

TRAVEL TALK Asia

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VOL 22 NO 11 2023 36 PGS



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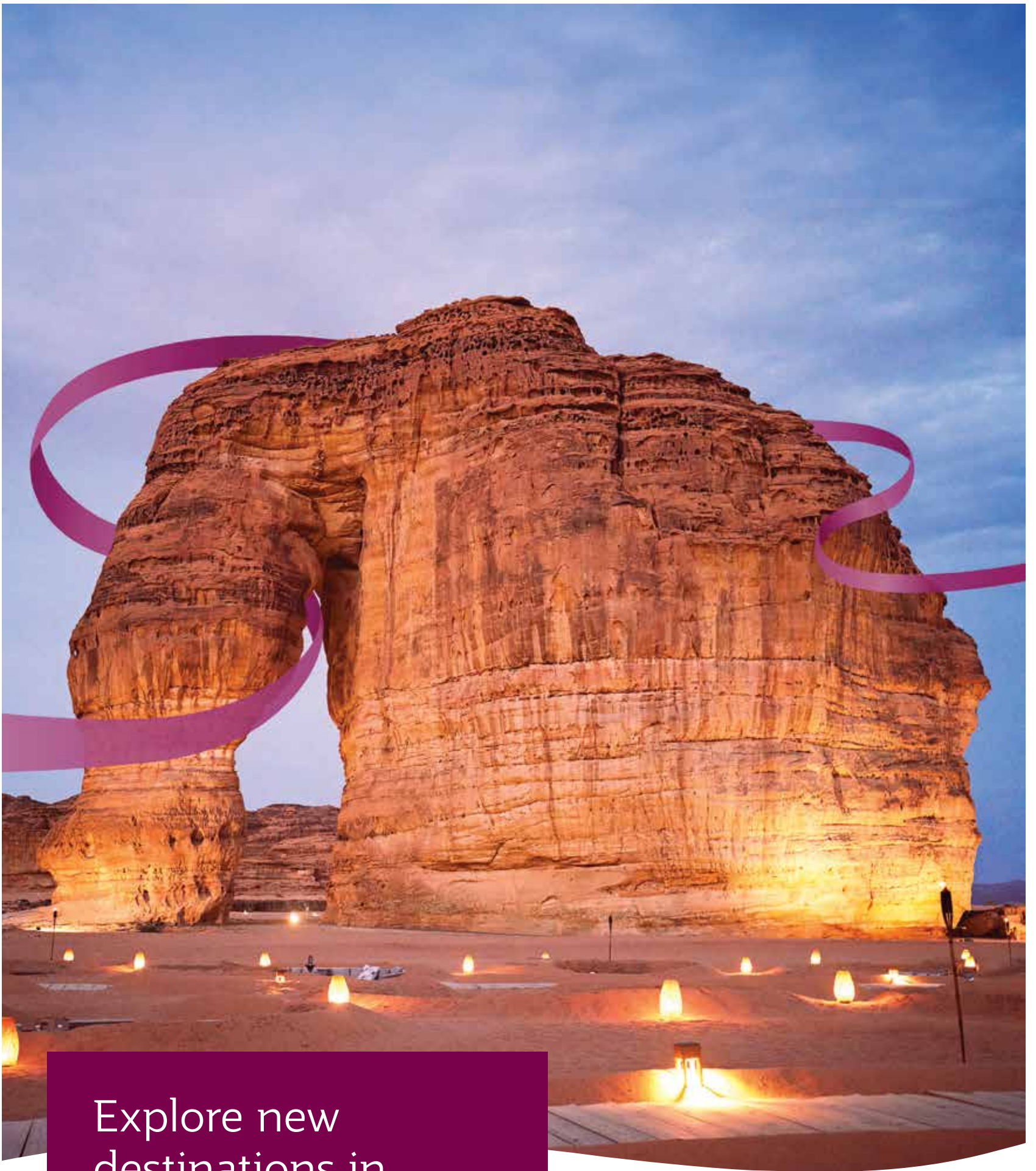
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TRAVEL TALK

Asia

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Jetwing Hotels and Thema Collection collaborate to showcase year-round appeal and charm of Sri Lanka's East Coast

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Jetwing Hotels and Thema Collection, two of Sri Lanka's leading homegrown hospitality brands, recently hosted an event titled "The Enchanting East: a year-round Sri Lankan experience" to break the misconception of the Eastern region being a mere seasonal destination. The event was patronized by leading travel agents, travel influencers, travel enthusiasts and media representatives.



Hashan Cooray



Maxime Wickramasinghe

waterfall expeditions and exploring historical sites.

Len Porter, Proprietor of Kottukal Beach House by Jetwing and a Non-Executive Director of Jetwing Symphony PLC, highlighted the year-round appeal of Sri Lanka's East, going beyond the traditional surfing months of April to September. He emphasized the region's rich cultural and historical heritage, mentioning lesser-known gems like Kudumbigala Viharaya and Magul Maha Viharaya. Porter also discussed the diverse weather patterns in the East and proposed a range of activities to fill-in a travel itinerary.

From October through March, the area becomes a haven for migratory birds escaping harsh Northern hemisphere winters, with places like Kumana National Park serving as their refuge. Furthermore, Gal Oya, Kumana, and Lahugala national parks offer peaceful sanctuaries for Sri Lanka's 'big three' – elephants, leopards, and sloth bears, making them an excellent alternative to the busier Yala National Park for wildlife enthusiasts.

Hashan Cooray, Director of Marketing and Development at Jetwing Hotels detailed the company's unique properties dotted towards the Eastern corner of the island: Jetwing Kaduruketha located in Wellawaya, Jetwing Surf and Kottukal Beach House by Jetwing both located in Pottuvil. Modeled after a traditional Sri Lankan village, Jetwing Kaduruketha offers guests a rustic village experience combined with modern luxuries. It is known for its personalized service, locally sourced cuisine and various excursions, making it an ideal base for

Guests can also engage in activities such as learning about Sri Lanka's agricultural traditions at the property's own paddy fields and taking a dip in the Kirindi Oya, which borders the property. Jetwing Surf redefines eco-luxury tourism with its distinctive and award-winning architecture, while Kottukal Beach House by Jetwing, is a luxurious villa, nestled on a secluded bay and surrounded by the ocean on two sides. Both properties offer easy access to prime surfing spots and a plethora of wildlife, nature, and cultural experiences, along with a myriad of other activities that can be experienced in the region.

Maxime Wickramasinghe, Director of Marketing and Business Development at Thema Collection, shared the brand's commitment to creating thematic experiences tailored to each property's location. Wild Glamping Gal Oya, located in Rathugala, a scenic village surrounded by mountains and inhabited by the Veddhas, the indigenous people of Sri Lanka, offers an exceptional glamping adventure, allowing nature enthusiasts to immerse themselves and learn about coexistence with nature from the Veddhas.

Maalu Maalu Resort and Spa, inspired by Sri Lankan 'wadiya' fishing villages, is located on the tranquil Pasikuda waters. Maalu Maalu offers a wide range of activities suitable for guests of all ages, from snorkeling adventures among vibrant coral reefs to exploring the historic and culturally rich city of Batticaloa.

