ocean beyond. After a refreshing warm bath, I headed to Grimaldi's at the Dolphin Coast for dinner, and oh boy! the menu was so extensive - Crayfish, Pork Belly, Oyster, Beef, Prawn - Grimaldi's vast range of food and wine offerings led me to have quite a grand feast. After the heavy dinner, I called it a night as day two's itinerary was supposed to be filled with adventure activities, and I needed the energy to enjoy it to the fullest.

Day 2 - Fear is Temporary, Regret is Forever

The day started quite early, as early as 3 am as a lot of activities were planned for the day. It started with Shark Cage diving at Rocky Bay. Instructor and guide John Miller who operates The Shark Cage Diving KZN first briefed me about the various do's and don'ts of Shark Cage Diving. I quickly changed into diving gear to have a date with the sharks. After a boat ride of around 4 kilometres into the sea, I descended into the shark cage, which was by then surrounded by sharks of various types such as Blacktips, Hammerheads, and Duskie. John was kind enough to click underwater pictures and videos of the sharks while they encircled the cage giving me a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Although cage diving in close proximity to these predators sounds scary, in reality, it is fun, and even non-swimmers can enjoy the experience.

After an hour we reached back to the shore, dried up, had some hot coffee, and got rejuvenated, before heading out to experience another thrilling activity. My host took me to Wild 5 adventures at the Oribi Gorge featuring the highest swing in the world which is equivalent to launching off a 55-story building. The height was enough to freak





me out. I carefully descended the stairs, reached the spot, and mustering all my courage I jumped from the edge with my eyes wide open. The exhilarating free fall combined with the sound of the Lehr's Waterfall sent me into a state of nirvana which I just didn't want to end. But alas, good things didn't last and my activity was over in around 5 seconds. For this life-changing experience and the courage bestowed upon me by the almighty to take the dive, I was awarded a certificate of achievement which made me really proud and made it one of the most cherishable moments of my trip. The next activities on the list were walking on the 85-meter-long suspension bridge and zip-lining on the wild slide were merely child's play in comparison to the Gorge Swing activity. After filling my soul with all these adventure activities, I ended my day by having dinner at Lupa Osteria Restaurant in Ballito, where I had Risotto and Caesar Salad with sparkling wine to celebrate my achievements of the day.

Day 3 - Day out at the Mangrove swamps

The 3rd day started early at around 6.30 am by bidding goodbye to the Capital Zimbali and starting towards KwaZulu-Natal's Mangrove Swamps - The Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park for a boat cruise journey. The swamps are home to an impressive array of animal species such as mighty hippos and crocodiles.

After the boat cruise, I started off on my journey to the Thanda Safari - Private Game Reserve situated in the heart of the Elephant Coast at Umkhanyakude District. Upon reaching, I had to bid bye to my guide, Nthato as Thanda had its own modified Land Rover specially designed for the difficult terrains of the game reserve. The luxurious Thanda tent with meals and drinks was to be my camp for the next day and had much to offer including sightings of the famed Big Five.

Day 4 - From Thanda with love

This private game reserve – Thanda not only presented the crown jewel of Africa, the Big 5 animals but also treated me to relaxing body massages and scrumptious food. Game ranger Peace and trekker Zebulon took me on safaris where I witnessed majestic lions, mighty elephants, beautiful rhinos, strong African buffaloes, and wily leopards, all in their natural glory. The wow moment for me was catching a glimpse of the lions. Other animals which graced me with their presence were the spiral-horned antelopes and zebras. On the game drives, Peace introduced me to Amarula – a cream liqueur from South Africa made with the fruit of the African marula tree, whose taste still lingers with me. Thanda truly opened my eyes to the beauty of Africa.

Day 5 - Ride with the Tide

After the morning game drive and breakfast, it was time for me to bid goodbye to the Thanda Lodge, Peace and Zebulon. Nthato straight away took me to the Durban south beach, where Sheldon, the owner of 101 Surfing was waiting to give a brief lesson on surfing. With my surfing gear on, I learned the basic surfboarding skills, like paddling on the waves, but quickly understood that riding the waves was not my cup of tea. Nevertheless, the lesson itself was quite fun. After the adventurous surfing tuition, I checked in at The Southern Sun Elangeni Hotel, Durban which was to be the last stay on my African sojourn.

