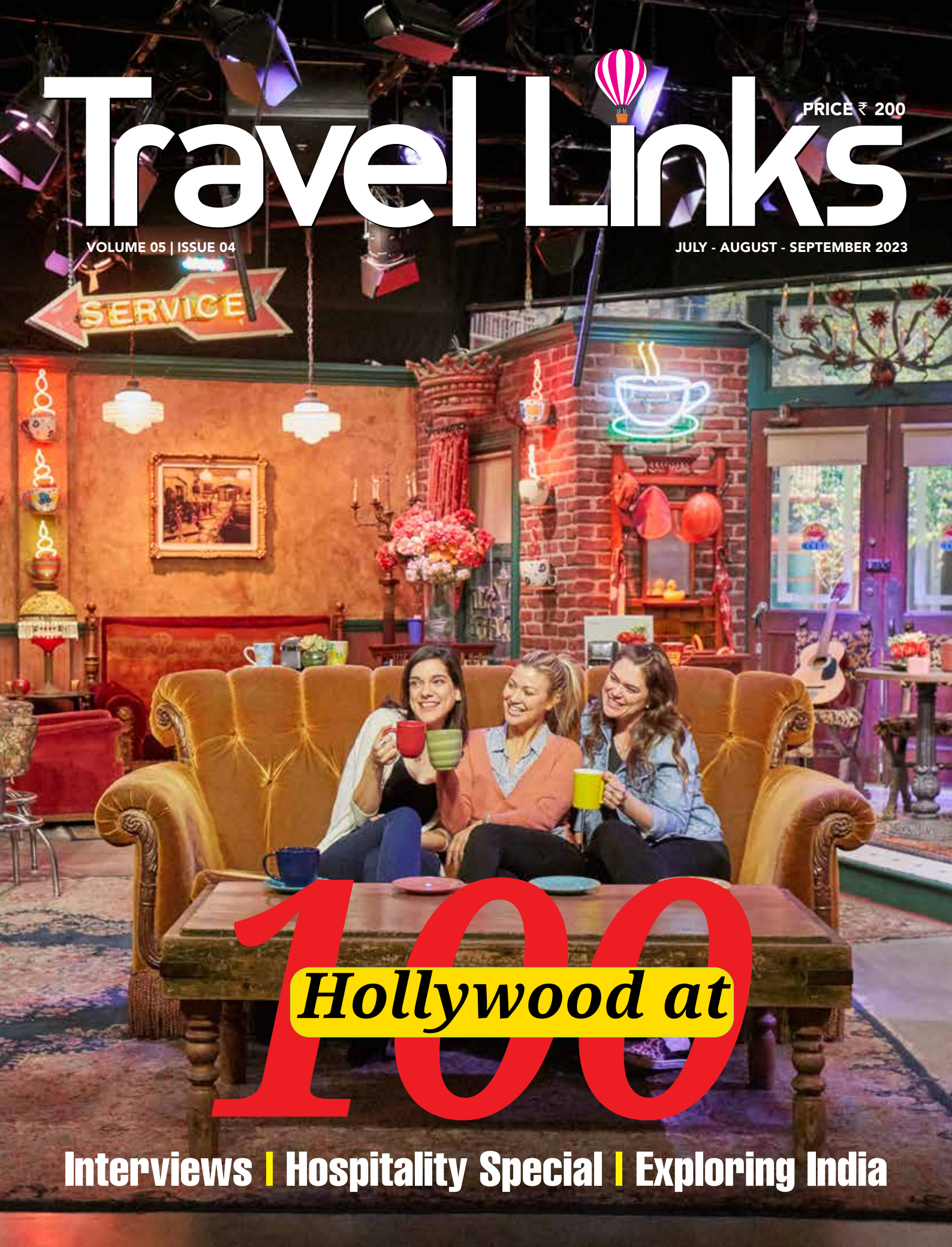


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100
Hollywood at

Interviews | Hospitality Special | Exploring India



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After hitting with a hard-hitting personal tragedy of a Short circuit in April, it made me realise once again, how unpredictable life can be and how pressing and important the issues of global warming and preserving the natural resources are which have often time and again talked about in Travel Links. This is the reason where I have often said that none of us can learn better than actually travelling and experiencing consciously. Conscious sustainable luxury was, is and will always be at the top of our minds and actions. About this issue of Travel Links

Hollywood at 100: Celebrating Tinsel Town's Glittering Legacy. In this exclusive piece, we pay tribute to the glitz and glamour of Hollywood as it reaches the momentous milestone of 100 years! Dive deep into the captivating history of the silver screen, relishing unforgettable moments from classic films that have shaped not just an industry but a universal culture of storytelling. The Hollywood Sign Trust, a non-profit organization formed to maintain the cultural and historic landmark for future generations, ensured that the 45-foot-tall letters were refreshed and ready for their close-up in advance of the sign's centennial year

India's Untamed Wilderness: Exploring Nature's Masterpiece

The allure of India's breath-taking landscapes beckons adventurers to embrace the untamed wilderness. Join us as we embark on an unforgettable expedition through its lush jungles, arid deserts, snow-capped peaks, and serene backwaters. Discover the raw beauty of India's natural wonders and get inspired to forge your path into the heart of the subcontinent. An Exclusive CEO Interview, Unveiling the enigmatic world of Waterways Leisure Tourism, we sit down with its visionary CEO to gain unprecedented insights into the cruise line's philosophy, opulent offerings, and commitment to eco-friendly voyages. He has quite a few things to tell us about Sustainable Travel.

Conversations That Transcend Borders: Intimate Interviews with Global Pioneers, Roshan; the General Manager of Hyatt Regency Lucknow talks about the importance of mental and physical well-being.

Our expedition through these pages takes us on a thrilling voyage, introducing you to remarkable individuals from around the world. Learn from their experiences, dreams, and aspirations, as they share stories that bridge cultures and showcase the power of human connection through the lens of travel.

Experiencing Hospitality: A Tapestry of Luxurious Abodes

Indulge in our handpicked hospitality reviews Of Hyatt Regency Ludhiana and Hyatt Regency Lucknow, where we explore an array of enchanting hospitality and local travel of the respective cities. Travel Links is a platform that talks about lavish palaces that transport you to a bygone era to serene eco-retreats tucked away in nature's embrace, each destination promises an unforgettable sojourn, leaving you yearning for more.

Love and Light

Editor

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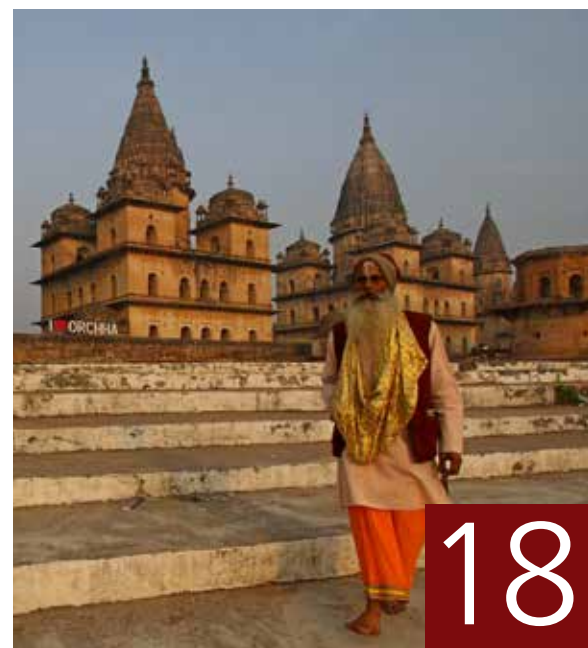
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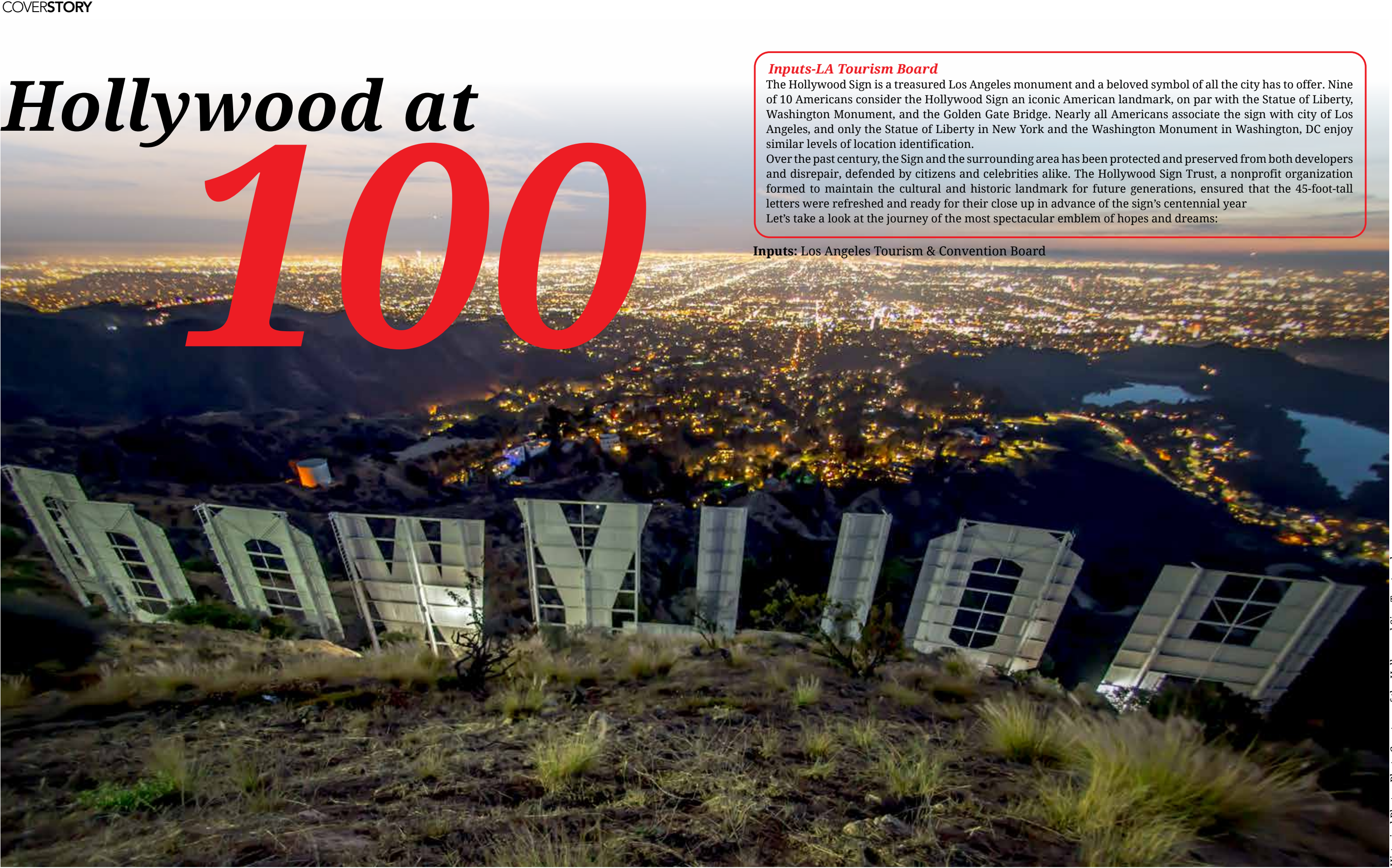
Inputs-LA Tourism Board

The Hollywood Sign is a treasured Los Angeles monument and a beloved symbol of all the city has to offer. Nine of 10 Americans consider the Hollywood Sign an iconic American landmark, on par with the Statue of Liberty, Washington Monument, and the Golden Gate Bridge. Nearly all Americans associate the sign with city of Los Angeles, and only the Statue of Liberty in New York and the Washington Monument in Washington, DC enjoy similar levels of location identification.

Over the past century, the Sign and the surrounding area has been protected and preserved from both developers and disrepair, defended by citizens and celebrities alike. The Hollywood Sign Trust, a nonprofit organization formed to maintain the cultural and historic landmark for future generations, ensured that the 45-foot-tall letters were refreshed and ready for their close up in advance of the sign’s centennial year

Let’s take a look at the journey of the most spectacular emblem of hopes and dreams:

Inputs: Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board



Historical Photo - Photo Courtesy of the Hollywood Sign Trust and HollywoodPhotographs.com. All Rights Reserved.



From real estate advert to cultural landmark...

Atop Mount Lee, in the Santa Monica Mountains on a hill overlooking Los Angeles in 1923, The Hollywood Sign served as a landmark for real estate development. It was built to last 18 months as a flashy advertisement for the “Hollywoodland”. The advertisement worked better than perhaps anyone could imagine, becoming a symbol not just for one housing development, but for an entire city. A century later, the Hollywood Sign is LA's ultimate icon, more recognizable than even the celebrities living in its shadow.

The sign stayed on...

The "H" had fallen in 1944 and the "...OLLYWOODLAND" Sign was in need of love. The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce



stepped up to lead the restoration effort in 1949, which is the year the Sign was shortened to read "HOLLYWOOD."

By the late 1970s, the Hollywood Sign was damaged beyond repair. In 1978, the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce raised the funds to completely rebuild the Sign. 194 tons of concrete, enamel, and steel later, the Sign was re-born, poised and polished for a new millennium. That's the Sign that you see here today. The Hollywood sign is really a symbol of hopes and dreams. It's about the movie industry, but it's something more than being just a symbol of the movie industry. It's about what they can aspire to, whatever their hopes and dreams are. The sign celebrates its

100th birthday this year in 2023

WAYS TO ENJOY

Today, the sign remains omnipresent. Yet, visitors are not allowed to touch the sign. You can enjoy views of the Hollywood sign with various hiking trails on Mount Lee, bars and hotels. “The Hollywood sign is an integral part of the LA story. It is more than an icon; it is where dreams come true! Perched atop, the sign is visible from hiking trails, restaurants, and luxury hotels. No visit to Los Angeles is complete without visiting this iconic landmark. On the centennial anniversary of the Hollywood Sign, it gives us an opportunity to celebrate the true spirit of Los Angeles,” says Seema Kadam, Regional Director Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board.



HIKING TRAILS & PARKS

GRIFFITH PARK: Among the best places to see the Hollywood Sign, Griffith Park offers multiple hiking trails on Mt. Hollywood, many departing straight from the iconic Griffith Observatory. The Cahuenga Peak Trail is among the most popular, a strenuous trek that rewards you with a unique view from behind the Sign and overlooking Downtown Los Angeles.

BRONSON CANYON: Bronson Canyon, home of the Batcave from the Batman '60s TV show, offers a selection of hikes and different vantage points to view the sign.

LAKE HOLLYWOOD PARK: For those

more interested in strolls or picnics than hikes, the reservoir at Lake Hollywood Park has a direct view of the Sign and is accessible by car and a short walk.

ROOFTOP BARS & RESTAURANTS

LEMON GROVE: Occupying the top floor of the Aster Club and Hotel, Lemon Grove serves up gorgeous views of the Sign and delectable cuisine from Top Chef Alum Marcel Vigneron.

DESERT 5 SPOT: A laid-back lounge inspired by Pioneertown, Desert 5 Spot offers colourful drinks and light bites and a great





vantage point to view The Hollywood Sign.

MAMA SHELTER: Few spots offer unobstructed view of the iconic Hollywood sign like Mama Shelter, serving up drinks and snacks in addition to its striking vista.

