

FOR THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL TravelBizMonitor

VOL 17 | ISSUE 6 | PAGES 28

NOVEMBER 2023

PRICE: ₹40

www.travelbizmonitor.com

1

African Tourism Sector poised to contribute USD 168bn over next decade: WTTC-VFS Report

TBM Staff | Mumbai

At the recent Global Summit in Kigali, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) in collaboration with VFS Global, a promising vision emerged for the African Travel & Tourism sector. The "Unlocking Opportunities for Travel & Tourism Growth in Africa" report unveiled during the event emphasises the potential for this sector to add a substantial USD 168 billion to the continent's economy and generate over 18 million new job opportunities, over the next decade.

The key to this growth is the implementation of three pivotal policies capable of achieving an annualised growth rate of 6.5%, eventually contributing more than USD 350 billion to the African economy.

In 2019, the Travel &



L-R: Arnold Donald, Chair, WTTC; Julia Simpson, President & CEO, WTTC and Hariprasad Viswanathan, Head, Sub Saharan Africa, VFS Global at the launch event of this report in Kigali, Rwanda.

Tourism sector in Africa was already a powerhouse, contributing over USD 186 billion to the regional economy and attracting 84 million international travellers. Moreover, this sector plays a vital role in employment, supporting 25 million livelihoods, equivalent to 5.6% of all jobs across the region.

The proposed policy package outlined in the report focuses on enhancing air infrastructure,

streamlining visa facilitation processes, and promoting tourism marketing as the means to unlock the full potential of Africa's Travel & Tourism sector.

Julia Simpson, President & CEO, WTTC, said, "Africa's Travel & Tourism sector has witnessed an extraordinary transformation. In just two decades, it has more than doubled in value, significantly contributing to the continent's economy. Growth potential for Travel

& Tourism in Africa is massive. It has already more than doubled since 2000, and with the right policies could unlock an additional USD 168 billion in the next decade."

Zubin Karkaria, Founder & CEO of VFS Global, emphasised, "We are excited to partner with WTTC to uncover the extensive opportunities that Travel & Tourism offers in Africa. This report not only highlights the diverse prospects for economic growth, sustainable tourism, and cross-cultural collaboration but also provides valuable insights for governments to formulate policies and offers businesses a well-defined roadmap for expansion in this thriving market."

The report delves into the historical journey of the Travel & Tourism sector in Africa, demonstrating resilience in the face of

challenges, including the Global Financial Crisis in 2008, disease outbreaks, and political instability. Despite these obstacles, the sector is on a path to recovery.

The WTTC projects 2023 to be a year of near-full recovery, only 1.9% shy of 2019 levels, and the creation of an additional 1.8 million jobs.

The report also highlights key opportunities for the sector, including strategic investments, improved connectivity, streamlined visa processes, reduced carbon footprint through low-carbon energy adoption, and enhanced water efficiency. These opportunities have the potential to drive sustainable growth, job creation, and economic development in the African Travel & Tourism sector, offering hope for a brighter future in the continent's travel and tourism landscape. ♦

Fully Recovery for Rail Europe in 2023, focus is on growth for 2024

Disha Shah Ghosh | Mumbai

Rail Europe, leading provider of rail tickets and rail passes for European train booking, has seen a record year in India this year with over 9% growth in business compared to the pre-Covid 2019 levels.

During her recent trip to India, Florence Pasquier, Chief Commercial Officer of Rail Europe, shared with **TravelBiz Monitor** in Mumbai, "In 2023, we've witnessed a record-breaking year with a growth of over 9% compared to 2019. Our GSA model forms the core of our operations in India, with India serving as our biggest market for this setup. Additionally, the global customer care center of Rail Europe is based in Mumbai, clearly demonstrating the value that the Indian market

holds for us."

Looking ahead to 2024, she said, "For 2024, I am expecting to reach 15% growth over 2023 from India. Indian travellers love Europe, especially Switzerland, Spain, Germany, and others. We are talking to our tour operators here to include rail segment in their itineraries to enhance the overall travel experience, offering a seamless and enjoyable journey that complements the essence of European travel."

Group bookings is an important focus area for Rail Europe, as Indians love to travel via train. "Post-Covid, a lot of Indians are travelling in coach tours. We had interesting discussions with



Florence Pasquier
Chief Commercial
Officer, Rail Europe

group tour operators in India, and are looking at varied combinations of rail journeys in Indian itineraries."

Currently, Rail Europe is expanding its product portfolio to include Austrian, Danish, Spanish, and American trains. This expansion will encompass trains from Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, along with airport connections. Florence mentioned, "We have a dynamic roadmap for 2024 and will continue to educate our trade partners in India

while collaborating with National Tourism Offices (NTOs). Our aim is to enrich our offerings further for this market."

Contd PG. 17 ►

DUBAI



06 Days From
US\$ 625*
per person

ULTIMATE FAMILY BREAK

Highlights: Half Day City Tour, Desert Safari with BBQ Dinner, At the Top Burj Khalifa (Non-Peak hours), Museum of the Future, Dubai Parks 1 Day/ 2 Parks, The Green Planet Tour.

Remarks: Rates are based on DBL/TWN sharing basis. Rates and Offers are subject to change without prior notice. Tourism Dirham Fees is not included. Valid till 15th Dec'2023. *T&Cs Apply.

Ottila International Pvt. Ltd.

Mumbai (Registered Office & Corporate Headquarters) : 022 6720 5000

Ahmedabad: +91 93761 20982

Bengaluru: +91 80 4165 6324

Chennai: +91 44 4555 8582

Coimbatore: +91 99527 17750

Hyderabad: +91 40 4020 0301

Indore: +91 731 4911 374

Kochi: +91 75938 63903

Kolkata: +91 98301 19561

New Delhi: +91 11 4141 4242

Pune: +91 20 4002 6960

Nasik: +91 253 231 0044

For Enquiries & Bookings, please contact any of our offices | **Website:** www.ottila.com | **B2B Portal:** www.ottila.net





NEW ORLEANS & COMPANY

48 hours in New Orleans: Explore the City's Vibrant Charm

New Orleans is a city steeped in history and culture. In just 48 hours, this vibrant city will envelop you in all its charm. Explore historic architecture, savor local delicacies, and let jazz music transport you into the lively nightlife for an unforgettable two-day excursion in New Orleans.

Day 1: Morning

Begin your day with a stroll through the iconic French Quarter. This historic district, at the heart of New Orleans, is known for its colorful buildings, lively street performers, and rich cultural heritage. Don't forget to include a visit to the stunning St. Louis Cathedral, a symbol of the city's deep Catholic roots. Treat yourself to a delightful experience at the iconic Café du Monde. Indulge in their signature beignets, a beloved New Orleans pastry.

Afternoon

After your morning exploration, make your way to Vue Orleans, a one-of-a-kind indoor and outdoor observatory and cultural experience featuring the city skyline. Enjoy a laid-back afternoon with handcrafted cocktails and jazz at the

historic Sazerac House. Join guided tastings featuring iconic drinks like the Sazerac, and explore a fascinating collection of vintage cocktail shakers, providing a captivating glimpse into the city's spirited past.

Evening

To get a taste of authentic New Orleans music, make a visit to Frenchmen Street. Once a hidden gem among locals, Frenchmen Street is now recognized as one of New Orleans' best spots for finding live music of all genres. As the sun goes down, head to the world-renowned Bourbon Street, known for its vibrant nightlife. This iconic street is lined with bars, clubs, and street performers. Immerse yourself in the lively atmosphere, grab a famous Hurricane cocktail, and dance the night away.

Day 2 : Morning

Start your second day by hopping on the historic St. Charles Streetcar. This charming mode of transportation will take you through the Garden District, known for its beautiful antebellum mansions and oak-lined streets. It is a delightful way to experience the city's unique architecture.

Afternoon

After your streetcar adventure, head to the combined Audubon Aquarium and Insectarium. Located along the Mississippi River, these attractions are perfect for both nature enthusiasts and families. Encounter exotic insects at the insectarium and then view sights from the ocean at the aquarium. Then, to get the feeling of Mardi Gras year-round, make way to the Mardi Gras World, which offers an

immersive experience where you can see the elaborate floats and costumes that bring this famous celebration to life.

Evening

End your 48-hour adventure with a night of soul-stirring jazz at Preservation Hall. This historic venue has been a cornerstone of the New Orleans music scene for decades. The intimate setting allows you to truly connect with the music and the culture that defines the city.

New Orleans is a city that captures the imagination and leaves a lasting impression on all who visit. It will surely have you longing to return for more. So, pack your bags and get ready to experience the magic of New Orleans in just two unforgettable days. Visit www.neworleans.com ♦



Sarbananda Sonowal flags off Costa Serena's maiden domestic operations from Mumbai

TBM Staff | Mumbai

The maiden domestic sailing of the Costa Serena, an international cruise ship, was officially launched in Mumbai by Sarbananda Sonowal, the Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways.

Starting November 4 until 11 January 2023 Costa Serena is set to home port in Mumbai operating on a newly created program of 2,3,5 nights itineraries from Mumbai and Kochi, Goa and the Island of Agatti in Lakshadweep.

Besides the Minister, T K Ramachandran, Secretary, MoPSW, Francesco Raffa, Director Asia Region & Growth Markets, Costa Cruises, Nalini Gupta, Lotus Aero Enterprises, GSA of Costa Cruises, and other senior Officials attended the on-board event.

Speaking on the Occasion, Sonowal, said, "We are offering our full support to the cruise line to home port their ships at Indian ports. We are ready to support further development of our port infrastructure to accommodate large cruise ships. It is a moment of pride for us that when the Mumbai Port completes 150 years, we have Costa coming back to offer domestic cruising options to Indian travellers."

Raffa in his speech said, "We are extremely happy to sail again in India where we've been operating since 2016. We are bringing to our Indian guests authentic Italian hospitality with



a local personalization in terms of food and entertainment. India is an important market for Costa, both for our established Fly&Cruise programs to Dubai and the Mediterranean and our newly introduced local operations sailing domestically. We are grateful to the Indian government for the efforts to support the domestic tourism and on infrastructures development. India is working to develop

the cruise industry and we are excited to sail together towards the vision of the Indian government."

Costa Serena has a total of 1500 cabins, 505 of which have private balconies, and 14 passenger decks. To make the most of their cruise on board, guests can choose from a wellness centre and a gym with a sea view, a beauty salon, a theatre, restaurants serving Indian and international cuisine, bars, 4 swimming pools, 2 of which have self-propelled glass roofs, a shopping area, and a kids' club for children and teenagers.

"I am happy that Costa is back to the Indian shores with dedicated domestic itineraries after a temporary pause. We are looking forward to a great season ahead. With Costa there will be the opportunity of easily accessible cruises with just their Aadhaar card. It will give Indian guests the opportunity to discover the country's most beautiful locations from a unique point of view. Indians will be able to easily access an experience of vacationing right from home without the hassle of visas, and flights while still getting that international holiday experience with the Indian touch," said Gupta.. ♦

'India is undeniably among the top priorities for RwandAir'

The newly-appointed Country Manager in India for RwandAir, Vennah Mukumburwa spoke to Disha Shah Ghosh about the value of the Indian market for the airline, route network and the passenger profile.



Q Tell us about the existing flight connectivity of RwandAir for India network.

At present, we operate two weekly flights to/from India. Departing from our hub in Kigali, travellers can effortlessly connect to over 25 destinations within our expansive network, all while benefiting from our commendable on-time performance.

