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Shaping the Future of Travel: dnata's Sebastien Doussin on Sri Lanka's Tourism Boom

Strong Partnerships with Aitkenspence Travels Fuel Unprecedented Growth

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Sebastien Doussin, the Divisional Vice President of Global Ground Services at dnata Travel Group, recently graced the vibrant shores of Sri Lanka for the prestigious dnata partner event, Horizon: Sri Lanka. This landmark event, which brought together business leaders from across the dnata Travel Group, was a significant showcase of opportunities aimed at catapulting Sri Lanka's tourism industry into key global markets.

The dnata Travel Group, a prominent subsidiary of the Emirates Group, has established itself as a global powerhouse in the travel and aviation industries.

In a year marked by remarkable growth, Doussin announced an impressive surge in tourism, with an approximate increase of 200% compared to 2023. This exponential growth underscores the potential and allure of Sri Lanka as a top-tier travel destination. "We are thrilled with the progress we've seen. The numbers are not just encouraging; they're a testament to the resilience and appeal of Sri Lanka," Doussin remarked.

Central to this success story is the strategic partnership with Aitkenspence Travels, a key player in the local tourism sector. Doussin expressed deep appreciation for their collaboration, stating, "Our partners in Sri Lanka, Aitkenspence Travels, are an integral part of the dnata family. The confidence we have in our partners has been instrumental in achieving these upward numbers over the past few years."

The Horizon event in Sri Lanka is the third of its kind, following successful editions in the Maldives and Mauritius. Each event has been pivotal in diversifying product offerings and improving overall service quality. "There has been a lot of diversification of products and improvements in the past few years," Doussin noted, highlighting the ongoing evolution and enhancement of travel experiences in these regions.

However, Doussin emphasized that the journey doesn't stop here. He identified destination perception as a critical factor in sustaining and accelerating growth in Sri Lanka's tourism sector. "Destina-

tion perception is key in growing Sri Lanka tourism. There is a need for a global awareness through a destination marketing campaign to shift traveler perception," he explained. This strategic shift aims to build a positive, compelling image of Sri Lanka that resonates with potential travelers worldwide.

Pricing, according to Doussin, is another crucial element, driven by market demand. "Pricing is determined by demand, and it is important to maintain that balance," he advised, pointing out the need for a harmonious approach to pricing strategies that ensure competitiveness while catering to traveler expectations.

Doussin highlighted an emerging trend and growth of the boutique and smaller property segment. "There is a growing need for boutique hotels and smaller hotels, but we need to ensure that health and safety regulations are in place. Since some of the converted colonial-style properties were not originally built for commercial purposes, it is important to ensure they are tourist friendly with acceptable standards for global distribution." This emphasis on quality and safety is crucial for building a sustainable and attractive tourism sector.

Reflecting on the future, Doussin expressed optimism about Sri Lanka's tourism trajectory. "We believe this is potentially the tip of the iceberg. We are over the numbers received in 2017/2018, and according to the forecast, we believe we will reach our targets for this year as well," he stated confidently. The continuous growth signals a bright future for Sri Lanka's tourism industry, driven by strategic initiatives and strong partnerships.

Nalin Jayasundera, Managing Director of Aitkenspence Travels, highlighted the untapped potential of the Middle East market, which already accounts for over 10% of visitors to Sri Lanka. "There is a wealth of opportunity, and Sri Lanka can tap into this market as we already have over 10% of visitors from the Middle East," Jayasundera said. He pointed out that while the perception of Sri Lanka in the UAE is not at its highest, a strategic marketing campaign could significantly improve this.



Sebastien Doussin

Minor Hotels Debuts NH Collection in Sri Lanka with Rebranding of Mövenpick

Colombo

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Minor Hotels, a leading hotel owner, operator, and investor with a portfolio of over 550 hotels and resorts in 56 countries, announced the rebranding and management of Mövenpick Colombo. This strategic move will see the property rebranded as NH Collection Colombo, marking the debut of the prestigious NH Collection brand in Sri Lanka.



Dillip Rajakarier

Located in the heart of Colombo, the hotel is ideally positioned to offer guests unparalleled access to the city's vibrant business district, cultural attractions, and entertainment options. The partnership with Softlogic City Hotels (Pvt) Ltd to rebrand as NH Collection Colombo will bring a fresh, contemporary aesthetic and an enhanced level of service, setting a new benchmark for hospitality in Sri Lanka's commercial capital. The hotel features 219 well-appointed rooms and luxury suites, each designed with contemporary decor and equipped with modern amenities, providing expansive views of the city and the Indian Ocean.

Minor Hotels is renowned for its diverse range of brands, including Anantara, AVANI, Elewana Collection, Oaks, NH Hotels, and Tivoli. With a commitment to delivering exceptional guest experiences and sustainable practices, Minor Hotels has established itself as a powerhouse in the global hospitality industry.

Dillip Rajakarier, Group CEO of Minor International, commented, "Introducing the NH Collection brand to Colombo, underscores our commitment to the destination while expanding our footprint in markets with growing international traveler appeal. Colombo, with its vibrant atmosphere and rich cultural heritage, is the perfect setting for the NH brand to thrive"

NH Collection, a premium brand under the NH Hotel Group, which is also part of Minor Hotels, is celebrated for its refined style, exceptional service, and strategic locations in prime urban centers.



NH Collection hotels are designed for discerning travelers seeking sophistication and comfort, offering cutting-edge technology, innovative meeting spaces, and gourmet dining experiences.

The NH Collection Colombo Hotel will soon join Minor Hotels' distinguished portfolio in Sri Lanka, which already includes the Anantara Kalutara Resort, Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort, and Avani Kalutara Resort.



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Sri Lanka's tourism sector is experiencing a dynamic resurgence, marked by significant developments and increased international attention. The recent openings of Waraka by Theme Resorts and Ayugiri Ayurveda Wellness Resort have added to the country's diverse hospitality landscape. These properties offer travelers a blend of luxury and wellness, capitalizing on Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty. Such additions not only enhance the tourist experience but also signify a robust investment climate within the hospitality industry.

Further solidifying this optimistic outlook, Minor Hotels is expanding its presence in Sri Lanka with the introduction of the NH Collection. This move highlights the confidence major international brands have in the potential of Sri Lanka's tourism market. The expansion of well-regarded hospitality brands enhances the country's appeal, providing travelers with a variety of high-quality accommodation options.

A significant confidence booster for the industry came with Dubai-based dnata choosing Sri Lanka as the venue for its annual conference, Horizon: Sri Lanka. This event brought together global business leaders to explore and showcase opportunities for tourism growth in the region. Hosting such a prestigious event underscores the renewed global confidence in Sri Lanka's tourism sector and its strategic importance to dnata's global plans.

Adding to the positive momentum, international airlines are ramping up their services to Sri Lanka. Etihad Airways has increased its flight frequency to Colombo, and Turkish Airlines has enhanced connectivity, offering greater access from key markets in Europe, the Middle East, and the USA. These developments significantly improve Sri Lanka's accessibility, making it an attractive destination for a broader audience of travelers.

The Sri Lankan government, in collaboration with industry stakeholders, is actively working to sustain this upward trajectory. Ongoing promotional efforts aim to enhance the country's image and attract a diverse range of visitors. This collective effort is crucial in maintaining the momentum and ensuring long-term growth.

With these promising developments, Sri Lanka's tourism industry is poised for a remarkable comeback. The synergy between new investments, increased global connectivity, and strategic marketing efforts positions Sri Lanka as a premier travel destination, offering rich and varied experiences



to the global traveler. This resurgence not only promises economic growth but also reinforces Sri Lanka's reputation as a vibrant and welcoming destination.

Dinushka

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NEWS / MOVEMENTS

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Sebastien Doussin and dnata's Vision...

Doussin emphasized the importance of understanding the diverse customer base in the Middle East. "The key is to knowing your customer – who is your customer? There are so many segments offering you multiple opportunities within a country to have a multicultural customer base. You can customize the products according to the customer requirements," he explained. Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage and diverse attractions make it an ideal destination for young travelers and families from the Middle East.



The Horizon: Sri Lanka event and the insights shared by Sebastien Doussin and Nalin Jayasundera highlight a promising future for Sri Lanka's tourism sector. With strong partnerships, strategic marketing, balanced pricing, and a focus on quality and safety, dnata Travel Group is poised to drive Sri Lanka towards new heights in the global tourism arena. As Doussin aptly put it, this remarkable growth is just the beginning, and the best is yet to come.

Roshi Lokuge appointed Head of Sales & Marketing Best Western Elyon Hotel Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Roshi Lokuge has joined Best Western Elyon Hotel Sri Lanka as the Head of Sales & Marketing. Roshi brings with her a wealth of experience, having dedicated more than 27 years to the hospitality industry. Her expertise spans Marketing, Sales, Project Management, Administration, and Event Management.



Roshi Lokuge

Roshi began her career in 1996 at Best Western Berjaya Mount Royal Beach Resort. She then worked at Aitken Spence Hotel Management before moving to Confiffi Group Hotels. There, she contributed significantly to the success of several properties including Eden Resort & Spa, Riverina Hotel, Club Palm Garden, Confiffi Beach Hotel, Club Horizon and Aquarius Sports Club, among others. Her 14-year tenure at Confiffi Group Hotels was a pivotal period in her professional journey.

Following her time at Confiffi, Roshi served as General Manager Sales & Marketing / Director Sales & Marketing at Pigeon Island Beach Resort in Trincomalee. She then moved to Lion Royal Resorts, managing sales and marketing for

Kassapa Lions Rock and Coco Royal Beach Resort.

Roshi further enhanced her qualifications by completing a Master's Degree in Global Business Administration at the University of Derby in the UK. Upon her return to Sri Lanka, she joined Horton Height Hotel – Nuwara Eliya as Director Sales & Marketing, contributing to its development as a premier 5-star destination.

Additionally, Roshi has shared her knowledge as a visiting lecturer at the Institute of Human Resource Advancement, University of Colombo. She holds Masters degrees in Economics, Travel, Tourism, and Hotel Management from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Roshi is known for her strong interpersonal skills and her ability to understand and meet the needs of clients and partners. She excels in Demand Management and is adept at negotiating and building strong relationships. Her adaptability and leadership have been key to her success in various roles throughout her career

Barista: Brewing Happiness with Progress and Purpose

TTA BULLETIN

In the fiscal year concluded in March 2024, Barista celebrated the opening of 11 new outlets across the country, accompanied by a remarkable two-fold growth in sales with the expansion while doubling their bottom line. Barista has also been a foreign-exchange earner, serving tourists at the outlets located in tourist hotspots, contributing to the country's economy. This accomplishment stands as a testament to Barista's resilience in the face of economic turbulence, tax shifts and policy reforms impacting the business landscape in the country. In light of these challenges, Barista takes pride in its performance, emphasizing the significance of this feat within the context of a demanding operational environment of the QSR industry. Beyond the confines of financial performance, Barista upholds a triple-bottom line approach, prioritizing profit, planet and people, thereby making a positive impact on its stakeholders and the community at large. Barista strives to the achievement of sustainable growth and value creation with a focus on corporate stewardship, integrating the principles of environmental and social responsibility into its business strategies.



their efforts have indeed yielded significant reductions in plastic waste. By adopting compostable Sugarcane lids, recyclable cold cups, paper straws, and glass water bottles, they've made substantial strides in minimizing their environmental impact. By introducing compostable Sugarcane lids in June 2023, Barista saved an impressive 2650 kg of plastic by March 2024. Moreover, by introducing recyclable cold cups and paper straws in August 2023, they further reduced Barista's plastic footprint by 2041 kg and 128 kg respectively. Additionally, the switch to glass water bottles in 2021 saved 528 kg of plastic in the last financial year. Combining these efforts, Barista has successfully saved a total of 5.35 tons of plastic, showcasing their dedication to sustainability across all aspects of their operations.