BAR LIS: The French Riviera-inspired Bar Lis offers a lovely spot for sign

HOTELS WITH VIEWS

THE KIMPTON EVERLY HOTEL: The boutique Kimpton Everly Hotel is right in the heart of Hollywood glitz and glamour, offering views of the Sign and the Hollywood hills from the rooftop and select guest rooms.



TOMMIE HOLLYWOOD: Check in to the Tommie Hollywood for panoramic city and Hollywood Sign views from their colourful rooftop pool and from Hollywood Hills view guestrooms.

THOMPSON HOLLYWOOD: The chic rooftop pool, dining experiences and event spaces at the laid back, yet refined Thompson Hollywood offer impressive views of the Hollywood Sign.

Rooms and public spaces with impressive views of the Hollywood sign.

OTHER SPOTS

GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY: The beloved cultural landmark and icon of the silver screen Griffith Observatory, home to the Samuel Oschin Planetarium, offers a premier view of the Hollywood Sign just a short distance from the parking lot.

THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL: Climb up to the top of The Hollywood Bowl amphitheatre for striking views of the stage and the Sign perched in the hills beyond.

OVATION HOLLYWOOD: Formerly known as Hollywood & Highland, Ovation Hollywood is a shopping and entertainment complex that houses the Dolby Theatre (home of the Oscars since 2002) and the TCL Chinese Theatre. There are spots throughout the development dedicated to viewing the famed sign, especially the 3rd floor viewing deck. [u](#)



Relax and Renew: An experience of Hyatt Regency Lucknow

By Payal Sahni

What is truly real hospitality? It's not just about a staycation, it's about the moment one plans a trip till the point one reaches back home. Location: Hyatt Regency is located very centrally located in the heart of the city in Gomti Nagar which makes it very ideal for your business, and leisure trips as it is for meetings, conferences,

weddings, and events

Arrival: They sent us a taxi with full amenities, a safety kit, and interesting goodies to much in the car to make our road trip memorable. On our way also the staff kept on checking on us for our safe trip. The drive from Delhi was smooth as the Agra-Lucknow highway is very well managed and the roads are smooth. It took us less than 6 hours to reach here. As we enter the gates of Hyatt Regency Lucknow, we are welcomed by a charming front desk team,



welcome drinks, and GM personally comes to meet us.

ACCOMMODATION- Hyatt stays true to its brand name as our suite room was set on the high floors with a serene view of the city and access to the regency club. The property has 206 rooms including

Their Italian menu is also good, the pizzas and risotto were good in taste and as per the international standards with a thin crust base, just apt cheese and toppings choice which was personal. Even the sandwiches which we ordered were not too cheesy. I would like to mention the in-room dining phone attendant girl on the second day knew our taste buds, and recommended with confidence what we should be tasting. Risotto I orders because of her and indeed she was right about it.

127 standard rooms, 37 pool view rooms, 23 club rooms, 17 regency suites & 2 regency Executive suites. The standard room size, at 355 sq ft is the largest amongst all hotels in the city. Regency Club Lounge, located on the penthouse floor with panoramic views of the city & the High Court.

The Siddh Spa facilities in the property is quite relaxing and well trained staff gave us a good

therapies accordingly to our needs and likings to the extent that they made us sleep. We were just so relaxed.

Rocca- Rocca, literally rock in Italian, is all-day dining destination serving authentic Italian & Indian cuisine. Their Italian menu is also good, the pizzas and risotto were good in taste and as per the international standards with a thin crust base, just apt cheese and toppings choice which was personal. Even the sandwiches which we ordered were not too cheesy. I would like to mention the in-room dining phone attendant girl on the second day knew our taste buds, and recommended with confidence what we should be tasting. Risotto I orders because of her and indeed she was right about it. Another USP of is its cakes and pastries. The cardamom flavors moose or the mango pastry of the chocolate mousse, there was plenty to drool upon.

China House -China House is slated to be the most coveted high-end authentic Chinese specialty destination, not only in the city but the state as well. With a seating capacity of 72, which includes two private dining spaces spread out spaciouly, this



signature restaurant offers lifestyle elements, family-style service, and a contemporary ambiance. China House their exclusive Chinese restaurant deserves a special mention for its authentic taste as Chef Han who manages the restaurant hails from China and everything about it is classy be it the décor, quality, taste, and pleasantness of the entire experience. Would rate this as 5/5.

UP's Bar- UP's, short for Uttar Pradesh or the erstwhile United Provinces is an inviting space decorated with books on Luknowi heritage & paintings of historical monuments in Lucknow. This stylish lounge bar is the entertainment venue of the hotel, catering to discerning guests in the city. The Penthouse, an elite martini bar perched at the rooftop of the hotel, is an ideal place for the city's HNI's, socialites, & guests staying at our Club rooms & Suites.

The Market- Offers perfectly packaged grab 'n go items, from snacks & sandwiches to pastries & sweets. You can also take back home souvenirs of Lucknow.

Hyatt also gives you travelling services if you would like to indulge in the city experience of Lucknow be it a shopping, city touring, arts and culture or some historic monuments. They have a special travel desk who would happily arrange itinerary for you.

Banquet capacities and other facilities: for meetings and events

Regency Ballroom-Located at the lobby level the spectacular pillar-



NISHANT

“
I base my success on my internal locus of control. I exhibit qualities such as leadership, effective communication, time management, reliability, delegation, confidence and respect for employees. I believe in adaptive leadership that encompasses emotional intelligence, organizational justice, self and colleague development, and ethical character which is required to execute professionalism and behavior.
”

Roshan Mendonsa
GM



less Regency Ballroom measures 4200 sq ft and has a pre-function area of 1885 sq ft with a separate entrance. The Regency Ballroom opens into 8500 sq ft of landscaped outdoor lawn. Ideal for large weddings, exhibitions & corporate events. Salon I & Salon II- Located at the mezzanine level, two breakout meeting rooms at 2000 sq ft and 1000 sq ft, both with natural light and separate pre-function areas. Ideal for small corporate meetings, cocktail dinners, and social events. Boardroom-Three boardrooms for 12, 10 & 6 pax respectively, also located at the mezzanine floor. Drawing Rooms- With two drawing rooms, two break-out meeting rooms & three boardrooms, all on the mezzanine floor, along with the Regency Ballroom and outdoor lawns, Hyatt Regency Lucknow is one stop for all meeting & event needs.

GM profile – Roshan Mendonsa

A chef by profession for almost two decades, he is a Food Enthusiast, Explorer, and a Food blogger. Pastry and Confectionary was always the passion that has enticed pure indulgence for food. In his current role as General Manager, he is engaged and involved in financial performance, quality management, Sales and marketing, Revenue management, customer service excellence, engineering, and data analysis.

He says “I base my success on my internal locus of control. I exhibit qualities such as leadership, effective communication, time management, reliability, delegation, confidence and respect

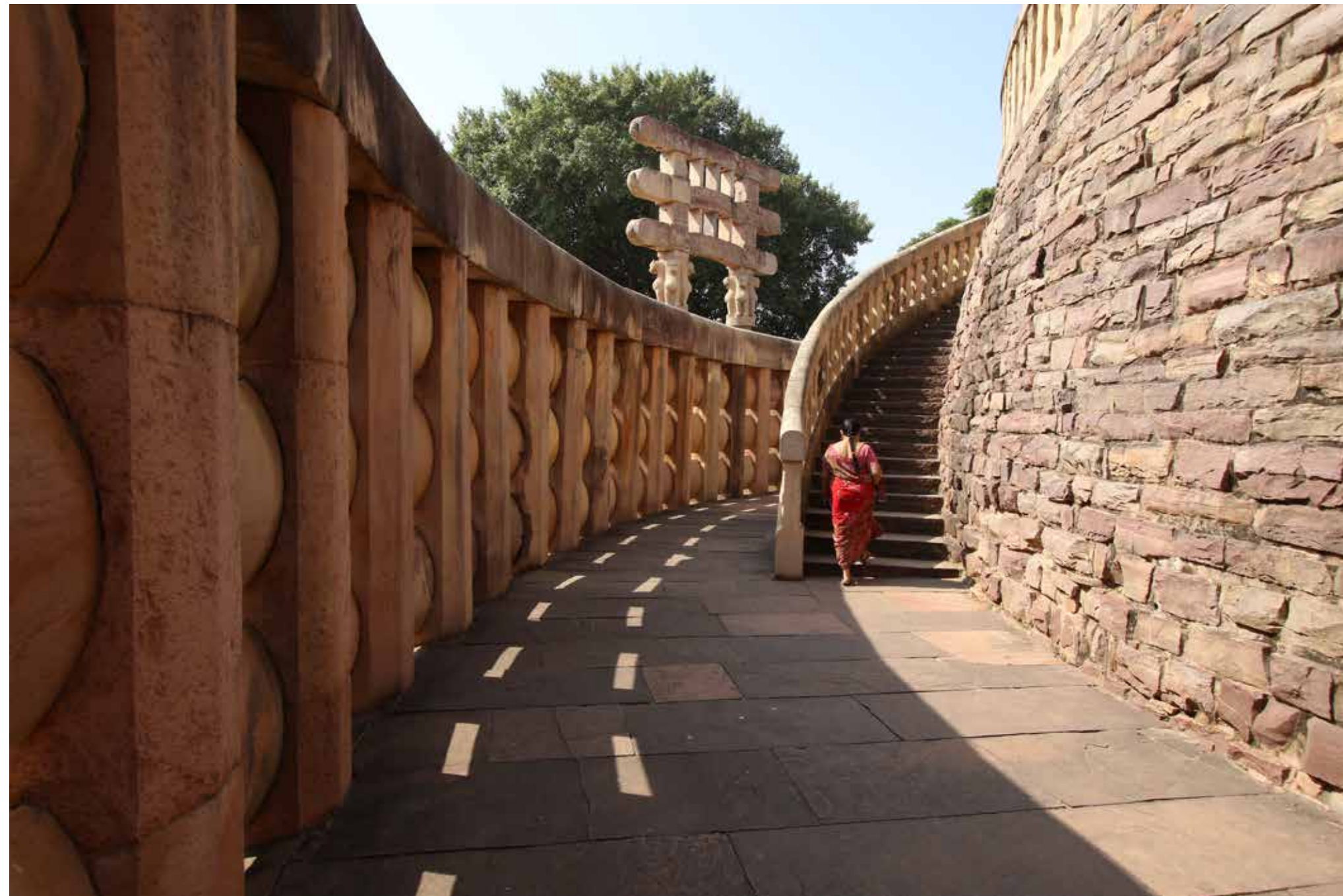
for employees. I believe in adaptive leadership that encompasses emotional intelligence, organizational justice, self and colleague development, and ethical character which is required to execute professionalism and behavior”.

Nisshant

Nisshant Kumar is currently associated with Hyatt Regency Lucknow as Director of Sales and Marketing, He has experience of 17 Years in Sales, Marketing, Revenue, and Team Management. At Hyatt Regency Lucknow, he is responsible for streamlining sales strategies, optimizing revenue along with brand visibility. Before this, he was associated with The Soaltee Kathmandu and headed India Market. Nisshant is known to be a result-driven professional who is passionate about all aspects of hotel functions right from Sales and Marketing, operations, revenue management, recruitment, and training and has been awarded with several accolades including India Achievers Award 2022, Most Fabulous leaders in the hospitality Industry 2019, Leader of the Quarter and many more.

Review:

Overall, it's a good property for your business or leisure trip or for planning events, conferences, and weddings as rest assured the needs of the customers will be well taken care of. Plan your activities and events with Hyatt Lucknow for better execution and seamless services. Join the world of Hyatt for better experiences. [📄](#)



Exploring India A Travelounge

By Tehzoon Karmalawala

I can still hear the sound of the waterfall crashing down. The vast expanse of the mighty Brahmaputra is a fresh canvas in my mind's eye. The crunch of leaves under my feet as I walked through the wilderness is still fresh, the smoke from the village household 'chullah' still fills my senses and the songs of the tribes reverberate through the air. Over the last 18 months, I have been a long way from home traversing the length and breadth of this beautiful country we call India and this is

You can help revive a dying art form, a delicacy, reviving stories, safeguarding landscapes and most importantly giving back to places and people who will inevitably contribute to who (after all those road bumps and bends) will become.

my story.

In 2014 I took a family trip to the backwaters of Kerala and on the trip, we spent a great deal of time by the riverside and came across this beautifully coloured bird that caught our attention; armed with a basic point-n-shoot camera I took several pictures of the bird over the next hour. On-going through the pictures back in my room a strong love towards nature took over. The bird turned out to be a Stork-billed Kingfisher which got me hooked on birding and subsequently spending most of my time in the wilderness.

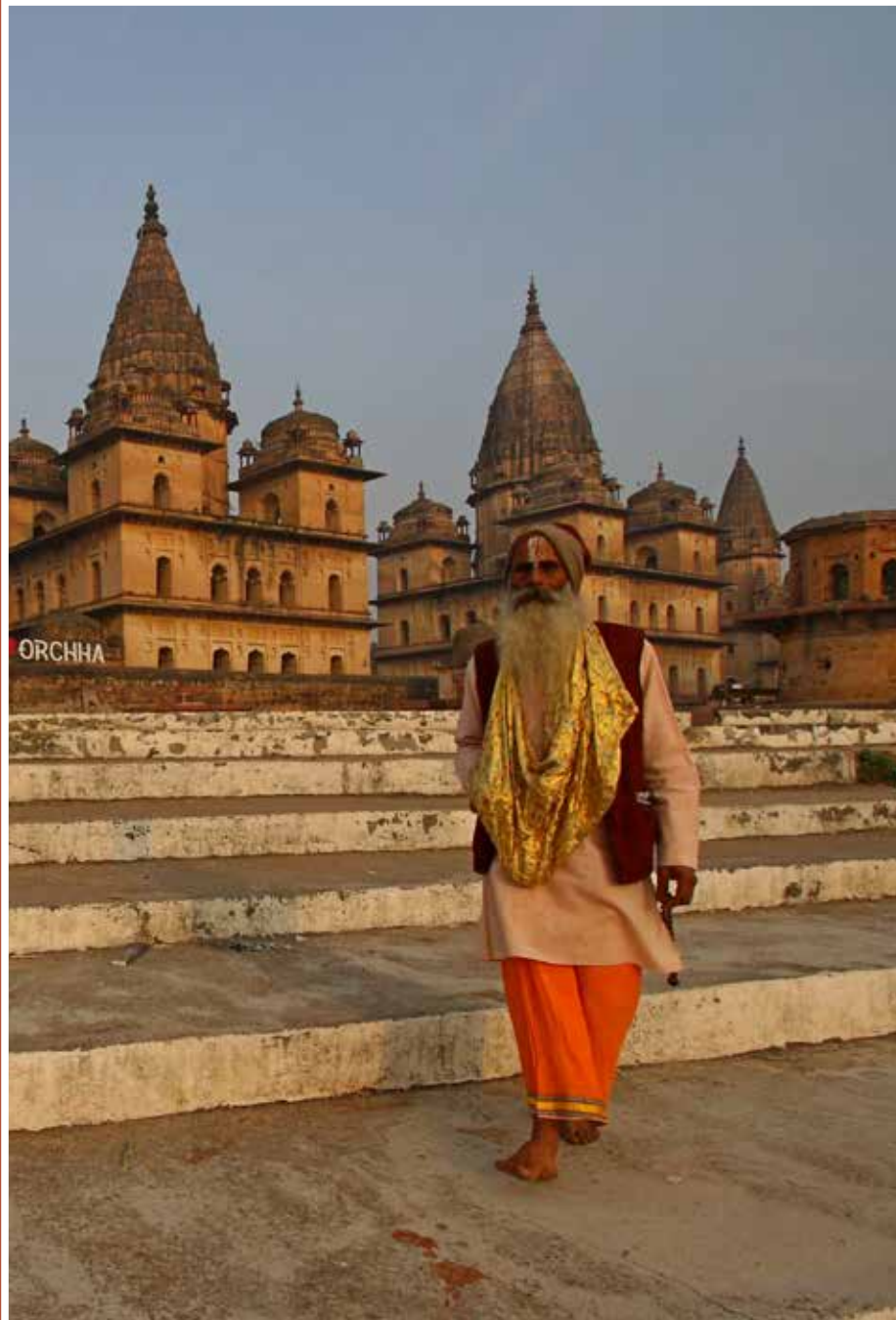
Over the next few years, the travelling with a special affinity towards birding within India as well as outside continued but somehow the urge to explore beyond remained. As the explorer in me grew impatient so did the grave situation with the pandemic, and for almost two years all I could do was wait patiently for a chance to be in the great outdoors. Being in nature made me genuinely happy, and sporadic trips did not allow me to explore the vast biodiversity of our country. It had to be a continued exploration with of course great planning, and determination. Interestingly enough when I sat researching the idea of exploration, all that cropped up was information about only one such attempt that had been carried out by someone in the USA with him traversing across all the American National Parks. With no one having attempted this in India, I took it up as a challenge and as a sign that needed to be put into motion.