Q What kind of load factor have you witnessed on the India routes?

The load factor is good, particularly for the outbound sectors. While seasonal variations

do influence these figures, the overall numbers are indeed positive.

Q Do you have any existing code-share or interline agreements with any Indian carrier or plans for a new agreement?

Yes, we have interline agreements with several carriers, including Air India and Vistara, to name a few.

Q Where does India rank in priority for Rwand Air?

India is undeniably among the top priorities for RwandAir. We deeply

value the robust Indian community in Rwanda, and across many of our service destinations. Our network witnesses a significant flow

of individuals travelling between the regions for a myriad of reasons, from business, trade to medical tourism and education.

Q What is your strategy for Indian market?

Our strategy will emphasise on a superior customer experience and offering a broad spectrum of flight options. We're actively looking to enhance our route network and ensure adaptability

to cater to the evolving needs of the Indian traveller.

Q Tell us about the composition of passengers from India.

A significant portion of our passengers consists of business travellers. We also see a notable number of those visiting friends and relatives (VFR), tourists & leisure travellers. ♦

disha.shah@saffronsynergies.in



vistara
Fly the new feeling™

airvistara.com

Now fly to
Hong Kong daily direct
from Delhi

Return fares starting from INR 26499 all-in*

Book Now



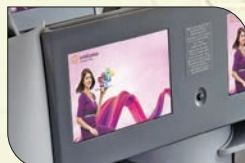
Choose from three cabin classes, including India's first Premium Economy



**Comfortable
full-recline flatbeds**



**Delectable
meals**



**In-flight
entertainment**

*Economy Class return fare including taxes and convenience fees. Flight schedule is subject to regulatory approvals. All images are for representational purposes only. Visit airvistara.com/in/en/adtn for detailed T&Cs.

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY
TATA AND
SINGAPORE AIRLINES**

'Kelantan offers history, architecture, markets, traditional villages, and outdoor fun for all'

The Malaysian state of Kelantan has long been seen as a bulwark of Malay tradition, with centuries of history. In order to educate the travel trade in the Indian market, Tourism Malaysia in association with **TravelBiz Monitor** has launched the **Malaysia Master Specialist e-learning programme**, and **Kelantan** is one of the featured states.



Q What does Kelantan offer for tourism to the Indian market?

Kelantan provides a rich cultural experience for the Indian market through traditional Malay festivals, arts, and crafts, giving Indian travellers a unique peek into the authentic Malay's past. The state's numerous gastronomic pleasures, ranging from nasi dagang to ayam percik, satisfies foodies, while its natural beauty, which include clean beaches, lush forests, and picturesque waterfalls, appeal to adventurers and nature lovers. Furthermore, Kelantan's historical and architectural landmarks, local markets, traditional villages, and outdoor activities make it a well-rounded destination. Meanwhile, the state's tranquil climate gives possibilities for wellness and relaxation for tourists who are looking for a temporary escape from the hustle and bustle of the city. Kelantan is a tempting choice for Indian travellers who seek after a genuine and diversified travel experience, with a rich combination of cultural, gastronomic, natural, and historical encounters.

Q Kelantan is called the cradle of Malay culture, please elaborate on this tag line.

"Kelantan: The Cradle of Malay Culture" captures the Malaysian state's great historical and cultural significance. Kelantan has long been seen as a bulwark

of Malay tradition, with centuries of history. The Kelantanese people had worked hard to conserve and spread a wide range of Malay traditions which include traditional performances such as Dikir Barat, Mak Yong, Wayang Kulit shadow puppetry, and musical performances like Rebab as well as Rebana Ubi and Kertok Kelapa percussions. Besides that, we also have crafts such as batik drawing, songket weaving, silver smithing and wood carving which all can be experienced first-hand by the tourists who are interested to learn on how to make these crafts. Kelantan's architectural legacy, traditional way of life, distinct dialect, and musical traditions highlight its role as a cradle of Malay culture, making it a location where the rich tapestry of Malay heritage is embraced and treasured.

Q Where does India rank as a priority for Kelantan, and which are the flight connections to reach the destination?

India may not be the highest priority for Kelantan, as Malaysia's primary trade and tourism relationships often focus on neighbouring countries and key global partners. However, the priority of India can change over time based on evolving economic, diplomatic, and trade factors. The level of priority depends on specific economic and strategic interests. Kelantan's main entrance point by air is through Sultan Ismail Petra Airport (KBR). However as of now, the airport only cater for domestic flights hence Indian tourists will need to fly here via a transit in Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KUL), and then take a connecting flight to Kota Bharu.

Flight connections can vary over time based on demand and market conditions, so it's critical to check with airlines and travel companies for the most up-to-date flight information and itineraries.

Q What different offerings does Kelantan have over other Malaysian destinations?

It is undeniable that Kelantan is very famous for its delectable cuisine which often keeps the tourists coming back for more. Among the frequently sought-after delicacies are nasi dagang, nasi kerabu, nasi tumpang, laksa and Kelantanese desserts like akok, lompat tikam, ketupat sotong, jala mas, buah tanjung and so on. Besides that, its historical significance as one of the oldest Malay Sultanates is reflected in well-preserved buildings, while the state's natural beauty, which includes peaceful beaches and lush jungles, draws nature lovers.

Q What is your trade outreach strategy in India?

Creating a trade outreach plan in India necessitates a multifaceted approach. Begin by performing extensive market research to gain a complete understanding of the Indian business landscape, defining the target audience, and establishing clear trade objectives. Customise the market entrance approach to the company model, accounting for aspects such as regulatory compliance, localization, and distribution networks. Create a marketing and promotion plan for the Indian market that takes use of cultural knowledge and local connections. It is critical to build a strong network and collaborate with local businesses, and you should also

give outstanding customer service. Ensuring a dependable supply chain and logistics infrastructure, analysing the performance, and modifying as needed are critical success factors.

Q What is your social media strategy for Indian market?

We promote Kelantan tourism in the Indian market through a social media strategy. It is essential to understand the Indian audience and their travel preferences. Hence, we use visually compelling content, including high-quality photos and videos, showcasing Kelantan's natural beauty, cultural festivals, and traditional arts. In these posts we highlight Kelantan's most unique selling point such as its trademark as "The Cradle of Malay Culture," and create engaging and shareable content that tells captivating stories about the fascinating destinations here.

Apart from that, we encourage user-generated content by running campaigns and contests. Our marketing team will provide insights into Kelantan's cultural heritage and local cuisine while engaging the audience through interactive posts, live streaming, and responsive communication through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, You Tube and TikTok. Additionally, our strategy is to provide paid advertising promotion to reach a broader Indian audience and collaborate with tourism authorities for support. We will also leverage Indian travel influencers who travel here to share their experiences. These are all the initiatives that can be done strategy to welcome Indian travellers to explore Kelantan. ♦

Visit Saudi

World's Entertainment Capital has moved to
Riyadh, this winter.

6 months of endless fun with
30+ events and festivals



SCAN ME

tbo.com
TRAVEL SIMPLIFIED



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

EXPLORING NEWER MEDIUMS

It needs some innovative thinking, but supporting and utilizing art and artists can elevate tourism departments' narratives.

Art and artists are often used in offers prepared as part of a promotional campaign for individual regions and even countries.

I recently came across a promo of the Ypress region in a Visit Flanders video. The video included visuals of a young Indian artist, Baptist Coelho in a poetic message highlighting the area's natural beauty. While the video doesn't mention his name directly, by using him in its promo clip, the indication of Flanders or even Belgium itself being a destination that attracts artists across the world and encourages their craft is a subtle subliminal message.

Mumbai-born Baptist who featured in it was the 2022 artist-in-residence at the In Flanders Fields Museum. In fact, the museum has published a book that is an overview of his works from 2006 to date. It includes a selection of fifty-six artworks and ten essays on them by academics amongst others.

On the other hand, Indian tourism campaigns remain poorer with the non-inclusion of contemporary art, especially the one not from the framed variety. This lack of enthusiasm can be forgiven for an evident lack of understanding of subliminal angles to a country's image, aspects that are not in-your-face objects of 'sightseeing'.

Usually, barely any sort of cultural offering occupies minimal mind space or priority in the fiscal calculations of tourism promoters or marketers. And that is exactly my point.

It can be understood that it is much easier to convince potential tourists to take advantage of an offer that includes beautiful views and comfortable hotels than an offer that requires having to indulge in artistic pursuits. That is all the more reason the government should identify and promote Indian artists, especially the young and innovative ones, who project the nation's imagery as a thinking, inspirational, or even interesting subject.

Baptist's book and his installation artworks present narratives that are Indian in context but global and human in sensitivity. No tourism company or brand will venture to pick such subtleties for marketing. It is clearly the job and responsibility of government departments, ministries, and institutions to further this.

Knock, knock. Anyone there?

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
EATA



Rakshit Desai
CEO
TPConnects



Rajiv Duggal
Director
Travel Specialists LLP



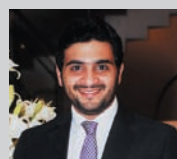
Manoj Gursahani
President
Visit USA Committee



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



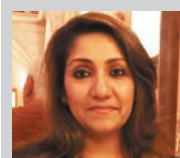
Kapil Kaul
CEO - India & Middle East,
CAPA



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 Saliankar
Head - Sales & Marketing,
Fortune Hotels



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



Vasudha Sondhi
Managing Director
OMPL Group



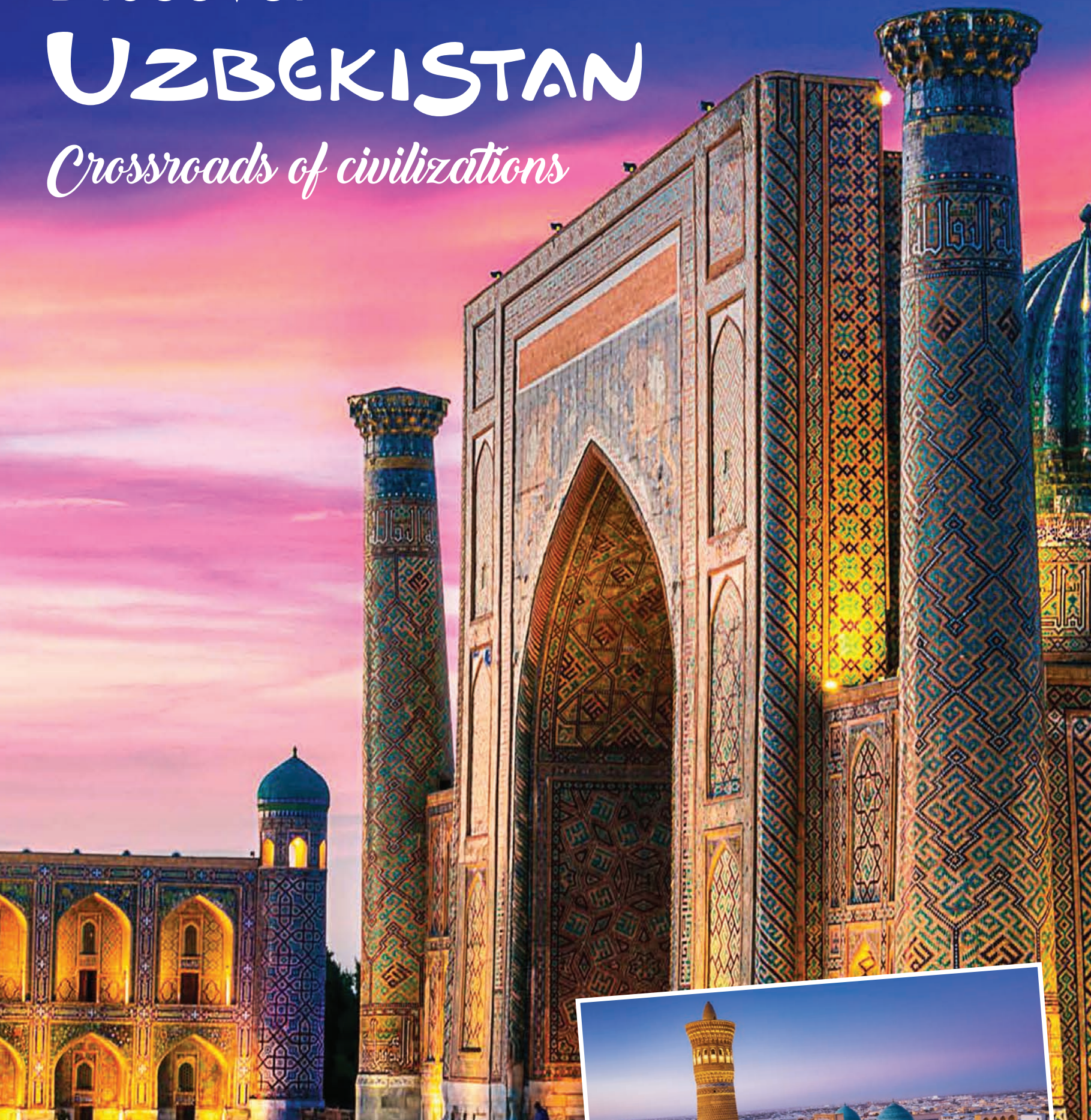
Sheema Vohra
Managing Director
Sartha Global Marketing