Such initiatives not only benefit the environment but also set a positive example for others in the industry to follow. By acting swiftly to implement these changes, Barista has prevented a significant amount of plastic waste from ending up in environments like the fields and oceans of Sri Lanka. Their proactive approach demonstrates the positive impact that businesses can have when they prioritize sustainability.

Beyond environmental initiatives, Barista is deeply invested in supporting communities and fostering inclusivity. Barista's partnership with #Fems, Hemas Consumer Brands in March 2024, has brought free sanitary napkin dispenser units to all Barista outlets, with over 2500 napkins already utilized in just a month.

"As we look to the future, Barista remains steadfast in our commitment to leading with purpose. From sustainability initiatives to community partnerships and employee development, every decision we make is guided by Barista's belief of doing well by doing good. Together, we will continue to brew progress, by making a meaningful difference for our employees, customers, investors, planet, and community and large" stated Dilupa Pathirana, Director/ CEO of Barista.

Barista's commitment to sustainability is commendable, and

Skal Colombo well represented at the 53rd Asian Area Congress in Bahrain

TTA BULLETIN

The 53rd Skal Asian Area Congress was held in Bahrain from 23rd to 26th May at the Gulf Hotel and Resort in Manama. Skal International Colombo was well represented at the Congress headed by its President, Ahintha Amerasinghe and a group of Skalleagues. They were the largest delegation from a Skal Club attending the Congress and travelled to support the current President of Skal International Asia, Keethi Jayaweera.

The Congress was ceremoniously opened by Ms. Sara Buheji, the Chief Operating Officer of Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) and was attended by over 100 Skalleagues from Skal Clubs in Asia, Australia, Africa, Europe and USA and from the local Bahrain club.

The Skalleagues from Colombo were privileged to meet the World President of Skal International, Ms. Annette Cardenas and Skal International Directors from various regions in the Skal Network. A B2B was held to introduce the tourist

attractions of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia to the participants who came away with a good understanding of what these destinations had to offer.

The 54th Skal Congress in 2025 will be held in Sri Lanka and at the Annual General Assembly President Ahintha and Congress Director Shamali De Vaz made a presentation on Sri Lanka and what those attending next year's Congress can expect. Thereafter a lunch was hosted by Skal International Colombo for all the participants. A Sri Lankan Executive Chef and another three Sri Lankan chefs currently working at the Gulf Hotel assisted to present an authentic Sri Lankan lunch to give a taste of Sri Lanka to the delegates. The Sri Lankan Ambassador to Bahrain, Her Excellency Mdm Reethsiri Wijeratne Mendis, graced the occasion with her presence and arranged for the Sri Lankan delegation to visit the Embassy and meet selected Travel Agents and Media personnel from Bahrain to promote tourism to Sri Lanka from the Bahrain market.



DTH Travel Maldives bags "Indian Ocean's Leading DMC" at the 2024 World Travel Awards

TTA BULLETIN

DTH Travel Maldives has been awarded the prestigious title of "Indian Ocean's Leading Destination Management Company", at the World Travel Awards 2024. The ceremony for the Indian Ocean Category was held at the Dubai World Trade Centre as a segment of the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024.



Suranjith De Fonseka, Managing Director of DTH Travel Sri Lanka and Maldives stated "this is a momentous achievement for DTH Maldives. It showcases our commitment to excellence and underscores our position as industry leaders in providing unparalleled travel experiences. This accolade uplifts us to continue elevating the benchmarks of travel in the Maldives. We are honoured and humbled to receive such an award, as it is conferred based on the votes of all those who have experienced our service and hospitality"

Howard Brohier, Director of DTH Travel Maldives, whilst expressing his appreciation stated, "this esteemed award serves as a testament to our team's passion, expertise, and tireless efforts in showcasing the unparalleled beauty and hospitality of the Maldives to the world".

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our valued guests, partners, and the awarding body for recognizing our dedication to

excellence. DTH Travel Maldives has been successively recognized in the list of the top 100 corporates in the Maldives, but this award inspires us to continue raising the bar and setting new standards of service in the Maldives travel industry.

DTH Travel Maldives takes pride in being an established Destination Management Company since 2009, boasting a 15-year experience-filled journey. It is birthed out of a partnership between the Maldives based Cyprea group, a prominent private conglomerate with operations in hospitality, aviation, insurance, export services and fuel supply and the Acorn Group – a leading conglomerate present in sectors such as travel, aviation, hospitality, education services and logistics in Sri Lanka, Maldives, Thailand, UAE and Cambodia. DTH Travel Group itself is a trusted name in Asia, and has been involved in destination management for over 60 years and is present in 14 countries in the region.

Minor Hotels' Ramón Aragonés Announces Retirement, Gonzalo Aguilar to Become Europe & Americas CEO

Aguilar, joining Minor Hotels from Marriott, will spearhead the group's growth strategy for Europe and the Americas

TTA BULLETIN

Minor Hotels, a leading global hotel owner and operator, has announced the appointment of Gonzalo Aguilar as Minor Hotels Europe & Americas CEO from 1 January 2025. Aguilar will replace current CEO Ramón Aragonés, who will retire and leave his chief executive role at the end of this year. Aragonés will remain a member of its Board of Directors and serve as Non-Executive Vice Chairman. Aguilar joins Minor Hotels Europe & Americas on 1 October to begin a three-month handover period with Aragonés.



Ramón Aragonés

Gonzalo Aguilar

Dillip Rajakarier, CEO of Minor Hotels and President of Minor Hotels Europe & Americas, said in response to Aragonés' retirement, "Ramón has dedicated his entire career to the hotel sector. Since joining the group, then known as NH Hotel Group, in 2009, he has been instrumental in transforming it into one of the leading hospitality groups in Europe and the Americas. He has demonstrated inspirational leadership, vision and tireless dedication throughout his tenure. Today, as we celebrate his tremendous legacy, we also extend our gratitude for his exceptional contributions to Minor Hotels."

Commenting on Aguilar's appointment, Rajakarier said, "Gonzalo's deep understanding of the hospitality industry

and his proven leadership will be instrumental in guiding and executing Minor Hotels Europe & Americas' strategic business plan. His invaluable insights into the multibrand and asset-light hotel space in Europe and the Americas will set Minor Hotels on the path of continued success."

Aguilar brings more than 30 years of industry experience to Minor Hotels. He joins the group from Marriott, where he was Chief Operating Officer for EMEA and responsible for driving growth and record earnings in the region. Throughout his career at Marriott, Aguilar oversaw numerous milestones, including the successful integration of AC Hotels following its acquisition by Marriott. Aguilar also served as General Manager of Marriott properties throughout the Americas before moving into executive positions in Europe. He began his career at Marriott in the United States in 1994 as Restaurant Manager at the Denver Marriott Tech in Colorado.

Dusit strengthens its development team to propel global hotel expansion

TTA BULLETIN

Dusit International, one of Thailand's leading hotel and property development companies, has strengthened its global development team with two key appointments to spearhead hotel development efforts for Dusit Hotels and Resorts across Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, Europe, and Africa.



Rami Massoud

Pornpim Hiranpradit

In the Middle East, Mr Rami Massoud has joined the company as Vice President of Development (EMEA) based in Dusit's regional office in Dubai.

Fluent in Arabic, English, and French, Mr Massoud is an Egyptian national with over 25 years of experience in hotel development, real estate investment, and asset management. During his career, he worked for hotel brands such as Marriott, Starwood, and Four Seasons and spearheaded projects for top developers including Dubai Holding, Power Holding, and Shuaa Capital across the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Most recently, he served as the Managing Director of Hotel Assets Acquisition Consultants. He holds a bachelor's degree in Hotel Management and advanced certification in Hotel Real Estate Investment & Asset Management from Cornell University.

Mr Rassoud is now responsible for the growth of Dusit's unique portfolio of Dusit Hotels and Resorts across key existing and emerging destinations in the EMEA region.

In Dusit's home base of Thailand, meanwhile, Ms Pornpim Hiranpradit has joined the company as Director of Development (Global) based in Bangkok, where she is responsible for spearheading Dusit's development efforts across Asia-Pacific and supporting Dusit's regional development offices worldwide.

She brings extensive experience in real estate and hospitality, having worked for real estate brokerage and management firms in New York as well as in hotel operations in Thailand. Notably, she was part of the development team for One Bangkok, one of the largest mixed-use developments in Thailand, where she executed three hotels with over 750 rooms while working for Frasers Property Holdings.

In their new roles, Mr Massoud and Ms Hiranpradit will work closely with Mr Siradej Donavanik, Vice President – Development (Global), Dusit International, to drive sustainable global expansion of Dusit Hotels and Resorts and its various brands.

ITB China 2024 Closes with Great Success

TTA BULLETIN

ITB China 2024, the leading travel trade show focused on China's travel market, has concluded its fifth edition, marking an unprecedented year of regrowth and optimism for the Chinese travel industry.

More than 15,000 attendees, over 1000 selected buyers, and around 250 media representatives participated in the event, underlining the high demand and increased interest of and in the Chinese travel market. The show facilitated +27,500 business meetings, reflecting the vibrant business atmosphere and eagerness for face-to-face interactions during all three days. With over 600 exhibitors from more than 80 countries, the event highlighted the robust recovery and further potential of China's travel market.

Since 2023, China's travel market has been on a steady upward trajectory, supported by improved visa policies and increased flight capacity. This year, ITB China demonstrated not only the recovery of the market, but also the strong demand and increased interest from global partners, signaling the potential for continued growth.

David Axiotis, Vice President China at Messe Berlin, reflected on ITB China 2024, stating, "The success of ITB China 2024 underscores the resilience and potential of China's travel industry. Our show has set a new benchmark for industry events. It is propelling the Chinese travel market to new heights, fostering global partnerships, and driving industry growth. As we look ahead, we remain committed to supporting the travel community and facilitating opportunities for business expansion and innovation".