Planning

The first step was choosing the most important companion for the trip, a sturdy vehicle. The second, and most important step was in-depth research and identifying the genre of travel. In India, there are several themes of travel; art forms, handicrafts, summit treks, and road trips to name a few. Once I chose the kind of travel, which would be mostly forests,



HOLLYWOOD SIGN TRUST AND HOLLYWOODPHOTOGRAPHS.COM



people, culture, and lifestyles, the next step was putting together ways of doing it responsibly, an example of which was not using plastic throughout my journey. To ensure this, I opted to use a 15-litre water container that was refilled with water at every opportunity and a 1 litre metal bottle that was on me at all times. Apart from the non-usage of plastic, proper usage of resources was ensured by depending on my solar panel to charge my camera, phone and other electronic devices, and most of my stay involved using my rooftop tent instead of using hotel facilities that tend to overuse resources. The initiation of a long journey in my opinion should always start in the right direction.

The local cultures

Apart from being conscious of resource usage, my journey was true to my travel genre and extra time was kept to have conversations with locals (understanding their relationship with the forest, what they eat, how they design their homes, their traditional knowledge, and learning sustainability from their lifestyles) indulged in the local art and craft and even had the most gastronomically satisfying days owing to local fare. To this effect, some of the most memorable days of the trip were spent observing local cultures such as with the Lanjia Saora tribe of Odisha, wherein I had the opportunity to document the beautiful art also called ikons (or ekons) as part of their homes, these are visually similar to Warli paintings holding religious significance for the tribe. Saoras are among the most ancient of tribes in India and the ikons paintings draw upon tribal folklore and have ritualistic importance. People, horses, elephants, the sun and the moon



and the tree of life are recurring motifs in these ikons. The paintings' backdrop is prepared from red or yellow ochre earth which is then painted over using brushes fashioned from tender bamboo shoots.

North East Festivals

Observing tribal festivals was another fascinating part of the journey, wherein I had the chance to observe the Sangai festival of Manipur, the Wangala festival of Meghalaya, and the Hornbill festival of Nagaland. The Sangai festival (which is attended by close to 30+ tribes) is so named to celebrate the uniqueness of the shy, rare,

and gentle brow-antlered deer popularly known as the Sangai found in the region, and is the state animal of Manipur. The celebration also helps in showcasing the state's contributions to art and culture, handloom, handicrafts, indigenous sports, cuisine, music, and adventure sports, as well as the natural environment. The Wangala or the 100 drum festival of Meghalaya is most popular among the Garo tribe of Meghalaya, India. It is a harvest festival held in honour of Saljong, the Sun god of fertility. The celebration of the Wangala Festival marks the end of a period of toil, which brings good output to the fields. It also signifies

the onset of winter. The Hornbill Festival is supported strongly by the Nagaland govt. is a powerful expression of Naga culture through great traditional music, traditional sports, food, dance, arts, handicrafts and performances, and is a great platform for tribes to engage with one another. The festival is named after the Indian Hornbill, which is a common bird in Nagaland's folklore and is the state bird.

Home Stays

While travelling extensively from one corner of the country to another, I made sure of enlisting help from local & tribal households





for homestays (when not using my trusted rooftop tent) instead of established hotels. While visiting Panna Tiger Reserve, I chose to stay at a homestay which in my opinion was the best decision as not only did it give me an insight into the local life, but it was where I had the chance to sample some of the most unique and delicious recipes put together using local vegetables, herbs, and roots. Despite spending memorable days in the often-remotest corners of our country or experiencing unique cultures and food, as a citizen I feel a lot more work in tandem with the state & central government agencies needs to be undertaken to better promote ecotourism around remote natural heritage sites which will not only provide a sustainable livelihood for the locals but will also help in long term protection and conservation of the said landscapes.

National Parks

An example of this is the Murlen National Park in Mizoram which despite being rated as one of the most beautiful parks of Mizoram, and one of the last remaining refuges of the Mizoram state bird, Vavu or Mrs. Hume's Pheasant has negligible to no visitors. I was listed as the third visitor in over a year, with the other two being researchers! Every place I visited was a unique experience. Be it a 2100 km trek across different landscapes, canoe safari in Keibul Lamjao National Park in Manipur, a raft ride in Nameri & Manas, exploring the beautiful valley called 'Chambal Ghati' in the Mukundra Hills National Park in a boat, island hopping in Andamans to witnessing the Rani Jhansi Marine National Park, the 200 people strong boat cruise in Papikonda National Park in Andhra Pradesh, the motorboat safari on the Ken with crocodiles



basking all around in Panna Tiger Reserve, an electric tricycle through the Bison National Park in Tripura and the camel safari in Desert National Park while looking for the Great Indian Bustards. Every step I took was a story in itself. However, the most fascinating experience for me had to be in the Gorumara National Park, wherein after reaching a certain point via a jeep, you switch to a bullock cart to explore the depths of the forest. What made my foray into the wilderness more exciting was that I wasn't chasing a particular species as we tend to while travelling to tiger reserves. The idea was to look out for different species, if not see then hear about them in local folklore, learn about different architectural styles, cultures, and people. Although life-changing, this journey of 63000 kms through 104 national parks 54 tiger reserves

32 elephant reserves 17 biosphere reserves 40 world heritage sites & 50 tentative world heritage sites have been very demanding, to say the least, through the wins and tribulations, via my journey, my dream is to help create awareness about India's wealth. This is essential because we are losing a lot of our natural and cultural heritage to neglect and ignorance, and we need to actively work towards conservation aid, ecotourism, and livelihood opportunities for locals which can only be strengthened by continued awareness about different landscapes.

India is a country that needs to be continuously explored to be properly appreciated. For the future explorers who I am sure will be many, I would urge reading up and planning. Exploration can be overwhelming and even scary but a

positive and calm mind is very powerful and how helps overcome the toughest of situations as you wind your way through those lanes, valleys, grasslands, and mountaintops, be sure to document all that you see and experience. You can help revive a dying art form, a delicacy, reviving stories, safeguarding landscapes and most importantly giving back to places and people who will inevitably contribute to who (after all those road bumps and bends) will become. [u](#)

————— **TEHZOON KARMALAWALA** —————
The above article is authored by Tehzoon Karmalawala engineer turned natural heritage explorer, Tezhoon is the vision behind India's first functional hybrid 2-wheel EV. He also holds the record for embarking on the longest exploratory expedition in India and aims to create awareness about India's natural and cultural wealth via his writings..



About Roshan Mendonsa General Manager Hyatt Regency Lucknow

From being a fitness freak, agile personality, gracious smile, passionate Chef, and very focused, Roshan- I get to meet him, and here is what he has to say.

By Payal Sahni

Q Please let us know about your latest passion.

I find great joy and fulfilment in two main areas of my life right now: working out at the gym to maintain my physical fitness, and immersing myself in the world of books, exploring various genres, and expanding my knowledge

Q We noticed you are a fitness freak. What keeps you motivated despite long working hours?

Once you recognize that taking care of your health will ultimately enhance your productivity and overall well-being, you start understanding the importance of physical well-being and prioritise it alongside your professional commitments. These goals can serve as a reminder and motivation for you to prioritize your fitness routine, even during long working hours.

Q Please do let us know a bit about your transition from being a culinary head to being a GM.

I embarked on an exciting career journey that led me from my role as a culinary head to a General Manager (GM) position. This transition allowed me to leverage

my expertise in the culinary arts while expanding my skill set to encompass broader operational and leadership responsibilities. By stepping into the role of a GM, I gained a comprehensive understanding of all facets of the business, from overseeing daily operations and managing teams to driving strategic initiatives and delivering exceptional customer experiences. This transition not only enriched my

Financial Acumen: In a GM role, you'll likely be responsible for budgeting, financial planning, and ensuring profitability. Understanding financial metrics, managing costs, and making data-driven decisions are crucial skills to develop.

professional growth but also enabled me to bring a unique perspective to the table, combining my culinary background with a holistic understanding of the organization.

How's this role play with so many targets and responsibilities? Does it change anything in the thinking pattern from being a creative head to this current role? Does it

require a different thinking pattern?

Transitioning from a creative head role to a position with multiple targets and responsibilities, such as being a General Manager (GM), can indeed bring about changes in thinking patterns. While both roles require creativity and strategic thinking, the shift to a GM role often demands a broader perspective and a more holistic approach to decision-making. Here

are some aspects to consider:

Strategic Thinking: As a GM, you need to think strategically, aligning your decisions with the organization's overall goals and long-term vision. This involves analysing market trends, identifying growth opportunities, and making informed decisions that have a positive impact on the

business as a whole.

Operational Focus: Unlike a creative head role, a GM position requires a strong focus on operational efficiency and resource management. You'll need to oversee day-to-day operations, streamline processes, and optimize resources to ensure smooth functioning and achieve targets.


Leadership and Team Management: As a GM, you'll be responsible for leading and managing teams across various departments. This requires developing leadership skills, fostering collaboration, and creating a positive work culture. Effective communication and delegation become essential in achieving collective goals. **Financial Acumen:** In a GM role, you'll likely be responsible for budgeting, financial planning, and ensuring profitability. Understanding financial metrics, managing costs, and making data-driven decisions are crucial skills to develop.

Stakeholder Management: As a GM, you'll interact with various stakeholders, including clients, employees, shareholders, and vendors. Building and maintaining strong relationships, negotiating contracts, and effectively managing expectations become integral to success.

While there may be a shift in thinking patterns, your previous experience as a creative head can still be valuable. It can provide a unique perspective and contribute to problem-solving, innovation, and customer-centric approaches within the broader scope of your GM responsibilities.

Ultimately, adapting to a different thinking pattern is essential to thrive in a GM role. Embracing the challenges, being open to learning, and continually evolving your skills will help you succeed in this dynamic and multifaceted position.

What is the advice that you would like to give to this young generation?

Pursue your passions, Embrace continuous learning, Emphasize personal growth, Foster resilience, Build meaningful relationships, Prioritize mental and physical well-being, and Embrace technology responsibly. 

Leadership and Team Management: As a GM, you'll be responsible for leading and managing teams across various departments. This requires developing leadership skills, fostering collaboration, and creating a positive work culture. Effective communication and delegation become essential in achieving collective goals.



5 Most delectable vegetarian Turkish dishes

Every year, Türkiye welcomes a great number of visitors from all over the world, including a significant number of Indian tourists. While the country is well-known for its exquisite kebabs and grilled meats, it also provides a varied choice of vegetarian meals to meet the dietary needs of all visitors. Indian travellers who are accustomed to vegetarian cuisine and have a strong preference for flavourful plant-based dishes will find a variety of options in Türkiye to suit their taste buds. Turkish cuisine contains a wonderful variety of vegetables, legumes, grains, and herbs, making it a haven for vegetarian food enthusiasts, in equal measure. With its abundance of vegetarian and vegan dishes, Turkish cuisine is known for its use of olive oil, fresh herbs, and seasonal produce.

Here are 5 Turkish dishes that are widely popular among vegetarians:

Yaprak Sarma, also known as stuffed grape leaves, is a popular vegetarian dish in Turkish cuisine. This appetizer includes a savoury filling of rice, sautéed onions, and currants, delicately wrapped in vine leaves. Yaprak Sarma is a delicious culinary

creation suitable for enjoyment throughout the year. To enhance its flavour, a drizzle of lemon juice is often added, accentuating the subtle sweetness of the currants. This versatile dish can be served as an



appetizer,

a side dish, or even a main course. It exemplifies the meticulous art of preparation, the celebration of seasonal ingredients, and the delight of sharing a cherished traditional dish with loved ones.

Mücver, a beloved Turkish dish that showcases the culinary excellence of Türkiye, is an appetizing creation in the form of savoury fritters. These fritters are primarily crafted using grated zucchini, which imparts a delightful texture and a vibrant green hue to them. Mücver is commonly served as an appetizer or meze, accompanied by a tangy yogurt dip or a refreshing splash of freshly squeezed lemon juice.

The combination of a crispy exterior and a tender interior, coupled with the subtle notes of zucchini, herbs, and cheese, results in a delightful medley of textures and flavours. Its freshness, tantalizing taste, and crispy texture have made it a favoured choice among both locals and



visitors alike.

Lentil köfte is a delectable vegetarian meal with a unique position in Turkish cuisine. These hearty, savoury morsels are made with bulgur wheat, cooked lentils, and a variety of fragrant herbs and spices. The lentils are cooked until tender before being combined with the bulgur and formed into small, round patties. Typically, köfte is seasoned with parsley, cumin, paprika, onion, and other spices that give them a rich, fragrant flavour. Lentil köfte can be eaten as a solitary appetiser, with a cool yogurt dip, or nestled into bread as a wonderful sandwich filler. With its comforting texture and savoury flavours, it is indeed a delicious vegetarian alternative



that is also very nutritious.

Kısır, a delicious salad originating from Turkish cuisine, is a classic dish crafted with fine bulgur wheat and a variety of fresh, vibrant ingredients. The foundation of kısır entails soaked bulgur wheat combined with finely diced tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, and parsley. To enhance its taste, the salad is seasoned with a zesty mixture of lemon juice, olive oil, pomegranate molasses, and a blend of fragrant spices. Despite regions like Osmaniye, Adana, Mersin, Antalya, Karaman, Konya, Gaziantep, Kilis, and Antakya being renowned for their meat-focused cuisine, kısır has gained widespread popularity and is often served during festive occasions, always accompanied by Turkish tea.