Kiran Yadav
VP
IIPT India

Discover UZBEKISTAN

Crossroads of civilizations



For more information, please contact:

Tourism Committee at the Ministry of Ecology, Protection of Environment and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Email: info@blinkbrandsolutions.com | **Phone:** +91 98350 69443

Add: 107B, Amir Temur Street, Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan





‘The Indian MICE market is rapidly growing due to its burgeoning middle class and entrepreneurial spirit’

Korea provides a diverse array of opportunities for bleisure travel, enabling travellers to seamlessly blend their business and leisure experiences, says **Myong Kil Yun, Regional Director India & SAARC, Korea Tourism Organization**, in an interaction with **Disha Shah Ghosh.**

Q Korea Tourism Organization is keen on tapping the MICE segment in the Indian market. What steps are being taken in this direction?

The Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) is actively pursuing the MICE segment in the Indian market through several strategic initiatives. These efforts include hosting roadshows, events and webinars in major Indian cities to introduce and promote South Korea as an ideal MICE destination. For instance, KTO India recently organized a successful roadshow in Mumbai in October 2023, bringing together key players in the Korean tourism industry and the Indian tourism fraternity. The KTO is also conducting joint marketing campaigns and collaborating with Indian travel agents and tour operators, providing them with training and support to create and promote customized MICE packages tailored to the specific requirements of Indian clients.

To attract Indian corporates and organizations, KTO offers attractive incentives and discounts. Additionally, KTO is actively showcasing South Korea's unique MICE venues, which encompass traditional Korean villages, historic sites, and modern convention centers, and promoting distinctive cultural experiences and Korean cuisine. Furthermore, KTO is working on

strengthening partnerships with Indian government agencies and industry associations to further establish South Korea as a preferred MICE destination for Indian businesses and organizations.

Q Where does India rank in pecking order as a source market in Asia for KTO?

India had been steadily climbing the ranks as a source market for the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO). India had shown significant growth in terms of visitor arrivals to South Korea in recent years, and it was becoming an increasingly important source

market for the South Korean tourism industry.

The Indian MICE market is in a rapid growth phase, driven by its burgeoning middle class and a thriving entrepreneurial spirit. Businesses and organizations from India are increasingly seeking international destinations to host their MICE events, with Korea emerging as a favored choice due to its strategic location, modern infrastructure, and a rich spectrum of MICE venues and immersive experiences.

Q Which are some of the new destinations beyond Busan being introduced in the Indian market?

Earlier this year we had launched the K-incentive Scheme that offered travel agents enticing benefits, such as USD 30 per passenger and streamlined visa support for visitors travelling to Korea. The main purpose of the scheme is for travel agencies to explore destinations like Busan, Gangwon province and Jeollanam-do province.

Beyond Busan, the KTO is actively introducing Indian travelers to diverse and captivating destinations in South Korea. Here are some of the notable options:

Jeollanam-do - Jeollanam-do is a province in southwestern Korea that is known for its natural beauty, cultural attractions, and delicious food. Jeollanam-do is home to

a number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the Hwasun Dolmen Site, the Seonam Temple, and the Naganeupseong Folk Village. Getbol tidal flat located on the coast of Jeollanam-do is one of the largest tidal flats in the world and has been listed as a world natural heritage site. Jeollanam-do also offers a variety of MICE venues, including the Yeosu Expo Convention Center and the Suncheon Bay Garden Expo Park.

Gangwon - Gangwon is a province in northeastern Korea that is known for its beautiful mountains, pristine beaches, and winter sports resorts. Gangwon is home to a number of MICE venues, including the Gangneung Convention Center, the Pyeongchang Olympic Park, the Alpensia Resort and one of the world's largest Legoland themepark.

Gwangju - Gwangju is a metropolitan city in southwestern Korea that is known for its cultural attractions and vibrant arts scene. Gwangju is home to a number of MICE venues, including the Kimdajeung Convention Center and the Gwangju Culture & Art Center.

Ulsan is a metropolitan city in southeastern Korea that is known for its shipbuilding and petrochemical industries. Ulsan is also home to a number of cultural attractions, including Daewangam Park, Hakseong Park, Whale Cultural Village. Ulsan offers a variety of MICE venues, including the Ulsan Exhibition & Convention Center, the Hyundai Motorstudio Ulsan, and the Hyundai Heavy Industries Ulsan Shipyard.

Q Alongside business travel, bleisure is gaining popularity in the Indian market. Which are some of the options for bleisure travel in Korea?

Korea offers a wide range of options for bleisure travel, allowing visitors to combine business and leisure seamlessly. Some popular options for bleisure travelers in Korea:

Seoul: As the capital and largest city, Seoul offers a wealth of attractions. You can explore historic palaces like Gyeongbokgung

and Changdeokgung, visit vibrant neighborhoods like Insadong and Myeongdong, and experience modern shopping and entertainment districts such as Gangnam and Itaewon.

Cultural Experiences: Participate in traditional Korean activities like hanbok wearing, tea ceremonies, and temple stays to immerse yourself in the local culture.

Cuisine: Savor the diverse Korean culinary scene, from street food stalls to upscale restaurants. Don't miss out on dishes like bibimbap, bulgogi, and Korean barbecue.

Shopping: Korea is a shopper's paradise, with everything from traditional markets like Namdaemun to trendy boutiques and high-end shopping in areas like Myeongdong and Dongdaemun.

Spa and Wellness: Enjoy a relaxing spa day in one of Korea's renowned jjimjilbang (sauna and bathhouses) or indulge in traditional Korean medicine at wellness centers.

Nature and Scenic Beauty:

Explore the natural beauty of Korea by visiting destinations like Namsan Park, Bukhansan National Park, or nearby UNESCO World Heritage Sites like Seoraksan and Jeju Island.

Cultural Performances: Attend

“To attract Indian corporates and organizations, KTO offers attractive incentives and discounts. Additionally, KTO is actively showcasing South Korea's unique MICE venues, which encompass traditional Korean villages, historic sites, and modern convention centers, and promoting distinctive cultural experiences and Korean cuisine,”

traditional performances like Nanta (a non-verbal cooking performance) or contemporary K-pop concerts.

Nightlife: Experience Korea's lively nightlife in popular districts like Hongdae, Gangnam, and Itaewon.

DMZ Tours: Take a day trip to the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to learn about the history of the Korean War and visit historic sites like the Joint Security Area

(JSA).

Han River Cruises: Relax with a scenic cruise along the Han River while enjoying views of the city.

Korea's efficient transportation system, including high-speed

trains and subways, makes it easy for bleisure travelers to navigate the country and explore diverse regions. Whether bleisure tourists interested in history, culture, nature, or modern amenities, Korea offers plenty of options to enhance their business trip with enjoyable bleisure activities.

Q Which business segment is driving business travel from India to Korea?

Korea recently hosted a group of 3,255 financial professionals from a Bank on a corporate meeting. This diverse group, hailing from various parts of India, embarked on their visit to Korea from October 11 to October 30, 2023, as a part of their International Training Programs.

Other than that one of the key driving forces behind business travel from India to Korea is the IT sector. India, globally renowned for its IT industry, has a significant presence in Korea, making it a vital market for Indian IT companies. Moreover, numerous Indian IT professionals work in Korea on a long-term basis, contributing to this collaboration.

Aside from the IT sector, other prominent business segments fueling business travel from India to Korea encompass Pharmaceutical and Healthcare, Automobile and Manufacturing, consumer goods, and Education. These sectors have been instrumental in fostering economic ties between the two nations. ♦

disha.shah@saffronsynergies.in

BECOME A CA STAR TODAY!



visit California

VISIT CALIFORNIA'S ONLINE TRAINING APP

A comprehensive digital platform designed to be a training tool, sales companion, and an online community for travel agents.

REGISTER AND COMPLETE THE 'CA STAR' PROGRAM BY DECEMBER 10, 2023, TO QUALIFY FOR BI-WEEKLY LUCKY DRAWS

Training Modules



DOWNLOAD THE APP:



California STAR Training



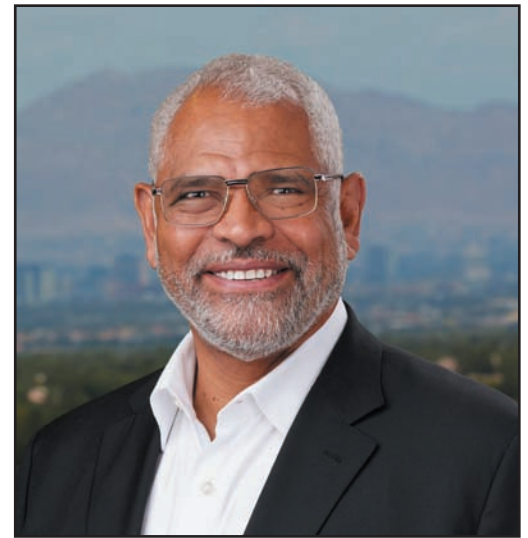
California STAR

11-41063204

ccolney@sarthaglobal.com

star.visitcalifornia.com





Arnold Donald
Chair, WTTC

23rd WTTC Global Summit With Africa in Spotlight; Sustainable Tourism Agenda Gains Momentum

TBM Staff | Kigali

As global stakeholders convened in Kigali, Rwanda for WTTC's 23rd Global Summit, a remarkable resurgence in the global Travel & Tourism sector was unveiled by WTTC President & CEO Julia Simpson. The industry is bouncing back to the vibrant levels witnessed in 2019, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The most recent data, a result of the collaboration between WTTC and its partner Oxford Economics, paints a picture of a thriving global travel industry, with all regions rebounding at a pace surpassing previous

predictions. Notably, the Asia-Pacific region leads this impressive resurgence.