The newly launched ITB China 2024 C-Talks set the stage for an impactful gathering of the highest level. This exclusive

closed-door event brought together presidents, founders and C-level executives from China's top travel agencies with highest level destination representatives and international tourism leaders, addressing key topics of the Chinese and global travel industry

Together with Partner Destination Maldives, the Grand Opening Dinner featured 600 esteemed guests and VIP from the global and Chinese travel industry. Welcome speeches were given by Dr. Mario Tobias, CEO of Messe Berlin; Zihuny Rasheed, Deputy Managing Director of Maldives Marketing & PR Corporation and Liu Shijun, Vice Chair and Secretary-General of WTA.

More than 600 Exhibitors and 1000 hand-selected top buyers engaged in over 27,500 meetings, fostering partnerships, new collaborations and business. The positive feedback from attendees underscores ITB China's positioning as China's premier travel event.

Zihuny Rasheed, Deputy Managing Director of MMPRC, this year's Partner Destination, noted, "We decided to participate in ITB China on this scale because it is the perfect place for B2B networking and meetings, as well as meeting the right media. As this year's Partner Destination, we've had a very successful show. The quality of the visitors was excellent, we've had high-level meetings with serious buyers and very engaged visitors throughout the show".

With 100 high-profile speakers covering ITB China Conference more than 50 topics, the served as a knowledge hub, providing attendees with market insights and innovative ideas. Organized in cooperation with TravelDaily, the sessions facilitated the exchange regarding cutting-edge trends and practices.

TCEB Unveils New Direction and New Development of Thai MICE Industry

TTA BULLETIN



Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya

Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (Public Organization), or TCEB, unveiled a new direction, performance in sustainability and potential of innovation of Thai MICE industry, including new product development for European market, at IMEX Frankfurt 2024.

Mr. Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, TCEB President, said that TCEB has set a new direction of Thai MICE industry, pushing it to be a platform to drive Thailand to become a high-value added destination. The focus is to cement collaboration between Thai MICE industry with future industries, such as food security, health tech, urban mobility and creative soft power so that MICE can serve as a platform to advance the growth and development of these industries, which will strengthen Thai economy and create new business opportunities in Thailand for overseas markets.

"The new direction of Thai MICE industry is partly in response to the government's vision 'IGNITE Thailand' which aims to position Thailand as a hub of 8 industries – tourism, medical and wellness, agriculture and food, aviation, logistics, future mobility, digital economy, and finance".

Apart from the new direction, TCEB will update the performance of Thai MICE industry in sustainability. The particular focus is decarbonisation of events Thai MICE industry has been able to avoid carbon emission and undertake carbon offset with measurable results. TCEB will also highlight the progress and potential of Thai MICE industry in advancing innovation for national development and collaboration with overseas markets.

Sustainability and innovation are two key pillars in TCEB's action plan to drive Thai MICE industry towards more international competitiveness. To prove their value for events, quantifiable impacts of sustainability and concrete potential in innovation must be made and these are the areas where TCEB has been working in collaboration with key stakeholders, according to TCEB President.

To keep abreast of the evolving needs of the European market, TCEB will feature product development and ideas of experience design, maximising the diversity of the country's MICE cities and potential destinations. New venues, new function space, new attractions will also be on the list.

Mr. Chiruit stated that Thailand has maintained its leading position as a global destination, hence, a constant development of infrastructure, facilities and new creativities, which are beneficial for return on investment and return on experience for events.

A total of 36 Thai exhibitors attended IMEX Frankfurt 2024 at Thailand Pavilion Stand A180. They consisted of 20 hotels/resorts, 11 DMCS/organisers, 2 venues, one airline, one association and TCEB, a national CVB. These exhibitors are from Bangkok, Phuket, Pattaya and Phang-nga (Khao Lak).

Established in 2004, Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (Public Organization) or TCEB – the government agency under the supervision of the Prime Minister – has been assigned a role to promote, support and develop business events industry – corporate meetings, incentive trips, conventions, exhibitions, mega events and world festivals.

Sri Lanka Tourism shows its promotional capacity at Guangzhou International Travel Fair (GITF - 2024)

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka Tourism participated at the Guangzhou International Travel Fair (GITF - 2024), which is an annual event held in Guangzhou, China, as an important platform for all the Travel Industry participants across the world to meet, network, negotiate and conduct businesses in the Tourism sector in Southern China.



Nalin Perera

Industry stakeholders including Sri Lankan Airlines, along with Mr. Nalin Perera, Managing Director, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), and Mr. Chinthaka Liyanaarachchi, Assistant Director, SLTPB. The industry participants showed their maximum

This is also a unique opportunity to display their respective travel and holiday opportunities iconic to each country. The Event was held from 16th to 18th May 2024 at China Import & Export Fair Complex in Guangzhou, China. The first two days of the fair were open to the trade to hold B2B discussions and meetings and the third day of the event was exclusively dedicated to the public. (B2C). By participating at the GITF -2024, Sri Lanka was able to entertain both online and onsite privileges to maximize the brand visibility for the destination during the travel fair. The Sri Lankan delegation consisted of 12

support and contribution towards promoting Sri Lanka as one of the most iconic travel destinations in the world with its unique holiday experience opportunities. At the GITF, Sri Lanka was also awarded as the most popular cultural tourism destination, which showed its success in portraying Sri Lanka as a land of Culture and heritage. The Sri Lanka Pavilion was ceremoniously opened amidst the presence of Mr. Suranga Algewatta, Consul General of Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lanka pavilion was arranged in an eye-catching manner with its most iconic



themes and famous attractions. The colorful Sri Lanka Pavilion was the cynosure of all eyes and drew a large number of interested visitors, eager to get the latest information on new attractions and holiday opportunities which the island paradise has to offer. Sri Lanka has a uniqueness of its own, with it's easy access and the ability to explore the entire island within a few days. It's rich history and culture, authentic cuisine has attracted a large number of travelers for many years.

The Chinese visitors were highly impressed with the products the Sri Lanka stand had to offer, displaying variety and color. Sri Lanka Tourism's theme, "You'll come back for more" showcased it's true meaning by attracting interested Chinese Visitors to the colorful Sri Lanka Pavilion. The Tea stall at the Sri Lanka Pavilion served a cup of pure Ceylon tea to each

participant who came visited the Sri Lanka pavilion, which they enjoyed with much zest and appreciation. The Sri Lanka Pavilion was able to attract the Chinese media with its colorful themes, promotional items and stand construction, and received 15 Media Interviews with leading Media stations including Guangdong TV and many other national level media stations.

The Chinese market plays a crucial role in bringing tourists to Sri Lanka as it's one of the main source markets for Sri Lanka Tourism. Up to May 31st 2024, Sri Lanka received 55, 241 Chinese tourists and is capable of increasing its number of travelers to the country. Due to the increase of Air Connectivity between the two countries, Chinese travelers find it more convenient and easier to travel for their respective purposes.

A POCKET OF *wonder* IN THE MISTY HILLS



A name that resonates with over 150 years of heritage and elegance, Broomfield by Jetwing is a charming bungalow that once stood as the montane home of the prominent Bandaranaike family. Nestled in the heart of Nuwara Eliya, it gazes out over the serene Gregory Lake, and just beyond its doors lies a mist-laden city, waiting to be explored.

Featuring six lavishly decorated bedrooms, each a sanctuary of timeless luxury and comfort, a welcoming lounge to unwind, and a verdant lawn that invites you to breathe in the crisp mountain air, Broomfield by Jetwing is the perfect hill country getaway to experience the warmth of our authentic Sri Lankan hospitality in the misty hills.



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WTM invites tourism industry thought leaders to shape 2024's conference

TTA BULLETIN

World Travel Market London opens its 'Call for Papers' inviting innovators and experts from around the globe to contribute to the 2024 conference programme at the world's most influential travel and tourism event.

The WTM London Conference programme is traditionally one of the event's highlights, as evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive feedback each year from attendees and sponsors alike. As well as high-profile keynote speakers, the WTM conference stages host a wide cross-section of voices covering mainstream as well as specialist topics.

This approach aligns with WTM's commitment to providing a platform for all, contributing to the immediate advancement of the industry, while providing inspiring ideas for the years ahead.

As usual, WTM 2024 will be organising the conference programme around themes and is particularly interested in: Marketing; Geo-Economics; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI); Sustainability; Technology; and Consumer and Industry Trends.

Last year's event included WTM's first



5-7 November 2024

ever Diversity and Inclusion Summit. Organisers are hoping to build on the success of the launch event with a similarly high-profile summit this year.

Juliette Losardo, Exhibition Director, World Travel Market, said: "The Conference programme is the heartbeat of WTM, and we strive to ensure that the content on stage resonates with our audience, reflecting issues of interest and current trends, while also having an eye on the future.

"We are as interested in proposals from emerging and established destinations, startups and blue-chips, industry veterans and newcomers. Innovative submissions, stories with bold goals and quantifiable achievements, out-of-the-box thinking, thought leadership, case studies and more.

Losardo concluded: "Presenting a mix of voices across themed stages is part of our ongoing effort to keep the content fresh and to guarantee that conference attendees come away educated and entertained."

Tourism Malaysia Strengthen Ties With West Asia At 31st Arabian Travel Market

TTA BULLETIN

Tourism Malaysia participates in the 31st edition of Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024, showcasing the country's latest attractions and destinations to attract more tourists from West Asia. The four-day prestigious event held at the Dubai World Trade Centre from 6 to 9 May 2024 marks Malaysia's 31st year of participation, demonstrating its enduring commitment to this burgeoning market.

Led by the Honourable Chairman of Tourism Malaysia Datuk (Dr.) Yasmin Mahmood, and accompanied by Dato' Shahrudin bin Abu Sohot, Deputy Secretary General (Management), Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, the Malaysian delegation comprises a good mix of 75 organisations, including hotels and resorts, travel agents, tourism product owners, and representatives from state tourism boards.

The Malaysia Pavilion will engage with Middle Eastern buyers, generating interest while highlighting tourism products and services tailored to their specific needs and preferences, thus underscoring the importance placed on West Asia as a key source of tourists, especially during its summer vacation.

"With the upcoming launch and



celebration of Visit Malaysia Year 2026, we strive to attract more West Asia tourists. We recognise the immense potential of this market, not only in terms of outbound tourism but also trade and investment.

"We are confident that Malaysia's position as a top destination for Muslim travellers, coupled with our intensified promotional efforts, will enable us to achieve our target," stated Datuk (Dr.) Yasmin Mahmood during the launch of the Malaysia Pavilion today.

In 2024, Malaysia aims to welcome 27.3 million international tourist arrivals and generate RM102.7 billion in tourism receipts. The remarkable rise in visitors from the

Gulf region in recent years fuels Tourism Malaysia's enthusiasm to further cultivate this market.