Barbunya, a classic Turkish dish, features pinto beans, which are known for their creamy texture and pink flecks. The highlight of the dish is the perfectly cooked beans, which are smothered in a delicious sauce made with onions and salça, a tomato paste that is frequently used in Turkish cooking. A delectable and soothing flavour is produced by the blend of delicate pinto beans and savory sauce. There are several ways to enjoy Barbunya. It can be enjoyed as a major dish on its own or combined with a serving of fluffy rice to make a satisfying supper. This popular Turkish meal is served at establishments and households all over the nation, attesting to its standing as a genuine staple of Turkish cuisine.

About Türkiye

Located in the Mediterranean and connecting Asia and European continents that are separated by the famous Bosphorus, Türkiye is a destination that welcomes tourists from all around the world. The country that has always been a hub for cultural interaction and home to varying climates inspires visitors today with its history, nature, and gastronomy that reflect the diversity of civilizations for centuries. Located at the crossroads of cultures, Türkiye has a distinctive understanding of art & fashion, which is the synthesis of tradition and modernity, and it's extremely dynamic shopping & entertainment life also attracts visitors from all over the world.

For more about Türkiye please visit: <https://www.goturkiye.com/>



HYATT REGENCY LUDHIANA

The Hyatt Regency Ludhiana is a luxurious hotel located in the heart of Ludhiana, Punjab. The hotel is known for its top-notch hospitality and impeccable service, which we were invited to experience and showcase.

By Payal Sahni

Arrival

Upon entering the hotel, we were greeted by a smiling staff with a bucket of flowers and a welcome drink arranged for us. A grand lobby designed in a contemporary style with a royal Punjab touch caught my attention. The check-in process is quick and efficient, with friendly staff members always ready to assist. The rooms at the Hyatt Regency Ludhiana are spacious and well-appointed, featuring modern amenities such as flat-screen TVs, minibars, and high-speed internet access. The beds are comfortable, ensuring a good night's sleep for guests. Our Suite room was Massive with sparkling marble floors, a Double King size bed, a more than 8 inches cushion bed that made it comfortable, lush bathrooms with bathtubs, a separate storage room, and double sinks which made it exquisite.

Food Experience

The hotel offers a variety of dining options, including a multi-cuisine restaurant kitchenAt95 which serves multi cuisines. We had a sit-down private dinner with 5-course meals prepared by Chef Jasmit and



his team. Some of the other experiences included in-room dining with a typical taste of Punjab food with chicken tikkas, dahi kebabs, and more. Another highlight about the food is their bakery-the cakes and pastries are super fresh and would just melt in your mouth. The Italian cuisine of the Hotel is also something worth mentioning with their wood oven pizzas, kinds of pasta, and plenty of other choices. The chefs use fresh and high-quality ingredients, resulting in delicious and flavourful meals. The breakfast buffet is also worth mentioning, as it offers a variety of options to cater to different tastes and preferences.

Excursions

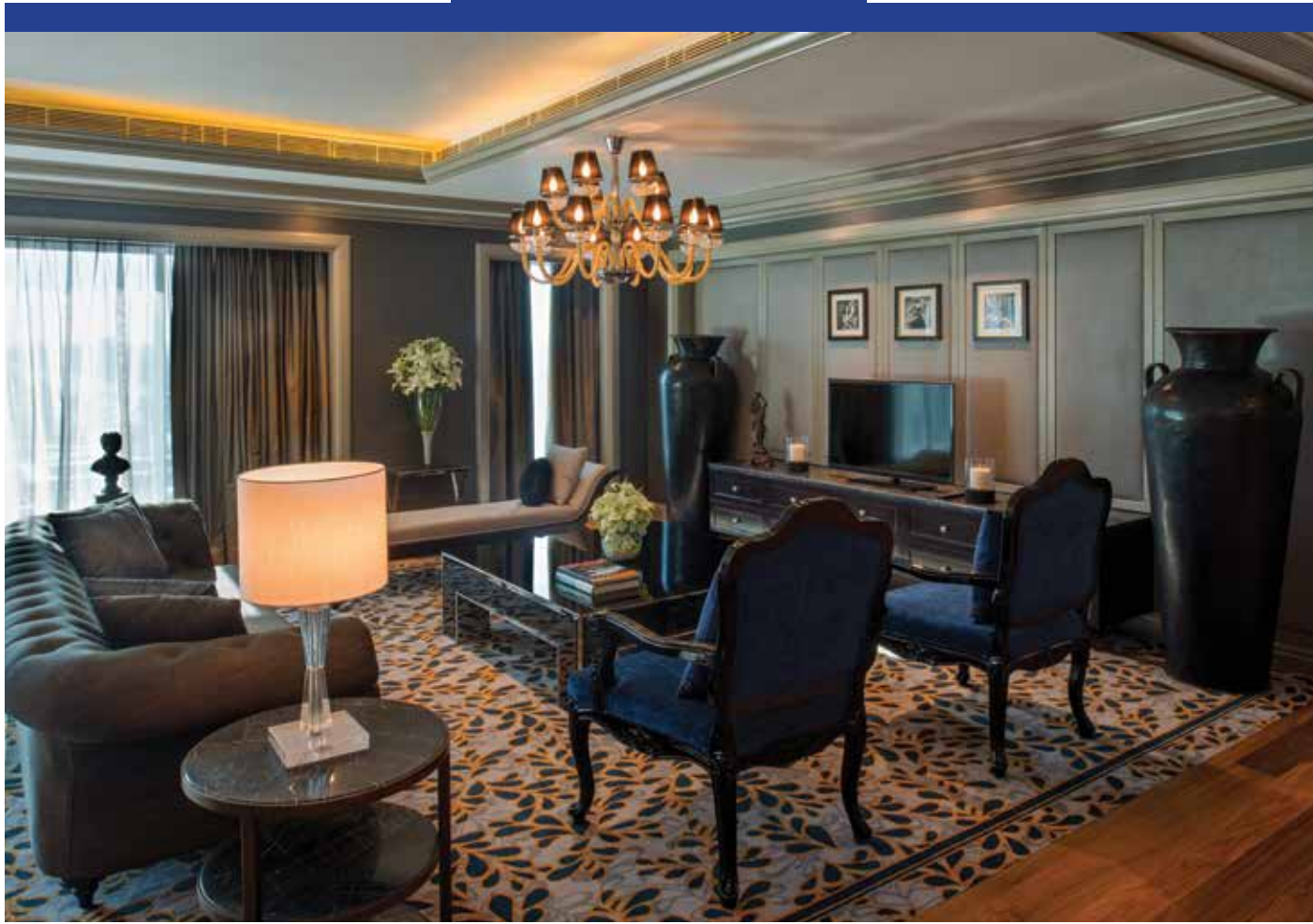
Hyatt helped us in preparing an Itinerary of our choice and their in-house cab with a tour guide took us to see the pind side (farms of Punjab), Punjab Agricultural University which we believe is one of the biggest Universities in Asia, the local market areas for some shopping and the famous

One of the highlights of the hotel is its impeccable service. The staff members are courteous, attentive, and always willing to go the extra mile to ensure guest satisfaction. Whether it is making restaurant reservations, arranging transportation, or addressing any other request, the staff members are always available and eager to help.

Gurudwaras. We also saw the modern and contemporary side of the city with all the young and happening crowd and some famous cafes The Gallery bar has a lovely blue vibe to it. Would like to mention the décor of the entire hotel including the lobby and lift areas which are adorned with lots of mirror work, art pieces, paintings and lamps, and comfortable royal sitting lounges. The fragrance used in the hotel is Aromatherapy Oxygen and is quite good.

One of the highlights of the hotel is its impeccable service. The staff members are courteous, attentive, and always willing to go the extra mile to ensure guest satisfaction. Whether it is making restaurant reservations, arranging transportation, or addressing any other request, the staff members are always available and eager to help.

The facilities at the hotel are top-notch. The fitness center is well-equipped with modern machines and equipment, allowing guests to maintain their fitness routine



while traveling. The swimming pool is another highlight, providing guests with a refreshing and enjoyable experience.

Ideal location for weddings and events

It is the ideal destination for weddings, product launches, corporate meetings, or private events. Furthermore, the hotel offers expertise in handling outdoor catering events ranging from 50 to 1,500 guests with professional services to make your event truly memorable. Hyatt Regency Ludhiana offers state-of-the-art meeting and event facilities with over 1,131 square meters ft of function space, including four boardrooms, Panache, poolside, and a ballroom that can

be divided into two parts.

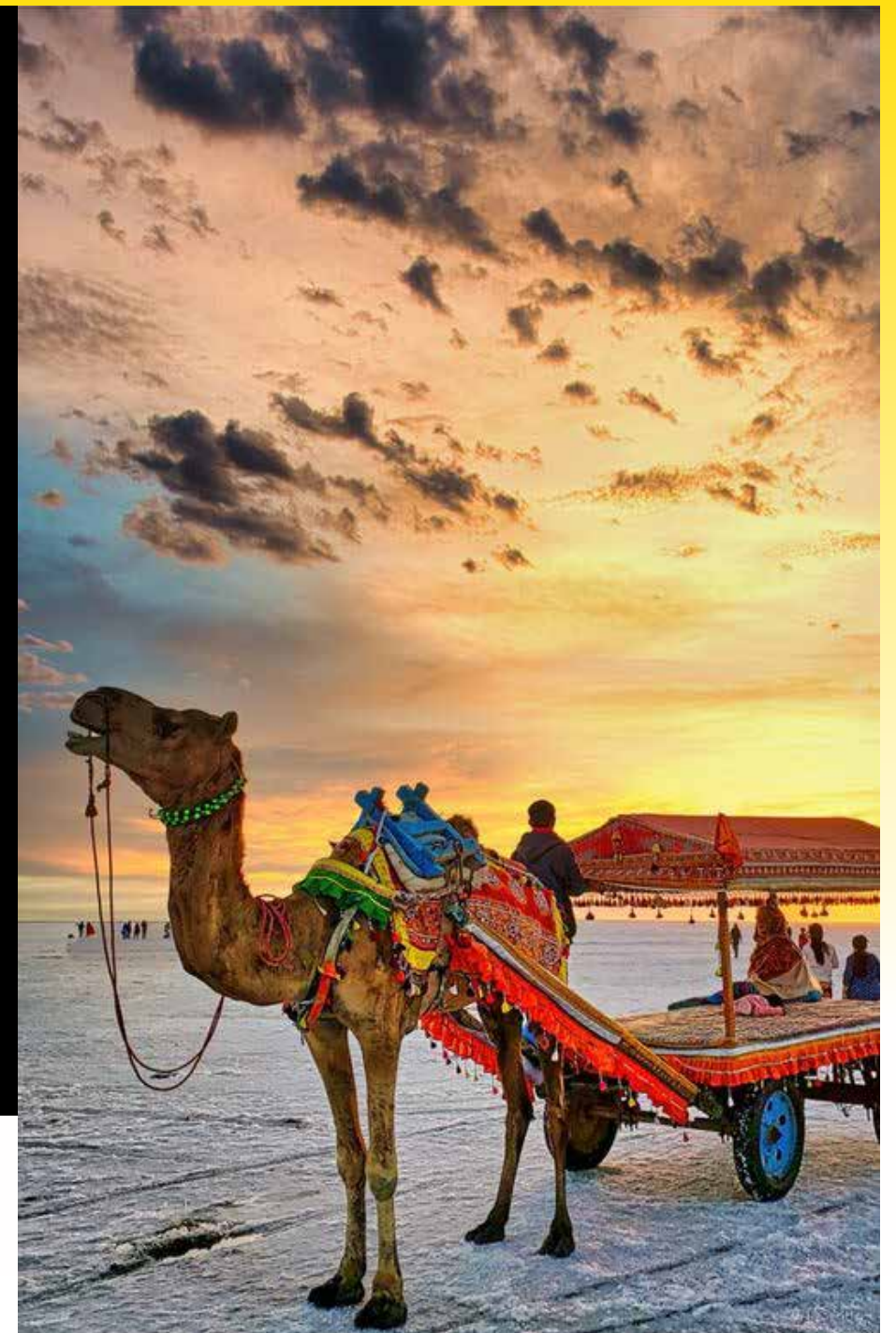
The team of wedding specialists will ensure that sumptuous cuisine, exquisite linens, celebration cakes, elegant flower arrangements, and decorations delight and impress guests

Spanning over 1,131 square meters of event space, Hyatt Regency Ludhiana can accommodate any style or size of pre- or post-wedding celebration for up to 400 guests. Should you be looking to hold an intimate and exclusive celebration, Hyatt Regency Ludhiana has the perfect venue and packages for your special day. Our venue offerings include a boardroom (4-20 guests), Regency Lounge (60 guests), poolside (100 guests), Panache (120 guests),

and a Ballroom (up to 450 guests), to cater to every need.

Review

Overall, the Hyatt Regency Ludhiana is a top-notch hotel that offers a luxurious and comfortable experience for its guests. The spacious rooms, delicious food, and excellent service make it a popular choice for travellers visiting Ludhiana. The hotel's location is another advantage. It is conveniently situated in the heart of the city, making it easily accessible to all major attractions and business centres. In addition to the excellent facilities, the hotel's service is outstanding. The staff members are warm, friendly, and always ready to assist.



An unforgettable Kutch

BY GAUTAM SINGH KANWAL

Ever since the 26th of Jan 2001, I've always wanted to take a peek into the state of Gujarat. And the opportunity came few years later. Rightly said by someone that good things take time, because this turned out to be a good thing indeed. Major portions of the state of Gujarat had been shattered and were in ruins after the deadly earthquake of Jan 2001, and why I associate with it is because my father was there at that time, and sometimes he recounts how he and his team worked 16-18 hours a day for damage control, relief work and rescue operations.

Kandla airport or Kandla Aerodome looks no more than a makeshift airport with bare minimum facilities and bare minimum

staff. You would have definitely seen more fancy bus stations. The number of passengers arriving at this airport is quite small which is probably why I noticed only those smaller sized bombardier aircrafts frequent this airport.. The airport is nevertheless a vital one as Kandla is one of the biggest sea ports in India, and India's biggest in terms of volume of cargo traded / shipped, thus officials and other logistical necessities need to access Kandla as a regulation.

Flying from Delhi to Kandla is a little

under 2 hours, and the approach prior to landing in Kandla gives you the glimpses of Kutch which testify the vast extent of Kutch, the biggest district in India, measuring well over 45000 square kilometres. Kutch in the literal sense means something that intermittently becomes wet and dry. That's exactly what happens to the Rann of Kutch, the vast salt marsh which becomes wet during the monsoons and dries up thereafter leaving bare a huge expanse of snow-white salt desert that stretches across an area of



around 7500 square kilometers, making it one of the biggest salt deserts in the world. The view made anticipation of white desert visit even more unbearable.

There are a few good luxury accommodation options available quite close to the airport such as Radisson and Holiday Village Resort at Gandhidham. A beautiful resort constructed in Rajasthani style architecture, which acts as an oasis in the middle of a desert, away from the hustle and bustle of city streets and noisy market places. The resort showcases palatial architectural designs spread across 20 acres of well-manicured lawns which are further embellished by fountains and pools and an adventure park. Certainly, a great place to feel very relaxed and a great base for an exploration trip across the entire district of Kutch.

