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The Festive Season Begins

October in India heralds a change of weather and the start of the festive season. Religious festivals are mostly based on the lunar calendar so tend to change dates. This year the month is replete with festivities for all religions. The start though is with a non-religious festival, Gandhi Jayanti. Celebrating Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on 02 October educates the young generation on his vital role in uniting Indians for an Independent nation. It also serves as a reminder that the path of non violence is as relevant today as it was more than sixty years ago.

The festival of Navratri or Nine Nights celebrates nine forms of the female divinity that are worshipped with music, dance and devotion. At the end of the month is Diwali or the festival of lights which celebrates the victory of good over evil. Eid-UI-Fitr is celebrated on the closing day of the fasting month, Ramadan. On this day, Muslims dress in their finest clothes and decorate their homes and visit the mosques.

This year October is also very special for Catholics. The Catholic Church in India will have its first woman saint on October 12 when Pope Benedict XVI canonises Sister Alphonsa of Kottayam, Kerala, 62 years after she died, at a ceremony at the Vatican.

Festivities apart, pleasant weather conditions announce the influx of tourists to India. For Indian Routes, this means that five months after our launch, the operations team is fully geared to handle the peak season!

Our newsletter will be a monthly affair, bringing you fresh updates in the tourism sector, interesting glimpses of contemporary India and we shall unveil a few Indian Routes specials. We hope you enjoy the read. We appreciate your comments and queries, so don't hesitate to get in touch with us at contact@indian-routes.in

~ FROM THE INDIAN ROUTES TEAM

Indian Skies Increasing Connections



Kingfisher Airlines had its first direct flight to London from Bengaluru international airport amid fanfare despite inclement weather. The airline will operate a daily service on the Bangalore-London-Bangalore route, with 217 seats, including 30 in first class and 187 in the premium class.

Kingfisher Airlines & Aeroflot signed a contemplation memorandum aimed at broadening commercial collaboration. As a result of this cooperation Russian passengers will receive an enhanced access to the internal Indian network of Kingfisher; Indian passengers will be able to use transit possibilities on the best terms, when flying by Aeroflot to Canada, the USA, Europe.

Jet Airways will connect Bengaluru (Bangalore) with New York (Newark and JFK) and Toronto, via its European hub, Brussels commencing 31-Oct-08. The airline will operate daily direct flights from India's IT hub, and its European hub in Brussels.

Etihad Airways launched daily flights from Abu Dhabi to Chennai and Kozhikode (Calicut). The new services increase the number of Indian destinations to six.

Cathay Pacific launched 4-times-weekly service to Chennai. This is in line with the airline's rapid expansion of services to India, making it a total of 28 per week to India.

DragonAir launched new services to Bengaluru. For this subsidiary of Cathay Pacific, the new destination is a milestone as it marks the first time for the airline to operate passenger flights to and from India.

Air India is introducing three new flights a week to Paris CDG. From 26 October 2008, Airbus A330 will connect Mumbai-Delhi-Mumbai & Paris-Delhi-Mumbai every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.



Announcements Galore

First Ibis hotel opens in Gurgaon. InterGlobe Hotels, a joint venture between InterGlobe Enterprises and French hotel group Accor to develop a chain of hotels in India under the Ibis brand, has opened its first property in Gurgaon, which is fast emerging as IT and MNC hub on the national capital's outskirts. The hotel is located on the prominent Golf Course artery and features contemporary European styling, 217 rooms, an all-day dining restaurant, a bar and meeting room.

Lemon Tree set to expand in India with 18 hotels by 2011 at a rate of five hotels per year. On completion, the company will have presence in 17 major Indian cities, apart from launching budget hotels under the name of Red Fox.

The Oberoi Group is planning to set up 10 more hotels in India and abroad by the end of 2011 and adding 2,300 rooms. The group is currently in planning and development stages on eight properties in India and six of them would be ready and operational by end of 2011, the official added.

Hilton Hotels Corp wants to add 300 hotels to the 47 it operates in Asia in the next decade in a bid to match its rivals and take advantage of a business and leisure travel boom in India and China. The company is focusing initially on India, where it has a joint venture with local property company DLF Ltd, which wants to open 75 hotels in the next five years.

Ramada Delhi had a soft opening on 4th Oct. In the heart of Delhi with over 400 rooms this will increase the inventory in the city.



Promoting Image and Culture

Incredible India campaign has a new Brand Ambassador – Aamir Khan. This famous Bollywood actor has been appointed by the Indian Tourism Ministry to be the face of its massive brand campaign, with the initiative of showcasing India's rich heritage and culture and the famous message of 'Athithi Devo Bhava' (Guest is God).

Kalakriti Cultural & Convention Centre in Agra: A wonderful new show called Mohabbat the Taj starts in September in a brand new theatre. A first in Agra, the show depicts the saga of love that led to the building of the magnificent TAJ MAHAL. The hour and a half dance-drama combines the wonders of technology with the beauty of classical dancing. Contact us for bookings and details.

Greenix Village is a cultural art centre promoting Kerala's varied art forms under a single roof in Fort Cochin area. The centre showcases Kerala's best known dance drama Kathakali, its martial art form Kalaripayattu and classical Indian music.

It also has a cultural audio-visual show on history and yoga training classes. Greenix houses an art gallery restaurant, a curio shop, book shop and wares from Kerala's cottage and craft industry. The village opens at 06.00 am & closes by 10.00pm.

Spreading Awareness and Out in the Field

Responsible Tourism. As a Socially Responsible Enterprise, Indian Routes recognizes that travel business has a larger role in augmenting natural and social capita. It is actively committed to the environment. In an effort to lead to optimum utilization of resources Indian Routes would use only recycled paper, propose use of hybrid cars among other initiatives.

The team's endeavour is to promote Responsible Tourism by encouraging participation in local community initiatives and by spreading awareness. Check out with the team how you and your clients can become part of this initiative.

Indian Routes at Kerala Travel Mart / Cochin. Senior members of the team attended the Kerala Travel Mart in Cochin (20/23 Sept). The team also travelled separately in Kerala to visit the new hotels and home-stays. For Kerala specific updates, please write to us.

Sports Track. A strong focus for Indian Routes, we have partnered with Cricket Journeys in the UK www.cricket-journeys.co.uk

Upgrade your FIT clients transport with our new FORD ENDEVOURS.