Embarking on a Culinary Odyssey: Roland Debuyst: A Michelin Star Experience - A Resounding Success

Colombo recently played host to an extraordinary culinary event that captivated gastronomes and left an indelible mark on the city's culinary landscape. Presented by 1864 Limited Edition and Mastercard, "Roland Debuyst: A Michelin Star Experience" unfolded as a gastronomic spectacle from the 3rd to the 5th of May, offering patrons an unparalleled journey through the realms of international fine dining.

Under the expert guidance of the esteemed Chef Roland Debuyst, guests at 1864 Limited Edition were treated to an unforgettable culinary experience, transcending cultural boundaries and tantalizing taste buds with a vibrant tapestry of global flavours. Chef Debuyst's expertise, coupled with his decades-long dedication to the craft, curated an exquisite menu that captivated the senses and reaffirmed his status as a culinary icon.

"The collaboration between Chef Roland Debuyst and Chef Rukie elevated the culinary experience to new heights, showcasing the best of international fine dining right here in Colombo," remarked Mr. Rohan Fernandopulle, General Manager of Galle Face Hotel. "This event

not only celebrates diversity and culinary artistry but also sets a new standard for gastronomic experiences in Sri Lanka."

The event, hosted at the iconic Galle Face Hotel, aimed to celebrate diversity, showcase culinary artistry, and provide guests with an unrivalled dining experience in Sri Lanka. With the support of Sri Lankan Airlines as the official airline partner and Mastercard, the event exemplified a commitment to elevating Colombo's culinary landscape.

Limited seating for "Roland Debuyst at 1864" ensured an intimate setting, allowing guests to savour every moment of this gastronomic journey. The overwhelming response led to a sold-out event within a matter of days, underscoring the anticipation and excitement surrounding this exclusive culinary extravaganza.

Chef Rukie's – Director, Culinary of the Galle Face Hotel - collaboration with Chef Roland Debuyst added an extra layer of grandeur to the 1864 Limited Edition culinary event, enriching the culinary experience for all

participants. Chef Rukie's expertise, combined with Chef Debuyst's culinary brilliance, created an unforgettable fusion of flavours that delighted guests and elevated the event to new heights.

But the culinary festivities didn't end with the dining experience alone. On May 6th, the Galle Face Hotel organized a transformative workshop for aspiring chefs from the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management and William Angliss Institute. Led by Chef Roland Debuyst and Chef Rukie, Director of Culinary, alongside the visionary leadership of Mr. Rohan Fernandopulle, General Manager of Galle Face Hotel, and President of Bocuse d'Or Sri Lanka, the workshop provided invaluable insights and hands-on training, shaping the future of culinary excellence in Sri Lanka.

"Roland Debuyst: A Michelin Star Experience" and the transformative workshop stand as a testament to the Galle Face Hotel's dedication to culinary innovation and excellence. As the culinary scene in Colombo continues to evolve, events of this calibre set a new standard for gastronomic experiences in Sri Lanka.





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Sri Lanka Tourism shows its high potential to attract the audiences by winning the “Best Booth Design” at the SITF 2024 -South Korea

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka Tourism once again showed its full potential and capacity to attract visitors not only by promoting the destination as a tourist attraction, but also for its vibrancy and creativity, by bagging the award for the “Best Booth Design”



The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) participated this time along with the country's leading travel and Industry stakeholders under different categories. The official opening ceremony of the Sri Lanka

stand was held under the patronage of H.E Savithri Indrachapa Panabokke, Sri Lankan Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, amidst the presence of Mr. Chinthaka Liyanaarachchi, Assistant Director, SLTPB. High profile Travel and Industry stakeholders participated at the SITF, where they shared the latest travel options and locations to visit in Sri Lanka. The visitors were impressed with

the beautifully designed Sri Lanka Stand which stood out from the rest and were keen to gain information about the latest travel and holiday opportunities and experiences from the Sri Lankan representatives. The participants also had the chance of having a sip of the finest Ceylon Tea, which they thoroughly enjoyed.



For more than 39 years, SITF South Korea has promoted meetings between decision makers, Industry experts and carefully selected and profiled buyers from Geographic areas with the highest rate of economic growth and from all sectors of the chain. It is the largest and the most well recognized travel fair in Korea, which is also an event that is also formative with major meeting conferences, seminars and B2B meetings on the latest Industry trends.



The South Korean Market plays a crucial role in enabling tourists to Sri Lanka as it generates a considerable amount of tourists each year to the destination. The similar Cultural and religious backgrounds and the myriad of travel locations are the most highlighted segments in which the Korean travelers show high interest. A total number of 4,005 arrivals from South Korea was recorded from January to April 2024, which has shown a gradual increase compared with the same period in 2023.

Eid al-Adha 2024: Niyama Edition

TTA BULLETIN

Niyama Private Islands Maldives is the perfect destination for Eid al-Adha getaways, with celebratory



events lined up throughout the month of June, and special benefits for bookings of three nights or more.

With two islands, and so much room to play, Niyama invites guests to find their groove this Eid al-Adha, whether hiding away in their sprawling pool villa, hidden from prying eyes, or diving into all the excitement on offer at Chill and Play.

Throughout the month of June, there will be festive dining to celebrate Eid al-Adha, culminating with the Odyssey dinner on the 16th, when the beach comes alive with mezze stations and tanoura dancers specially flown in; the Fire Feast on the 17th, deep in the jungle, with the exotic flavours of South America and Africa; and on the 18th, a Moonlit Oasis dinner for only five tables, each with a personal chef to serve up an exquisite three-course creation.

Guests may of course enjoy any of Niyama's nine dining outlets (all halal), afternoon tea served in the privacy of their villa which takes a distinctly Middle Eastern twist this month, or a specially created floating futoor with date champagne.

Niyama offers a wealth of stylish beach and overwater villas to choose from. Most exclusive of all is The Crescent of five villas, located at the very tip of the island and reached by its own private boardwalk. Accommodating parties of up to 22, no luxury has been spared, and two Thakurus (villa host) ensure everything is taken care of, from breakfast in bed to private movie screenings.

Guests can jet into the VIP terminal at nearby Dhaalu Airport, with a speedboat waiting to whisk them to the resort in minutes. What follows is endless chilling or playing, with high-speed water sports, spa indulgence, and a world of fun for little ones at the Explorers Kids' Club.

Niyama offers savings of 20% for bookings of three nights or more, as well as the following benefits: complimentary breakfast and dinner each day; one in-villa floating breakfast; a 30-minute spa treatment per person; 10% off water sports; and a magical dolphin cruise. In addition, guests staying on the 16th are invited to join the shisha party at Dune.

Global Brands Magazine awards Fairway Colombo 'Best City Business Hotel in Sri Lanka'

TTA BULLETIN

Fairway Colombo, nestled in the vibrant heart of Sri Lanka's capital city, has proudly secured the coveted title of "Best City Business Hotel in Sri Lanka" at the prestigious Global Brand Magazine Awards held at The Athenee Hotel Bangkok, Thailand recently. This accolade stands as a testament to Fairway Colombo's unwavering dedication to providing unparalleled service and luxury within Colombo's dynamic business landscape.

Global Brand Magazine, renowned for celebrating excellence across diverse industries worldwide, bestowed this honour upon Fairway Colombo, recognizing the hotel's commitment to delivering exceptional experiences to business travellers and visitors alike.

Saman Perera, General Manager of Fairway Colombo, expressed immense pride in receiving this esteemed recognition. "We are thrilled to be acknowledged by Global Brand Magazine," he remarked. "This award reaffirms our ongoing efforts to elevate hospitality standards in Colombo, establishing Fairway Colombo as the premier choice for business travellers seeking comfort, convenience, and sophistication."

Fairway Colombo Hotel is a modern luxury destination that seamlessly integrates cutting-edge technology with exceptional design to enhance guests' experiences. The hotel's focus on energy efficiency includes motion sensor-driven room temperature control, allowing guests to customize their environment while conserving energy. Additionally, the hotel practices rainwater harvesting for sustainable water management.

It also offers a paperless check-in system for added convenience and environmental friendliness.



Guests can access their rooms using RFID technology, ensuring both security and ease of access. The integration of IPTV in every room enables guests to manage their stay, check bills, and access services without the need for front desk queues.

Further more The Fairway Colombo Hotel's prime location near the iconic World Trade Center and the new Port City is one of its greatest strengths. Guests benefit from easy access to business hubs, cultural attractions, shopping areas, and the dynamic atmosphere of Colombo's evolving landscape, enhancing their overall experience during their stay.

Looking ahead, Fairway Colombo is exploring the integration of futuristic robotic assistance for guests, aiming to offer personalized services and elevate the guest experience.

These stand out technological conveniences position Fairway Colombo as the epitome of sophistication in Colombo's hospitality scene, offering a unique blend of innovation, comfort, and convenience unparalleled in the city.

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HOTELS / FAMILY ALBUM

Sri Lankan Residents can Experience the Ultimate Getaway with Hilton Yala Resort's All-Inclusive offer

Immerse in wildlife wonders with this limited time all-inclusive offer exclusively for Sri Lanka locals and residents

TTA BULLETIN

Hilton Yala Resort is thrilled to announce an all-inclusive offer designed for Sri Lankans and residents. Priced from LKR120,000 per night for two people, this limited time offer provides an unforgettable escape into the heart of Sri Lanka's world-renowned Yala National Park.

The package includes a stay in elegantly appointed rooms with stunning views of the natural surroundings. Guests will enjoy full-board dining at both Sandali and Dhira, with a choice of three-course set menus. The package also includes free-flow drinks featuring soft drinks, local

brews, and a selection of grapevine delights served during all meal periods. Guests will also enjoy access to all resort facilities, including the pool, fitness center, and recreational areas.

Located on the edge of Yala National Park, Hilton Yala Resort offers unparalleled access to the rich biodiversity and stunning landscapes that define this iconic destination. Guests can embark on thrilling safari adventures, where they can witness majestic elephants, elusive leopards, and many exotic bird species in their natural habitat. Each safari is expertly guided by the resort's Wildlife Rangers ensuring an educational and awe-inspiring experience for all. After a day of wildlife watching, guests can unwind at the resort's eForea spa with soothing massages, revitalizing facials, and other indulgent wellness treatments. The Junior Ranger Program offers young adventurers a world of fun and learning, where they can identify animal tracks and birds, discover fascinating facts



about wildlife, and earn a special badge to commemorate their experience.

Hilton Yala Resort is dedicated to creating unforgettable memories for its guests. This limited time exclusive offer is a perfect opportunity for locals and residents to

experience the magic of Yala National Park in unparalleled comfort and style. Whether seeking adventure, relaxation, or a bit of both, this package promises an extraordinary getaway that will linger in memories for a lifetime. Bookings can be made directly through the hotel or via phone.



Celebrating May Day in Style at Pegasus Reef Hotel

A Day of Fun, Freedom, and Family Bonding

Pegasus Reef Hotel, a renowned beachfront destination in Wattala, Sri Lanka, celebrated May Day in grand style, hosting a vibrant event that captivated guests of all ages. The May Day event, themed "Kids Freedom Party," was a resounding success, offering a day of fun-filled activities, delicious food, and unforgettable memories.