The following day, the resort staff advocated on visiting a beautiful Jain temple in Derasar (Mundra), located around 35 kilometers from Gandhidham. I'd never been to a Jain temple before, so visiting the Shree Bhadreswar Jain Tirth in Daresar in Mundra was a completely novel experience

for me.. It was divinely beautiful. This holy site is around 2500 years old (it is believed to be one of the oldest Jain temples in India) and the temple structure has been renovated after the devastation caused by the earthquake in 2001. Complex carvings all around the fortifying walls as well as within the temple compound are fascinating to see. Layer after layer of elaborate carvings of various designs go all around the exterior perimeter of the temple, all the way from the ground level to the top. The effort to carve into the marble in such a fashion would have been nothing less than herculean. Mahavir Jain's statue is placed in the central temple while a lot of other small temples built connectedly in a concentric manner around it, showcase other deities and gods. It was interesting to note Ganesh's sculpture carved on some of the pillars. The expressions on these Ganesh sculptures were rather different from the calm and cherubic ones that we see in conventional temples. There's quite a bit one can learn about the Jain history and Jain culture over here. A beautiful temple such as this deserves much more attention from the tourist eye and I hope that would happen in

the future.

The Swami Narayan temple in Bhuj is another majestic piece of architecture. Our driver Kalu Ram, insisted that we must pay visit this temple in Bhuj during our stay in Gandhidham. Bhuj being around 60 kms from Gandhidham was a comfortable drive through small towns and villages. One of the villages has big houses, but nobody lives there as everyone has settled abroad. An empty village with great houses, a perfect setting for ghost movies. Another village, Ratnal, on the way to Bhuj has a unique identity as this village holds the record for the greatest number of trucks and truck owners in all of Asia. On an average, nearly every family owns a truck here. Coming back to the Swami Narayan Temple, this is a temple built in honour of Hari Kishan Maharaj, Lord Krishna and Nar Narayan Dev. Upon entering the gate, you will be spellbound by the magnificent structure. The main temple structure is built of only two materials – marble and gold. The carvings on these marble walls and pillars are very intricate and are very much a sight to behold. The skeleton structure of the main temple is like

a beautiful marble maze, its design appears to be quite mesmerising, particularly when you're inside and you see pillars after pillars, and arches after arches in all directions. The thrones of the deities are all gold and so are the summits of the dome structures. This temple too has undergone major renovation after the Gujarat earthquake of 2001. The images of these temples that remain in the mind made me realise the resilient nature of these people who built such splendid places of worship place after it being almost reduced to rubble. So many times, people give up on certain things after getting shaken up. This kind of resilience is a great example to idolise in such times.

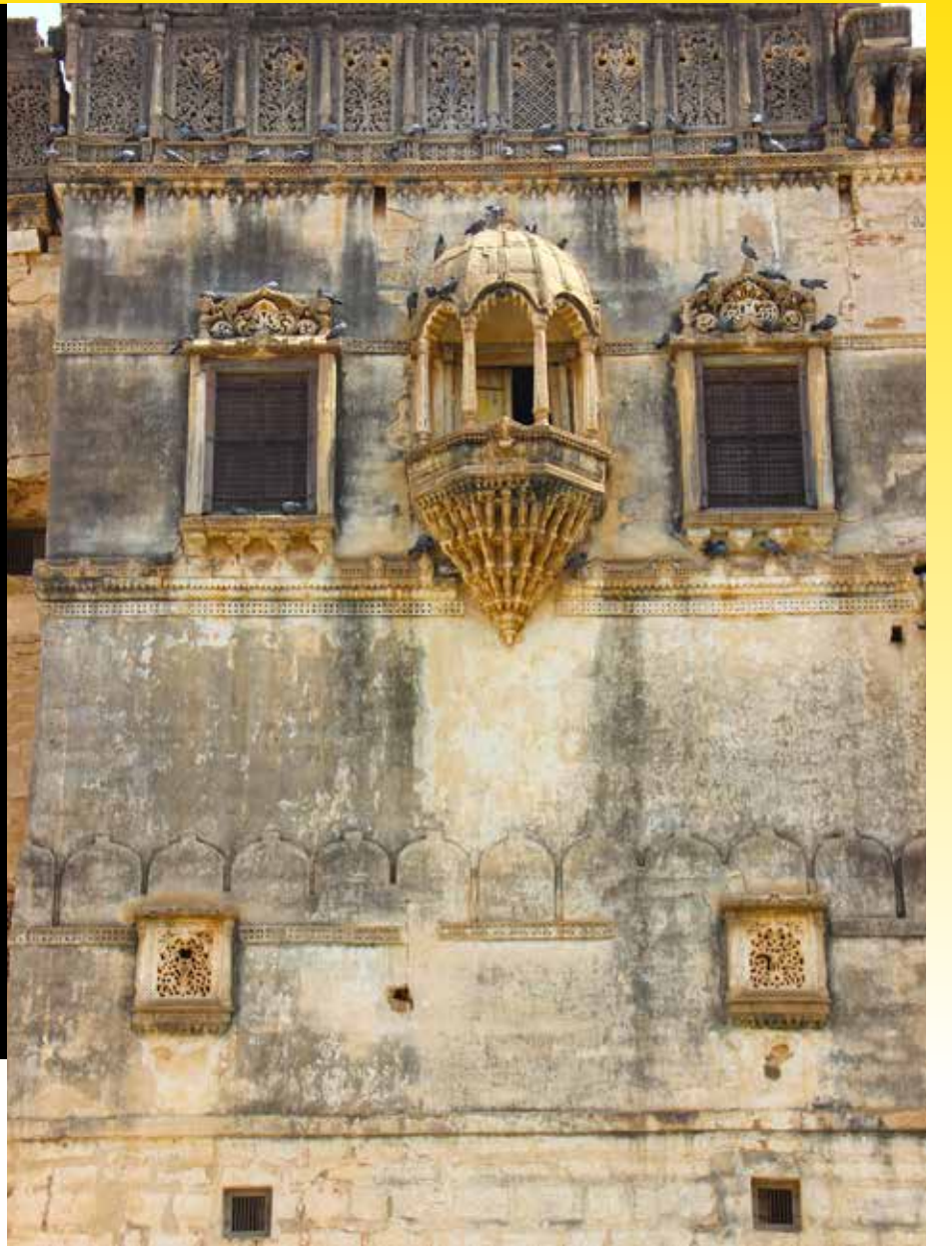
Aaina Mahal at Bhuj turned out to be a fine place to visit as well. Some parts of the palace are in ruins after the Gujarat earthquake and have been preserved in that manner. I personally feel that this can be a great place for various kinds of photo shoots. A museum in the Aaina Mahal offers insights into the history of this palace. What is particularly interesting about this palace is that its architectural designs, especially the interiors, are a fusion of Indian and



European architecture. The chief architect is said to have gone all the way to Europe to study and practice architecture for almost 20 years prior to building this fine palace, and that was way back in the mid 18th century. Only such kind of passion and conviction could result in such a marvel. The museum displays various articles such as paintings,

swords, shields and a lot of fancy mirrors among other antiques.

The best part was ofcourse going to be visiting the White Rann! The drive towards Rann is quite beautiful. It looks like you are driving into infinity. A straight long road with flat bare land on either side. No other structures. For those who still have been



unable to witness the mysterious working of the famous magnetic hill in Ladakh, can also make a trip towards Kalo Dungar (the highest hill point near the White Rann) and on the way towards Kalo Dungar a magnetic field area will present itself where you can observe your vehicle move freely under the effect of the magnetic field. It was undeniably bewildering and I had to place our vehicle in the area over a dozen times again for the feeling to sink in. A childlike joy surfaces on your countenance when you observe such a phenomenon, that's exactly what happens to the visitors here. Kalo Dungar (Literally meaning Black Hill) is a point from where a panoramic view of the White Rann can be seen on a clear day as it offers much elevation over the desert (over 450 meters in height). Camel rides are available to take you to the highest view point. The area has an army check post as it is in proximity of the international border. Further off from the highest viewpoint the last BSF post before

the border can be seen as well. It would take some time and a few deep breaths to soak in such a grand view. Shrubs all over the hill side running downhill to meet the salt desert and the desert stretching out to meet the sea. Reminded me of a Ruskin Bond poem on how everything in nature is connected to be complete in itself. The view becomes a memory even more permanent because of the local artists sitting there at the view point, playing local instruments and singing folk songs to entertain the visitors.

The visit to the White Rann of Kutch, the white salt desert, might fittingly be called the icing on the cake of a Kutch peregrination. For this white salt expanse could actually be mistaken for ice crystals or snow accumulation if viewed from a distance. When I stepped onto the salt terrain, by default my steps were very careful ones at first, for I didn't want to disturb the salt deposition on the ground. In fact, I was even apprehensive of stepping onto this beauty

for I felt that would be a derogatory act towards such a fine work of nature. Those who have read 'Love Across the Salt Desert' by K.N Daruwalla (most ICSE students of the early 2000's would have), would recall Najab crossing this very salt desert to meet his love Fatima across the border. However, I was tempted to think that Najab must have fallen in love with this salt desert as well. I certainly did. White all around, white everywhere, in every direction, white for as far as the eye can see. Wow! I felt quite sure that movie makers can film a moon landing scene for a sci-fi movie over here. Riding a camel deeper into the desert made it an enigmatic experience. Camping at this site under a starry full moon night must be the ultimate experience, and that is possible during the White Rann festival which is held every year from November to February. That's also a great time to watch the Gujarati or Kutchi women perform the traditional folk dance, Gajiyo. A ride into the white salt desert is

highly recommended. Apart from camels decorated in fashionable cloth work, horse driven carts are available for families to go deeper into the desert. This is a unique experience everyone must live, for it can't be entirely explained in words in any language.

Gujarati dishes are very popular and find their way into many breakfast menus across the country. Especially thepla, dhokla, ganthiya, etc. but I was hooked onto a delectable sweet, Mawa, which is a speciality of Kutch. And some of the best quality of Mawa can be purchased on the way to White Rann from the small local confectioners. I made a big purchase on the urging of my sweet tooth and a little guilt.

Kutch is very popular for the local art and craft, and its textile art is very well known across India. The expertise in their handicrafts can be traced all the way back to at least the 13th century. Articles such as clothing, apparel, home and wall decorative items, toys, etc. are all

handmade and this aspect has even become renowned internationally after evidence from the Harappan sites in the region were discovered. Beading, embroidery, pottery and copper works are some of the main expertise of the artisans over here. The people performing the handiwork are from different communities such as Jat, Aahir, Mutwa, Harijan, Rabari, etc and its heart-warming to see and understand how art unites everyone in a common thread and blurs the boundaries separating people, regions and even countries. Anjar, a town near Gandhidham, has some good markets where these artefacts can be purchased at a reasonable price. A week flew by as we lost track of time. But there's so much more to explore in the district of Kutch. There's

the Mata na Madh, Dholavira (a Harappan archaeological site), Mandvi beach, Vijay Vilas Palace among other attractions. But the highlight for anyone exploring this region will always be the white desert.

In all honesty, the state advertising tagline - Kutch Nahi Dekha Toh Kuch Nahi Dekha (If you haven't seen Kutch, you've seen nothing) stands very much valid for which I would definitely testify, because Kutch - Kutch Hota Hai (Kutch is Kutch, and there's nothing else like it).

GAUTAM SINGH KANWAL

The above article is authored by Gautam Singh Kanwal (Master Mariner) who works aboard Merchant Ships and hails from Nainital, Uttarakhand. An avid for travelling, reading, learning, music, art and adventure sports, he is keen to indulge in new experiences every time.



ARUBA

A JEWEL OF THE CARIBBEAN

North of Venezuela in the southern part of the Caribbean Sea shines a dazzling jewel of the Dutch Caribbean – Aruba. Along with neighbouring islands of Bonaire and Curacao it forms the popularly known trio of ABC Islands. Where A stands for Aruba, while B and C stand for Bonaire and Curacao respectively.

BY GAUTAM SINGH KANWAL

A tiny constituency country of the Kingdom of Netherlands which measures only 33 kilometres in length while being around 9 kilometres at its widest extremity. While most people might even not have seen Aruba on the map as it's too tiny to be spotted, it can engage and occupy a visitor's interest as much as any other major destination across the globe.

Flying to Aruba from New York was a pleasant 4-hour flight though the landing at Aruba felt quite unnerving. The tiny island has this tiny airport which can



hardly be spotted from the air until almost touchdown. It almost appears as if the plane is going to land on a beach. Once you're driving out of Queen Beatrix airport towards the north, one can get a feel of the islands minuteness by spotting a casino right next to the Parliament of Aruba (which is bang on the road). It just goes to show how they have managed the little space available to them. Else, could one ever think of a bustling casino next to a parliament?

Driving to Noord (the northern part of the island) would light up anyone as you drive past brightly coloured buildings, resorts and casinos. Some of the best street art can be spotted in the Caribbean islands and many of the walls on the streets of Aruba are perfect testimony to that. I was headed for the main resort beach of the island which was Palm Beach and for my stay at Aruba, I was being put up at Holiday Inn Resort (a resort / hotel I've always enjoyed staying at for its sheer ambience, having previously relished its joyful environment at Montevideo, Uruguay and Cape Canaveral, FL, USA).

A beautiful white grainy sand beach kissing the blue water under a steady breeze welcomed guests just across the lobby of Holiday Inn. I couldn't take my eyes of the view for a long time. The complimentary drink served just lay by my side for a long time as I was still trying to soak it all in. It was a moment I still think of reliving many a times.

Right there and then I decided not to take a nap or any sort of rest that one would normally do after back to back flights, just wanted to feel Aruba to the bone and off I went after dumping my luggage in the room. The soft white sand Palm beach across Holiday Inn was too appealing. No one could resist the temptation of lying flat on such a striking beach. Aruba being nice and warm and mostly dry throughout the year does call for a lot of sunscreen. Beaches in Aruba have regularly figured in the top 10 or top 20 island beaches of the world.

Palm Beach, Noord.

Palm beach to Eagle beach (which are connected) is a leisurely 4 km walk that one could enjoy over and over again and not enervate. I took that walk a couple of times back and forth without even realising it. Both beaches are almost similar in ambience as they are connected and have



hotels and resorts lined up adjacent to them continuously.

**Eagle Beach, Oranjestaad
Rodgers Beach**

Walking back to Holiday Inn, I was just in time for lunch. And the sea food was all a fresh catch. A rich blend of sea food and salad is a craving really hard to curb. Discussing with the hotel staff over the meal I learnt of a historical spot nearby which must be visited. It was the Alto Vista Chapel of Noord. Having grown up in a Catholic boarding school I was more than inclined to pay it a visit. The thought of it being centuries old piqued my interest even further. The Holiday Inn staff arranged an ATV for me to visit the Chapel which was about 5 kilometres away (Travel within Aruba is a bit expensive, and bargaining with cabbies is common, however it is better to hire your own car or ATV if you're comfortable with driving).

The drive to the Alto Vista Chapel takes you along a dusty and muddy terrain lined with tall cactus plants along the road. Not quite the vegetation one would expect in the Caribbean and you get a desert expedition feel by the time you arrive there.

Alto Vista Chapel, Noord.
Tall Cactus line the roads to Alto Vista



At first sight the Alto Vista Chapel looked like a colourful drawing from an Enid Blyton children's book. And almost instantaneously my favourite hymn started to play in my mind (All things bright and beautiful,

All creatures great and small). A hymn we sang most joyfully in school chapel. Interestingly, when this chapel's original structure was built there wasn't even a priest in all of Aruba, way back in the year 1750.