Raising the Bar: Sri Lanka Tourism aims for Record Visitor Numbers

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Sri Lanka Tourism clocked in a record one million arrivals in September this year, propelling a hike in arrival targets to close this year. "This is the first time since 2019 that Sri Lanka has seen positive numbers and both the private sector and public sector are working tirelessly to ensure this momentum continues and we reach our year end goals" said Hon. Minister of Tourism and Lands Harin Fernando



Hon. Harin Fernando

The surge in arrivals during the first two weeks in October has boosted the visitor number making it conducive to aim at a higher annual number of visitors as the trajectory would clearly exceed the goal of 1.5 million international arrivals. "This is a clear indication of a resilient recovery for the tourism industry and private sector stakeholders are confident that the next couple of months will pave the way for a buoyant winter season for Sri Lanka Tourism"

In a bid to further stimulate interest in the destination, Sri Lanka has introduced a visa-free entry initiative for visitors from seven countries including India, China and Russia which are part of this pilot project which would be in effect until March 31st 2024. This initiative was approved by the Sri Lanka Cabinet and will make it more conducive for visitors.

The visitor arrival statics place India in the number one spot producing the largest number of arrivals followed by Russia and the United Kingdom. This clearly indicated that amidst the negative media publicity and economic downturn, the UK market remains

resilient.

"Global trends shifted in the pre-pandemic years with China and India leading the way in terms of the highest number of visitors annually. However, global demands and trends are constantly evolving and we see a resurgence from the UK market which is a very positive indication that Sri Lanka tourism is steadily back on track"

"We are confident that a strong Destination Marketing campaign will derive positive results and a robust increase in arrivals for the upcoming winter season. Sri Lanka Tourism is gearing up for a strong digital presence in both traditional and emerging markets and the campaign coupled with the 'visa free stimulus program' will further enhance the island's position as a prime tourism destination in Asia" said Chalaka Gajabahu – Chairman Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau



Chalaka Gajabahu

2023 figures from January to end September indicates that India is ranking at the top with 200,310 arrivals followed by the Russian Federation with 132,300 and the UK comes in third with 90,843 visitors.

Tourism, is a significant contributor to Sri Lanka's foreign exchange earnings, hence the industry is planning numerous marketing activities starting with a digital marketing campaign followed by a global destination marketing campaign. Industry analysts said the steady recovery underscores the resilience and appeal of Sri Lanka as a destination of choice, offering travellers a rich blend of cultural heritage, natural beauty and hospitality.

Cont on Pg 2



Sri Lanka's tourism industry has been witnessing a number of developments, with the primary focus being on enhancing its appeal to both traditional and non-traditional markets. The second UNWTO World Tourism Barometer of the year shows that the International tourism sector's swift recovery has continued with overall international arrivals reaching 80% of pre-pandemic levels as it continues to show resilience. The Israel-Palestine conflict has raised significant concerns regarding the possible disruption in the global supply chain. However, thus far, it has not caused any significant impediments to the overall international travel landscape. Economic challenges on a global scale tend to have a significant impact on the overall growth of tourism which we hope would not be the case going forward

Sri Lanka Tourism together with a large contingent of stakeholders will showcase the best of the destination at one of the world's largest travel and tourism trade events, the World Travel Market in London. The UK has long been a significant source of visitors to Sri Lanka, drawn by the country's rich history, diverse landscapes, and warm hospitality.

One notable development is the emphasis on sustainable tourism. Sri Lanka is increasingly recognized for its eco-friendly practices and conservation efforts, which resonate well with eco-conscious UK travelers. From wildlife safaris in national parks to coastal conservation initiatives, Sri Lanka is becoming a hub for responsible and immersive travel experiences.

Sri Lanka tourism is also on the brink of launching a global media campaign which would be the first in over a decade. The first phase of the campaign with emphasis on digital marketing was rolled out to highlight the message that Sri Lanka is safe and ready to welcome visitors. The negative publicity generated from the political crisis in 2022 caused concern for travelers and this first phase addresses these concerns while assuring visitors of a safe and seamless visit to the island.

This new campaign showcases Sri Lanka in a fresh and captivating light, emphasizing its unique attributes and the myriad of experiences on offer. It highlights the country's breathtaking beaches, lush forests, cultural heritage, and mouthwatering cuisine, capturing the essence of Sri Lankan hospitality under the tag line "Sri Lanka – You'll be back for more"



Dinushka

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NEWS

Contd from Pg 1

Jetwing Hotels and Thema Collection...

Wickramasinghe also presented interesting statistics comparing rainfall in the Eastern and Southern regions, indicating that the East, for most months of the year - including the misconceived "off-season" months, receives significantly less rainfall than the South. This information is valuable for travellers planning their visits and seeking more favorable weather conditions.



Following their presentations, a panel discussion was conducted with the participation of Hiran Cooray, Chairman of Jetwing Symphony PLC, and Chandra Wickramasinghe, Founder and Chairman of Thema Collection and Connaissance de Ceylan. The audience posed thought-provoking questions to the panel on biodiversity conservation, and ways in which connectivity to the east can be improved. The engaging panel discussion offered profound insights and ignited stimulating conversations, highlighting the importance of partnerships and collaborative efforts in this endeavor and the need to protect the region from overdevelopment and exploitation.

Jewing Hotels and Thema Collection invite travellers to explore and experience the captivating allure of the eastern region. From the majestic mountains to the pristine, unspoiled beaches, this region caters to discerning explorers with a rich tapestry of experiences throughout the year. Travellers are able to peacefully observe birds and other wildlife, delve into the lifestyles of paddy-farmers and Sri Lanka's indigenous communities, enjoy the serene shores of Pasikuda and the exhilarating waves of Pottuvil and its abundant surf points. Whether travellers seek to reconnect with nature or immerse in the vibrant culture and history of Sri Lanka, Jetwing Hotels and Thema Collection properties in the East offer unparalleled opportunities for unforgettable and transformative journeys.

ITB ASIA 2023: Redefining Travel and Tourism in a Dynamic World

TTA BULLETIN

Katrina Leung, Managing Director of Messe Berlin (Singapore), the organizer of MICE Show Asia, Travel Tech Asia and ITB Asia. Spoke to Travel Talk Asia on the success of Asia's leading B2B event

What sets ITB Asia 2023 apart from other travel trade shows?

The ITB brand boasts a well-established name and reputation, serving as a robust foundation for ITB Asia, a prominent player in the APAC market since 2008. Unlike any other show in Asia, ITB Asia provides a comprehensive representation of the entire travel value chain for the APAC region. We pride ourselves on being a dynamic hybrid event, encompassing MICE Show Asia and Travel Tech Asia. Our event boasts a truly international character, with exhibitors converging from every corner of the globe. To put this into perspective, our past shows have featured impressive figures: exceeding 1,300 exhibitors, with over 1,250 discerning buyers in attendance. The conferences have amassed more than 7,000 productive minutes of discourse, drawing over 13,000 enthusiastic attendees. Notably, more than 27,000 crucial business appointments have been facilitated

Under the theme "Accelerating Growth - paving the way for the future" what in particular is the main area of focus?

The conference theme captures the industry's need for a proactive approach. ITB Asia Conference is committed to tackling challenges while fostering rapid growth, with the goal of uncovering fresh opportunities that will shape the future of travel and tourism. With a distinguished lineup of mostly C-level speakers, we will explore emerging trends, the evolving landscape of travel, pivotal industry concerns. The main area of focus is on leveraging sustainable tourism practices.

You have a great line-up of speakers this year. How important is the knowledge sharing hub for this event?

The ITB Asia Conference spans across more than 100 sessions and boasts more than 160 speakers this year. We arrange three theaters, each specifically tailored to address vital segments of the travel industry: MICE, Travel

Technology, Leisure, and Corporate. The knowledge sharing hub is pivotal for the event, as it provides a platform for experts to share insights, trends, and expertise. This exchange of knowledge is crucial for industry professionals to stay updated and ahead of competitors, making informed decisions.