From the moment guests arrived at Pegasus Reef Hotel, they were greeted with an atmosphere of joy and excitement. The hotel's lush gardens and pristine beachfront provided the perfect backdrop for a day of outdoor festivities. Children and families alike reveled in the freedom to explore, play, and connect with one another in a safe and welcoming environment.

The highlight of the event was the lively carnival held on the hotel grounds, featuring an array of interactive

games, bouncy castles, and entertainment for children of all ages. Laughter filled the air as families enjoyed face painting, balloon twisting, and other festive activities. Meanwhile, parents relished the opportunity to relax and unwind, knowing that their children were in good hands.

In addition to the carnival, Pegasus Reef Hotel organized an educational workshop aimed at empowering the younger generations. From arts and crafts sessions to environmental awareness activities, children had the opportunity to learn, grow, and express themselves in a supportive and nurturing environment.

Of course, no celebration would be complete without delicious food, and the May Day event at Pegasus Reef Hotel did not disappoint. A special buffet was

arranged, offering a tempting array of culinary delights. From mouthwatering appetizers to decadent desserts, guests indulged in a feast like no other.

In the end, the May Day event at Pegasus Reef Hotel was more than just a celebration—it was a testament to the spirit of resilience, joy, and togetherness that defines us as a society. As guests bid farewell to the day's festivities, they left with hearts full of cherished memories and a renewed sense of appreciation for the beauty of life.

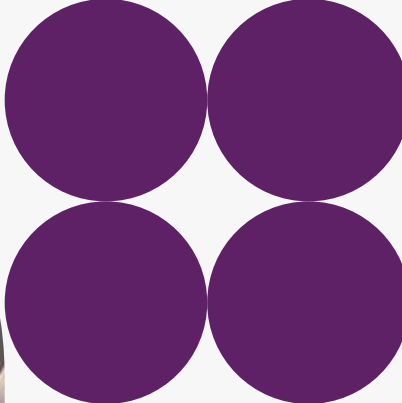
For Pegasus Reef Hotel, the success of the May Day event serves as evidence of their commitment to providing exceptional experiences and fostering a sense of belonging for guests of all ages. As they look towards the future, they remain dedicated to creating moments that matter and memories that last a lifetime.





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Jetwing Kaduruketha wins Skäl Asia Sustainability Award

TTA BULLETIN

At the recently concluded Skäl Asian Area Congress held in Bahrain (23rd to 26th May), Jetwing Kaduruketha was awarded the Skäl Asia Sustainability Award for its work in practicing sustainability in all its activities.

Adjudged by an independent panel of judges comprising Past Presidents and Directors of Skäl International and Skäl Asia, Jetwing Kaduruketha beat two other competitors to win the award. In their assessment, the Chairman of the Judges said “ The Skäl Sustainability Award generated a lot of discussion. All three



entries were very impressive and they were all very different from each other. We want to congratulate ALL the participants on their presentations and we wish had been able to give out three Awards! However a decision had to be made. In the end, we were in agreement that the winners came the closest to achieving the overall criteria that had been set by the Area Committee. Their activities created the most benefits across the areas of Environment, Social, and Economic sectors as detailed in the Skäl Asia Area Awards definition. For this reason we finally decided to give the Skäl Sustainability Award to Jetwing Kaduruketha from Sri Lanka.”

The Award was accepted on behalf of Jetwing Kaduruketha by the President of Skäl International Colombo, Ahintha Amerasinghe, at the Gala Dinner held on the penultimate day of the Congress.



Pegasus Hotels of Ceylon PLC Partners with Korea Lanka Hotel School to Empower Low-Income Youth

TTA BULLETIN



Pegasus Hotels of Ceylon PLC has taken a significant step towards empowering low-income youth by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Korea Lanka Hotel School. This partnership aims to provide comprehensive training and valuable work experience to ten selected interns from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Under this initiative, the chosen candidates will undergo an intensive six-month training program in hospitality ending up with NVQ Level 4 certificate. Upon successful completion of the initial training, The interns will embark on a twelve-month paid internship at Pegasus

Reef Hotel. This phase of the program is designed to deepen their expertise, focusing on operational skills, language proficiency and their chosen areas of specialization within the hospitality sector.

At the end of the twelve-month period, the interns will be awarded a service certificate from Pegasus Reef Hotel, in addition to the NVQ Level 4 certificate. These qualifications will serve as a testament to their dedication and the rigorous training they have completed, opening doors to promising career opportunities in the hospitality field.

Alhambra Hotels celebrates 50 years in Hospitality Excellence

Alhambra Hotels commemorated five decades of unwavering dedication to hospitality excellence with a full-on gala on April 30th with Chief Guest President Ranil Wickramasinghe and First Lady Prof. Maithree Wickramasinghe, together with Minister of Tourism & Lands and Sports & Affairs Harin Fernando, Chief of Staff Sagala Ratnayake, US Ambassador Julie Chung and Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, Director Franchise Operations Eurasia Aminesh Kumar.

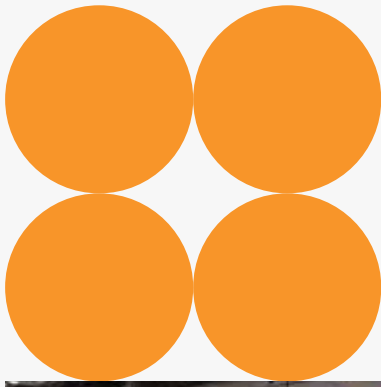
Speaking at the event, Chairman Fahmy Cader paid homage to the visionary behind this brand, his father and founding Chairman late Jabir A. Cader, a prominent

businessman, who evolved the hotel into a cornerstone of Colombo's hospitality landscape. The chairman thanked the shareholders who have come on this journey with them together with the staff, the patron guests, Board Members Director Operations M. Shanthikumar, Managing Director Imthiaz Cader and Mrs. Ayesha Hasheem along with a special mention to his son and current General Manager, Wasim Cader who has been a live wire to make the evening a successful one.

President Ranil Wickramasinghe addressing the gathering, stated this was his favourite and most frequented place from the time it was known as Holiday Inn Colombo

and also spoke fondly of the late Chairman Jabir A Cader and extended his continuous support to the success and growth of Alhambra Hotels. Originally envisioned as a modern cinema, the venture transformed with the changing tides, capitalizing on the burgeoning tourism industry generated by the 'Tourism Development Act' and in 1974, a pivotal partnership with the Holiday Inn group propelled Alhambra Hotels into the international spotlight, becoming only the second International Hotel Chain in Sri Lanka to do so at that time and later on in 2009, Alhambra Hotels bid adieu to Holiday Inn and entered its new phase as Ramada Colombo under Wyndham Hotels and Resorts.





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Heritance Kandalama Named One of the Best Hotels in Sri Lanka by Condé Nast Traveller India

TTA BULLETIN

Heritance Kandalama, nestled within the cultural triangle of Sri Lanka, has been named as one of the Best Hotels in Sri Lanka by the prestigious publication Condé Nast Traveller India. Designed by the visionary architect Deshamanya Geoffrey Bawa, this 5-star eco-retreat embodies timeless elegance, seamlessly blending the man-made with the natural world.



World Heritage Sites such as the ancient city of Sigiriya and the Dambulla Cave Temple, as well as Minneriya National Park, home to a large population of wild elephants, and the tranquil waters of Kandalama Lake, Heritance Kandalama ensures an immersive experience of a lifetime.

The gastronomic offerings at Heritance Kandalama take center stage, featuring an array of immersive and one-of-a-kind dining experiences. Among these, the renowned Cave Dinner stands out, inviting guests to dine in a candlelit cave amidst lush jungle surroundings, accompanied by the melodic tunes of a flutist. For a taste of traditional Sri Lankan cuisine, the Bawa Dinner is a must-try, showcasing locally sourced ingredients prepared in authentic recipes passed down through generations. Set against the backdrop of the magnificent Kandalama Lake, where Geoffrey Bawa himself preferred to enjoy his meals.

As the first LEED certified hotel outside the US and the pioneer Green Globe 21 certified hotel in Asia, Heritance Kandalama establishes a benchmark for sustainable travel. Its dedication to environmental stewardship is palpable in the sprawling 211 acres of conservation forest, where 128 species of native flora thrive alongside 64 species of butterflies, and the air resonates with the calls of 183 endemic and migratory bird species. In this sanctuary, guests are not only immersed in architecture, culinary and comfort but also in a profound connection with nature, fostering a deeper appreciation for the magnificent biodiversity of Sri Lanka.

Immersive experiences at Heritance Kandalama extend far beyond its architecture and picturesque setting. With a variety of activities that showcase the rich cultural and natural heritage of Sri Lanka, travellers are promised an authentic experience of what the cultural triangle has to offer. Located in proximity to UNESCO

Jetwing Hotels Awarded 17 Travellers' Choice® Awards for 2024 by TripAdvisor®

TTA BULLETIN

Jetwing Hotels announced that 17 of their hotels and villas have been recognized by TripAdvisor as 2024 Travellers' Choice award winners, for a second consecutive year, garnering the highest number of honours in Sri Lanka.



Jetwing Ayurveda Pavilions, Jetwing Colombo Seven, Jetwing Jaffna, Jetwing Kaduruketha, Jetwing Kandy Gallery, Jetwing Lagoon, Jetwing Lake, Jetwing Lighthouse, Jetwing Safari Camp, Jetwing Saman Villas, Jetwing Sea, Jetwing St. Andrew's, Jetwing Surf, Jetwing Vil Uyana, Jetwing Yala, Jie Jie Beach by Jetwing, and Mermaid Hotel and Club, have all been recognized for their excellent service by TripAdvisor travellers.

guests with our authentic Sri Lankan hospitality. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated teams around the island, whose passion and hard work make honours like this possible. We remain dedicated to upholding the high standards that travellers expect from Jetwing Hotels, and we are honoured that our efforts have been acknowledged by the global travel community." - Dmitri Cooray, Managing Director, Jetwing Hotels.

The award celebrates businesses that have consistently received great traveller reviews on TripAdvisor over the last 12 months, placing these winners among the top 10% of listings on TripAdvisor globally.

With a legacy spanning over half a century in the tourism industry, Jetwing Hotels has established itself as a pioneer in curating unique experiences and offering authentic Sri Lankan hospitality. As a family-owned brand, Jetwing continues to be a leading advocate for sustainability and responsible tourism, with ongoing initiatives focused on community upliftment, environment conservation, and resource efficiency. The brand's diverse portfolio includes a range of luxury hotels and villas, each offering a unique perspective on Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty.