Day 6 - South Africa's Indian connection

Early next morning after a filling breakfast, my next stop was to witness the long and eventful journey of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa. Durban holds the record of having the highest concentration of Indians outside of India at the Phoenix Settlement, which was the home of Mahatma. While exploring the Inanda Heritage Route, Durban, I was taken on a journey to experience the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, John Langalibalele Dube, and Nelson Mandela.

After this insightful session, I headed out to my last adventure activity of the trip – the Canopy Tour at the spectacular Karkloof Forest Reserve, which consists of zipline slides over the forest canopy, with stops below a 15-meter waterfall offering breathtakingly beautiful views of the Karkloof valley.

Day 7, 8, 9, 10 - A Bag Full of Memories

Days 7th, 8th and 9th were spent attending Africa's travel event – Travel Indaba Africa at ICC Durban, in a supercharged atmosphere showcasing African culture. Finally, my exciting and super adventurous African trip came to an end, but not before a few more activities that Nthatho had planned as a surprise for me. Starting off with a cruise ride at the Albert Park, Durban, it ended with a visit to the Victoria Street market, which is an ideal place to shop for souvenirs. My bargaining skills came in handy here. With this, it was time to bid goodbye to the lovely people and colourful country of South Africa with a promise of returning soon, as Africa had lived up to my expectations and had definitely marked its place in my heart. ♦

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in



‘Traveller should always opt for a protection plan that can be customised as per needs’

Dev Karvat,
Founder & CEO
– **Asego** in a
conversation with
TravelBiz Monitor
sheds light on the
importance of travel
insurance while
undertaking a
cruise holiday.

Q What new cruise travel trends have you been witnessing in your industry?

The surge in cruise trips could be attributed to the pent-up demand for travel owing to the travel restrictions over the past 2 years. Travel enthusiasts, irrespective of their age are now seeking unexplored experiences and today’s cruise lines provide exotic choices in terms of destination and experiences.

Furthermore, the growing emphasis on health and safety precautions onboard have encouraged travellers to pack their bags and explore cruise travel. Additionally, cruise operators have also been promoting customised packages including travel assistance services with special cruise covers which has instilled a great deal of confidence amongst travellers.

We have also been witnessing huge spike in the number of people opting for exclusive cruise protection plans that safeguards them against exigencies not only on the cruise, but also while they are out on excursions and tours.

Q Is a regular travel insurance sufficient for someone

embarking on a cruise trips?

Sailing through the open seas amidst serene landscapes and luxurious provisions is an amazing experience. But what if an unforeseen emergency or mishap arises? That’s when a cruise protection cover comes into the picture.

There is a general misconception amongst cruise enthusiasts that a regular travel insurance should be sufficient to keep them secured while enjoying the high seas. However, travel insurance does not cover passengers while on a cruise. For instance, if a mishap strikes before you even begin the journey, you may have to cancel your trip. The cruise line won’t reimburse you, but a dedicated cruise trip protection can. Further, if a passenger is affected with COVID-19 or any

medical care expenses in case of serious injuries.

Q What are the various aspects a cruise traveller should look into before choosing an insurance?

We have been in the travel protection space for more than 22 years now, and as per my experience every traveller embarks on a trip with a different set of preferences and needs. Hence, they should always opt for a protection plan that can be customised as per their respective travel needs.

While holidaying abroad, every second counts and even the slightest delays may cost a bomb. Though weather is one of the most crucial aspects, cruise trips are always prone to glitches such as mechanical issues, human error or improper maintenance that may cause unexpected delays and detours. Hence, travellers should consider a cruise protection plan that covers their losses against trip delays, missed cruise departures and other unforeseen

“ While holidaying abroad, every second counts and even the slightest delays may cost a bomb. Though weather is one of the most crucial aspects, cruise trips are always prone to glitches such as mechanical issues, human error or improper maintenance that may cause unexpected delays and detours. Hence, travellers should consider a cruise protection plan that covers their losses against trip delays, missed cruise departures and other unforeseen emergencies. ”

other medical emergencies on board, they will be confined to their cabins and eventually miss their excursion. Cruise protection plans such as Asego’s exclusive cruise cover does not only safeguard travellers from such losses, but also covers emergency evacuation and subsequent

emergencies.

Also, since we are now living in an age of uncertainties, travellers should ensure that the cruise protection plan they opt for covers them against losses due to cabin confinement and new-age travel risks such as loss of baggage and gadgets. ♦

The Gateway to **India's Travel Markets**

The Leading Travel Show in Asia-Pacific



13, 14 & 15 September 2022
Jio World Convention Centre, BKC, Mumbai



Booster Edition

500+ Exhibitors | 20+ Countries | 15+ Indian States/UTs | 250+ Hosted Buyers | 15,000+ Trade Visitors

OTM is the gateway to India's travel markets. Find new international partners, discover thrilling destinations and make world-class deals.