The catholic influence on Aruba is said to have arrived from Venezuela. As brightly painted on the outside, so on the inside. A brief visit inside the chapel, learning of its history and a small prayer made it a meaningful visit.

Riding the ATV back to Holiday Inn was equally fun and I was impatient to get back on the beach. Eagle beach, Palm beach among the other beaches also happen to be popular dream wedding destinations.

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There are over a dozen wedding organisers in Aruba who plan and organise these dream destination weddings by the picturesque beaches.

And while beaches may be the cynosure of Aruba, it also has other attractions such as the Oranjestaad Tram. Not only is it the first, but also the only rail facility in all of Dutch Caribbean. It is quite popular among the tourists who get charmed by the mere sight of it and one can't help hopping on to it for a ride.

Oranjestaad Tram
The entire track length being under 3 kilometres it is only enough to take you in and around Oranjestaad (Capital of Aruba), but these battery-operated trams is a sure joy ride for visitors. The ticket / pass for the tram is quite reasonable too.

The good thing about making payments in Aruba is that though they have their own local currency (Florin), US Dollars are





widely accepted. In fact, USD is more in circulation than Florin. This is also the case in most of the Caribbean islands.

The following day was an early rise to ride the ATV further north to the California lighthouse for watching the sunrise. This is a major attraction specially with the guided tours. Built in the early 20th century it has stood tall for over a century now, guiding ships off the coast of Aruba.

It has been named after a ship by the same name which was wrecked in the late 19th century. There is an interesting story of the merchandise onboard the wrecked ship being salvaged and sold off at the markets at Oranjestad.

Being open to public for climbing atop (100 feet high) for a panoramic view, it is a perfect point for watching the sunrise. Having worked on ships (from where we often make use of lighthouses for position fixing) for quite some time, this was the first time I went inside a lighthouse so it was quite memorable for me altogether. It is a nice spot indeed for gazing at the panoramic surroundings from atop the

lighthouse.

California Lighthouse.


If there is something one wouldn't want to miss out in Aruba, it is the Flamingo Beach or Renaissance Beach. A short 10 minutes boat ride from mainland (though it costs around 100 USD) took us there and as we arrived the area, cohorts of baby pink and off-white coloured flamingos were flocking spontaneously towards the arriving visitors in hope of a treat. The visitors can get to feed these docile birds from their bare hands for a very reasonable price. Avifauna has always interested me from childhood and I've made school projects on the subject too, so the charisma of these majestic birds flocking all around made it a very unique and memorable experience.

Pink Flamingo at Renaissance Beach.

Aruba is also a popular spot for diving, snorkelling, parasailing among other adventure sports which the visitors regularly indulge in.

Having experienced some of the major highlights of Aruba's attractions was very satisfying before I set sail from this gem of an island. Honestly, I was unaware of this island's existence till the time I was asked to board my ship from here. Hadn't heard of it, hadn't seen it on the map. Even after locating it on the map I remained oblivious towards it. But once I set foot on Aruba, it fascinated me to a magnitude one couldn't describe. No words in any language could suffice.

Sunset over the Caribbean Sea

Flying in to Aruba and sailing out of it had me in contrasting moods to say the least. Ever since my short visit to Aruba, I've always been planning a vacation there. And I really hope it would happen soon. 

GAUTAM SINGH KANWAL

The above article is authored by Gautam Singh Kanwal (Master Mariner) who works aboard Merchant Ships and hails from Nainital, Uttarakhand. An avid for travelling, reading, learning, music, art and adventure sports, he is keen to indulge in new experiences every time.



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Mr. Jurgen Bailom

President and CEO, Waterways Leisure Tourism

In his role as President and CEO of Waterways Cruises, Mr. Bailom is spearheading the launch of this world-class cruise experience in India. Being an industry veteran, he has played an instrumental role in the selection of the first ship, its refurbishment, bringing on board like-minded partners, ensuring the first cruise is ready to set sail, and making the experience one-of-its-kind for Indian travellers - amongst others.

With a career spanning over 30 years in the cruise and hospitality industry, Mr. Bailom has been President & CEO of Grupo Vidanta Cruises before his current role. He has also held senior Corporate Director positions within several of Royal Caribbean's brands, such as SKY SEAS, TUI and Celebrity Cruises, Island Cruises, and most recently as the Chief Operating Officer & Vice-President of Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines Pullmantur. He has also been Vice-President of The Maho Group, Sonesta Collection Resorts, Casinos, Spa & Real Estate, to name a few.

With an MBA in Business & Tourism and a Diploma in Business Administration & Language, Mr. Bailom is a Certified Hotel Administrator (CHA) from the Hotel & Tourism School of Vienna & WIFI (Institute for Executives), Austria. In addition, he is the Founder of the JB Foundation, a non-profit Cancer Foundation (Ironman4Cancer). He is also an author, entrepreneur, community leader, and Ironman athlete.

By Payal Sahni



What measures do you take to minimise your environmental impact?

Cordelia Cruises is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and complies with international and local maritime organisations by using very low sulphur fuel oils. We prioritise energy efficiency by optimising ship routes based on weather and currents, minimising power consumption. Extensive research is conducted on technologies like solar power, wind power, biofuels, natural gas, fuel cells, biomass, and shore power.

Clean Waves is a Cordelia Cruises

program that focuses on protecting the environment and the oceans, both in port and at sea to deliver great vacations responsibly.

Cordelia places great importance on compliance with internationally recognized standards and regulations, such as the ISM Code, SOLAS, and MARPOL, going above and beyond to ensure safety, quality, and environmental management systems are in place. We implement waste management practices, including sorting recyclables on board, reducing packaging materials, and participating in container return programs.

Cordelia Cruises actively seeks to reduce single-use plastics and responsibly

manages chemicals used in its operations. Water management is prioritised, with 100% freshwater produced on board through desalination and reverse osmosis while water conservation measures are implemented. Wastewater treatment plants are installed to avoid untreated discharge into the ocean, and ballast water is treated to prevent the introduction of non-native species.

We also ensure compliance with regulations for recreational water and greywater discharge, even exceeding the required distances. Overall, Cordelia Cruises goes above and beyond to promote sustainability, waste reduction, responsible

chemical and water management, and support for local economies while meeting or surpassing international standards and regulations.

Q What steps has Cordelia Cruise taken to ensure that your company supports the local economy and community where you operate?

Cordelia Cruises recognizes the importance of supporting and positively impacting local economies and communities in the port destinations we visit.

Across departments - hospitality, entertainment, deck, and engine - 94% of the crew onboard is Indian. The food and beverage offerings span across a wide variety of authentic vegetarian and non-vegetarian, Indian and international fare, all of the produce, ingredients, and packaging which is sourced locally. Cordelia has made sure that the people of India do not have to move out of their home countries to experience the cruise work life. They can encounter international exposure here in India itself yet stay connected to their roots.

Cordelia Cruises believes in giving back to the communities that welcome us.

How do you ensure that your employees

and partners are trained and informed about sustainable tourism practices, and what kind of training programs do you offer?

We at Cordelia Cruises conduct regular training programs to educate our crew members about sustainable practices, waste management, and environmental conservation. We make sure that the crew is aware of the international agreements and guidelines for cruising. A continuous quality check is done to make sure that no harm is done to the environment.

We consider sustainability to be an ongoing commitment rather than a one-time effort. We stay up to date with emerging trends and best practices in sustainable tourism and integrate them into our training programs. By continuously improving our knowledge and practices, we strive to be at the forefront of sustainable cruising and set an example for the industry.

Q Can you describe Cordelia Cruise's approach to waste management and reduction on your vessels and at your destinations?

Cordelia Cruises recognizes the importance of protecting the ecosystem. One of our

core focuses is sustainable cruising, where we strictly avoid the use of plastic on board and prioritise the use of reusable materials throughout our ships. To conserve water resources, we have implemented advanced water management systems on board, enabling us to convert sea water into drinking water, ensuring a sustainable supply for our guests and crew.

Q How does Cordelia Cruise differentiate itself from other cruise companies in terms of its travel and tourism promotions strategy?

We at Cordelia take pride in offering exceptional dining options that cater to a diverse range of tastes. From authentic Indian cuisine to international delicacies, our onboard restaurants ensure a memorable culinary journey for our guests. To keep our passengers entertained throughout their voyage, we curate a vibrant lineup of Indian and international entertainment.

One of our standout marketing strategies is to highlight our exceptional dining options, entertainment, enriching activities, and immersive cultural experiences. Even though our services are international, we always maintain the essence of Cordelia which is the Indianness or the feeling of having a home away from home.

Q Can you share any specific marketing campaigns or initiatives that Cordelia Cruise has undertaken to promote its brand and attract more customers?

We executed our recent brand campaign in April - May, which turned out to be fruitful for us. This was a Pan India - 360-degree

First indulge in the onboard cuisines. From authentic South Indian dishes to tasty Continental food for breakfast, the Food court has everything to serve every taste bud! Try the exotic pan-asian cuisines at Chopstix for dinner or pizzas and burgers at the International Grill to satisfy your midnight cravings in the middle of the ocean. One can never miss the onboard entertainment on Cordelia. The Indian family drama "Balle Balle" makes everyone leave the Marquee Theater with zeal.

media campaign that utilised print, digital, OOH, radio, transit media across 30+ major cities, metros and airports. As a result, we saw an organic lift across all brand matrices.

We also recognize the importance of a strong online presence in today's digital age. We utilise various digital marketing channels, including social media platforms, to engage with our target audience.

Overall our focus has always been on techniques and strategies that will aid the Indian cruise category to flourish. We take utmost pride in paving the way for the

Indian cruise industry, and to maintain the same, our efforts are focused with new and relevant strategies to keep connecting with our customers and partners.

Q What are your top 5 picks/ suggestions the way we should

all enjoy cruises?

First indulge in the onboard cuisines. From authentic South Indian dishes to tasty Continental food for breakfast, the Food court has everything to serve every taste bud!

Try the exotic pan-asian cuisines at Chopstix for dinner or pizzas and burgers at the International Grill to satisfy your midnight cravings in the middle of the ocean. One can never miss the onboard entertainment on Cordelia. The Indian

family drama "Balle Balle" makes everyone leave the Marquee Theater with zeal.

The ardour of the Indian Cinematic show leaves one speechless, adding to that the Magic show by Tejas, the burlesque show, are one of the most captivating experiences one can witness when sailing onboard the Empress. Apart from shows, one can sit at the Chairman's club with their

partner and enjoy live music performances, whereas the music never stops at the Dome for the party animals. Adventure seekers can enjoy the rock climbing wall on the topmost deck, and the mesmerising sunset with the infinite skyline leaves one in awe.

If you're one of those seeking a calm day, the spa is always open for a calming and relaxing experience. The destinations, the cuisines, the onboard experiences, the relaxation, the homeliness, and the overall feeling of Cruising one experiences with Cordelia is rare in itself.[u](#)



With New Michelin Honors, San Francisco Retains its Culinary Crown

The 2023 MICHELIN Guide awards new Michelin Stars, Green Stars, and the Young Chef of the Year Award to San Francisco Restaurateurs, cementing the city's status as one of the world's great gastronomic hubs

Last week's prestigious 2023 MICHELIN Guide California awards made one thing clear: San Francisco remains the culinary capital of the Golden State. The City by the Bay boasts 27 Michelin-starred restaurants, and the San Francisco Bay Area is now home to 50 of the 87 California restaurants awarded Michelin stars.

Two San Francisco restaurants – Aphotic, a restaurant specializing in sustainable and dry-aged seafood, and Nari, a Thai restaurant – earned their first Michelin stars, and all of the city's

previously awarded two-star and three-star restaurants retained their honors. Aphotic was also honored with a Michelin Green Star, which recognized the establishment for its commitment to sustainability. Altogether, San Francisco is home to half of the state's three-star Michelin restaurants and five of its 12 two-star establishments, plus three of its 15 Green Star restaurants.

Michelin also recognized the city's rising culinary talent for the second year in a row. Chef Harrison Cheney, the executive chef at Sons & Daughters, received the prestigious Michelin Young

Chef Award, which was awarded to Chef David Yoshimura of San Francisco's Nisei last year.

"For a small city only seven-by-seven square miles, San Francisco is one of the world's great gastronomic hubs," said Joe D'Alessandro, president and CEO of the San Francisco Travel Association. "We are thrilled to see the city's incredible culinary scene recognized again by Michelin."

"This year's new Michelin Guide highlights the diversity and quality of our San Francisco restaurant community. With our access to the highest quality

local ingredients, regional wines and highly dedicated chefs, our local culinary scene continues to be a highlight for locals and tourists alike," said Laurie Thomas, executive director of the Golden Gate Restaurant Association and CEO of Nice Ventures.

The wider San Francisco Bay Area also shined with new stars. Calistoga's Auro and Carmel-by-the-Sea's Chez Noir each earned one Michelin Star, while Chez Noir was also honored with a Green Star.

John Schafer of Healdsburg's SingleThread was recognized with the

Michelin Outstanding Service Award, and John Haffey of Carmel-by-the-Sea's Aubergine was presented with the Michelin Sommelier Award.

Earlier this month, Michelin added four Bay Area restaurants to its Bib Gourmand roster, which recognizes restaurants with great food at an affordable price point. The additions include San Francisco's Bansang, Oakland's Snail Bar and Bombera, and San Jose's Petiscos.

Sixteen San Francisco restaurants are designated Bib Gourmands, and 70 are featured as Michelin Selects in the 2023

MICHELIN California guide.

Full details on the restaurants and Michelin's inspector notes can be found on the MICHELIN Guide website and mobile app.


SAN FRANCISCO TRAVEL

The San Francisco Travel Association is the official destination marketing organization for the City and County of San Francisco. The city is one of the top tourism and meetings destinations in the U.S. and received 21.9 million visitors in 2022. Total tourism spending in 2022 exceeded \$7.7 billion. The tourism industry is the largest generator of outside revenue into San Francisco's economy and supports over 53,000 jobs.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

SFO is excited to welcome travelers back to the skies with an airport experience featuring seamless access, thoughtful amenities, sustainable design and inspiring artwork and exhibits.

For up-to-the-minute departure and arrival information, airport maps and details on shopping, dining, cultural exhibitions, ground transportation, masks and COVID-related protocols and more, visit <https://www.flysfo.com/>. Follow us on twitter.com/flysfo and facebook.com/flysfo.

United Airlines is the preferred airline of the San Francisco Travel Association. 

The Life and Leadership Style of Mr. Dev Karvat



Mr. Dev Karvat - the Founder & CEO of Asego is a renowned face in the Indian Travel Industry. It has been his constant endeavour to deliver new-age travel ancillary services to clients with innovation and customer-centricity at the core. With numerous national and international accolades under his belt,

Mr. Karvat, a young and dynamic visionary is all set to revolutionize the Indian Insurance sector with his new venture - Asego. His grit and determination to achieve this vision in the face of all adversities is what sets Mr. Karvat apart as he embarks on another historic journey.

Early Life

Mr. Karvat was born in a family with deep roots in the Insurance Industry. Being very close to his Father, Late Shri Ashokbhai Karvat, he grew up absorbing and learning about the Insurance industry in depth. By the time he turned 16, Mr. Karvat had clearly drawn his career path and had taken the initial steps towards his first entrepreneurial venture. It was an amalgamation of his passion for travel and his vision to create a seamless experience for travellers seeking tailored travel protection solutions and sustainable business opportunity for clients.