"We are immensely pleased that 17 of our iconic properties have been recognized with TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards for 2024. This accolade is a testament to our unwavering commitment to excellence and the memorable experiences we strive to create for our

Sancharaka Udawa 2024: Forging Lasting Connections

TTA BULLETIN

Sancharaka Udawa, the pinnacle of Sri Lanka's travel and tourism industry, unfolded its vibrant essence on May 17th and 18th at the BMICH, attracting over 10,000 visitors. Organized by SLAITO and supported by SLTPB, this event provided a vital platform for all travel players, from small businesses to industry giants. Pegasus Reef Hotel and Girithale Hotel's participation was a testament to their commitment to excellence and innovation, with a primary focus on building relationships with travel agents and generating business.

For Pegasus Reef Hotel and Girithale Hotel, Sancharaka Udawa was a strategic opportunity to engage with travel agents and industry peers, showcasing their passion for hospitality and creating lasting impressions. The event highlighted the resilience and unity of the travel community, emphasizing the importance of personal connections in driving business growth. Sancharaka Udawa not only strengthened existing relationships but also paved the way for new partnerships, fueling the hotels' future endeavors in the dynamic world of travel and tourism.

Ayugiri Sigiriya: Redefining luxury Ayurveda wellness in Sri Lanka

Browns Hotels & Resorts Sets the Stage for a New Era in Luxury wellness tourism

TTA BULLETIN

In a captivating reimagining of Ayurveda and wellness, Browns Hotels & Resorts recently unveiled the exquisite Ayugiri Ayurveda Wellness Resort Sigiriya. Nestled amidst 54 acres of unspoiled natural splendour, Ayugiri features 22 exclusive suites, offering plunge pools in every room, rendering it truly one-of-a-kind.



Ayugiri invites guests on a journey of purity and rejuvenation, harmonised with a balance of mind, body and spirit, the essence of

As traditional drummers and dancers infused the air with vibrant energy, Browns Hotels & Resorts' CEO, Eksath Wijeratne, His Excellency Kotaro Katsuki, Acting Ambassador for the Embassy of Japan and General Manager, Buwaneka Bandara, unveiled the resort's new logo, marking a significant moment witnessed by distinguished guests from the French Embassy, Ayurveda and wellness enthusiasts along with officials from the Sigiriya area, LOLC Holdings and Browns Group.

nature, echoes of culture and the wisdom of ancient Ayurvedic healing.

"Our strategic expansion into wellness tourism with Ayugiri Ayurveda Wellness Resort Sigiriya symbolises a significant milestone for Browns Hotels & Resorts. Wellness tourism has consistently outperformed the overall tourism industry for over a decade, reflecting a growing global interest in travel that goes beyond leisure to offer rejuvenation and holistic well-being. By integrating the timeless wisdom of Ayurveda with modern luxury, we aim to set a new standard in luxury wellness tourism in Sri Lanka. Whether your goal is prevention, healing, or a deeper connection to inner harmony, Ayugiri offers a sanctuary for holistic well-being" stated Eksath Wijeratne.

Resident Doctor, Kema Priyadarshani, who has also served as the former Director for the Ayurveda Research Hospital and Ayurveda Teaching Hospital in Sri Lanka, brings a wealth of four decades of experience and expertise to Ayugiri. Ayuwāsa, Ayugiri's state-of-the-art Ayurveda Treatment Centre, offers personalised treatment tailored to meet the individual needs of every guest, with doctor consultation rooms, seven treatment chambers, herbal baths, steam and sauna facilities and an authentic Beheth Oruwa.

Ayugiri's Swastha packages, with "Swastha" meaning health and balance in Sanskrit, offer personalised journeys to restore equilibrium of the Three Doshas within each guest. These bespoke authentic Ayurveda healing experiences, guided by expert practitioners, include herbal remedies and a blend of Ayurvedic treatments, dietary guidance, yoga and meditation. Through personalised consultations and diagnostic assessments, Ayugiri tailors a roadmap to revive vitality and harmony in each guest's life.





3 - 4 July 2024 Indonesia Convention Exhibition (ICE) Jakarta, Indonesia

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Siddhalepa Enters GCC With Sri Lankan

Authentic Indigenous Medical Treatment And Products

TTA BULLETIN

The first ever promotion of Sri Lankan Indigenous medical system, 'Hela Wedakama-Ayurveda' was launched in United Arab Emirates by the leading Sri Lankan traditional Ayurveda company, Siddhalepa Ayurveda at Novotel Hotel, World Trade Center, Dubai at the Arab Travel Mart 2024.

The launch was initiated by Siddhalepa Ayurveda Health Resort as the kick-off session of the awareness campaign targeting the health-conscious travelers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. A special promotional campaign is planned with the partnership of SriLankan Airlines, travel trade and Media partners of GCC to reach the length and breadth of GCC region.

The expectation of present international visitor has been expanded beyond the typical holidays and the travelling for medical or holistic wellbeing has become a boom at present. Thus, this initiative entails enormous 'healthy' results for the



medical-traveler who is exploring on alternative medical treatments.

The main presentation of the session was conducted by Ayurveda Ratna, Mr. Asoka Hettigoda the Chairman and Managing Director of Siddhalepa Ayurveda Health Resort (As well as Hettigoda Group of Companies). Mr. Hettigoda explained how Siddhalepa grew from the grass-root level and entered the Switzerland first in 1934. Further, he added presently Siddhalepa has attracted visitors from various parts of the world while exporting its authentic Ayurveda products to more than 40 countries.

Currently, Siddhalepa Ayurveda Health Resort aided by Siddhalepa Hospital is patronized by the visitors not only for their relaxation treatment but also medicament for various body abnormalities.

The launch was well attended by 45 professionals comprising Arabian travel trade members and media based in the GCC region. The Arabic travel trade members commended that they are happy to hear about the efforts to promote medical tourism by Siddhalepa. Several travel companies added that Sri Lanka should continue these kinds sessions as it will be helpful for them promote and sell Ayurveda packages in the region. Some expressed

their willingness to experience Sri Lankan authentic Ayurveda treatment. Siddhalepa Ayurveda Health Resort has also planned to conduct a series of familiarization visits for the travel trade and media of the GCC region in the coming months.

Australia's MDF collaborated with Siddhalepa to support expanding the organizations' reach to growing frontier markets in the GCC region, marking a significant move towards diversifying the source markets of Sri Lanka's wellness tourism industry. Following the successful launch at the 2024 ATM, Siddhalepa and MDF will continue to work together on advancing and executing marketing and promotion efforts. The special promotion is expected to target Saudi Arabia, UAE, Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Oman.

Sri Lankan Counsel General to UAE, Hon. Alexi Gunasekara addressed the session and highlighted how the Siddhalepa became a leading Ayurveda brand of Sri Lanka entered the global markets. Further, he added that Siddhalepa is rendering invaluable service through its dedicated Ayurveda Hospital, Ayurveda resort and products not only to the Sri Lankan nation but also to the world.

Mr. Dushan Wickramasooriya, Director



Marketing of Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, added that Sri Lanka Tourism highly appreciate the efforts by Siddhalepa as the leading Sri Lankan traditional Ayurveda company and this promotion is planned at a time that the medical tourism has become a vital segment in Sri Lankan economy as well.

As the founder of Siddhalepa Ayurveda, the Ayurveda Kidney Specialist and Astrologer, Dr. Hendrick De Silva produced the first commercial Ayurveda product, Siddhalepa Balm in 1934. Thereafter, his son, considered as the "Father of Modern Ayurveda of Sri Lanka", Deshabandu Dr. Victor Hettigoda, Litt.D. made Siddhalepa balm the leading product in the indigenous medicine sector of Sri Lanka. Today, Siddhalepa name has become synonymous with Sri Lankan Ayurveda. Possessing an Ayurveda family heritage exceeding 200 years, Siddhalepa Ayurveda is yet reach its fullest potential on using its Ayurveda heritage and has planned many expansion activities in the GCC region.

Air India opens new office premises with new GSA Hayleys Aviation

TTA BULLETIN

Air India recently opened its new office premises in the heart of Colombo, with the newly appointed General Sales Agents (GSA) in Sri Lanka – Hayleys Aviation. This significant development marks a new chapter in Air India's commitment to providing superior service and accessibility to its valued customers in the region.



The new office, strategically located in Colombo, will enhance Air India's operational efficiency and customer service capabilities. By partnering with Hayleys Aviation, a leading player in the aviation sector, Air India aims to strengthen its presence and expand its market reach in Sri Lanka.

"Together, we share a commitment to corporate responsibility and uphold similar values, allowing us to offer unparalleled credibility, strength, stability, and value to our customers. The improved connectivity resulting from this collaboration will add greater momentum to Sri Lanka's resurgent tourism industry, creating value for our nation and supporting the growth aspirations of Air India," said Mohan Pandithage, Chairman and Chief Executive of Hayleys PLC.

Air India operates 17 weekly flights between India and Sri Lanka, contributing to the growing trade and tourism between the two countries. With its vast global network spread across five continents, Air India offers convenient connections via Delhi or Chennai to key destinations in Europe and the US

The new office will provide a range of services, including passenger sales and ticketing, reservations, and customer support, ensuring that travelers have access to comprehensive assistance for all their travel needs. Air India's collaboration with Hayleys Aviation is expected to bring about a host of benefits, including streamlined operations and improved customer satisfaction.

'Waraka Udawalawe' - Thema Collection opens Eco-Luxury Retreat

TTA BULLETIN

Thema Collection recently announced the grand unveiling of its newest addition, 'Waraka,' an eco-luxury boutique hotel nestled amidst the enchanting landscapes of Udawalawe. The hotel opened its doors to the public on the 1st of June 2024, with the opening ceremony graced by the esteemed presence of Mr. KATSUKI Kotaro, Chargé d' Affaires a.i. of the Embassy of Japan.

Waraka is located just 20 minutes away from Udawalawe National Park, renowned for its captivating wildlife and majestic elephants. Inspired by the flamboyant jackfruit tree, Waraka promises an unforgettable escape enveloped in nature's embrace. This intimate 12-room ecofriendly retreat boasts a range of amenities, including a restaurant offering delectable international and local cuisine, and an Ayurveda spa, where guests can relax and unwind in contemporary comforts amidst breathtaking scenery.

Thema Collection, with its ideology to provide an authentic Sri Lankan experience to its guests, offers a variety of experiences ranging from guided elephant safaris to village tours and canoeing adventures. These are all carefully crafted to provide personalized insights into the region's rich biodiversity, intricate irrigation systems, and vibrant agricultural environment. Moreover, with



a commitment to sustainable development, Waraka focuses on empowering local communities, conserving biodiversity, promoting energy conservation through renewable sources, and engaging in community development initiatives.

Waraka proudly extends its support to 'Eth Athuru Sevana,' Asia's first Elephant Transit Home. Established in 1995 by the Sri Lanka Department of Wildlife Conservation, this initiative focuses on rescuing and nurturing elephants orphaned mainly due to human-elephant conflicts and release them back into their natural habitat. There are about 60 orphaned baby elephants at this transit home, and witnessing their rehabilitation process is a captivating experience for any traveler. As a part of the Group's Sustainability Initiative, Thema Collection adopted a baby she elephant, pledging support for its rehabilitation journey.