To book your vantage stand at OTM, write to us at contact@fairfest.in • Tel: +91 22 4555 8555 • Web: www.otm.co.in

*OTM is a trade show, visitors below 15 years are not allowed. (Rights of Admission reserved)



‘We expect continuous growth in volume of visitors from India’

Lake Tahoe has been gradually gaining momentum among travellers from India in the past couple of years. **Tony Lyle, Chief Marketing Officer, Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority (LTVA)** speaks to **Disha Shah Ghosh** about the destination attractiveness and their outreach activities in India.

Q Enlighten us on the geographical location and spread of Lake Tahoe.

Located in the Sierra Nevada mountain range in the western United States, on the California and Nevada border, Lake Tahoe is widely considered one of the most beautiful places in the world, known for its crystal-clear waters and majestic scenery, offering the ultimate high-country experience with superb outdoor recreation throughout the year.

Q Which are some of the key tourist attractions of Lake Tahoe?

The key attractions are Emerald Bay State Park, which is one of the most photographed places in the USA, the Heavenly Gondola, that reaches 9000 ft (2744 m) elevation

and provides spectacular views of Lake Tahoe, and M.S. Dixie II scenic sightseeing cruise that lets you experience Lake Tahoe from its waters.

Q What made Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority foray into the Indian market, and what kind of growth do you expect?

The Indian market has always been present at Lake Tahoe, but a significant increase in visitation was experienced in 2016, when we sought representation in India. We expect continuous growth in volume of visitors from India.

Q From India, what is the kind of air connection

includes extensive sales calls and training programs targeting travel companies in Tier-I, II, and III cities. We also launched a contest-based promotion named ‘Tahoe Conquest’ and received an overwhelming response from our trade partners.

Additionally, we have been participating in various initiatives organised by Brand USA. Recently, we participated in the ‘Discover USA- Knowledge series’ to promote Lake Tahoe as a popular road trip destination.

Q How are you positioning the destination for Indian travellers?

Lake Tahoe is a ‘must visit’ destination when travelling to the west coast of United States, especially when visiting California or Nevada. We are included in multiple popular itineraries and our destination has plenty of opportunities to



Scenic views of Emerald Bay

options are available for visiting Lake Tahoe?

Reno Tahoe International Airport is very well connected to major US gateway airports like SFO, LAX, ORD, JFK, etc. This airport is only a one-hour drive from South Lake Tahoe hotels with a convenient express shuttle service available multiple times per day.

Q Enlist some of your marketing, trade and media activities chalked out for the Indian market?

Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority has been conducting various activities to continuously engage with the travel trade in India. This

experience the great outdoors, year-round. It has options for all type of visitors: either you are an adventurous explorer; or you enjoy a slower pace. There is something for everyone.

Q In terms of traveller segments, which are your focus areas?

Our primary focus is leisure travellers, both couples, families and small groups. We also welcome larger tour groups and love our leisure visitors. We work with traditional travel agents and tour operators, plus OTA and all other sellers of travel products. ♦

disha.shah@saffronsynergies.in



Scenic views of Fannette Island

It's time to Restart, Rebuild and Rejuvenate
Business+Leisure Travel and MICE

BLTM

BUSINESS+LEISURE TRAVEL+MICE

10 & 11 September 2022

The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi



Meet hundreds of sellers of **Business+Leisure Travel and MICE** from around the world in a five-star setting.

130+
EXHIBITORS

10
COUNTRIES

275+
HOSTED BUYERS

1,500+
TRADE BUYERS

9,000+
MEETINGS SCHEDULED

To book your vantage stand at BLTM, write to us at contact@fairfest.in
Tel | +91 22 4555 8555 • Web | www.bltm.co.in

*BLTM is a trade show, visitors below 15 years are not allowed. (Rights of Admission reserved)



Monteria Village, an authentic experience of rural India

The model village offers visitors with opportunities to get closer to nature and indulge in plenty of outdoor experiences through various activities

Prasenjit Chakraborty | Mumbai

If anyone is looking for any offbeat destination from Mumbai or Pune, Monteria Village is a perfect place. It's a destination designed to offer the visitor an elevated experience of a quintessential village life. The destination which is located at Khalapur of Raigad district, is just two hours drive from Mumbai or Pune. The entire objective is to take its guests closer to nature. They have nurtured an ecosystem that plants its guests in the daily life, culture, cuisine, entertainment, art and heritage of an Indian village. Every age group will find a path that leads them to their inner child and in turn, connect to their authentic roots.