Speaking at the inauguration of the Global, Simpson said, "Our latest data underscores our sector's enduring appeal and resilience, recovering faster than anticipated. This trend underscores the enduring desire for travel among consumers. Despite China's full recovery potential remaining untapped, the global travel sector is surpassing expectations."

WTTC has recently introduced the latest Environmental Impact Research data (ESR) that is set to reshape the industry, in collaboration with the Sustainable Tourism



President of Tanzania speaks at the WTTC Global Summit opening session in Rwanda

Global Center (STGC), a division of the Ministry of Tourism of Saudi Arabia. This groundbreaking initiative was initiated during last year's WTTC Global Summit in Riyadh.

The ESR data represents the most comprehensive environmental insights in the history of Travel & Tourism. It includes greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, and water usage across the sector's supply chain, both domestically and internationally.

The data reveals that in 2019, Travel & Tourism accounted for 8.1% of global greenhouse gas emissions, 10.6% of total global energy consumption, and 0.9% of freshwater usage. This data, which encompasses 185 countries worldwide, will be updated annually with the latest statistics.

Francis Gatare, CEO of the Rwanda Development Board, delivered a warm welcome at the Summit.

The address commenced with a warm welcome to the distinguished guests, including President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, President Samia Suluhu of Tanzania, and Vice-President Prosper Bazombanza of Burundi.

Gatare expressed his deep gratitude for the unwavering support of these leaders for the

New Chair of WTTC



The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) has named Greg O'Hara, Founder and Senior Managing Director of Certares Management LLC, as its incoming new Chair.

O'Hara, who will take over the position later this month, has been a member of WTTC's Executive Committee since 2019, and Vice Chair since 2021. He will follow current Chairman, Arnold Donald, former President & CEO of Carnival Corporation, who has been in the position since the spring of 2021.

"We now embark on a new chapter, and I am delighted to welcome Greg as our new Chairman. Greg will bring a wealth of experience and a deep understanding of the Travel & Tourism sector, and I believe that under his stewardship, WTTC will reach new heights in a sector that is growing faster than the global economy."

Greg O'Hara said, "It is a great privilege to pick up the reins from Arnold Donald – a giant of our sector. I look forward to supporting our Members, WTTC and Julia, as the sector continues to go from strength to strength."



Julia Simpson
President & CEO, WTTC

tourism sector. He also extended his thanks to Arnold Donald, Chief, WTTC and Julia Simpson, and the entire WTTC community for choosing Rwanda as the host for this year's summit.

Hosting the WTTC Global Summit in Rwanda, for the first time in Africa, was highlighted as a momentous achievement for the continent. This event is a testament to Rwanda and Africa's strong commitment to sustainable tourism.

The CEO underscored the crucial role that travel and tourism play in shaping Rwanda's economy and fostering global unity.

Arnold Donald, Chair, WTTC, addressed the audience, celebrating the transformative power of travel and acknowledging Rwanda's profound significance. He emphasised travel's ability to foster tolerance, reduce fear of the unknown, and promote understanding among diverse cultures.

Donald highlighted Rwanda's breathtaking natural beauty and wildlife, but emphasised that the true essence of the nation lies in its united and dynamic people.

Holding the Global Summit in Africa was deliberate and marks a historic moment for the Travel & Tourism sector. Donald praised Africa's diversity with 54 countries, diverse languages, and 1.4 billion people.

WTTC closed its first ever Global Summit in Africa today with more than 1,200 delegates

WTTC Global Summit 2024

During the closing session of the Summit in Kigali, Western Australia was announced as the host for 2024, marking the first time the event will visit Oceania.

The 24th Global Summit will be taking place in Perth in late 2024, in partnership with Tourism Western Australia.

"We are so excited to be heading 'Down Under' next year. Western Australia and the beautiful city of Perth have always been popular destinations and we're sure attendees will enjoy a real taste of quintessential Australian hospitality."

Carolyn Turnbull, MD, Tourism Western Australia said hosting the 24th Summit presents a significant opportunity for WA to demonstrate its growth ambition and investment opportunities to WTTC's members, which includes the CEOs of key travel businesses such as airlines, global hotel operators and investors, and cruise lines.

"The effect of hosting this event goes far beyond the immediate economic impact generated from delegate spend; this event will open avenues for conversation around inbound trade and product investments, new inbound aviation routes and the development of high-value tourism product business opportunities."

attending the event in Kigali, Rwanda.

The global tourism body's Global Summit saw speakers such as global economist and renowned business commentator Justin Urquhart-Stewart; Administrator of the United States Transport Security Administration, David P. Pekoske; and Chief Commercial Officer of Arsenal Football Club, Juliet Slot.

The most influential Travel & Tourism event in the calendar, WTTC's Global Summit, was attended by more than 45 countries. Simpson said, "The success of this year's Global Summit in Kigali is testament to the power of Africa's Travel & Tourism sector. Through Rwanda, the continent has well and truly put itself on the map."

WTTC also launched its groundbreaking Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging report which tracks DEIB in the Travel & Tourism sector and highlights effective practices and recommendations for the future.

The Global Summit was moderated by Thami Nkadimeng who was recently selected as a 2023 Top 100 Most Influential People of African Descent under 40 in support of the United Nation's General Assembly resolution 68/237. ♦



International arrivals across APAC grew in 2022; gained momentum during early 2023: PATA

TBM Staff | Mumbai

BANGKOK, October 23, 2023 - After a series of annual contractions in international visitor arrivals (IVAs) in recent years, calendar year 2022 saw 44 destinations across the Asia Pacific region end with a collective annual gain of almost 124.2 million foreign arrivals, to return a collective inbound count of nearly 265.5 million, according to a report released today by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA). The 'Annual Tourism Monitor 2023' report, released today, shows that IVA numbers in 2022 were the strongest since 2019 and, as such, herald the much-awaited resurgence of the international travel and tourism sector for the Asia Pacific. There were wide differences at the three Asia Pacific destination region levels. The Pacific had the strongest growth rate in 2022 year-over-year, whereas Asia received both the largest number of arrivals and the greatest annual increase in absolute numbers from 2021.

Even so, the number of IVAs into and across Asia in 2022 reached only 27% of 2019 levels.



The Americas had the strongest recovery in that regard, with 69%, followed by the Pacific, with over 57%.

These are generally very positive results, but even more heartening are those for the early periods of 2019 to 2023, where the strengthening of international arrival numbers which began in the first periods of 2022, continued in early 2023.

Every year-to-date figure is consistent for each of the 38 destinations with early period

arrivals data and their respective months covered between 2019 and 2023. This data therefore gives a solid indication of how arrival numbers into and across Asia Pacific are trending over time.

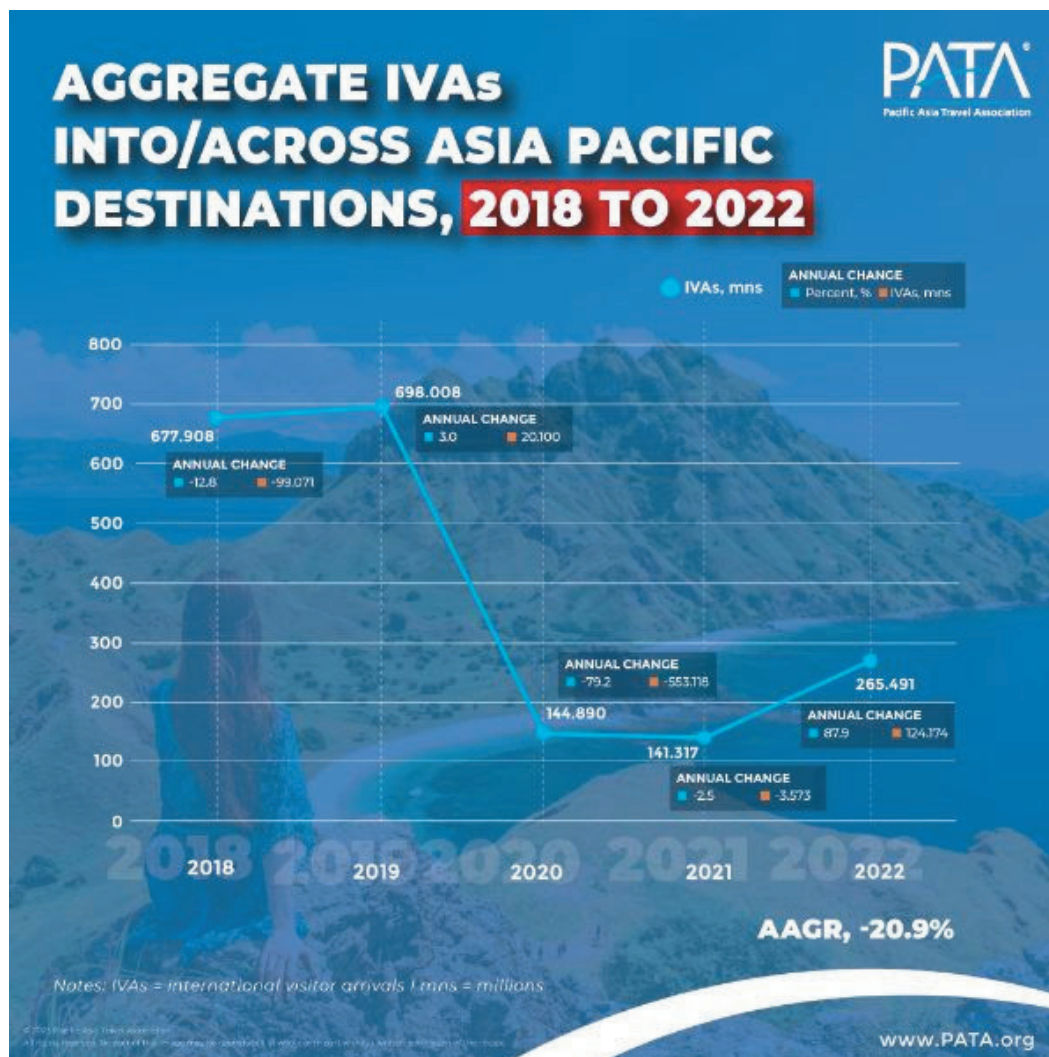
The IVA growth that began in early 2022 has gained momentum in early 2023, with the addition of more than 93.3 million foreign arrivals, a volume increase of more than double compared to the previous period. This has boosted the recovery rate for early 2023 to more than 68% of the early 2019 IVA levels.

Although Asia may have been slower in returning to growth up until 2022, the early 2023 figures show a very powerful return to dominance in the Asia Pacific mix of arrivals. Asia had the strongest performance of the three destination regions against the metrics of IVAs year-to-date, period-to-period growth rate and period-to-period increase in absolute numbers of IVAs. Even the recovery rate for Asia, while still the lowest at 62.4%, is a 35 percentage point improvement over calendar year 2022 and is only six percentage points below the Asia Pacific average.

Of particular interest is the mix of source markets fuelling these recovery rates. Most source regions have achieved recovery rates above 80% in early 2023. The exception is Asia, which has improved its arrival numbers for the Asia Pacific to just a little over 52%.

That raises a critical issue because in 2019, Asia was the dominant supplier of international visitor arrivals to the Asia Pacific, accounting for nearly 63% of total arrivals in the region. Therefore, any decline in those source markets poses an obvious challenge for the Asia Pacific as a whole.

Although Asia's recovery rate as a source region in early 2023 is relatively low, at just over 54%, it marks a dramatic improvement of almost 43 percentage points compared to early 2022. This demonstrates significant





growth momentum, and the results for the full calendar year 2023 are eagerly awaited.