The opening ceremony activities commenced with the adoption and naming of the baby she elephant at the Elephant Transit home in Udawalawe, followed by the opening ceremony of the hotel at an auspicious time and the traditional boiling of milk, honoring Sri Lankan traditions and symbolizing prosperity and blessings for the future.

With its unique location, cocooned by a cluster of jackfruit trees boarding a beautiful waterway, Waraka promises to be a sanctuary for discerning travelers seeking a meaningful and unforgettable experience amidst the wonders of Udawalawe

Singapore Airlines signs renewed agreement with Sabre to optimize its all-important slots and schedules.

TTA BULLETIN

Sabre Corporation (NASDAQ: SABR), a leading software and technology provider that powers the global travel industry, today announced the renewal of its longstanding agreement with Singapore Airlines, one of the world's premier airlines and a Star Alliance member. Through this agreement, Singapore Airlines will continue to leverage Schedule Manager and Slot Manager from Sabre's Network Planning & Optimization suite of technology, reinforcing its commitment to operational efficiency, choice and reliability for its passengers.

Sabre Slot Manager is the industry's most widely used system for managing slots at busy airports worldwide, enabling carriers to identify and secure slots required for future schedules while minimizing the chances of losing valuable historic slots. Meanwhile, Schedule Manager empowers airlines to create and execute robust, accurate, and feasible operating schedules across their networks, providing a powerful way to boost revenue and gain

competitive advantage.

The agreement further underscores the strong, historic relationship between Sabre and Singapore Airlines, which recently announced robust passenger traffic and capacity growth. The carrier also distributes its New Distribution Capability (NDC) content through Sabre's global marketplace.

"Without the right slots and schedules, it's impossible to fly routes that are both profitable for airlines and which meet evolving passenger demand," said Rakesh Narayanan, Vice President, Regional General Manager, Asia Pacific, Travel Solutions Airline Sales. "We're pleased and proud to renew this valued and longstanding collaboration with Singapore Airlines so they can continue to benefit from advanced network planning capabilities, enabling them to optimize their flight schedules, maximize resource allocation, and deliver superior service to their customers."

Elevate your dining experience with tea pairing by Dilmah Tea & Emirates

TTA BULLETIN

Celebrating International Tea Day on 21 May, Emirates and their esteemed tea partner of three decades- Dilmah, share expert insights into the art of food and tea pairing onboard, in Emirates Lounges across the world, and at home.



Tea pairing is a sensory experience that explores the dynamic between the aromas and flavours found in both tea varieties and food. A well-matched tea can balance and even accentuate the culinary flavours of a dish or can be used to create an interesting contrast on the palate. Emirates serves a selection of 12 gourmet tea blends, brewing more than 33 million cups of tea onboard each year and offering plenty of opportunities to experiment with tea and food pairing.

Emirates invites customers to elevate their inflight experience by pairing a delicious tea with their meals or try a tempting Emirates & Dilmah recipe at home, served with a complementary tea or tea-infused cocktail to impress guests.

Dilmah's Breakfast Tea is a single region Ceylon tea, grown at 4000-feet above sea level. Its flavour profile is bright, brisk and full bodied with a rich, natural taste. It pairs ideally with cheese and egg dishes, like Emirates inflight breakfasts' of scrambled eggs with chicken chipolatas, beans and crushed chive potatoes in First Class, or kale and spinach frittatas with roasted potato wedges, spinach and portobello mushroom in Business Class. The charcuterie plate of grilled chicken,

air-dried beef, cheddar, gouda and feta cheese and crudites also works well with the Dilmah Ceylon Black Tea served in Premium Economy Class, or the fluffy cheese omelette with grilled chicken sausage, hash brown and sautéed mushrooms in Economy Class.

Natural Green Tea from Dilmah is a gently steamed green tea with a mild astringency and sweet finish, which lends itself as the perfect companion to green salads or seafood. Dishes to try onboard that pair well include the poached lobster tail and masala prawns served with kachumber and coriander chilli dressing in First Class, pan-seared salmon trout with mashed sweet potatoes, sautéed kai-lan, and beurre blanc with roasted macadamia nuts in Business Class, or the antipasti salad with asparagus and olives, lettuce, parmesan, and pine nuts in a balsamic glaze in Premium Economy and Economy Class. First and Business Class customers can also sample Dilmah's Moroccan Mint Green Tea which works well with the complimentary First Class caviar, citrus and raspberry tarts, or the Emirates regional favourite dessert – sticky date pudding.

Qatar Airways is the First Leading Airline in MENA to Introduce Complimentary Starlink Wi-Fi Onboard

TTA BULLETIN

Qatar Airways, a multiple award-winning airline, has announced the introduction of Starlink's innovative high-speed, low-latency Wi-Fi on three of its Boeing 777-300 aircraft by the last quarter of this year, as part of the initial phase of its rollout strategy. This strategic move solidifies the airline's commitment to elevating the passenger experience onboard, with plans to progressively extend SpaceX-powered technology across its entire modern fleet within the next two years.



The announcement took place on the second day of the Aircraft Interior Expo at Hamburg - Germany, in the presence of Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Officer, Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer, and Mr. Mike Nicolls, Vice President of Starlink Engineering at SpaceX.

As a globally recognised leader in innovation, Qatar Airways consistently delivers advanced technologies to redefine the inflight experience for passengers. By offering an ultra-high-speed Wi-Fi connectivity of up to 500 megabit per second per plane, Qatar Airways' passengers can use the high-speed and low-latency network with a simple 'one-click-access' to enjoy a variety of internet-based services such as video streaming of their favourite entertainment and sports videos, online gaming, enriched web-browsing and much more.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Officer, Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer, said: "This exciting collaboration with Starlink is a testament to our customer-first

mindset and commitment to elevating our passengers' experience to unprecedented heights, as we continue furthering our innovative offerings to meet and exceed passengers' expectations throughout their journey with Qatar Airways."

As the first-ever service of its kind in the MENA region, the collaboration with Starlink, the world's largest satellite internet constellation engineered and operated by SpaceX, marks a new milestone for the national carrier of the State of Qatar. This strategic initiative will further elevate the airline's unparalleled onboard experience.

Starlink Engineering Vice President at SpaceX, Mike Nicolls, said: "High-speed, low-latency internet is the future of aviation connectivity, and we're excited to work with Qatar Airways to start flying Starlink on their fleet by the end of this year. Soon, all Qatar Airways passengers will be able to enjoy all the benefits of the world's best in-flight connectivity from the comfort of their seats."

Starlink delivers high-speed, low-latency internet to users all over the world. Qatar Airways is the largest airline to partner with Starlink.

SriLankan Cargo Partners with CargoAi to Enhance Airfreight Booking and Payment Experience

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Cargo, the cargo arm of SriLankan Airlines, has partnered with CargoAi, a leader in digital freight solutions, to simplify and enhance its airfreight booking and payment processes, and bring more transparency and velocity for users than ever.



The integration of SriLankan Cargo's airfreight services into CargoAi's ecosystem gives users access to online booking and instant cross-border payment capabilities, while allowing SriLankan Cargo to increase its reach and support forwarders that were previously untapped.

CargoAi's integration with SriLankan Cargo also streamlines payment processes by offering multiple payment methods, ranging from local transfers to credit card payments, removing the reliance on cash payments and enhancing security and efficiency in financial transactions. Additionally, CargoAi's CargoWALLET platform facilitates the reconciliation process, automating tasks that were

previously manual and time-consuming.

For freight forwarders, the integration also means that they no longer need to provide a bank guarantee or pay yearly subscriptions. Everything is seamlessly integrated with CargoMART, simplifying operations and reducing overhead costs, allowing forwarders to focus on core business operations without the burden of administrative complexities.

Chaminda Perera, Head of Cargo of SriLankan Airlines commented by saying, "Our partnership with CargoAi marks another significant stride in our digitalization journey, aimed at expanding our horizons. We will be able to enhance the visibility of our inventory and offer customers a convenient airfreight booking experience. We are looking forward to extending our market reach and engaging with businesses of all scales with CargoAi."

AIRLINES

Qatar Airways Named 'Airline of the Year' by Airline Ratings for 2024

TTA BULLETIN

Qatar Airways has been named the 'Airline of the Year' for 2024 by the leading industry organisation, Airline Ratings. In addition to the 'Airline of the Year' accolade, Qatar Airways has also won 'Best Business Class' for the fifth consecutive year, as well as 'Best Catering'.

The yearly Airline Ratings awards include several key categories: 'Best In-flight Entertainment' and 'Best Catering', 'Best Cabin Crew', 'Best Environmental Airline', and 'Regional Airline of the Year'. Airlines are assessed based on various criteria including fleet age, passenger reviews, profitability, safety rating, product rating, innovation, and forward fleet orders.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Officer, Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer, said: "We, at Qatar Airways, stand for delivering exceptional customer experiences, and it is always reaffirming to be recognised for our relentless pursuit of service excellence. Receiving the 'Airline of the Year' accolade by Airline Ratings has reinforced our commitment to innovation and customer care that defines our brand."

Airline Ratings Editor-in-Chief, Geoffrey Thomas, said: "In our objective analysis, Qatar Airways came out number one in many key areas although it was a very close scoring for the top five. The passenger reviews however scored Qatar Airways ahead of all airlines and its consistency and high standard of service delivery came through in the feedback."

Qatar Airways leads Airline Ratings' list of top premium airlines which includes 25 global carriers: <https://www.airlineratings.com/news/qatar-airwas-worlds-best-airline-for-2024/>



A multiple award-winning airline, Qatar Airways won the 'World's Best Business Class' for the tenth time at the 2023 World Airline Awards, managed by the international air transport rating organisation, Skytrax. The airline continues to be synonymous with excellence, also taking home, 'Best Airline in the Middle East', 'World's Best Business Class Lounge' and 'World's Best Business Class Lounge Dining' at the prestigious awards held during the 2023 Paris Air Show. Qatar Airways is an unprecedented seven-time winner of the 'World's Best Airline' voted by Skytrax (2011, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021 and 2022). As leaders in industry innovation and digital adoption, Qatar Airways was recently voted the 'World's Best Airline Website' by World Travel Tech Awards.

Qatar Airways was the first Airline in the Middle East to be certified to the highest level of IATA's Environmental Assessment (IEnvA) programme, based on recognised environmental management system principles (such as ISO 14001). As an inaugural signatory to the Buckingham Palace Declaration in March 2016, Qatar Airways became the first airline globally to be certified to the industry standard for the prevention of illegal wildlife trafficking in aviation.

Qatar Airways currently flies to nearly 170 destinations worldwide, connecting through its Doha hub, Hamad International Airport, the 'World's Best Airport', as voted by Skytrax in 2021, 2022, and 2024. In 2024, Hamad International Airport also received the 'Best Airport in the Middle East' accolade for 10 consecutive years, as well as 'World's Best Airport Shopping' for the second year in a row.