His First Entrepreneurial Step

Mr. Karvat stepped into the Travel Protection business with 10 people in a single office, who shared an unflinching determination for providing dedicated and relevant travel assistance services to Indian travelers. Over the years, his leadership, management insight and operational expertise strengthened the organisation's position in the market with over 450 employees spread across 47 branches PAN India. Mr. Dev Karvat also introduced the first online luggage tracking system in India along with other travel ancillary services such as concierge services, family protection, and emergency medical assistance abroad.

Global Exposure

In 2012, Mr. Karvat took TrawellTag global by partnering with Cover-More Group, Australia to enhance the company's operational capabilities and expand its product offerings in India. Eventually, in 2017, the Zurich Insurance Company acquired Cover-More Group, making TrawellTag Cover-More one of the world's largest travel insurance service providers. These alliances not only propelled the organization in terms of technological, operational and servicing capabilities, but also sowed seeds of a new insurance revolution in Mr. Karvat's mind.

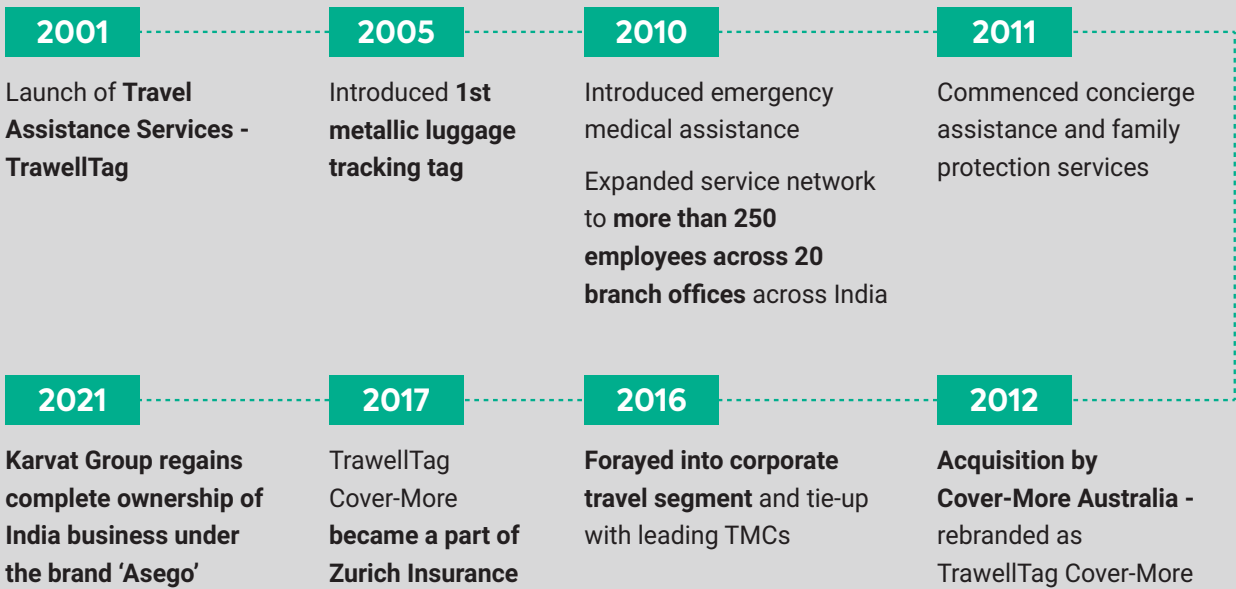
Asego- His New Brain-child

Post Cover-More's decision to exit India in 2020, Mr. Dev Karvat regained complete ownership of the travel ancillary business. With his unwavering determination and passion, he further strengthened the organisation's position in the travel protection domain. With clients including top travel agents, corporates/ TMCs, airlines, visa processing services and student counselors, today his dream enterprise protects several million travelers worldwide. With a stronghold on the travel insurance sector and a digital-first approach to insurance, Asego has expanded its offerings to other insurance segments including health, motor, package products, marine cover etc.

His Greater Vision

Asego is a progressive business model driven by digitisation, which will not only provide best-in class travel insurance solutions but also open up new business opportunities in other insurance portfolio for its clients, business associates and employees. Through a digital-first approach, Asego looks to simplify the process of managing their partners' growing clientele and empowering them with improved technological and servicing capabilities.

His Journey





Beyond skiing and snowboarding—

off-beat activities to try this winter in New Zealand

By Team TL

To all the winter lovers, step into a world of enchantment as New Zealand's alpine landscapes embrace a mesmerizing winter wonderland from June to October. Beyond the exhilaration of skiing and snowboarding ingrained in Kiwi culture, an array of captivating experiences awaits in the realm of wintertime exploration. Marvel at the awe-inspiring migration of majestic humpback whales, gracefully traversing towards tropical waters. Embark on a scenic train odyssey through celestial alpine vistas, evoking a sense of pure wonder. And behold the celestial spectacle of the Matariki cluster ascending, a celestial dance that leaves you

spellbound.

Unveiling New Zealand's cherished winter activities, this handpicked list extends far beyond traditional winter sports, offering extraordinary adventures that will ignite your wanderlust.

Glacier hiking and Ice climbing Glacier hiking and Ice climbing in New Zealand is considered to be among the best in the world as one gets to explore incredibly beautiful landscapes that will leave everyone in awe. There are opportunities to experience the glaciers for people with all levels of ability. You can follow the walking tracks up to the terminus of either glacier for a close up view or hike through the bush to a viewing point. And if actually touching the

ice is on your bucket list then a guided tour (with all equipment included) will allow you to get up onto the glacier face itself. Opt to visit the below locations for an enlightening experience.

Fox Glacier Guiding, West Coast

To see Fox glacier, you can head towards Lake Matheson on Cook Flat Road for magnificent views. You can arrange an ice-hiking adventure or book a scenic flight. Embark on a mesmerizing helicopter journey from the base, where you'll be transported to a remote and exceptionally stunning section of the glacier. Immerse yourself in an unforgettable experience on the ice, creating memories that

will last a lifetime. After your awe-inspiring time on the glacier, enjoy a second scenic helicopter ride that will bring you back to the base, located in the heart of the charming Fox Glacier township. There are glow worm caves just a short walk from the town centre, where you can also find a good choice of cafes and restaurants. Close to Fox Glacier is beautiful Lake Matheson, one of the most photographed lakes in New Zealand. On a clear day it reflects Mount Cook.

Franz Josef Glacier Guides, West Coast

Franz Josef glacier is five kilometres from the town of the same name, and a 1.5 hour walk will take you to within 750m of its terminal face. If you want to actually make contact with the glacier, take a heli-hike or a guided ice walk. Embark on a thrilling glacier climbing expedition, renowned for offering some of the world's finest experiences. Your adventure commences with a comprehensive briefing at the Glacier Base Building, where an experienced guide will equip you with all the necessary gear for your ice climbing expedition. Aerial

sightseeing is another option.

There's a range of natural attractions like rainforests, waterfalls and lakes in close proximity to Franz Josef Glacier Village. In the town, you'll find plenty of places to stay and eat, or explore the wildlife centre. At nearby Lake Mapourika, you can take a kayak tour or rent a stand-up paddleboard.

Winter stargazing

Dark, clear skies, unique celestial features and otherworldly landscapes make winter stargazing in New Zealand a breathtakingly magical experience. In New Zealand, the winter months bring forth the emergence of Matariki, experience a mesmerizing cluster of stars that graces the early morning sky at the below locations.

Chameleon Stargazing, Canterbury

Immerse yourself in a 90-minute astronomy adventure alongside fellow stargazing enthusiasts (maximum 12 participants) and you will be treated to captivating insights about the night sky and get a chance to observe deep sky objects through an

impressive 9.25-inch telescope and warm blankets to ensure you can fully enjoy the celestial spectacle. As the tour ends, enhance your comfort with outdoor furniture, cozy pillows, comfortable mattresses, and gather around the cozy fire bowl, where you can bond with friends and family while roasting delicious marshmallows. It's a magical experience you won't want to miss!

Tekapo Star Gazing, Lake Tekapo

Tekapo Star Gazing combines the stunning Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve with the soul-warming hot pools of Tekapo Springs. A 2-hour tour, the first half begins with an introduction to the night sky with star gazing guides, and is complemented by looking through high-powered telescopes pointed at interesting features of the night sky. Then let the real world melt away as you relax in the hot pools on a floating hammock to ensure easy sky viewing. You'll feel like you're floating among the stars while your guide tells stories that combine astronomy with local tales and Mori myths.



Geothermal walks:

New Zealand’s geothermal activity is truly captivating. Within these remarkable geothermal areas, one can encounter bubbling mud pools and awe-inspiring geysers, providing a firsthand encounter with the raw power of the Earth. To fully immerse yourself in these extraordinary natural phenomena, embarking on a geothermal walk is a fantastic choice. Witness first-hand the incredible wonders

that New Zealand's geothermal landscapes have to offer by visiting the below locations:

Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland, Rotorua

Prepare to be astounded by the breathtaking beauty of Waiotapu Thermal Wonderland, an extraordinary display of New Zealand's vibrant and extraordinary geothermal features crafted over countless millennia



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of geothermal activity. Its unique features include the world famous Champagne Pool, naturally coloured springs, bubbling mud, steaming ground, expansive vistas, huge volcanic craters and sinter terrace formations. Visitors can choose one or all of three walks which take between 45 and 90 minutes.

Waimangu Volcanic Valley, Rotorua

Take an eco-focused nature walk or hike through the spectacular Waimangu Volcanic Valley thermal park. This trail will wind down to the serene lake, where a delightful 45-minute cruise awaits you on the tranquil waters of Lake Rotomahana. As you embark on this leisurely cruise, prepare to witness captivating geothermal activity that can only be accessed by boat, unveiling a hidden world of natural wonders. Along the way, keep an eye out for the presence of rare native bird species, adding an extra touch of enchantment to your experience. [\[1\]](#)





Taiwan's secret heaven

Kaohsiung





By Team TL

Straddled diagonally between China and Japan is the island country of Taiwan, and sitting at the South western edge of Taiwan by the shores of the Taiwan Straits is the city of Kaohsiung (the second largest city in Taiwan). Influence of these two powerful countries of Japan and China has been believed to play a major part in development of the port city of Kaohsiung. From a mere fishing hamlet in the olden days, the city of Kaohsiung has seen much ups and downs on its turbulent journey to becoming the business, industrial and trading powerhouse of Taiwan as well as its busiest port. Having been under Japanese rule for some 50 (1895-1945) years, the city was the point of contact for Taiwan to the outside world and vice versa under rule as it was the Japanese garrison city. Fortunately, the city of Kaohsiung didn't have to bear the brunt of war outbreaks to a great extent despite

being a strategic military base, because the consequences of war are incalculable, and damage to Kaohsiung could mean suffering (economic and social) in all of Taiwan. Having grown steadily from there, it comes as no surprise that today Kaohsiung is the largest municipality in Taiwan and its most important port.

But there's much more to Kaohsiung than just the industrial and trading facets. Having undergone colonisation under the Dutch, the Japanese and the Chinese, Kaohsiung's culture and tradition is fairly versatile and traces of each influence can be felt around the city.

Located at a distance of 360 kilometers from Taipei (the capital of Taiwan), it can be reached by HSR (High Speed Rail) in 2 hours from there, while distance from Tai Chung is roughly 200 kms which can be covered in a little over an hour.

Love River is more or less the focal point of Kaohsiung which runs through the core

of the city and is a great place to catch your breath by. A walk by the river will slow down time as you watch ferries and gondolas pass back and forth. Walking under the tree shades on either side can be very soothing to the eye as you admire the glistening and shiny water that flows by. This river was barely a stream in its primate times, but the locals have worked hard to revive it to what it is today and that is a true testimony of the hard-working origins of the people of Kaohsiung. It is probably named Love River as a lot of couples on a date frequent this place, it was earlier called Kaohsiung canal and by other oriental names in olden days. A big statue of 'Ao', a mythological half dragon – half fish figure makes a good selfie spot by the Love River. Best time to visit is in the evening when the bridge over the river is lit up and the promenade running parallel to the river comes alive with bustling pretty cafes and open-air restaurants. During a certain Dragon Boat Festival, boat races



are held in the Love River while during the lantern festival the riversides are decorated with lit up lanterns.

Probably the most popular area of Kaohsiung is Lotus lake. This is one of the largest lakes (being 1500 meters long and 500 meters wide) in Taiwan and is a man-made lake. It is one of the most popular attractions where locals and tourists can be seen hanging around throughout the day and the evening. With a variety of colourful pagodas, temples, pavilions and statues at the lakeside, it has a lot of photogenic spots which are Instagram worthy.

The most interesting and coolest attraction at Lotus Lake is the Dragon and Tiger Pagodas. A zig zagging pathway from No.9 Liantan road directs you to the Dragon and Tiger Pagodas. These twin pagodas have a dragon and a tiger at their entrance and popular belief has it that to get rid of bad luck and get good luck in your life one must enter through the dragon's mouth and exit from the tiger's mouth. Be sure to climb the seven-story pagodas and enjoy the views from the top while also admiring the art on the walls

within the pagodas. There is a depiction of the 18 levels of hell in the Taiwanese mythology and it is displayed in a manner to discourage people from committing sins.

Right opposite the Dragon and Tiger Pagodas is a beautiful temple built in honour of Baosheng Dadi (God of Medicine).

A very prominent structure at Lotus Pond is the 72-meter-high statue of the mysterious warrior Xuan Wu (believed to be the ruler of the North Pole in the local mythology). Visitors can even walk into the statue through an entrance at the base and climb up several floors inside the towering statue which houses shrines at each level.

The Spring and Autumn Pavilions overtly showcase traditional architecture. On the outside the Pavilion is a visual treat with the backdrop of the lake, and you can enter the dragon mouth which has steps leading in and is shaped like an inclining tunnel within. On either side in the tunnel you will sight colourful murals depicting their mythology, tradition and culture.

Being at Lotus lake makes one feel care free. Best way to explore the area is on foot. By the road that runs parallel to the Lotus lake are many food stalls serving a variety of snacks and fresh cut fruit to take care of hunger calls and quench your thirst.



It is a great place to watch the sun go down towards the end of the day and one should not miss out on capturing the beautiful sunsets here. Enchanting views take shape across Kaohsiung when the sun sets and the city lights up.

Chi Jin Island at Kaohsiung is a well-known fishing power house. The place has been intensely involved with fishing probably ever since the time of its habitation. This island can be easily reached by short

ferry rides from the ferry jetty at Shiziwan. It is barely a 10 minutes ride. Lots of fishing families have been here generation after generation. You could rent a bicycle to get around this island. Among the most popular places to visit are Thean Hou Temple in Chi Jin Island, which is dedicated to the Goddess Martu – The protector of sailors. Monkey mountain is a great hike where you can see cohorts of playful monkeys among other flora and fauna. The sea food at Ya Jiao

restaurant is quite popular in Chi Jin Island and most tourists prefer having lunch over here. A seafood platter with cold beer really checks the box for me on a hot tiring day. And Im quite sure it's the same for most enthusiastic travellers. The lighthouse at Chi Jin island (built by the British) offers great panoramic views of the city, the sea and the far-off horizon. This lighthouse has a great collection of old photographs on display from the time the lighthouse was newly built.