"From the moment a guest enters Monteria Village, they will find themselves transported into village life. They can be a farmer for a day, savour the goodness of home-cooked meals, play a game of lagori, laze on hammocks, swim in a lake and find simple joys of being in a stress-free set up that thrives on a well-nurtured ecosystem. The people who run the experiences are skilled artisans and workers, which adds a spontaneity to the activities. This is an apt option for anyone looking to slow down and spend quality time together with their loved ones," this is how Rahi Vaghani, Managing Director,

Monteria Resort Pvt. Ltd, described the destination. He also said that the product was developed during the pandemic time. "We used the pandemic time to develop the village. Around 300 workers relentlessly worked during the difficult time and we took utmost care of them," revealed Vaghani.

On the property, one will find carpenters, furniture weavers, tailors, potters, metal and stone artists, bamboo and khaat weavers, blacksmiths, cobblers, and goldsmiths doing their works. Even guests can take some time to try their hand at a skill or take home an artifact. Activities include getting a haircut from a barber or a champi from a masseuse and taste the delightful makes of papad, pickle and shrikhand from women cooperative sellers.

Farming is another attraction of the village. Monteria Village believes in the future of agriculture and has adopted age-old techniques of open farming to modern adaptations of hydroponic practices. Traditional

village techniques are executed using BioGas, Vermicompost, Gobar Brickets, Godan Ark and Floriculture greenhouse. Guests can sign up for a holistic one-of-a-kind farming course in the Dhanvantri take a walk through fresh produce grown on the farm.

While walking through the village if any one feels hungry there are plenty of options for food. As local stalls sell flavoursome pani puri, spicy chana jor garam or a spicy chaat to indulge in. There are ice golas and matka curd to choose from too. To quench a thirst, options available are coconut water, saunf water, kokum drink, marble soda (goti soda), buttermilk, or a cutting chai or coffee.

Those with an appetite for play will find their adrenaline rush in a game of lagori, tops, tyre rolling, a sway on a jhula, or a ride on a Kathiyawadi chhakdo. A quiet walk will lead to cave tunnel, a bamboo oxy-park or even a Lakshman Jhula replica. The village mela becomes a venue to socialise and



an evening for folk music, dance and theatre performances.

'The Kabila' Experience

Monteria Village recently launched 'The Kabila' experience which is inspired by the banjaras, the wanderers. 'The Kabila' is an attempt to recreate the wandering experience far from the city's hustle bustle. It (The Kabila) offers 50 well equipped tents erected in starstruck authentic rural imagery. The campsite is lined with 26 well-equipped toilets and bathrooms for the guests. The surrounding atmosphere of the campsites is bound to give a person the much-needed reason to take a break from modern life and recharge his/her energies. "The atmosphere here is really nice and will definitely rejuvenate me. I will come here again in winter," said a 42 year old executive who doesn't wish to be identified.

A single tent can accommodate up to four people. Each tent is equipped with a fan to keep the inside temperature cool. Not only that, each tent has six windows that can be zipped down for ventilation. Near the tents there is a wide green space, benches and shades allowing visitors to enjoy their meals in the open. Group hammocks under tree covers are perfect nooks to read a book, watch the world go by or huddle together and chat.

Talking about the response, Vaghani said, "Since we opened it in February, our guests are from Maharashtra (mainly Mumbai & Pune) but of late people from Gujarat have also started visiting. Besides Maharashtra, our next focus will be in Gujarat and then slowly we will target other states. We are getting groups who have selected this venue as their reunion (schools & Colleges) and appreciated the overall ambience."

Be it a day outing or an overnight experience, the property leaned on a modern outlook to offer the authentic traditional touch to family holiday, birthday parties, get togethers, kitty parties, wedding destination, and corporate events.

In the ultimate analysis, Monteria Village is a year-round destination because every season has its own charm in an Indian village. ♦

prasenjit.chakraborty@saffronsynergies.in

The irresistible longing for travel *that you cannot translate*

By **Dr. Nimit Chowdhary**, Professor of Tourism,
Faculty of Management Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia

Coddiwomple
Fernweh
Hiraeth
Nostalgia
Saudade
Seachrán
Sehnschut
Shaughraun
Vacilando
Wanderlust

It is better to travel ten thousand miles than to read ten thousand books- goes a famous Chinese saying. Travelling no doubt unravels much wisdom that the books can encapsulate. Likewise, feeling feelings and making sense of them in their diverse cultural contexts is one of the joys of travelling. These emotions, associated with stages of travel, expressed in the indigenous idiom are by themselves an experience of a lifetime. However, these experiences are not always readily discernable because of underlying cultural undertones.