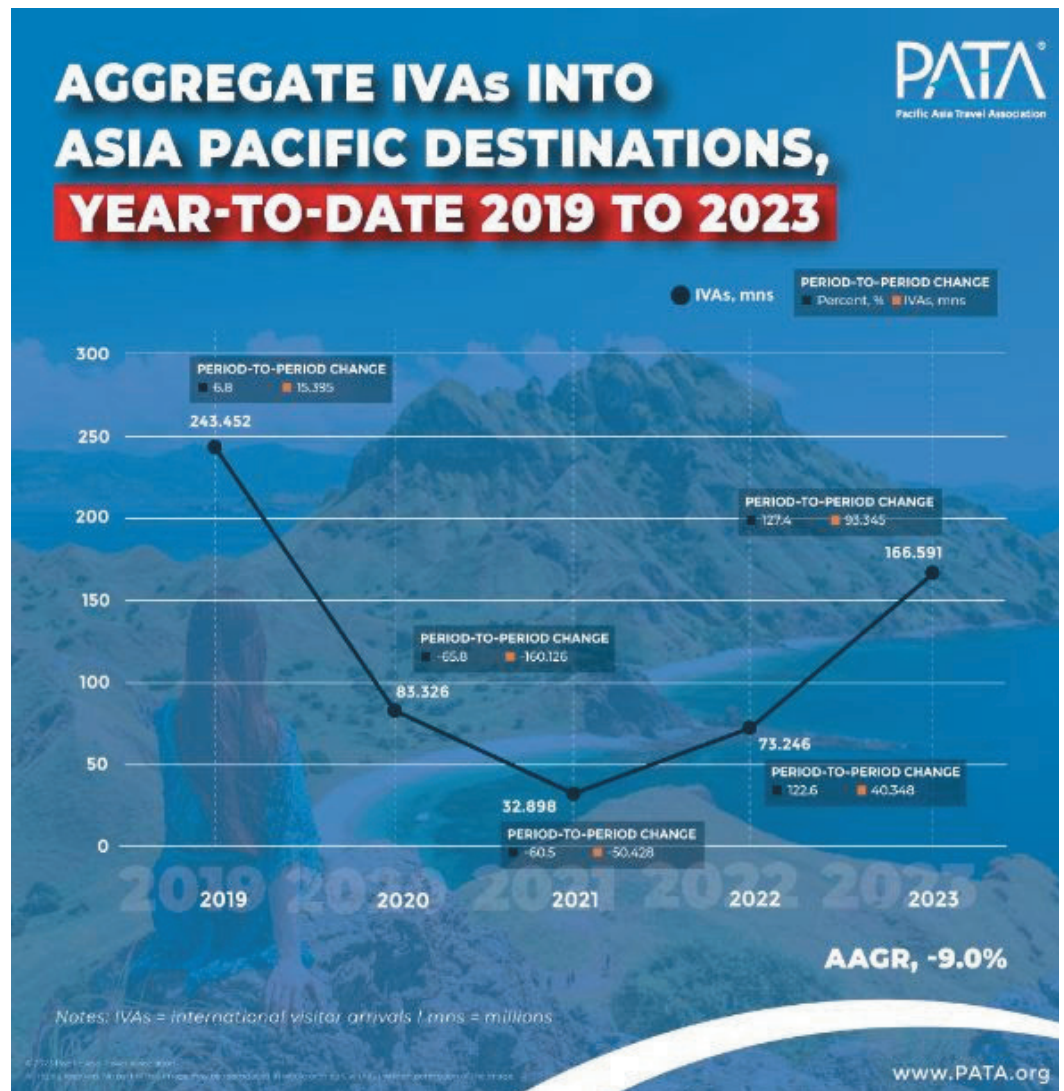
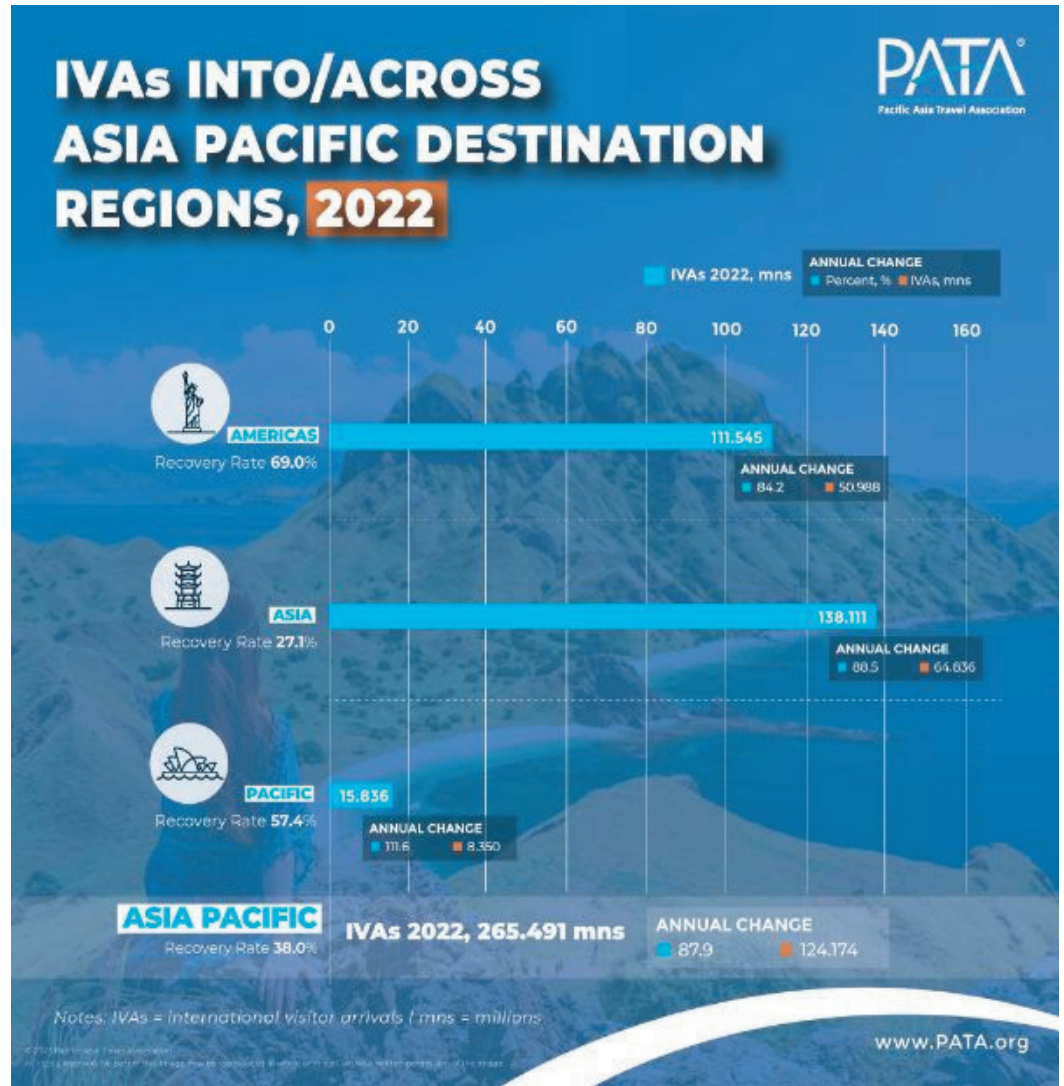
Among all the source markets in the Asia Pacific region, mainland China is understandably the most significant in terms of volume. In 2019, it accounted for almost 30% of the IVAs from Asia and 19% of the total aggregate visitor numbers to Asia Pacific destinations.

In early 2023, visitor numbers from mainland China saw a dramatic increase, surpassing 23 million. This marks the strongest early-period performance since early 2019. However, it still represents only 34% of the early 2019 level of arrivals. With the recent relaxation of restrictions and the reintroduction of group travel, a significant improvement can be expected by the end of calendar year 2023.

PATA Chairman Peter Semone, noted that “the overall growth in international visitor arrivals within the Asia Pacific is primarily fueled by Asia, serving as both a source and destination region, with mainland China playing a dominant role in visitor flows.”

Mr. Semone added, “Visitor growth from China has been relatively subdued until now. However, with the relaxation of most pandemic-imposed restrictions, we can now expect rapid change. Experience shows us that when change occurs in China, it is both rapid and impactful. The question, however, is whether the destinations in Asia Pacific are prepared, as change involves not only an increase in visitor numbers but also evolving expectations and demands from these visitors.”

Peter concluded that , “PATA forecasts of visitor demand indicate that, under the medium scenario, international visitor numbers by the end of 2023 are predicted to exceed 516 million, approaching 76% of the pre-pandemic levels of 2019. This is expected to further increase to 107% in 2024 and 116% in 2025. The wave is coming, and we must prepare ourselves to ensure that we have a better, stronger and more resilient tourism and travel industry.” ♦



TIES 2023: Showcases India's potential in Luxury and Experiential travel

TBM Staff | Mumbai

The maiden edition of The Iconic Experiences Show (TIES) 2023 recently concluded in New Delhi. Held at The Hyatt Regency New Delhi, the event was very well attended by Travel Tourism and Hospitality professionals along with Government officials and people from the field of Yoga and Wellness. Acknowledging the presence and growing potential of the Luxury Segment, Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI and Director TIES in collaboration with Chander Mansharamani, MD, Alpcord and Director TIES & TV9 network, came together to launch the new and one of its kinds – The Iconic Experiences Show. Keeping Luxury segment as its main target, TIES 2023 focussed on 5 sectors of the industry – Weddings, Wellness, Leisure, Conferences and Sustainability. The event was spread over a period of 2 days and followed a very different style and itinerary on both days.

Day one, i.e., October 16 was a day dedicated to discussions, deliberations, masterclasses, TED talks, powerful presentations and more.

Some of the prominent speakers who marked their presence on this day included Acharya Pratishta, Yog & Spiritual Guru, Former Diplomat HCI Mauritius Ministry of External Affairs & Director, Mokshayatan Yog Sansthan; Sadhvi Pragya Bharti, Spiritual Leader & Co-Founder – Sambhav International Foundation and Yudhistir Govinda Das, Country Director of Communications & National Spokesperson, ISKCON India who talked about wellness and how it is not just a luxury but also a necessity. Aditya Ghosh, Co-Founder, Akasa Air and Kapil Kaul, CEO & Director, CAPA Advisory discussed the immense underlying aviation potential in India.

Touching upon the most relevant sector in luxury today – Weddings, the panel discussion witnessed deliberations from Chetan Vohra, Managing Director, Line Communications & Weddingline; Vandana Mohan, Founder, The Wedding Design Company; Dr. Sanjana Jon, Social Activist & Fashion Designer and Asmita Chakraborty, Miss Tourism India 2021. An invigorating perspective on how to make "experiences" better was delivered by Ashish Gupta, Consulting CEO, FAITH.

Another Panel Discussion on Luxury in Leisure brought together hotelier's perspective from veterans such as Zubin Saxena, MD and Senior Area VP, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group; Meshaal M. Qureshi, Trade Markets Director, Saudi Tourism Authority; Hadigalage Chalaka Dev Gajabahu, Chairman Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau; Noel Swain, COO, Evisa VAS & Tourism Services- VFS; Parveen Chander Kumar, EVP Sales and Marketing, Indian Hotels Company and Puneet Dhawan, Senior Vice President Operations, Accor India & South Asia.