Katrina Leung

As Asia's leading travel exhibition, how important is innovation in the technology arena related to travel and tourism?

Innovation in technology is highly significant for the travel and tourism industry, especially in Asia. It enables improved customer experiences, efficient operations, and facilitates new ways of travel, all of which are vital for maintaining a competitive edge. For instance, the integration of blockchain technology for secure and transparent transactions in ticketing or reservations systems is an important step towards streamlining operations. It's crucial that travel tech is given its own conference within ITB Asia.

How do you see the impact of the MICE Show Asia and Travel Tech Asia in terms of running them simultaneously?

MICE and Travel Technology have been integral sectors of ITB Asia since its inception, given our hybrid nature. In response to the requests of our exhibitors, we established these brands to enhance recognition and amplify the prominence of these two additional pillars within the travel industry.

Running all three shows together leads to a synergetic effect. This may create a dynamic environment where participants can engage with various aspects of the industry, from meetings and events to travel technology and leisure travel. For example, a participant in the MICE Show Asia might discover a cutting-edge event management software showcased at the Travel Tech Asia theatre, offering a comprehensive understanding of the industry.



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Duminda Kuruwitaarachchi Elected As President TAASL 2023 /2024

TTA BULLETIN

The 48th Annual General Meeting of the Travel Agents Association of Sri Lanka (TAASL) was held recently at the Holiday Inn Bangkok Silom, Bangkok, Thailand. 95 participants attend this event.



Duminda Kuruwitaarachchi

Wilhelm E. Brown was elected as the Treasurer

TAASL is the national travel agents body in the country, with representation on the governing boards of the Sri Lanka Tourism

Development Authority (SLTDA), the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourist Hotel Management (SLITHM), the Tourism Industry Skills Council and a Member of the 'One Industry One Voice' initiative taken among the travel and tourism industry, was founded on 22 October 1974 and is an approved Association of The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce representing the interest of 126 outbound travel agents in Sri Lanka.

Duminda Kuruwitaarachchi's 26 years of experience in the travel industry is a clear indicator of his deep knowledge and expertise in this field. Such extensive experience is invaluable in the travel industry, as well as his role as the founder of Travel Outlook Private Limited and leadership in Travel Agents Association of Sri Lanka (TAASL), indeed make him a notable figure in the field. His diverse knowledge and Experiences in the Airline's in areas such as Airline revenue management, Modern marketing, and Human resources, along with an MBA and ongoing PhD, showcases his dedication to personal and professional development. It's clear that he has a well-rounded background that contributes to his success as an entrepreneur in the Travel Industry.

The following Executive Council Members were elected at the TAASL Annual General Meeting: 2nd Chance Travels (Pvt) Ltd – Mr. Riza Ahamat, Acorn Travels (Pvt) Ltd – Ms. Chamila Wijethunge, Aitken Spence Travels (Pvt) Ltd – Mr. Nishantha Senaveratne, Classic Travel (Pvt) Ltd - Mr. Sabry Bahaudeen, Delair Travels (Pvt) Ltd – Ms. Sonali Wijesurendra, George Steuart Travels Ltd – Mr. Channe Wijemanne, Scenic Ventures (Pvt) Ltd – Mr. Rizwan Ramieze, The Traveller Global (Pvt) Ltd – Mr. Rizmi Reyah, Travel Fantasy DMC (Pvt) Ltd – Mr. Dishal De Silva, Worldlink Travels (Pvt) Ltd – Mr. Danukh Amerasinghe.

B.O.C. Travels (Pvt) Ltd, General Manager / Chief Executive Officer Mr. Romesh Samaranayake joined the Executive Council in his capacity as the Immediate Past President.

Yenesha Travels (Pvt) Ltd, Managing Director Shanaka Fernando was elected as the Senior Vice President, Skyways Travel Solutions (Pvt) Ltd, Managing Director Mr. Tillak Wickremasinghe was elected as the Junior Vice President, Alpha Travels & Holidays (Pvt) Ltd, General Manager Mr.

Tourism in Sri Lanka Looking Buoyant

TTA BULLETIN

Tourism business in Sri Lanka is looking buoyant and we are truly delighted to see the level of visitor arrivals to the country amidst facing some very challenging times since April 2019.



M. Shanmukun

It is once again clear that Sri Lanka as a destination is extremely resilient and has the ability to bounce back to normalcy very fast. Tourism figures in terms of arrivals and hotel occupancy saw a dramatic positive change from the end of the first quarter of this calendar year. The inquiries and the bookings flow for the coming winter season is extremely positive and hoteliers are expecting a very good tourism season in the coming months.

Apart from the country's diversity and its ability to show case the best of the destination within a short period, the country has on offer an array of unique accommodation in touristic locations and off the beaten track. Some of which are one of a kind and could never be found in any other country. We are proud that even in the recent past, some iconic properties have received many accolades and endorsements from organizations and publications of repute and have been listed amongst the best hotels in the world.

Quality accommodation in the country at different price points across all regions gives a client an opportunity to select their stay as per a budget. From unique boutique properties, villas, bungalows, camps, lodges to stand alone small, medium and large scale properties including International brands are available for

visitor stays on the beach, wildlife parks, cultural triangle, hill country, ancient cities and of course in the commercial capital of Colombo.

The island nations tourism has evolved to such an extent, visitors to the country now can immerse themselves in experiencing the Sri Lankan way of life. Most hotels now offer uniquely curated excursions to their guests to experience life in an around the hotel and the country. These are really worth a try as they all vary from one another!

The Government of Sri Lanka recently banned the import of single use plastic such as straws, cups, plates, forks, knives, stirrers, spoons, garlands and polystyrene boxes effective 1st October 2023, as a measure to protect the environment. More such initiatives are expected to come in the future. In an effort to give back to the community, it is with great pride we state that over 70% of the raw material is sourced locally by most hoteliers for their daily operations. THASL believe that Tourism industry stakeholders can contribute immensely to make this planet a better place to live in!

Tourism is poised to be the leading foreign exchange earner to the country by end of 2023. We are confident the industry will meet the Government expectations. The Government of Sri Lanka is focused on Tourism development and growth more than ever before and is doing its utmost to make Tourism a vibrant industry in the island nation.

S4IG and Sri Lanka Tourism Alliance collaborate to boost Skills Development and tourism education

TTA BULLETIN

Skills for Inclusive Growth (S4IG) recently signed an MOU launching an innovative partnership between Sri Lanka Tourism Alliance and Skills for Inclusive Growth (S4IG) a program funded by Australia Aid. This is a crucial collaboration with the private sector and one which is of great importance for scaling S4IG's support In a bid to boost tourism education and skill development.



This partnership is all about alerting the tourism industry and the Tourism Alliance's member base on the incredible assistance through S4IG's support and courses available for micro, small, medium businesses within the tourism industry.

Some of the information to be highlighted in the planned programs includes, how to upgrade your culinary offerings to guests with global appetite, World Class self-training for MSME hospitality staff which can be done in your workplace and How to Hire a coach to help you achieve your goals. It will also highlight areas such as how best to present your hospitality business online.

The Tourism Alliance will introduce these programs and product offerings from S4IG as a self-paced, self-learning course that will propel on-line education. In addition, S4IG together with the Tourism Alliance will host a series of webinars and talk about the courses' relevance, offering insights and tips to anyone looking to enhance their skills in the tourism value chain in Sri Lanka.

Our mission is together empowering individuals, create opportunities, and contribute to the growth of Sri Lanka's economy.

