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The Great Indian Travel Experience

India is many different things to different people, especially if it's their first visit to this great, confusing, full of contradictions, country. Almost everyone can find what they were looking for while dreaming of their trip to India. The critical element being that the Indian service provider should understand what the clients are seeking.

The days of organised travel are not quite over yet – be it budget or luxury. Still, one finds more and more that the traveller, no matter what the budget, while planning an organised trip, also wants a true life Indian experience. This means that over and above the perfect arrangements for hotels, food, transport and visits, the traveller today seeks a form of authentic experience; with what he feels is the 'real India'. The country still exudes that mysterious quality inspiring people to feel that their trip will in some way be life-altering. Perhaps not exactly life-altering but Indian Routes strives to provide unique experiences, a touch of India that clients can carry back...

Now without getting too philosophical, as a service provider we are constantly on the look out for mini experiences that add value to an organised tour. This could consist of having a home cooked meal with an Indian family, staying at their home, going food shopping and then actually learning to cooking an Indian meal...Naturally all the experiences are culinary! Other fields like village walks, yoga, Indian fashion, Bollywood and so on.

Travel is becoming experience based and even the most bland tour can be spiced up with an experience based activity. For more on this aspect of travel, don't hesitate to write in.

Kiran Joti

Vice President & Business Head



Trying Times

Flying out of Delhi will cost you more. The government has allowed GMR-backed Delhi International Airport Pvt Ltd (DIAL) to charge a User Development Fee of Rs 200 for each domestic passenger departing from Delhi and Rs 1,300 for each international passenger, from 01 March for the next three years. This will be exempted to all Infant travel. This amount will be paid to GMR desk direct by passenger.

German carrier Lufthansa has shut its sales offices in Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad, citing the global economic slump. The carrier officials said there were no immediate plans to pull out flights.

Emirates Airlines is successful in moving up its growth charts, despite the global recession. The airline has added nine additional services from Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore starting February 1, 2009.

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol is in the process to strengthen contacts in the airline industry in India. Annemiek Holkeboer, Market Development and Manager Marketing Communications, Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, ex-

pressed interest in welcoming Indian carriers to start direct flights from India to the Schiphol Airport as it is the gateway to Holland. Currently no Indian flights have direct services to Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.

Domestic airlines have simultaneously withdrawn low fares, reintroduced last month following fall in jet fuel price, and now offer higher fare tickets on select routes. According to a report in leading national daily, Times of India, ticket prices have gone up from Rs 1,200 to Rs 5,000. This means fares are now at least as much as or even higher than December last year, while fuel prices are at the year 2005 levels.



Long Terms Investments

Marriott International is set to launch seven new hotels in India this year. President & Managing Director of International Lodging, Ed Fuller spoke about the new hotels which will add 1,561 rooms to Marriott International's portfolio in India. Marriott's new hotels will represent three of the company's brands. JW Marriott Hotel, Bangalore, the luxury segment, Pune Marriott Hotel & Convention Center, the deluxe segment and in the upper-moderate segment, five new Courtyard by Marriott hotels will open in Gurgaon, West Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Mumbai International Airport

AB Hotels-promoted The Radisson Delhi plans to open eight more hotels in India under Radisson, Park Plaza and Country Inn brands. The investment will come from the company's internal accrual and debt within a span of four years. The new hotels will be set up at Bhubaneshwar, Chilka Lake, Hyderabad, Konark, Puri, Paradip, Visakhapatnam, and Kakinada. Currently, the company operates two Radisson Hotels in Delhi and Varanasi, with an inventory of 400 rooms.

Nadesar Palace, Varanasi opened on 01st Feb. Built by the East India Company and acquired by Maharaja Prabhu Narain Singh in the 19th century, the palace is run by the Taj group of hotels. Located in the heart of the bustling city, amongst mango orchards, marigold and jasmine fields, the Palace has 4 luxurious Heritage Rooms and 6 Heritage Suites. It also offers the Taj signature Jiva Spa as well as a Yoga room.

Green Apple Experience, promoting Homestays & Bungalows, recently announced two new properties in Kerala. Kainady Heritage is a majestic 18th century home, ideally located in the beautiful little village at the outskirts of Kottayam & Alleppey in the fertile land of Kuttanad. The other is Maryknoll built in 1940 as the home of the Palace Doctor and the Surgeon General of Travancore Kingdom. Set in sprawling garden atop a knoll in the heart of Trivandrum city, it is cut off from the hustle and bustle.

India & Beyond

Valentine Special – Indian version. Last month Sri Ram Sena (Army of Lord Ram), a right-wing activist group, was blamed for an attack on women drinking in a bar in Mangalore, a city in South India. To protest at the attack, more than 5,000 people, including men, have joined the Facebook group, which calls itself the Consortium of Pub-going, Loose and Forward Women. They plan to send a provocative gift of Pink underwear to right-wing activists on Valentines Day, who in return have offered Pink sarees (traditional Indian dress).

The movie "Slumdog Millionaire" that won 5 Critics' Choice Awards, 4 Golden Globes and 7 BAFTA Awards, has been nominated for 10 Academy Awards. The British drama directed by Danny Boyle is an adaptation of the Boeke Prize-winning novel Q and A by Indian author Vikas Swarup. This story about a poverty-raised orphan in Mumbai who goes on the Indian version of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" was filmed on location in Mumbai, India.

On Wednesday, 2009 July 22, a total eclipse of the Sun will be visible from within a narrow corridor that traverses half of Earth. The path of the Moon's umbral shadow begins in India and crosses through Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar and China. After leaving mainland Asia, the path crosses Japan's Ryukyu Islands and curves southeast through the Pacific Ocean where the maximum duration of totality reaches 6 min 39 s. A partial eclipse is seen within the much broader path of the Moon's penumbral shadow, which includes most of eastern Asia, Indonesia, and the Pacific Ocean.





Time to Travel

ITB Berlin / 11-15 March 2009 – Meet the team at the Indian Routes stand no. 228 in hall 5.2b (India Pavilion).

Team travels within India. In the past few weeks, the team has travelled to Tamil Nadu & Rajasthan to check out the new products that can be offered.

Solar Eclipse – July 2009. Write to us for in case you would like to promote the Solar Eclipse experience in India.