Knowledge Sessions

Adding an element of great knowledge and experience share was the MasterClasses by Industry stalwart Nakul Anand, Executive Director, ITC Limited. The day also saw elaborative and insightful talks by Sridhar Keppurengan, Senior Director/Lead- Cross Border Payments and G. Kamala Vardhana Rao, IAS, Secretary (GOI) & Chief Executive Officer, Food & Safety & Standard Authority of India.

The Knowledge Session on Vibrant Heritage India saw participation by Mukesh Kumar Meshram, Principal Secretary, Tourism and Culture Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh & Director General, UP

Tourism; M.D. Sinha, Principal Secretary, Haryana Tourism Department; Tarun Thakral, Founder & Managing Trustee – Heritage Transport Museum, Ashish Gupta, Founder: StrategyPLUTO & Consulting CEO: FAITH, Rakhee Gupta Bhandari, IAS, Secretary Tourism and cultural affairs, Punjab Tourism.

The perfect icing on the cake was the last session of the day one focussed on Women Powering Sustainability Goals and witnessed the viewpoints



TIES, Hyatt Regency New Delhi, MICE, Wedding, luxury, Dr. Jyotsna Suri, Jyoti Mayal, RARE India, Rupinder Brar, Zubin Saxena, Iconic, Yoga, Wellness, fusion, music

of Rupinder Brar, Commissioner of Income Tax, Govt. of India; Dr. Jyotsna Suri, Chairperson & Managing Director, Bharat Hotels Limited; Varija Bajaj, Fashion Designer, Founder, Varija Lifestyles, O&Y, Lela, Varija Home, Varija Life & THE CAREER and Shobha Rudra, Founder partner, RARE India. From multi-tasking talented women to those who are outweighing men in performance numbers, the session was all about women empowerment.

The entire day was alive with very interesting more than a house packed venue followed by lively fusion music, gala dinner.

Highlights of Day 2

The Day 2 of the TIES 2023 took place on an Exhibition Format and saw many Industry Stakeholders take up booth space, showcasing their marvellous products and services to the discerning visitor and Travel / Tour Operator. With pre-fixed meetings with 30 Corporates in MICE 50 high end wedding planners and good number of walk-ins, the show allowed ample opportunities to the tourism professionals to network and form mutually beneficial business ties.

A perfect conclusion to this unique and grand show was the Mock Wedding, which was jointly collaborated by Ties and Q Events, wherein, through some traditional Indian ceremonies, the rituals and process of an Indian wedding was explained beautifully. Amidst much laughter, networking, good food and great conversation, the first-ever edition of Ties 2023 came to an end.

"The maiden show of TIES 2023 has been a huge success. Conference hall filled to capacity at 10:15 in the morning on Day 1 of the show. The impressive and aspirational line of speakers, whom we had requested to come and share their experiences with the audience, all showed up – sharing their vast pool of knowledge with the gathering and staying back to hear what their peers had to share. The event was successful in offering people from the travel trade an opportunity to interact with State Tourism heads, Reps of Countries, Attractions, Hoteliers, Aviation experts, DMCs directly and learn how 'differently' they can package the same old destination – how they can offer an Iconic Experience to their clients," said Mayal. ♦

Air India enters into interline partnership with Alaska Airlines for 32 destinations in USA, Mexico, and Canada

TBM Staff | Mumbai

Air India has entered an interline partnership with Alaska Airlines. The partnership, while strengthening Air India's international network, will allow Air India guests to avail seamless connections from New York JFK, Newark-New Jersey, Washington DC, Chicago, San Francisco, and Vancouver gateways to and from 32 destinations in the USA, Mexico, and Canada on Alaska Airline's network.

The scope of agreement includes bilateral interlining which allows both the airlines to sell tickets on each other's network. In addition, the two airlines have also entered a Special Prorate Agreement, which allows Air India to file 'through fares' on routes covering Alaska Airlines' network. Passengers will also be able to enjoy Air India's free baggage allowance on Alaska Airlines routes.

Commenting on this, Nipun Aggarwal, Chief Commercial & Transformation Officer, Air India, said, "The tie-up with Alaska Air will expand our international footprint in the US and Canada and even extend our reach to Mexico boosting our network expansion plans. It will help us offer more choice to our guests and mark a significant step forward in our mission to enhance

connectivity."

Air India currently operates 47 non-stop flights every week from Delhi, Bengaluru, and Mumbai to five American cities: New York, Newark, Washington DC, Chicago, and San Francisco, and 14 non-stop flights every week from Delhi to Toronto and Vancouver in Canada. ♦

CONTD from PG 01 ▶

Full recovery for Rail Europe...

Rail Europe allows travellers to book train tickets from more than 200 rail providers. Highlighting their most popular product in India, she stated, "The Swiss Travel Pass is our top-selling and iconic product for Indian travellers. This is closely followed by Eurostar, the French and Italian high-speed networks. Eurail is also doing a successful comeback after Covid. Also, our m-pass is a big draw among youth and student travellers." ♦



7 Night - Legendary Winter in the Mediterranean Starting at just US\$ 1,399* PP only

Voyage Highlights

- With overnights in Rome, Nice, and Barcelona, your guests will have plenty of time to explore the beauty of these cities in Winter.
- Windstar Cruises offers you the opportunity to discover iconic ports like Barcelona, Nice, Livorno (Florence/Pisa), and Rome in an entirely different light onboard the all-suite Star Legend.
- Visit museums and famous landmarks without the summer crowds.
- Experience Christmas in Rome or the fireworks spectacle for New Year's in Barcelona.
- Shop bustling Christmas markets in the shadow of Gothic cathedrals and glide through the season's magic with visits to ice skating rinks in Barcelona and Rome.
- Witness breathtaking seasonal light shows like the one on the exterior of Sagrada Familia or on the Ponte Vecchio bridge in Florence, see Rome at its holiday best with Christmas trees at St. Peter's Square, the Colosseum and Spanish Steps, and breathe in the enchanting fragrance of roasting chestnuts on the vibrant streets of Barcelona and many more.



Barcelona to Rome

Dep. Dates: Dec 17, 31, 2023
Jan 14, 28; Feb 11, 25; Mar 10, 24, 2024

Rome to Barcelona

Dep. Dates: Dec 10, 24, 2023
Jan 7, 21; Feb 4, 18; Mar 3, 17, 2024

Ports:

Barcelona, Marseille, Nice, Livorno, Rome

*T&C apply | subject to change and availability

Destinations:

Alaska | Asia | Australia & New Zealand | Canada & New England | Caribbean | Costa Rica & Panama Canal | Greece | Italy | Mediterranean | Mexico | Northern Europe | South Pacific | Tahiti



For further information, please contact:- 9811283957

2nd Floor, Tower C, Cyber Greens, DLF Phase III, Gurgaon - 122002, Haryana |
Phone: 0124-4595300 | Email: info@sticgroup.com | Web: www.stictravel.com



Explore France Kochi 2023: Reinforces India's Potential as a Tourism Source Market

The event offered an ideal opportunity to establish successful collaborations between French tourism partners and the travel industry across India.

[Prasenjit Chakraborty | Mumbai](#)

Atout France, the France Tourism Development Agency organised the 5th edition of its flagship B2B event, Explore France in Kochi from October 10 to 12. The event provided a perfect platform in building successful synergies between French tourism partners and the travel trade fraternity pan India. Over 2 days of interactive exchanges, an approximate of 1,500 scheduled one-on-one meetings took place between buyers and exhibitors reinforcing India's potential as a source market for destination France.

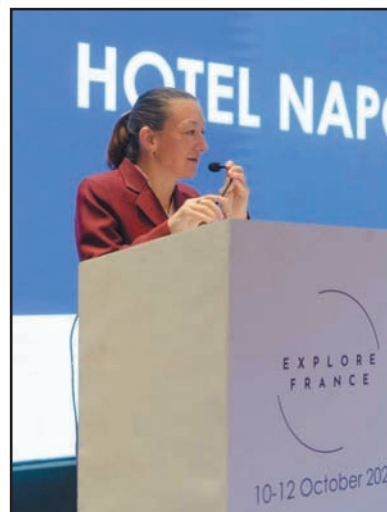
The French delegation consisted partners who have maintained a steady presence in the market, and new entrants interested to foray into India.

On 11th October "An Evening Under the Stars" was organised in association with La Vallée Village – member of the Bicester collection in the presence of Mme Lise Talbot Barré, Consul General of France in Pondicherry and Chennai, M Didier Talpain, Consul General of France in Kolkata and M. Jean-Marc Séré-Charlet, Consul General of France in Mumbai.

Meanwhile the Consul Generals of Pondicherry and Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata interacted with the media on the sidelines of the event. Mme Talbot Barré informed that 30,000 visa requests were received from Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu and Kerala in 2019. "Out of this 24,500 visas were delivered," she said. She also added that this

year from January 1 to August 31, around 21,000 visa processing requests were done. "We believe by the end of the year 30,000 visas will be delivered," said Mme Talbot Barré. She mentioned that 70% of the people travel through tourist visas and the rest 30% on business visas.

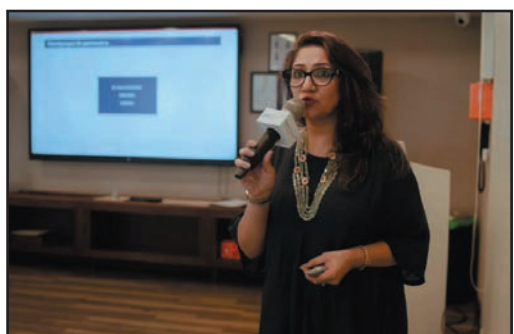
Mme Talbot Barré also indicated that France is no longer issuing visas within 48 hours. "We have modernised our visa processing system, and done away with many paper works. We need 7 days to process the visa request," she said.



Describing France as a diverse country, M. Séré-Charlet appealed to Indians to explore the entire country, not just Paris. Throwing light on the trend, he said that there was a time when people used to travel during select season, but now they travel throughout the year. Drawing a comparison between Delhi and Mumbai markets, M. Séré-Charlet said, "People from Delhi mostly prefer Paris but tourists from Mumbai are open to discover new destinations." He also said that in the pre-Covid times, they used to receive approximately 60,000 to 65,000 visa processing requests in total from states like Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Goa, and Daman & Diu. "Out of this, we delivered around 60,000 short term visas," he said. According to M. Séré-Charlet, they have received around 44,000 visa-processing requests till August, 2023. "We are hopeful to deliver the same number of visas this year as we used to do in pre-Covid times," said an optimistic Séré-Charlet

M. Talpain revealed that in the 2018-19 period, the Eastern region of India, encompassing West Bengal and its neighbouring states, saw the highest number of visa requests. According to M. Talpain, "Although visa requests have started to increase, they have not yet returned to the pre-COVID levels. We remain optimistic about achieving that figure by next year."

On 12th October, the Consulate General of France in Pondicherry and Chennai organised an interactive session on visas for



all participants. The session provided many useful insights on visa submissions and other relevant information.

Sheetal Munshaw – Director Atout France India, shared her thoughts, "We've had a very satisfying turnout for this edition of our showcase. Both our partners and agents displayed strong levels of motivation and a keen interest in the showcase of destination France to the discerning Indian traveller. India is within the top 15 source markets for



Exhibitors' View

Patrick Allais, Senior Partnerships Business Development Manager, LA VALLEE VILLAGE



"This is the second time we are participating in the event and have seen a lot of traction from the Indian market. I visit India thrice a year and this speaks volumes of the importance of this market. The platform offers us a huge opportunity to meet our partners from across India. We are more focused on FITs and families because we represent a premium and luxury brand. We receive 50% of our total guests from the India market. This has become possible due to our excellent relations with the tourism industry in India. I also want to congratulate Atout France India for this achievement."