Citrus Leisure to Elevate Hospitality to New Heights at Colombo Lotus Tower

TTA BULLETIN

Citrus Leisure PLC, the leading local hospitality brand, has embarked on an extraordinary journey by taking the reins as restaurant operator at the iconic Colombo Lotus Tower, the tallest self-supported structure in South Asia. Citrus Leisure PLC has been awarded an exclusive contract to manage and operate the revolving restaurant, and two banquet halls within this skyline-defining architectural marvel.



we at Citrus Leisure are dedicated to crafting an out-of-this-world experience that will showcase our expertise in delivering exceptional Sri Lankan hospitality."

Citrus Leisure PLC has firmly established itself in the hospitality sector over the past 12 years and is committed to delivering a one-of-a-kind F&B and hospitality experience. As it ventures into this new endeavour, Citrus is poised to redefine luxury and create unforgettable memories for visitors.

As guests step into the Lotus Tower, they will be captivated by a culinary experience that features cuisines from around the world, impeccable service, and breath-taking views. Mr. Chandana Talwatte, Chief Executive Officer of Citrus Leisure PLC, said "Having secured this prestigious contract to manage and operate leisure services at this iconic regional landmark,

Citrus Leisure PLC owns and manages a chain of distinctive luxury resorts, hotels, restaurants, pubs in Sri Lanka, and aims to provide the ultimate and most memorable hospitality and travel experiences in the Island. Citrus Leisure PLC presently owns and operates; Citrus Waskaduwa, a 150-room 5-star luxury resort on the lazy West Coast of Sri Lanka; Citrus Hikkaduwa, a 90-room resort situated in the hip and happening beach town of Hikkaduwa on the Island's South Coast; The Steuart by Citrus, a luxury Boutique Business Hotel situated in the historic heart of Colombo, capturing the mystery of a bygone colonial age, dating back to 1835; iconic restaurants and cafes, including & Co. Pub & Kitchen at The Steuart by Citrus, Ceylon Curry Club and the Heladiv Tea Club in Colombo and Galle.



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Manoj Mathew - Senior Vice President Operations Hospitality Division of Tamara Leisure Experiences

TTA BULLETIN

Manoj Mathew, a Taj Veteran with over 34 years of service with the Taj Group of Hotels has taken over as Vice President Operations at Tamara Leisure.

A Science Graduate from the Steel City of Bhilai, Mr. Mathew went to earn a Hotel Management Diploma from the first institute of Hotel Management in South East Asia. Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology & Applied Nutrition (IHMCTAN), Mumbai.

Having joined Taj Group in 1986, Mathew has had a varied and exciting journey which has taken him from Kerala to Gujarat and from Zambia to Sri Lanka. He has established his credentials as an expert in business turnaround and a curator of unique guest experiences.

A thought-leader with a strong value



Manoj Mathew

system, Mr. Mathew is the Past President for SKAL International (an Association of Travel and Tourism Professionals) in Bangalore. He is also a Founding Member of Karnataka Tourism Society (KTS) and presently the Joint Secretary of KTS 2023-25. He is also the Chairman of the Expert Committee on Hospitality, Travel & Tourism and Wellness in Bangalore Chamber of Industries and Commerce (BCIC).

An avid traveler, nature lover and disciple of global cuisine, he maintains a synergetic balance between his professional commitments and personal passions.

Minor Hotels Welcomes Patrik Ilstam as General Manager of Thailand's New Luxury Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort and Villas

TTA BULLETIN

Minor Hotels announces the appointment of Patrik Ilstam as General Manager of Anantara Koh Yao Yai Resort and Villas, a brand-new luxury resort with a collection of 148 rooms, suites and villas on Thailand's stunning island of Koh Yao Yai, effective from 1st August 2023.



Patrik Ilstam

Minor family and to our leadership team in the region. With his extensive experience, passion for service, and commitment to sustainability, we are confident that he will establish Anantara's newest resort in Thailand as a preeminent destination for families and couples looking for a private island-style experience in a stunning natural setting only a 45-minute boat ride from Phuket," said William Costley, Senior Vice President, Operations (Asia) for Minor Hotels.

"I am very excited to join Anantara Koh Yao Yai – a spectacular new signature resort with extensive luxury offerings, wellness facilities and never before seen family and children's amenities on one of Thailand's last untouched islands. I look forward to working together with the amazing team here to create memorable experiences for our guests and contribute to Thailand's reputation as one of the world's major tourism hubs," Patrik added.

A Swedish national, Patrik is also fluent in Danish, Norwegian, English and Thai and holds a diploma from International Tourism & Hotel Management School (Thailand). In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family and pursuing hobbies that range from aerospace technology to travel.

An experienced pre-opening hotelier, Patrik has held various senior management roles in international five-star hotels in Southeast Asia over the last twenty years. Most recently he served as the General Manager at Burasari Phuket Resort, where he steered the property through the challenges of the pandemic and initiated the 'Green Committee' to implement sustainable operational goals and procedures. His efforts earned the property the prestigious Green Hotel Gold Level award.

Patrik has a rich background in operations, having started his career in various rooms division roles with Marriott International and Starwood Hotels & Resorts in Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam. He was also involved in several hotel and resort pre-opening operations, such as Sheraton Grand Danang Resort and Sheraton Hoi An Tam Ky, both in Vietnam; and Le Meridien Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia.

"We are delighted to welcome Patrik to the

Anura Dewapura appointed Mount Lavinia Hotel Group COO

TTA BULLETIN

Anura Dewapura, an industry professional has been appointed as the Chief Operating Officer of the Mount Lavinia Hotel Group. With over four decades of experience and having worked in over 18 countries, Dewapura is a native Sri Lankan who has spent most of his life working overseas.



Anura Dewapura

"I am excited to be back in Sri Lanka and look forward to this new chapter as we are in an opportune position to rebuild and reintroduce some of the iconic features, facilities and services that the Mount Lavinia Hotel Group has to offer" said Dewapura.

In this capacity, he will oversee the overall profitability, operations, performance, and strategic direction of the properties and the catering division of the Group. His leadership style, rooted in transformation and purpose, combined with his core values, empathy, and strategic acumen, has contributed to numerous successes in the industry, including his previous tenure with MLH from 2008-2012.

With a background in managing luxury properties across the globe, he is welcoming the challenge of undertaking this new role as areas such as strategic planning and development are some of his core strengths.

A career in hotel chains across Asia, Europe, North America, Middle East, Caribbean and Australia has afforded Dewapura with the global vision combined with a local mission to make the business a success.

With an aim to highlight the iconic MLH as a flagship property on the outskirts of the city, "we must aim to bring people in for its great historical value, superior levels of service excellence and modern product innovation" said Dewapura.

The team is the backbone of the property and there is a need to ensure overall training and product knowledge is at its highest level while they adapt to new technological trends, and all facilities on offer live up to the expectations of the discerning traveler.

Anton Perera and Aravinda Premarathna join Clarks Hotels & Resorts

TTA BULLETIN

Anton Perera was recently appointed as the Head of Operations / Sales & Marketing for Sri Lanka, the Maldives and International



Anton Perera

On completing his Hotel Management Diploma from the Claremont Hotel school in Sri Lanka he gained experience in multiple areas of the hotel industry and eventually worked his way to becoming a General Manager.

Perera has worked overseas in the Middle East, Asia, Europe and the UK with global hotel chains such as the Hilton, Sheraton and Forte Grand. His multi lingual skills are also an advantage as he is fluent in English, Sinhala and German.