85 Sky Tower is the most prominent landmark in Kaohsiung. One cannot miss this building especially while taking the ferry to Chi Jin island or when getting back from there. At the top of the 85 Sky Tower is a viewing deck for tourists to soak in authoritative views of the city. The building has as many as 92 elevators. One of these elevators can reach the 77th floor in just 45 seconds making it the 3rd fastest lift in the world. This imposing structure can be



prominently sighted from various parts of the city and is the most iconic landmark of Kaohsiung among foreign tourists. One can notice the co-existence of modern concrete and glass buildings with traditional oriental architecture in Kaohsiung. The city can be seen mingling the old with the new in various areas. Taiwan's largest Confucius temple is also in Kaohsiung.

The art on the ceiling at Kaohsiung Formosa station is worth looking at from various angles. Even if one is passing by this station on his journey, he should step off at Kaohsiung station and get a look at it before resuming his journey. Designed by the renowned artist Narcissus Quagliata, this art on the ceiling showcases a theme of love and pardon in the lifetime of Person. This work of public art is also called 'Dome of Light'. This is the biggest glass installation of its kind in the whole world. One has to see this ceiling lit up in all its glory to feel awestruck by its beauty. One can easily notice that the Taiwanese appear to be a very ordered society which can be seen in the metro stations how people assemble in a single line in a disciplined manner without causing inconvenience. The stations are extraordinarily neat and clean and very well maintained. Their rail network covers most of the best destinations in a short span by High Speed Rail (HSR).

There is no dearth of night markets in and around Kaohsiung. But the Ruifeng Night Market is amongst the most popular ones here. You can feel the energy of this place as you hop around from one stall to

another. One could eat till his stomach bursts as there is so much of variety in food in ample quantity servings from a big number of stalls and at a very cheap price. Seafood, chicken dishes, smoothies, confectionery, fresh fruit juices among various other gastronomy options are available in great variety. Most foreign tourists throng this place throughout the night and fill their stomachs with tasty grub at a reasonable price.

There is an interesting rail road museum in Shiziwan, which showcases the history of Kaohsiung's first railway station (established by the Japanese) and the important role it played in the city's industrialisation and civil modernisation aspects. This is a fine place to visit for an entire family. Interesting historic facts to know as well as fun for the kids to hop on to the old rail bogies. At the rear of the museum is a sizeable park where one could relax and families could picnic. A miniature train runs around the park which is really fun and amusing. It could make you feel like a child all over again. Once a week (generally on a weekend) a flea market is put up with local artistry on sale. This is a place to find a perfect souvenir for collectors.

Tucked away from the skyscrapers, industrial and commercial zone of the city is the peaceful sanctum, Fo Guang Shan Monastery. This is the largest monastery in all of Taiwan. Upon entering you will be led across a huge pathway with eight pagodas lined up on either side facing each other. The main shrine is embellished with a big and beautiful golden Buddha statue (36 meters high) sitting on top. The order



of this monastery encourages the practice of Humanistic Buddhism. Fo Guang Shan literally means Buddha's Light Mountain and this place enshrines the spirits of Buddhist teachings, philosophy and lifestyle in a majestic atmosphere. There are enough attractions within the premises for drool worthy sights and for enlightening oneself on a spiritual plane. For those who are not Buddhists, a trip to this monastery proves to be very insightful as you learn a lot about various aspects of Buddhism, and those who are Buddhists or are aware of Buddhism will

Something not to be missed in Taiwan is 'Pearl Milk Tea' or 'Bubble Tea'. Pearl milk tea was invented in the late 80's right here in Taiwan (in the neighbouring city of Taichung which is only an hour's journey from Kaohsiung by the bullet train from the High-Speed Rail Station). This marvellous beverage was invented as a result of a simple experiment by a local restaurateur using tapioca pearl and regular tea. The result was astonishingly great, so much so that the business of this refreshing beverage has grown by cosmic scales and turned into a

various activities such as diving and surfing. ATV's are available here for riding around the area. The place is particularly great for a morning excursion and has a very peaceful environment in general.

In my opinion the city of Kaohsiung is a very underrated tourist destination, but that's probably a blessing in disguise, because one of the best things about this place is that a tourist rush hasn't mobbed this place like some of the popular destinations in the South East and the Far East, and one can patiently go through

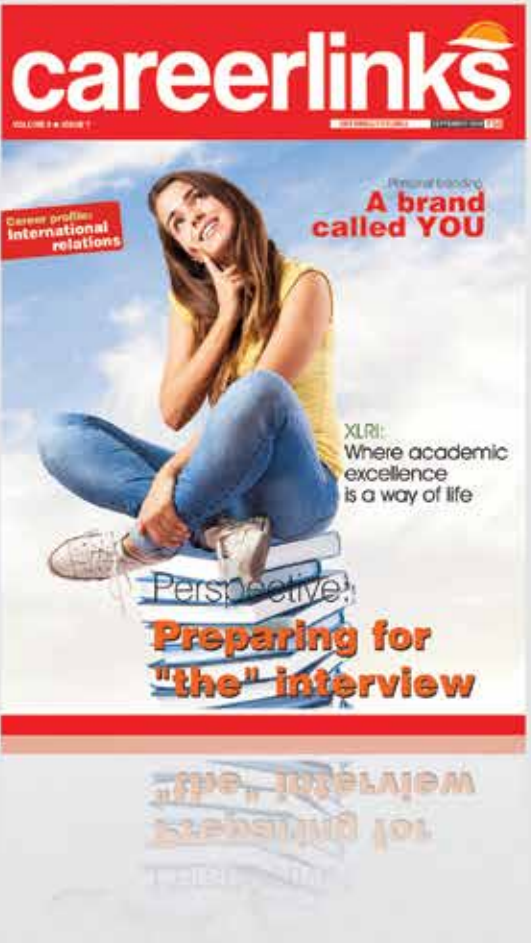
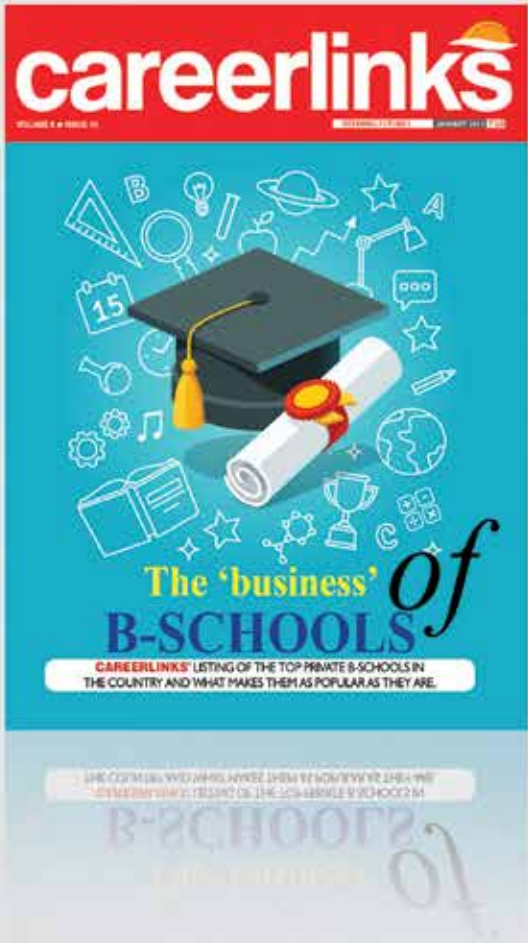


sharpen their knowledge and be grateful to have visited this monastery. The highlight is the Jade Buddha and Gold Buddha displayed at the main Pagoda. Photography inside is prohibited, but one look at these magnificent statues will remain like a photographic memory in your mind. Lots of master craftsmanship can be noticed in the statues (stone as well as wooden) erected in various parts of the monastery. This is like a big palatial museum where Buddha's tooth relics are also kept. Even after leaving from the monastery one can feel its warmth and aura for a long time. One must visit this monastery when exploring Kaohsiung and preferably keep it for towards the last part of his / her trip.

multi-million-dollar global industry in recent times. A very refreshing beverage specially when served cold with ice and the best place to have it is at 'The Original store of Chun Sui Tang', that's where the idea of bubble tea came up with subsequent successful experimenting. Today probably a hundred (or even more) varieties of bubble tea would be served across restaurants and stores in Taiwan. This beverage is an absolute must in Taiwan.

If one is a bit of a thrill seeker, then Kenting is a great diving location 100 kms (90 Minutes' drive) south of Kaohsiung. It's the southernmost tip of Taiwan. One can visit this place to satisfy his thrill-seeking side. This place has a beautiful beach and

the various moods of the city with time on his side. It's quite incredible when you think of how much variety a small place can offer to its visitors. If one is willing to indulge in fancy foodstuff, inexpensive transportation (though more expensive than some of the South East Asian destinations which are dirt cheap) with hills, rivers, sea side, beaches, fast paced city streets with laid back zones too, and enchanting monasteries, one must visit Taiwan. And once in Taiwan, Kaohsiung is a recommended destination. I strongly feel the tourism aspects of Kaohsiung will only get better and better, and that the best part of Kaohsiung's story is still being written.[\[1\]](#)

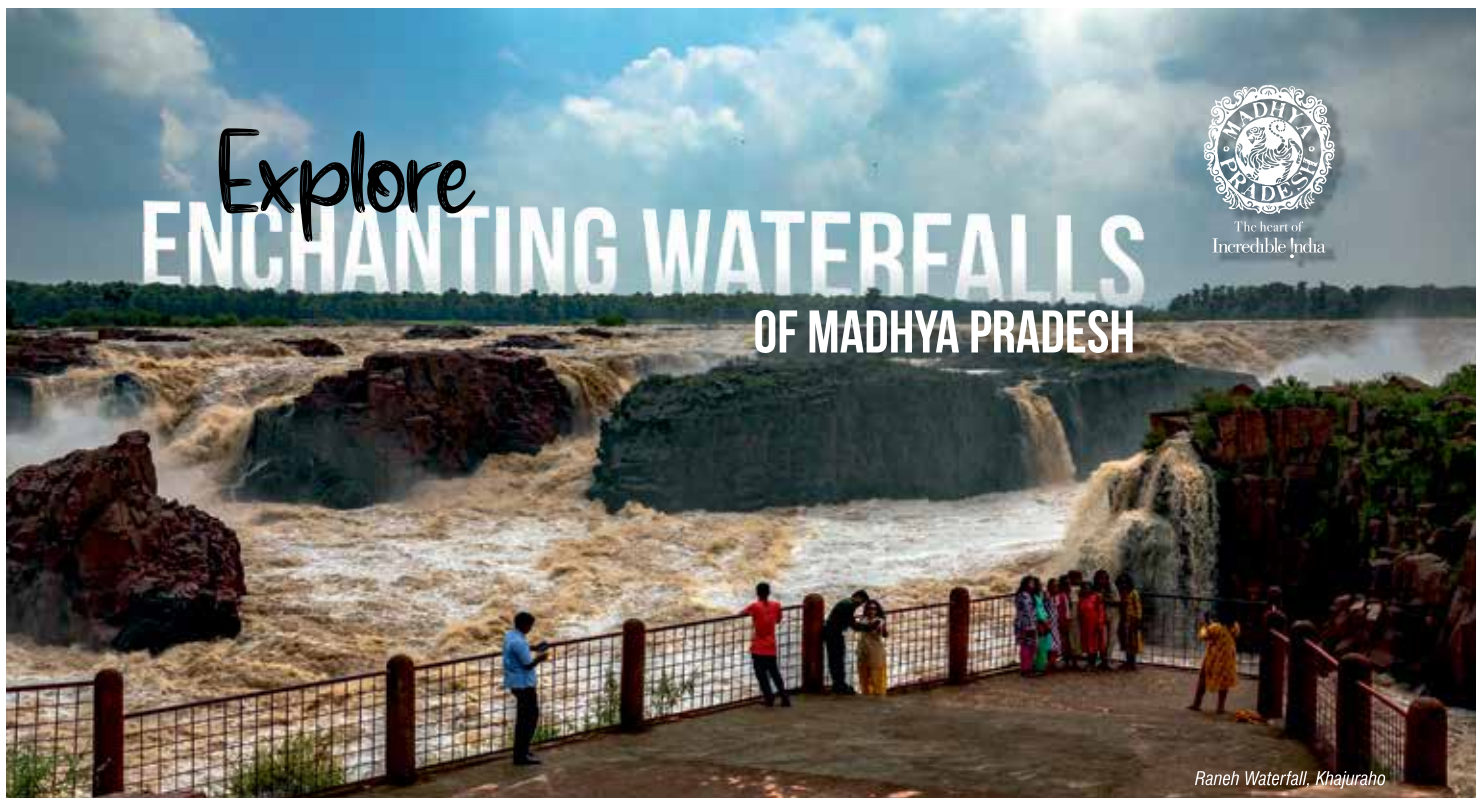


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Explore ENCHANTING WATERFALLS OF MADHYA PRADESH



Raneh Waterfall, Khajuraho

Here are some waterfalls that can be included in your itinerary.



Bee Fall, Pachmarhi

Raneh Waterfall, near Khajuraho

Raneh Waterfall is about 22 kilometers from the UNESCO World Heritage site Khajuraho on the Ken River. The main attraction here is a crystalline granite canyon that is 5 kilometers long and 100 feet deep. Situated in a salubrious environment, this is an ideal place to de-stress. Kutni Island Resort (27 kms), Jhankar (21 kms) and Payal Resorts (19kms) in Khajuraho are some accommodations near the falls that you can book to stay.

Keoti and Bahuti Waterfalls near Rewa

Located near Rewa, Keoti (100 meters) and Bahuti (198 meters) are one of the highest falls in Madhya Pradesh. The waterfalls percolates a natural bliss for the travellers. Vindhya Retreat situated at a distance of 35 kms from Keoti falls and 68 kms from Bahuti falls is a good option to stay.



Keoti Waterfall, Rewa

Kapildhara Waterfall, Amarkantak

Amarkantak lies at the meeting point of the three central India hill ranges- Vindhyas, Satpuras and Maikal and is popularly known as 'Teerthraj', or the King of pilgrimages. Situated near the source of Narmada, the two waterfalls - Dugdha Dhara and Kapil Dhara are surrounded by a dense forest and Towards south-west of Dugdha Dhara is the Kapil Dhara. The distance between both the waterfalls is not more than 1 km. Holiday Homes Amarkantak is an exclusive accommodation facility which is only 8kms from the Kapil Dhara falls.



Kapildhara, Amarkantak

Dhuandhar Waterfall, Jabalpur

This waterfall is a must-see for tourists in Jabalpur. Magnificent 100-foot-tall marble cliffs rise on either side of the Narmada River. The river flows gently over these tall marble cliffs, and after a short

stretch, it tumbles down to form the Dhuandhar Falls. The waterfall gets its name from the smoke-like appearance of the water rushing down the cliffs. Motel Marbel Rocks, Bedhaghat is a luxury MP Tourism property for a comfortable stay near the waterfall.



Dhuandhar, Jabalpur

More on the plate

Chachai and Purwa Falls in the Rewa, Pandava falls in the Panna district, Patalpani falls near Indore, Bee and Silver fall in Pachmarhi and Sankua falls in the Gwalior district are some other waterfalls that can rejuvenate you.

What are you waiting for? Plan a trip with your loved ones and explore these amazing creations of nature.



Patalpani, Indore