Barbara Breheret, Market Manager-India, Auvergne Rhone-Alpes, Tourisme



"Ours is a four-season destination and today the mountains are really appealing to Indians. A substantial chunk of our visitors is repeat customers. There was a time when people used to stay only for 3 days in the Auvergne Rhone-Alpes region but things have changed now. Today, many tourists are staying for 12 days in this region."

France and happy to announce that arrival figures for the first half of the year (mid-June) are at an approximate of 4, 99,000. With the Rugby World Cup underway and the Olympic and Paralympic Games slated to take place in Paris next year, I believe that the interactions between our partners and agents are instrumental to establishing France's strategic positioning as a preferred tourist destination for this year and the next". ♦

prasenjit.chakraborty@saffronsynergies.in





‘India is a key priority market for The Anam Group’

The Anam Group, an independent hotel operator from Vietnam, is keen to further welcome Indian guests of varied profile with the country seeing an unprecedented influx of tourists from India. **Laurent Myter, Group GM, The Anam Group** spoke to **Disha Shah Ghosh** about their hospitality offerings suited to the Indian clientele.

Q Give us a brief introduction about The Anam Group.

The Anam Group is an independently owned and operated hospitality brand with two resorts in Vietnam. The Anam Cam Ranh, our inaugural property, sits on the Cam Ranh peninsula with 300 metres of beachfront that enjoys 300 days of sun. Voted among the top 25 hotels in Southeast Asia by the readers of Condé Nast, it has 75 villas, 40 premium rooms, and 96 rooms and suites, as well as multiple dining venues, including The Indochine, The Colonial, Lang Viet, and Saigon Bar and Beach Club. This seaside haven has multiple MICE venues perfect for Indian weddings with 200 guests. The resort also has a 60-seater 3D movie theatre, The Anam Spa, three swimming pools, a recreational and fitness centre, a tennis court, a yoga room, and a Kids Club.

In its first year of operations, The Anam Mui Ne became the only Vietnamese resort to join the Small Luxury Hotels of the World portfolio. Our resort has

127 rooms and suites across six categories overlooking the ocean, gardens, swimming pools, and the Mui Ne beach town, along with two restaurants, a bar, two swimming pools, a ballroom, conference facilities, a water sports centre, fitness area, The Anam Spa, a yoga room, a Kids Club, and a gift shop. Our resorts are uniquely positioned and architecturally designed to offer guests the privilege of direct beach access.

Q What do your properties bring to the hospitality landscape of Vietnam?

The Anam Group is redefining the hospitality landscape by preserving Vietnamese culture through architecture and design, offering unique experiences to guests, and promoting sustainability. Guests can

history and stories of the people and places.

Q There has been a sudden surge in Indian travellers to Vietnam. In that context, where does India rank as a priority market for The Anam Group?

Over the past few years, India has emerged as a significant player in Vietnam. India is a key priority market for The Anam Group, and we have seen a steady influx of Indian guests this year.

Q Which segment of travellers are your key areas of focus in India?

Our strength is our diverse guest base, which includes leisure travellers, families, honeymooners, weddings, and corporate groups. We have strategically focused on catering to the needs of luxury travellers, the MICE segment, and long-term vacationers from Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, and Bengaluru. With Mui Ne becoming popular among honeymooners and bleisure travellers, The Anam Mui Ne appeals to Indians. The Anam Cam Ranh caters to high-spending guests, extended vacationers, and MICE groups.

Q How are you engaging with the travel trade in India for product knowledge and package information dissemination?

We offer tailor-made incentives to our trade partners based on the group size and specific requirements. This approach ensures that our partners feel valued and supported, enhancing their confidence in promoting our properties to their clients.

We hosted luxury travel agents from Mumbai at The Anam Cam Ranh and The Anam Mui Ne this year. A 360-degree view of our offerings and firsthand experience has better equipped them to curate effective itineraries for their clients.

We also plan to participate in Indian travel trade shows to enhance our brand visibility and engage with potential partners in the coming year. ♦

disha.shah@saffronsynergies.in

Q What is your brand philosophy?

The brand philosophy of The Anam is based on four core values: authenticity, sincerity, timeless, and sustainability. These values reflect the vision and mission of The Anam to provide guests with a unique and memorable experience that celebrates the rich culture, heritage, and charm of Vietnam.

Authenticity means that The Anam crafts authentic experiences that draw inspiration from the region and pay homage to the delectable cuisine, art, music, and traditions of Vietnam. The Anam offers guests the opportunity to immerse themselves in the local lifestyle and learn about the



It won't be
business as usual
Coz delivering
luxury is
sacrosanct to us

Opening in early 2024

Nestled on the beaches of Puri, the Swosti Premium Beach Resorts is set to deliver extravagant, international class hospitality to its guests. Conceived to be a 'go to destination' for leisure, business affairs and weddings this resort is going to be a visual delight too. Planned to cater to visitors from across the globe who visit to gratify spiritual yearning and also the young as well the young at heart who find solace in the pristine beaches of Puri and Konark, Swosti Premium Beach Resorts will be an indulgence of unparalleled luxury.

Highlights :

- 125 luxury rooms including presidential suite overlooking miles of the Bay of Bengal
- Multi-cuisine all day dining restaurant
- Roof Top Sky Lounge Bar
- Coffee Shop
- Entertainment Lounge / Centre
- Lawns designed for large gatherings
- Banquet Halls & Conference Halls suitable for weddings, conferences & exhibitions
- Business Centre & Board Room
- Health Club / Spa
- Shops
- Swimming pool with facility of RestoBar
- Kids club / Water slides
- All areas in the hotel centrally air-conditioned

CORPORATE OFFICE

SWOSTI PREMIUM LTD.

P-1, Jaydev Vihar, Bhubaneswar 751 013, Odisha, India

Ph: 0674 6611111 | M: 9338015588, 9337476478 | E: info@swostipremium.com

www.swostihotels.com

Skal India Congress: Bringing Together Myriad Views on Sustainability

TBM Staff | Mumbai

Inaugurated by HK Patil, Minister for Tourism, Law and Parliament Affairs, Govt. of Karnataka, the SKAL India Congress embarked on a first of its kind

convention where in two cities of Mysuru and Bengaluru played host to a galaxy of senior tourism professionals from India and abroad.

SKAL International India organised its SKAL INDIA CONGRESS, a first-of-its-kind event at Bengaluru and Mysuru. It was an



elaborate platform designed for like-minded professionals who want to participate in the progress of the travel industry.

This event acted as a catalyst to initiate exchange of views on the key issues of the travel and tourism industry. The event was designed to arrive at anticipating future growth of the industry by providing a bridge to connect today's resources to tomorrow's sustainability.

Ayappa Somaiah, President of the host club, Bangalore, said "Incredible connections and partnerships formed during the conference have paved the way for a brighter future in our industry. A tremendous gathering of minds at the conference fueled our inspiration, and revitalised our resolve to meet the challenges of the growing industry."

This event when ably supported and promoted by Department of Tourism, Government of Karnataka.

Event Highlights:

Brand Ambassadors: Bomman & Bellie, the couple protagonists of the Oscar-winning documentary 'Elephant Whisperers' are the face of an emerging altruistic India, aware of its riches and wise enough to preserve them.

Having them as the Brand Ambassadors, endorsing the credo of Skal by being faithful to sustainable development goals where nature with all its diversity is mindfully cared for and preserved from Anthropocene affects. Who else could have justified such a mission other than Bomman & Bellie!

Carl Vaz, President, SKAL International India, said, "The SKAL India Congress was a resounding success, uniting industry leaders and visionaries for an inspiring exchange of ideas. The congress provided invaluable insights and practical takeaways, leaving us better equipped to drive growth of our members."

The Congress promised and delivered an action-packed event with Networking, Business Sessions, showcase of cultural vistas and fellowship.

Sudipta Deb, the Congress Chairman, added "From engaging keynote sessions to the vibrant networking opportunities, this congress has brought our club members closer, and the energy and enthusiasm generated here will





continue to drive our mission forward".

The Congress began with a cultural extravaganza with the backdrop of Mysuru Palace where the colorful prelude to the Mysore Dasara celebrations were showcased. A panel discussion on conservation and heritage of Mysore to a session on the growing menace of cyber-crimes to a power packed interview with Mr. Patu Keswani, Chairman and Managing Director of Lemon Tree Hotels.

Deb added "From engaging keynote sessions to the vibrant networking opportunities, this congress has brought our club members closer, and the energy and enthusiasm generated here will continue to drive our mission forward".

The event encompassed a B2B exhibition which demonstrated the need of business networking and helped showcase different destinations and products. The business sessions came to a close with a felicitation of achievers in the field of tourism and hospitality. The event included a delegation from US,



Nepal, Sri Lanka, Kenya and Rwanda, making it one of the most successful SKAL National conventions.

BS Prashanth, the Co-Host and President of SKAL International Mysore, said "For the first time in the history of SKAL International, two clubs have come together to organize a National Congress. Our congress has been a remarkable journey, and it's only the beginning

of the great things we can achieve together as a club. This congress has set a new standard for excellence showcasing the strength of our members."

The festivities came to a close with a thundering performance from the legendary Usha Uthup, India's ultimate singing diva, who's baritone voice brought the house down. ♦



India vs Bharat: A Question of Identity

Organic Reality, Induced Image, and Collective Aspirations

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

Every place has a unique personality and lived experience that shapes its identity and narrative. This identity, however, can be complex, comprising three distinct existential realities. The ongoing debate of India vs Bharat offers an exciting opportunity to explore the interplay between these dimensions - the organic, the induced, and the collective.

The organic reality of a place is an intricate tapestry woven over centuries, influenced by geology, geography, history, and the subsequent political and cultural legacy. It represents the intrinsic essence of a location, the sum of its historical, social, and environmental forces. This organic identity is not something that can be manufactured or contrived; instead, it evolves naturally, reflecting the spirit and character of a place.

Conversely, the induced image of a place is often a deliberate construct carefully cultivated by the leadership of a community or nation. This image serves as a representation of the collective aspirations of the people of that era. Formal place branding exercises are often employed to shape and project this image to the world. The induced image can be a powerful tool for shaping public perception, attracting investment, and fostering a sense of pride and unity among residents.

However, the third dimension - the real-time experience of people at the place, the visitors and the host - is a crucial factor in understanding the relationship between the organic and induced aspects. These visitors, whether tourists, investors, or immigrants, are inevitably confronted with the organic reality of the place. While they may have been drawn in by the induced image, their experience is ultimately shaped by the authentic character of the location.

Moreover, the impact of the induced image versus the organic reality is not limited to external visitors alone. Members of the host community, those who live in the place day in and day out, can also find themselves caught in an identity crisis when these two dimensions diverge. For individuals living in a place, the organic reality is not just a backdrop but their lived experience.

It encompasses the everyday routines, the social interactions, the traditions, and the challenges that shape their lives. This organic reality is deeply personal and often forms the core of their identity. However, when the induced image diverges significantly from this organic reality, it can lead to a sense of disillusionment and loss. The narratives crafted for external consumption may not align with the lived experiences of the community members. They may feel that their authentic stories, struggles, and aspirations are overshadowed by a manufactured image that does not truly represent who they are. The contrast between the daily reality they experience, and the narratives of the induced image can create a profound sense of dissonance and disconnection.