Aravinda Premarathna was appointed head of Revenue Distribution / Digital Marketing / Sales for Sri Lanka, Maldives and International.



Aravinda Premarathna

With over 15 years of experience in Sales and Marketing Aravinda has a degree in Business Management from the University of Sunderland followed by an MBA in Marketing where he specialized in Digital Marketing and International Marketing from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in London.

His professional journey has been nothing short of diverse as he has had the opportunity of working across multiple areas of the hospitality industry, including sales, marketing and technology solutions.

His experience spans from working at STAAH Channel Manager where he managed a portfolio of 4000+ hotels with local OTA, contributed to corporate sales at Best Western Hotel Colombo and handled digital marketing for a luxury boutique hotel chain in Sri Lanka.

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TTA BULLETIN

In a recent interview with Roberto Simone, General Manager of Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle, Sri Lanka, he stressed that Sri Lanka is moving in the right direction to attract investment which is a key factor in economic recovery. “I am witness to the synergy between the burgeoning tourism industry and the flourishing investment landscape in this island nation. Sri Lanka's remarkable transformation into a premier destination for tourists and a haven for investors has been a testament to its untapped potential and the relentless commitment of its people”



Roberto Simone

led to numerous projects encompassing luxury resorts, eco-friendly accommodations, adventure tourism initiatives, and sustainable ventures. This has brought Sri Lanka's potential to the forefront of global attention. These investments, underpinned by the commitment to responsible and sustainable practices, not only create remarkable experiences for tourists but also contribute to the long-term prosperity of the island”

Strategic infrastructure projects are also important for the

overall growth of tourism, Modernized transportation networks and sustainable energy facilities, are just some of the areas that are critical to make the investment climate attractive while ensuring a sustainable future.

“As the General Manager of Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle, my role is not only about providing exceptional experiences to our guests but also about contributing to the growth of Sri Lanka's tourism and investment sectors. We at Anantara Tangalle are dedicated to the principles of sustainability and responsible tourism. We strive to leave a positive impact on the environment and the local community while providing our guests with unforgettable memories”

Anantara Tangalle, committed to responsible tourism and environmental stewardship, has implemented a range of sustainability initiatives that underlines its dedication to protecting the pristine beauty of Sri Lanka while offering memorable experiences to guests. “We have made significant strides in reducing our carbon footprint. Our resort has adopted eco-friendly practices, including energy-efficient lighting, renewable energy sources, and waste reduction programs”.

The sustainability initiatives are driven by the belief that there is a significant need to focus on both responsibility to the environment and the local community as this is integral to the success of the resort.

In conclusion, Simone said “the story of Sri Lanka's growth in tourism and investment is a testament to our resilience, unwavering determination, and boundless potential. Our journey continues, and with each step, we aspire to become an even more significant player on the global stage. Sri Lanka stands as a shining example of the harmonious coexistence of sustainable tourism and strategic investments, creating a thriving oasis that invites the world to explore, invest, and be inspired”

Tourism remains the heartbeat of Sri Lanka's economy, nestled in the Indian Ocean, it has emerged as a jewel for global travelers. “At Anantara Tangalle, we take immense pride in our role of showcasing the natural beauty, our pristine beaches, lush landscapes and warm, welcoming nature of our people. Our luxurious resort provides guests with a gateway to experience Sri Lanka's unparalleled wonders, and in the process, it generates employment, fosters cultural exchange, and contributes to the overall economic prosperity of our community” said Simone.

Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle with 120 rooms and 22 luxury Villas is a property spread across 22 acres of lush green landscapes overlooking the Indian ocean. Equipped with all modern amenities, the resort is a haven for holiday makers with an exceptional culinary offering to cater to the tastes and demands of the discerning traveler. “At Anantara Tangalle we take pride in offering guests indigenous experiences coupled excellence in service standards and the highest level of Sri Lankan hospitality” said Simone

When focusing on the aspect of investment, being in the hospitality sector for over 25 years, Simone has simultaneously focused on operational and investment asset management within traditional and alternative real estate mixed use projects.

“In parallel, the investment climate in Sri Lanka has experienced a significant surge, driven by the government's steadfast commitment to facilitating and streamlining procedures making it conducive for foreign investors. The Colombo Port City, a groundbreaking initiative, is a testament to becoming a regional financial hub, rivaling established giants in the region.”

He went on to say that “the tie between tourism and investment is a symbiotic one. The influx of tourists, paired with the favorable investment environment, has

Connaissance De Ceylan and Hidden Trails welcomes Special Interest Australian Group

TTA BULLETIN

Connaissance De Ceylan in partnership with Hidden Trails Sri Lanka have opened up Sri Lanka to Australian tourists with an itinerary showcasing the best of the island.



learning to play the Ukulele while they travel from location to location.

“Sri Lanka's - The Amazing Adventure” was put together recognizing the Australian holidaymakers love for beaches, taste for local foods, a sense of adventure and connecting with local communities.

The 16 night / 17 day itinerary is ideally suited to escape the Australian winter but can be easily adapted to cater for singles, couples, families or groups wanting to travel anytime of the year.

In line with the Australian sense of fun and love of music, a group of 21 Australians are currently travelling around Sri Lanka

On Tuesday the 24th of Oct the group plans to play a few songs on the train from Nanu Oya Station to Hatton Station with local musicians and at the end of their holiday (Sat 28th of Oct) they will be visiting a local school, performing for the children and donating their instruments to the local school.

Tour Leader - Stewart Kreltszheim who was born in Kandy and now lives in Regional Victoria says “we are constantly putting on additional tours to cater for the ever-increasing demand by Aussies to visit the country”. The group is having so much fun and really immersing themselves in the local culture.



India welcomes over 1000 delegates to PATA Travel Mart 2023

TTA BULLETIN

PATA Travel Mart 2023 (PTM 2023), generously hosted by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has attracted over 1000 delegates from 46 global destinations. The delegate numbers embraced 159 sellers from 92 organizations and 15 destinations, along with 196 buyers from 191 organizations and 38 source markets.



of Tourism, Government of India, taking place at the Ashok Hotel.

The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) was also pleased to welcome over 350 local and international students and young tourism professionals. The students from 10 local and international universities are part of the PATA Youth Symposium.

“The Ministry of Tourism for the Government of India has been one of our most valuable members and active partner for more than 60 years. Based on their commitment and enthusiasm in organising PATA Travel Mart, we at PATA are excited to facilitate engagement between India and the rest of the world through this event,” said PATA Chair Peter Semone. “Even after a three-year hiatus in-person, PATA Travel Mart continues to provide unparalleled networking and contracting opportunities for our delegates from all over the world.”

PTM 2023 officially opened in New Delhi, India with the PTM 2023 Inauguration Ceremony & Welcome Reception, presided by Sh. G Kishen Reddy, Minister

Some of the speakers at the event included Aashish Gupta, Consulting CEO, FAITH; Supawan Teerarat, Senior Vice President, MICE Capability and Innovation, Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB); Jyothi Varma, Consultant for Travel Related Services Online And Offline; Noredah Othman, CEO, Sabah Tourism Board; Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman, Indian Convention Promotion Bureau; Peter Richards, Project Manager, Tourlink SwitchAsia Programme; Prof. Monika Prakash, Nodal Officer, Central Nodal Agency – Sustainable Tourism; Alisara Sivayathorn, CEO, Sivatel Bangkok Hotel; Kanokwan Homcha-aim, Cluster Naturalist, Anantara Layan Phuket Resort; Prof. Veena Sikri, Convenor, South Asia Women's Network; Shradha Shrestha, Manager, Tourism Branding, Marketing & Promotion- Nepal Tourism Board; Rupesh Kumar, Coordinator, Responsible Tourism Mission Kerala; Dr Manoj Kumar Singh, Nodal Officer, Responsible Tourism Madhya Pradesh and Dr. Shikha Jain, Founder Director, DRONAH

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Experience Celestial Bliss with Citrus.