At some point in time, most of us feel farsick. As avid contemporary travellers, we yearn to be at our far away dream destination- perhaps a place we have never been to. That is **Fernweh**- a German phrase derived from 'fern' meaning far and 'weh' meaning pain- literally meaning 'far pain' or pain for a far away place. Thus, it contrasts 'Heimweh', which is longing for home. Fernweh sounds like wanderlust which means a passion for exploration. Fernweh is, however, more intense. While the English wanderlust, also derived from a German root, conveys a desire for travel, the German fernweh takes a clue from it and turns it up a notch, conveying a more painful longing for a place.

The Portuguese expression for the bitter-sweet longing for something that one cares for/wants with a feeling that one might never get a chance of having it is captured in an emotion of incompleteness, '**Saudade**' - the presence of absence. Derived from Latin *solitās, solitātem*, meaning 'solitude', the phrase encapsulated sadness for those who departed on journeys to unknown seas during Portuguese expeditions in the 13th century and never returned. Acquiring different meanings, Saudade is often used to mean yearning for a place perhaps that one has never been to or that even exists- the dream destination!

Saudade is different from Nostalgia.

Nostalgia is derived from the Greek *nóstos*, which means homecoming. Nostalgia is a feeling of pleasure and some sadness associated with a personal experience with a place or event- the good old days! Saudade, on the other hand, is for something that might have never happened.

The Welsh phrase **Hiraeth** connotes a distinct feeling of missing something irretrievably lost. It combines nostalgia, wistfulness and longing. Originally, Hiraeth was a concept associated with homesickness for Wales (in particular), which is more or less lost now. Practically, the term is used as a synonym for nostalgia. However, some users point to a slight difference between the two. While nostalgia is more tangible in terms of a place in the past, for example, nostalgia for my village in the 1980s, hiraeth is more rooted in feeling and emotion.

Further, while Nostalgia is past focused, an intense future-focused desire for a far-off dream destination is captured by the German expression **Sehnschut**. Sehnsucht originates from *das Sehnen*, which is longing or yearning, and *die Sucht*, which means addiction. Thus, in travel parlance, it is never-ending craving for the unknown ideal place minus the melancholy in Saudade. The never-fulfilled longing is itself sweeter than the fulfilment. So, in the grip of Sehnsucht, one sustains a profound and intense longing for the dream place without even knowing what is yearned for.

Philosophically, you do not know what life has in store for you. Thus, it is suggested that you stop and look around once in a while, or else you could miss what life has in store for you. So, many people stray with an open mind to figure out where they end up. This sentiment is captured by a mid-19th century Irish phrase, **Seachrán**, which has an English equivalent in **Shaughraun**. When travel experience is more important than reaching the destination, Spanish will call this wandering **Vacilando**.

Even when the destination is ambiguous, many explorers are mindful of the importance of the travel experience. A purposeful journey towards a vague or unknown destination is **Coddiwomple**. Post-COVID, many people have decided to own a recreational vehicle to coddiwomple. Coddiwomple, an English



Dr Nimit Chowdhary is a Professor with the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management at Jamia Millia Islamia. He has more than 28 years of the academic experience of which he has been a full professor for 15 years in India, China, and Mexico. In addition, he was a visiting faculty at Gotland University (Sweden), the University of Girona (Spain), IIM Sirmaur, IIQM, and EDII. He is a recipient of many academic awards and recognitions. He has authored 15 books and more than 155 academic papers and chapters. He has travelled extensively to around 40 countries and almost all states within the country.

slang, unlike Seachrán, can be more abstract. Seachrán is generally used in a corporeal sense, for example, for going for a stroll. Whereas, one can coddiwomple their way through their life.

"A good traveller has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving"

—Lao Tzu. ♦

'The views expressed in the column are of the author, and may or may not be endorsed by the publication.'

INVITING ALL

Travel Professionals to the largest
Travel and Tourism Interaction

2022 - 2023



www.gps-india.com

Call: +91 9225248070, +919820224272 for details email: harmandeep@gps-india.com | madhu@gps-india.com