For any place, whether a small community or a vast nation, to establish a clear and coherent identity, these three circles - organic personality, induced image, and people's experience - must overlap as much as possible. When these dimensions align, it creates a harmonious narrative that resonates with both internal and external audiences. However, a disconnect between these aspects results in cognitive dissonance, where the perceived image clashes with the lived reality.

This interplay between organic reality, induced image, and collective aspirations is particularly evident in the debate surrounding "India vs. Bharat." The Constitution of India begins with the preamble, "We the people of India..." This declaration lays the foundation for the collective identity of the nation. Article 1 of the Constitution states, "India,..., shall be a union of states." However, this raises the question of what "India" truly means in this context. Adding "that is Bharat" in Article 1 provides crucial insight into this question. It signifies that the collective aspirations of the people of the new republic, "India," are rooted in and extend from a more incredible tradition known as "Bharat." In essence, "India" represents the induced image, carefully crafted to unite a diverse nation under a common identity, while "Bharat" embodies the organic reality that has emerged over thousands of years of



Dr Nimit Chowdhary is a Professor at the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management at Jamia Millia Islamia. He has more than 29 years of academic experience, of which he has been a full professor for 16 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 20 books and more than 200 academic papers and chapters. He has travelled extensively to around 40 countries and almost all states within the country

existence and all that has transpired within this land.

This duality in the nation's identity is not unique to India; it reflects the broader concept of place identity and its complex interplay with history, culture, and aspiration. While the induced image of India may seek to unite the nation's diverse communities and cultures under a single banner, Bharat's organic reality reminds us of the rich tapestry of history, traditions, and beliefs that make India unique.

To sum up, the debate between "India vs Bharat" underscores the intricate relationship between organic reality, induced image, and collective aspirations in the context of place identity. ♦

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



Discover Modern Uzbekistan

Embark on a journey to Uzbekistan, the crossroads of culture in Central Asia. Discover the rich tapestry of Samarkand, Bukhara, and Tashkent, where history meets diversity. Unearth the secrets of this captivating land. Your adventure awaits – explore Uzbekistan today!

1. The renewed Samarkand Airport

Samarkand International Airport, a pivotal hub for National Uzbekistan Airways and the country's second busiest after Islam Karimov International Airport in Tashkent, serves over 500,000 travellers yearly. In 2019, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's visit prompted a modernization directive, resulting in the airport's grand reopening on December 14, 2022. Operating since 1967, it's the sole airport in the Samarkand region and one of the CIS's oldest now ensures a promising future for aviation facilities.

2. Museums and UNESCO Treasures

Uzbekistan is home to an impressive 8.4 thousand cultural heritage sites, with 209 nestled within four museum cities (Ichan Kala in Khiva, Historical Center of Bukhara, Historical Center of Shakhrisabz, and Samarkand – Crossroads of Cultures), all proudly listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The country also hosts 104 museums and galleries, adding to its rich tapestry of cultural treasures.

3. The Legend of Pilaf

Uzbek pilaf, a culinary delight, boasts over 100 global recipes. In Uzbekistan, each region takes pride in its unique pilaf preparation. Legend attributes the term 'Palov OSH' to Avicenna, with each letter representing an ingredient: P–Piyoz – onion, A – ayez – carrots, L– lahm – meat, O – olio – butter, V – vet – salt, embodying the essence of this flavorful dish.

4. Unforgettable Mice Experience

Uzbekistan hosts a spectacular array of grand cultural events, festivals, and exhibitions, each with a unique purpose – uniting people, conveying cultural values, and fostering global business connections. Notable among these is Navroz on March 21, a breathtaking celebration marked by Sumalyak, Halim, and joyous festivities. The country also hosts vibrant festivals, offering a deeper understanding of Uzbek traditions. For music enthusiasts, world-famous DJs spin at electronic music festivals in Tashkent and by the Aral Sea in Muynak. Major events include the Tashkent International Tourism Fair, "Tourism on the Silk Road," "Made in Uzbekistan," and "Food Week Uzbekistan." Explore Uzbekistan's rich cultural tapestry and diverse festivities.

5. Wellness and Healing Retreats

The country's natural beauty includes pristine landscapes, thermal springs, salt lakes, unique sands, and salt caves. The country boasts numerous sanatoriums and health centres, some offering traditional medicine in a culturally

immersive setting. Notable health resorts include the unique Natural Salt Cave – Khojaikon, which offers natural treatments with salt and sand, and the Balneal resort, which provides specialized health services in a modern environment.

6. Shop the Silk Road

Exploring Uzbekistan unveils a treasure trove of shopping experiences, with Tashkent showcasing the best in Central Asian style, from boutiques and bazaars offering traditional rugs, carpets, silk, handicrafts, and suzani to large Soviet-style malls and traditional bazaars. Tourist hubs like Bukhara and Khiva are known for a range of Silk Road mementoes, from crockery to textiles, knives, and spices. Additionally, explore interesting photographic books and maps in Bukhara's bookshops and don't miss craft centres in Khiva, where you can witness the traditional art of suzani stitching.

7. A Pilgrimage of Faith and History

Uzbekistan is a land of sacred places from Islamic and Sufi traditions to Christianity and Buddhism, including UNESCO World Heritage sites like Bukhara, Samarkand, and Shakhrisabz. Its history intertwines with Islam and Christianity, with over 10 revered pilgrimage sites. The "springs of Job," notably in Bukhara, hold significance for both faiths. Whereas, Termez, known for its Buddhist heritage, features ancient temple complexes and Hellenistic cultural elements, with relics now housed at the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg.

8. Your Gateway to Adventure

Enjoy classic winter sports in well-equipped mountain resorts like Chimgan, Beldersay, Amirsoy, and Yangiabad. For thrill-seekers, there are opportunities for extreme skiing, snowboarding, motorcycle racing, motocross, skateboarding, mountain biking, rock climbing, canyoning, and paragliding. Water enthusiasts can explore Charvak reservoirs and untamed rivers like Chatkal, Pskem, and Syr Darya, with options for scooters, catamarans, and exhilarating rafting tours. And don't forget paragliding – it's a year-round adventure, with the Charvak reservoir area as the prime launch spot, where you can soar with a professional instructor or after some cool training. ■



For more information, please contact:

Tourism Committee at the Ministry of Ecology, Protection of Environment and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Email: info@blinkbrandsolutions.com | **Phone:** +91 98350 69443

Add: 107B, Amir Temur Street, Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan



‘Qatar aims to establish itself as a top-choice destination, especially for weddings and MICE events, by the year 2024’



Due to its flourishing economy, a vibrant young population, and a growing middle class, India stands on the cusp of becoming one of the world’s most promising outbound tourism markets, says **Manoj Kumar Tiwari, General Manager, Regency Holidays (Qatar based DMC)**, in an interaction with **Prasenjit Chakraborty**.

Q How significant is India as a source market for your company?

The Indian market has gained prominence for Qatar, particularly since the FIFA World Cup 2022, unlocking substantial tourism potential. In the global context, India stands out as a crucial source market, and for Regency Holidays, it holds particular importance. The geographical proximity to Qatar, a burgeoning middle class with disposable income, and a keen desire to explore diverse travel experiences make India a key market. The spectrum of interests among Indian travellers, spanning luxury, culture, adventure, and exclusive social events, aligns seamlessly with the diverse offerings of Regency Holidays. The array includes golfing facilities, cultural and historical sites, museums, beaches, and nature experiences. Qatar’s infrastructure, featuring new hotels with ample inventory, has successfully hosted numerous Indian weddings, with more in the pipeline. The support from the Qatari government in attracting Indian tourists further underscores the pivotal role India plays as a source market.

Q How do you engage with trade partners in India?

Effective engagement with travel trade partners in India necessitates a proactive and strategic approach. Our focus lies in cultivating robust relationships, presenting competitive packages, and delivering exceptional support to establish a sustained presence in the Indian market. Strategies encompass regular participation in travel trade fairs, organizing FAM (familiarization) trips, conducting B2B workshops through sales visits, and implementing incentives and promotions. Collaborative marketing efforts further enhance our outreach. On the product front, we offer customizable

hotels with convention facilities and dining options.

Weddings and Social Events: The robust infrastructure, coupled with numerous hotels and attractions, positions Qatar as an attractive choice for weddings and social gatherings.

FIT (Free Independent Travellers): Catering to a broad spectrum of interests and intensity levels, from leisurely breakfasts or dinners on Safliya Island to adrenaline-fueled dune bashing and football stadium tours, Qatar offers a diverse range of experiences.

GIT (Group Inclusive Tours): Ongoing efforts are in place to develop and be the pioneer in offering packages tailored for this segment.

Q What kind of MICE movement have you witnessed from India?

As of now, the predominant MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions)

“On the product front, we offer customizable packages, responsive customer service, and keep our partners updated through newsletters and new product releases. Red Dot Representations, our trusted partner, acts as a vital conduit, leveraging their market expertise and extensive travel trade connections to facilitate our growth and success in India”

packages, responsive customer service, and keep our partners updated through newsletters and new product releases. Red Dot Representations, our trusted partner, acts as a vital conduit, leveraging their market expertise and extensive travel trade connections to facilitate our growth and success in India.

movement from India primarily comprises incentive groups.

Q What is your forecast for the Indian market in 2024?

With a burgeoning economy, a youthful population, and an expanding middle class, India is poised to become one of the most lucrative outbound tourism markets globally. Leveraging its proximity to major Indian cities, solid infrastructure, emphasis on safety and security, and a wide array of activities, we anticipate Qatar to secure the label of a preferred destination by 2024, particularly for weddings and MICE segments. ♦

Q Which traveller segments are your primary focus areas in India?

Our key focus areas in the diverse Indian market include:

Incentive Travel: Qatar emerges as a credible alternative for destinations within a short flying time, boasting incredible infrastructure and a variety of

prasenjit.chakraborty@saffronsynergies.in



EXPERIENCE OMANI HOSPITALITY

With unparalleled natural beauty, rich heritage, and legendary warm hospitality, Oman is an all-round extraordinary destination. Opt for a direct flight to Muscat or extend your journey and indulge in an exclusive stopover package. Your unforgettable travel experience begins with Oman Air.

Book now at omanair.com

Welcome to

Malaysia Master

SPECIALIST E-LEARNING PROGRAM

brought to you by



in association with



E-learning Program for Travel Agents in India

“Upskill knowledge and Sell Malaysia More Effectively”

Tourism Malaysia in association with TravelBiz Monitor invites Indian travel trade to register and successfully complete the Malaysia Master Specialist Program.

With a storied past embodied in centuries-old temples and shrines, as well as a visionary outlook, Malaysia can be experienced in so many different ways. This course will help you to design vacations to suit your clients' changing needs and let them explore the destination on their own terms.

You will learn not only about some of Malaysia's newest attractions but also how to make the best recommendations for clients seeking off-the-beaten-path experiences.

Why Become A Malaysia Master Specialist?

- Malaysia as a renowned desired destination
- Improve knowledge about tourism products and destinations
- To increase travel package bookings
- Higher percentage of Repeat traveler.

How to participate?

- Log on to <https://www.travelbizmonitor.com/malysiamaster2023/>
- Complete 5 Compulsory Modules with min. 80% per module in chronological order in order to become a 'Malaysia Master'.

Program valid for 180 days from the date of launch on www.travelbizmonitor.com



Register Now