Citrus Hotels, in a milestone partnership with Colombo Lotus Tower, will soon deliver an experience unlike any other. Nestled majestically amidst the clouds and stars, atop the tallest self-supported structure in South Asia (356.3m), Citrus Hotels introduces three exceptional venues curated especially for those that desire an out-of-this-world experience.



blue Orbit

Enjoy an exceptional gastronomic journey through a variety of global cuisines expertly crafted by our world-class chefs as you revel in the stunning 360-degree view of the city and beyond at Sri Lanka's very first revolving restaurant (234m).

cosmic

Elevate your events at our stunning Banquet Hall. Treat the guests at your wedding or corporate event to an unforgettable experience set against the stunning panoramic views of beautiful Colombo (229m).



MOON WALK

Indulge in delectable food and drink as you dance the night away among the stars at our signature bar, soon to be Colombo's most sought-after address for an infinitely great experience (224m).

Opening Soon

For more information and inquiries, please contact supun@citruslt.com

Colombo Lotus Tower, No. 320, D.R. Wijewardena Mawatha, Colombo 10, Sri Lanka.

THE CLARKS

HOTELS & RESORTS



Pioneering in making Unique Destinations

We focus on improving the quality of hospitality and tourism in undiscovered locations. Through our hotels, we help put the lesser-known destinations on the tourism map of the globe

With a history spanning over a century of glorious tradition, this is the story of an Indian business house that, to date, embodies the unique ethos of its birthplace, Varanasi, India. Today, the Group is a leading player in textiles, manufacturing, international trade and hospitality, consisting of companies such as Banaras House, Indian Textiles and The Clarks Group of Hotels, founded by **Babu Brijplal Das Ji and Shri L.P Gupta**.

A long journey began from just simple beginnings in **1947** with the first **Clarks Hotel in Varanasi**. And as we say, a journey matures with age and experience - so the story continues.

The Clarks Hotels & Resorts, started by the promoters of the parental legacy of "Clarks Group", pioneered the luxury hotel segment in India with landmarks like Clarks Shiraz, Clarks Avadh, Clarks Amer, Clarks Khajuraho and Clarks Varanasi.

Today, The Clarks Hotels and Resorts has their Head Office in **Gurgaon, New Delhi** that covers all areas of expertise. We have established a corporate office out of **Bangalore** and a Satellite office in **Chennai**. The Clarks Hotels & Resorts has also established a new corporate office in **Colombo's CBD**. We have launched our 2nd property in **Sri Lanka**, which is also located in a picturesque environment amidst some tea plantations - "**The Celestial Villas & Suites by The Clarks**".

At 'The Clarks', we aim to provide our guests with progressive **hospitality with an Indian soul**. We aim to be modern and forward-thinking but always keep our ethos and roots in mind. We strive to bring to our guests a true sense of Indian hospitality that blends with a touch of the local culture. From the aroma, the food and the hospitality, we want our guests both locally and internationally to experience true Indian Hospitality," said Anoop Kumar, Chairman. The Clarks now have over **115 hotels** in their portfolio spread across an array of brands, hotels ranging from premium leisure to economy business and another **47 confirmed openings** within the next **12 months**.

And by the year **2025**, **The Clarks Hotels and Resort's** goal is to have a Global presence with over **200 properties** worldwide under The Clarks Brand. In **2006**, the Hotel Asset management concept began, and the company worked extensively to be relevant to their partners in line with the vision of **The Clarks Hotels & Resorts** in the evolution of the hotel business. "We were exploring every avenue to be true to our promises to our owners and partners both in India and internationally. Therefore, we welcome interested Hotel owners in Sri Lanka, Maldives and other countries looking to manage their hotel for them." **The Clarks Hotels & Resorts** are encouraging hotel owners in partnerships for management and franchise agreements.



Mr. Anoop Kumar
Chairman

He is a hotelier, an author and a motivational speaker, he is from the promoter family of the Clarks Group of Hotels. His first Book My Abstract Thoughts has been a best seller on Amazon, he has also studied under various coaches like Deepak Chopra and Tony Robbins. He also conducts motivational speeches and seminars during his many travels internationally to CEO's, Entrepreneurs and anyone who has the desire to excel in hospitality management education similarly.



Mr. Aryavir Kumar
Managing Director

He studied hospitality management at the Glion Institute of Higher Education Switzerland. Carrying forward the Legacy, he is the man behind the company's growth and the driving force. His approach is extremely aggressive, and the vision is clear "The Clarks Hotels and Resorts is to be present in every Continent and be the feeling of vacation to all". An entrepreneur who launched OxyPure, India's first oxygen bar, is a professional Golfer who has represented India in many international events.



Mr. Rahul Deb Banerjee
Vice President

With more than 2 decades of experience with renowned hotel groups such as the Leela, ITC

Welcome Group and Gemini International. His successful stint with The Clarks Hotels & Resorts has risen him up the ladder. He is a result-driven hotelier with great leadership qualities. His passion has uplifted the competition in today's hospitality industry, and he is responsible for the chain's operations.



Mr. Rupam Das
Director
Business Development

He is a seasoned professional with an experience close to two and a half decades, having worked in different domains with various hospitality. He is an avid traveller & cooking enthusiast. He is responsible for overlooking organizational expansion, strategic alliances with hotel development. He is one of the key drivers of growth & development of the brand The Clarks Hotels & Resorts pan India.



Mr. Alam Khan
Vice President
Sales

He is a highly diligent person with good Communication Skills, Organizational Capabilities, Leadership Qualities and Excellent Relationships in the Industry. Over 20 years of experience with established brands like ITDC, IHG, Nikko and Sarovar. An established record of decision-making and experience in all phases of management systems, personnel management, guest services and overall support functions. He is responsible for Sales, Revenue and Marketing for the company. Alam loves cooking and reading, his mantra is Creativity, Relationship with Suppliers and Market Knowledge solves ever.



Mr. Gabriel Gunsekere
Head Development (Int'l)

He is an accomplished hospitality and tourism professional with wide experience in Hotels, Tourism and Aviation, totalling 3 decades in the Middle East, South Asia and South-East Asia. Multi-lingual Sri Lankan and of Austrian descent, he has worked with Accor, Swiss-Belhotel Group, The Kingsbury Hotel Colombo, etc. Gabriel also holds a Pilot's License and has followed several other trainings with Qatar Tourism, Accor Academy and The World Tourism Organization.

THE CLARKS



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VILLAS & SUITES
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Experience Sri Lanka with
The Clarks Hotels & Resorts

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with us



Albatross Villas & Suites by The Clarks

The boutique resort has spacious rooms with panoramic views of the scenic mountains, Victoria Reservoir and the Victoria Golf Course.



Celestial Villas & Suites by The Clarks

Luxurious Individual Villas with private pools resting in the lush green environment whilst creating an everlasting impact amidst nature.

Explore
Sri Lanka,
amidst nature

The brand caters to the boutique and Luxury homestay segment for those who like to be adventurous and want to explore an enriching experience. The "Villas & Suites by The Clarks" are mainly situated in exotic locations with authentic local food and personalized services, with a relaxing and rejuvenating experience. It marks the start of a journey that will alter the travel experiences inside India and overseas.