Emirates joins IATA's Turbulence Aware Platform, becomes first airline to integrate flight data for real-time accuracy with Lido mPilot from Lufthansa Systems

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates has joined the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) Turbulence Aware Platform. It will also be the first airline to integrate the IATA platform within the latest version of Lido mPilot, the mobile navigation solution from Lufthansa Systems.

Bringing these platforms together offers a wealth of data, combined with new technologies that make up-to-the-minute, highly accurate turbulence information and forecasts available for pilots, equipping them with the means to plot the best paths around affected areas for enhanced safety, efficient navigation, and optimisation of flight plans.

In conjunction with the IATA Turbulence Aware Platform, the airline has equipped more than 140 aircraft with the required onboard software to automatically share turbulence reports with all airlines contributing data to the platform. All new aircraft joining the Emirates fleet over the course of the next few years, such as the Airbus A350 and Boeing 777-9, 777-8 and B787, will be enabled to participate in the programme.

Captain Hassan Alhammadi, Divisional Senior Vice President, Flight Operations Emirates Airline said: "Actively participating in IATA's Turbulence Aware platform and equipping our pilots with a complement of the latest industry technologies such as the mobile navigation solution Lido mPilot from Lufthansa Systems are part of our commitment to ensure operational safety, efficiency, and customer comfort on every flight. We're also proud to contribute data around



turbulence through our Middle East network and extensive links across Africa, Asia, Australia, and other regions. It will help build sophisticated industry knowledge to effectively manage turbulence and evolving weather patterns with even more precision. This is only the beginning, and we are progressing with plans to integrate more cutting-edge technologies to elevate the flying experience even further, so our customers can enjoy smoother journeys."

"Mitigating the adverse effects of turbulence is an industry wide challenge and obtaining accurate and live data is key in this endeavour. The cooperation between IATA Turbulence Aware, Emirates and Lufthansa Systems will further improve the quality and quantity of real time data made available to the industry, allowing for smoother and safer air travel for all," said Frederic Leger, IATA's Senior Vice President Commercial Products and Services.

"IATA Turbulence Aware data enhances the value of Lido mPilot by providing pilots with real-time, accurate and comprehensive information on turbulence, enabling them to make informed decisions and navigate more efficiently.

SriLankan Airlines Hosts Indian Travel Trade Journalists for FAM Tour of Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines recently welcomed a group of senior journalists from leading Indian travel trade publications on a familiarization (FAM) tour of Sri Lanka, in collaboration with Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts, along with the coordinating efforts of the official PR agency of SriLankan Airlines in India, AVIAREPS. The initiative aims to enhance Sri Lanka's appeal as a preferred vacation destination among Indian travelers. Timed to coincide with an uptick in Indian visitors to Sri Lanka, surpassing destinations like the Maldives in Southern Asia, the journalists arrived from Mumbai and Delhi on May 17, 2024. Over several days, they explored Sri Lanka's historical and cultural landmarks; savored local cuisine; embarked on thrilling wildlife safaris; indulged in city shopping; and relaxed on picturesque beaches. Impressed by their experiences, the journalists are currently penning glowing reviews that are expected to inspire more Indians to choose Sri Lanka for their next holiday destination.



SriLankan Cargo Reinvents Service Delivery with Strong Customer Focus

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Cargo, the air cargo division of SriLankan Airlines, recently unveiled its reinvented service delivery framework and website, with a strong focus on customer experience. The new service model of SriLankan Cargo classifies service delivery under Freshness Class, Wellness Class, Precious Class and Guardian Class to ensure consistent and premium care for customers and their consignments. It also includes a 24/7 service hotline and a redesigned website for a better user experience.



“We are excited to present our latest innovation – product verticals – that is the culmination of our collective focus, dedication and creativity in the pursuit of excellence in airfreight services. SriLankan Cargo is passionate about serving its customers even better by setting new standards, which when coupled with the innate warmth and friendliness of our people, create a service that rivals the best in class,” stated Chaminda Perera, Head of Cargo of SriLankan Airlines.

The four classes of service emphasize precision in activities throughout the airfreight logistics process. Freshness Class and Wellness Class focus on priority service, rapid connections and advanced cold chain management to conserve the freshness of perishable cargo and potency of medicine, respectively. Precious Class pledges to offer the highest degree of security for valuable

and vulnerable cargo, and Guardian Class aims to provide all the comfort and care that pets and other animals need during air transportation.

Customers can now reach out to the SriLankan Cargo team at any time of the day through the new 24/7 service hotline at +94197 33 3344, an integral feature of the new service framework. SriLankan Cargo will further provide regular tracking updates on shipments to customers.

The redesigned website, another important element of the framework, aims to supply customers with all the information that they require for shipping decisions. From discovering the perfect flight schedule to easily calculating the chargeable weight by entering the dimensions of the consignment or making a request for air cargo charter services, the site promises to be the quickest information source for SriLankan Cargo products.

“It is great to see the national carrier aggressively forging ahead with the introduction of these value-added products amid all the challenges that they are facing. I take this opportunity to wish SriLankan Cargo every success as they take off into the future,” expressed Ruwan Waidyaratne, Managing Director of Hayleys Advantis.

Etihad Boosts Colombo Connectivity with 27 Weekly Flights

TTA BULLETIN

Starting June 1st, Etihad Airways will enhance its connectivity between Colombo and Abu Dhabi with 27 weekly flights. This expansion aims to strengthen ties between Sri Lanka and the United Arab Emirates, offering travelers more options and flexibility.



As the national carrier of the UAE, Etihad Airways is responding to the increasing demand from passengers by adding more flights to key destinations in the Indian subcontinent. Alongside Colombo, the airline’s network expansion includes new routes to Kolkata and Bangalore in India. This strategic move significantly boosts Etihad’s presence in the region.

The new schedule represents a substantial increase, with the airline now offering over 25% more weekly departures compared to the summer of 2023. This rise in frequency is a testament to Etihad’s commitment to meeting the growing travel needs of its customers.

Enhanced connectivity not only

benefits tourism in Sri Lanka but also provides Sri Lankan travelers with more convenient travel options via Etihad’s hub in Abu Dhabi. The increased number of flights allows for seamless connections to a wider range of destinations, facilitating both leisure and business travel.

These improvements are part of Etihad’s broader strategy to expand its global network and increase flight frequencies, further positioning Abu Dhabi as a major international travel hub. By offering more flexible travel options, Etihad aims to attract a larger number of passengers, enhancing its competitive edge in the global aviation market.

Overall, Etihad Airways’ expanded services between Colombo and Abu Dhabi mark a significant step in boosting regional connectivity and supporting the growth of international travel.

Emirates to donate thousands of children’s backpacks made from upcycled aircraft interiors ‘Aircraft KIDS by Emirates’

TTA BULLETIN

To commemorate World Environment Day and as part of an environmental strategy that includes a commitment to consuming responsibly, Emirates is readying to repurpose more than 50,000 kilograms of materials from 191 aircraft undergoing a cabin interior refresh. Emirates will give new life to the materials and is personally producing thousands of handmade children’s backpacks and schoolbags, to be donated to community schools and organisations supporting early education across Africa and Asia this year.

To minimise waste, Emirates’ Engineering team tasked themselves to find a way to repurpose the fabrics from the Economy Class seats of 22 Airbus A380 aircraft that have completed the retrofit process. From these aircraft, 5,205 kilograms of scrap materials were recovered, including seat fabric of 95% wool and 5% nylon composition with a flat weave structure, sourced from Germany and Ireland. The materials were identified as ideal for upcycling due to their durability and non-flammable nature, and a decision was made to make high quality backpacks for children in need.

In the workshop at Emirates Engineering, a dedicated team of tailors creatively designed a whole range of backpacks, for children of different ages and worked with the Emirates Corporate Communications, Marketing & Brand

team to identify charitable entities, schools, orphanages, and foundations, where the bags are set to be distributed in the coming months.

Emirates’ teams spent weeks researching bag styles, ensuring the bags are safe and comfortable for children to use and fit for purpose. Across all the individual designs, all fabrics are freshly laundered in a facility, then further deep cleaned by hand, leather-conditioned for the leather accents featured on some bags, and thoroughly disinfected before being sewn into unique pieces. Brand new lining is added to the bags, along with functional zippers and adjustable straps. The result is a range of sturdy, quality bags which Emirates will make-to-order for worthy causes across Africa and Asia.

Emirates produces the backpacks by hand in the Emirates Engineering workshop where a team of tailors - officially titled as Engineering Maintenance Assistants, are responsible for assembling and stitching the bags. Their roles normally involve fixing any tears in the interiors of Emirates’ vast aircraft fleet, but now many of these tailors are also putting their skills towards the production of schoolbags for students across Emirates’ network.

Ahmed Safa, Emirates’ Divisional Senior Vice President for Engineering, said: “We are so proud of our people at Emirates and their commitment to this initiative.

Countless hours have been invested into making these bags for children; it’s a true passion project for our diligent team. We’ve even had volunteers within the larger company come forward and offer to help with the project, there is a huge appetite to contribute and support entities in need. It’s also a testament to Emirates’ commitment to constantly evolve our environmental efforts and examine all aspects of our products and supply chains. For this project, our aim is to turn what would have been waste, into prized possessions.”

The world’s largest ever known retrofit project is a multibillion-dollar investment from Emirates, which kicked off in August 2022 with the intention of fully re-fitting 191 aircraft and elevating customer experience. This includes 110 Airbus A380s and 81 Boeing 777 aircraft, which together have the potential to provide up to 50,000 kilograms of waste fabrics. As and when the aircraft are furnished with new fabrics, there is also scope to recover the excess ‘cut off’ materials for repurposing and upcycling.

From the 22 Airbus A380 aircraft that have been completely retrofitted, materials from First and Business Class cabins such as leather, aluminium, and wool have already been repurposed. The



Aircraft KIDS by Emirates range is a limited-edition capsule collection of luggage launched in November 2023 and designed in-house by Emirates Engineering, which sold out in a matter of weeks. Proceeds from the first sale of the not-for-profit collection Aircraft KIDS by Emirates amounted to more than 70,000 AED, and after minimal operational cost deductions, were donated to Emirates Airline Foundation supporting humanitarian projects around the world.

Managed entirely by Emirates’ Engineering team, the retrofit is a considerable project that will take years to complete and provide multiple opportunities for upcycling. This will see 21,814 Economy Seats installed, 8,104 brand new Premium Economy seats installed, 1,894 First Class suites refurbished, over 11,182 new generation Business Class seats installed, as well as the opportunity for more creative upcycling initiatives to be launched.

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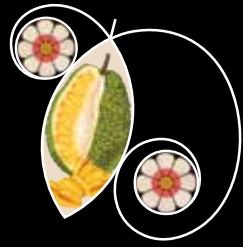
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