Albatross Villas & Suites By The Clarks is certainly a beautiful Boutique Villa Resort in Kandy, Sri Lanka and is the first of The Clarks Hotels & Resorts in Sri Lanka, which is in walking distance to the beautiful Victoria Golf Course. It is perched on top of "The Coconut Hill" and has a backdrop of Pidurutalagala Peak. The property is in close proximity to an 18-hole Golf Course with breathtaking views of the hills and the Victoria Reservoir. It is centrally located near the temple of the Tooth Relic in Kandy and the Pallekelle International Cricket Stadium. The magnificent suite boasts a private balcony, jacuzzi, rain shower, and butler service and is equipped with other modern amenities. They have an in-house bar serving strong and exotic mocktails and cocktails. The multi-cuisine restaurant located on the premises offers Indian, Sri Lankan and international cuisines.

The Clarks Hotels & Resorts has launched its 2nd property in Sri Lanka, which is located in a picturesque environment amidst some tea plantations - "*Celestial Villas & Suites by The Clarks, Kandy*". The Celestial Hills, beautifully surrounded by a lush green environment and breathtaking mountain views, comprises 11 individual Villas, including 9 Single Room Villas and 2 Family Villas, comprising of 2 rooms each.

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

It is indeed a pleasure to note that Sri Lanka Tourism is witnessing a steady growth in visitor arrivals amidst some very challenging times in the recent past.

As the President of the Tourist Hotels Association, representing the industry at the World Travel Market in the UK will afford us the opportunity to regain visitor confidence by reassuring our trade partners that Sri Lanka is safe and ready to welcome visitors while highlighting the many innovative products and services the destination has to offer.

This increase in visitor arrivals this year can be attributed to various factors, including the collective efforts of both the public and private sector in creating awareness through numerous road shows and global familiarization tours along with a strong marketing initiatives that have showcased our diverse landscapes and rich culture.

It is an added bonus that Sri Lanka with its rich culture, heritage, diverse tourism offering and warm hospitality, is also home to some of the most iconic and historic properties spread across the country. A culmination of all factors has played a pivotal role in this success story.

Sri Lanka's hotel industry offers quality accommodation at different price points, giving visitors an opportunity to select their stay as per a budget.

From unique boutique properties, villas, bungalows, camps, lodges to stand alone small, medium and large-scale properties including International brands are available for visitor stays on the beach, wildlife parks, cultural triangle, hill country, ancient cities and of course in the commercial capital of Colombo.

We have also embraced sustainable tourism, focusing on preserving our natural resources and supporting local communities. This commitment to responsible tourism has garnered the attention of conscientious travelers worldwide.

The Government of Sri Lanka has imposed a ban on the import of single use plastic such as a measure to protect the environment. It is expected that similar initiatives will be introduced in the near future. In an effort to give back to the community, it is with great pride we state that over 70% of the raw material is sourced locally by most hoteliers for their daily operations. THASL believe that Tourism industry stakeholders can contribute immensely to make this planet a better place to live in!

Tourism is poised to be the leading foreign exchange earner to the country by end of 2023. We are confident the industry will



M. Shanthikumar

meet the Government expectations.

M. Shanthikumar
President THASL

Sri Lanka's image as a 5-star island is well known. Due to our own internal issues, the hotel properties that complement the island's natural and cultural

wonders were not projected to the world, and many thought of Sri Lanka as a 3-star destination. It is nice to see the hoteliers getting together to position Sri Lanka as a luxury destination at the global stage, by highlighting the remarkable properties that have been lovingly developed and nurtured over the years. Ever since my father ventured into the industry over 50 years ago, we have pioneered many unique concepts and continue to be leaders in sustainable tourism. Jetwing Vil Uyana in Sigiriya is one of our most ambitious projects that has been recognised as a global example in sustainable hotel development since its opening in 2006. My wish is for all Sri Lankan hoteliers and tourism stakeholders to have confidence in our destination, our products, and our people – together with our international partners, we can work towards transforming Sri Lanka's image so that discerning travellers will identify our paradise island as a luxury travel destination. This will go a long way for our country and its people, as we navigate through these challenging times.

Ayubowan! (May you live long!)

Hiran Cooray
Chairman
Jetwing Symphony PLC
The Lighthouse Hotel PLC

Rediscovering Sri Lanka at World Travel Market 2023



Hiran Cooray

At World Travel Market 2023, we proudly unveil Sri Lanka's resounding resurgence as a top destination for UK and European travellers. Over the past year, we have witnessed an incredible revival, symbolised by the milestone arrival of our one-millionth traveller in September 2023. This remarkable comeback reaffirms Sri Lanka's standing as a 'jewel' in the Indian Ocean, offering a symphony of experiences that transcend the ordinary.

The United Kingdom remains one of Sri Lanka's top three key markets and we are poised to reach, if not surpass, pre-pandemic tourist arrival numbers, attesting to Sri Lanka's unwavering allure.

The collective industry commitment to sustainability and innovation is not just reviving tourism but inspiring a new era of exploration that respects, preserves and celebrates the soul of our destination. It is here that adventure finds its home, culture

finds its roots and travellers discover not just a destination, but an enduring connection. Sri Lanka has become the prime choice for travellers in the region, providing unparalleled experiences, genuine warmth and compelling value.

As we redefine travel norms and co-create a new era of responsible exploration, Sri Lanka stands travel-ready! We invite you to be a part of an extraordinary journey of revival and exploration.

Suresh Rajendra
President
Leisure Group
John Keells Holdings

Sri Lanka and the hope for tourism

Sri Lanka has endured its most challenging five years since independence,

beginning from the 2019 Easter Sunday attacks, then the COVID pandemic and the country's economic crisis, which have together had a massive impact on the country's tourism industry. The industry is finally bouncing back, albeit slowly, and Sri Lanka is gearing up to reclaim its position as one of the most sought after destinations in the world', says Chandana Talwatte, Executive Director/ CEO of Citrus Leisure PLC.

'We are planning on securing and improving our current markets in Europe, CIS countries, China & India. Maintaining high standards of service, ensuring that all tourists have positive experiences, and encouraging repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth is our end goal. We are positive that the upcoming winter season will be a potential turning point for the tourism industry in Sri Lanka, indicating optimism for its recovery and growth.

Chandana Talwatte
Executive Director/ Chief Executive Officer
Citrus Leisure PLC

"In the opening chapter of the 2023/2024 financial year, both Sri Lanka and Browns Hotels & Resorts have witnessed promising strides, emerging from four years of persistent challenges with steadfast resilience. We anticipate a gradual leveling of price escalation over the next 12 to 18 months, providing a stable environment for businesses and travelers.

The surge in airline bookings aligning with pre-pandemic levels is a positive indicator, signaling a return to normalcy. It is imperative that Sri Lanka proactively manage our supply chain, ensuring seamless operations to meet our ambitious target of welcoming 5 million tourists annually.



Suresh Rajendra



Eksath Wijeratne

Eksath Wijeratne
Chief Executive Officer of Browns Hotels and Resorts

Sri Lanka's Comeback: Renewed Tourism, Renewed Hope

In a testament to our unwavering spirit and resilience, I am filled with immense optimism for the resurgence of Sri

Lanka's tourism industry. I foresee a robust return to the remarkable levels of 2018 in the upcoming year. Despite the recent challenges that have tested our nation, the magnetic charm of Sri Lanka still beckons travelers from every corner of the globe.

Tourism stands as a vital lifeline for Sri Lanka's economy, nurturing local enterprises, creating employment opportunities, and bolstering the country's foreign exchange. Traditionally, as the third-largest source of foreign exchange earnings, it plays a pivotal role in sustaining the nation's income. It is imperative that all industry stakeholders, from major players to the smallest contributors, collaborate closely to drive this revival. United efforts are essential to ensure a steady influx of income from international visitors, thus rebuilding our economy and securing the nation's prosperity.

As a nation, Sri Lanka has embraced strategic initiatives, reinforced safety protocols, and focused on a profound commitment to sustainable tourism, instilling confidence in the industry's revival. Sri Lanka's timeless attractions, encompassing its rich cultural heritage, pristine beaches, lush landscapes, and the exceptional warmth of our people, remain powerful magnets for visitors. I firmly believe that we are on the cusp of witnessing Sri Lanka's inspiring triumph as it regains its well-deserved prominence in the global tourism arena.

Rohan Karr
President – The Colombo City Tourist Hotels Association (TCCTHA)
Managing Director – Hayleys Leisure



Rohan Karr

Cont on pg 16

Tea Trails, Hatton



Luxury Tea Bungalows in Sri Lanka.

A Relais and Chateaux Resort. Listed in the Condé Nast Traveler Gold List 2023.

Steeped in history and immersed in the verdant scenery of Sri Lanka's UNESCO World Heritage central highlands, Ceylon Tea Trails is the perfect blend of past and present. Perched in an altitude of 1250 meters, the five historic tea planters bungalows embody natural hospitality and offers you an idyllic space to rejuvenate amidst emerald tea carpeted mountains.

Jetwing Lighthouse, Galle

Iconic Heritage Luxury in the tropical south.

The influence of the world shaped the very fabric of Galle. From the iconic Dutch Fortress to the traditional fishing villages with its cross cultural charm have since extended in to the nature of legendary hospitality and has been brought to life in an architectural masterpiece designed by Geoffrey Bawa.

Jetwing Light House is situated on the southern coastal line in Sri Lanka.



Jetwing Saman Villas, Bentota



The 1st boutique resort in Sri Lanka.

A unique and undeniably romantic boutique hotel that pushes the boundaries of luxury.

Gloriously aqua hued waters of the Indian Ocean gently lap fine golden sandy shores of the southern coast of Sri Lanka, lies the Saman Villas.

Galle Face Hotel, Colombo

Timeless Grandeur! Over 150 years of rich history and legendary traditions.

Sri Lanka's iconic landmark, the Galle Face Hotel is situated in the heart of Colombo along the sea front and facing the Galle Face Green. One of the oldest hotels east of Suez.



This luxury hotel embraces its rich history and legendary traditions, utilizing them to create engaging, immersive experiences that resonate with old and new generations of travelers alike.

Heritance Kandalama

Heritance Kandalama, formerly known as the Kandalama Hotel, is a luxury five-star hotel in Kandalama, Sri Lanka, approximately 11 km (6.8 mi) south-east of Sigiriya. The hotel was built in 1991 and designed by Geoffrey Bawa...

Bawa was interested in developing a spatial and visual sequence of entry

that culminated in the revelation of the distant view of the monument of Sigiriya only after entry to the hotel lobby. One of the hotel's dominant design features is the large, cave-like porte-cochère abutting the western side of the cliff around which the hotel wraps. A large slanted canopy that angles down towards the entrance to an enclosed tunnel-like walkway, with a boulder-lined wall, with an expansive open-air lobby and panoramic view northward over the Kandalama Reservoir.

Heritance Kandalama is shaped like the outspread wings of a bird, following the line of the cliff from which it seems to emerge. The hotel is a staggering 1km from end to end, and rises up seven floors, yet appears to be a perfectly natural extension of the mountainside.



Heritance Tea Factory

A theme hotel, encompassing the rich heritage of tea production and return to the old world charm of then Ceylon. Offers you the ultimate colonial style stay experience, enhanced by the tea plantations and the misty mountains.

Heritance Tea Factory is perched on the edge of a steep slope in Kandapola, a quiet village near Nuwara Eliya, the highest town in Sri Lanka, and offers spectacular views across the valley. Its picturesque and remote setting is perfect for those seeking total escape from urban life



Mt. Lavinia Hotel, Colombo

The very best in colonial luxury and a breathtaking view of the Indian ocean.

With a history spanning over 210 years, Mount Lavinia Hotel Colombo is one of the oldest hotels in Sri Lanka. This premier colonial heritage hotel in Colombo has earned a reputation over the years for its magnificent structure and ambiance, the old world charm which harks back to the grandeur of old Ceylon, a romantic legacy left by the



colonial Governor General who used it as his residence, the exceptional service offered by its well-trained staff and its popularity as a venue for weddings.

Read the Mt. Lavinia hotel history book and it will unravel the story behind this magnificent hotel.

Cont from pg 14

Voice of The Hotels Association...

Embracing Growth & delivering Exceptional Experience...

It brings me immense joy to witness the positive resurgence of tourism in our beautiful country after facing multiple challenges in recent years.

Despite the setbacks & tough journey, the current scenario paints a much brighter picture as tourist arrivals have shown significant improvement.

As we approach the winter of 2023/24, optimism is in the air, fueled by the increasing inquiries for this period. The emergence of new hotel properties, including those from international chains, is a testament to the growing confidence of international travelers in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka's tourism industry has taken



Chamin Wickramasinghe

commendable steps to enhance the product offerings, catering specifically to the international market. This proactive approach reflects the industry's commitment to delivering exceptional experiences and ensuring the satisfaction of our guests.

Looking ahead, we are enthusiastic about achieving the targets set for 2023/24. The collaborative efforts and resilience displayed by all involved have played a crucial role in steering us towards this positive trajectory. We express our heartfelt gratitude to all who maintained confidence in us during the challenging times of the past couple of years.

As we move forward, our commitment is to extend even better products and services to our guests. Together, let's continue working towards making Sri Lanka a preferred

destination for travelers around the globe.

Chamin Wickramasinghe
Vice President – THASL
CEO/Director, Thema Collection

Ayurveda – Hela Wedakama as an Immune Booster

The Great King Ravana who lived 5,000 years ago, is considered the father of Sri Lankan indigenous medicine (Hela Wedakama). King Ravana invented Arka Shastra, which he has compiled every herb, its usage and dosage revealing cures to some complex diseases. He is also the author of Arka-prakasa, a work on tinctures and extracts and Nadi-pariksha (pulse-examination) which is quite popular today. Presently, Sri Lankan Ayurveda has become popular in the global context of alternative medicine and providing wellness therapy.

Ayurveda is a holistic system of medicine focusing on the balance of the three Dosha, Vata, Pitta and Kapha. The balance of



Asoka Hettigoda

Dosha is achieved through yoga, meditation, health food and treatments that strengthen the mind, body and soul. There are more than 24,000 registered Ayurvedic Doctors spread throughout the country practising Traditional Hela Wedakama and Ayurveda in

Sri Lanka.

With more than 200 Ayurveda resorts, visitors have a good selection of treatment centres where most well-known resorts are located in the Southern Coast of Sri Lanka while others are spread throughout the island.

Combined with other tourist attractions such as wildlife, culture, and environment, I believe Sri Lanka is the best island for an Ayurvedic immune boosting holiday.

Asoka Hettigoda
Vice President THASL

Taj Bentota Resort & Spa, Srilanka Wins Two Prestigious Awards At SATA awards 2023

TTA BULLETIN

In a double win for Taj Bentota Resort & Spa, Srilanka at the South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) 2023, the resort earned a Silver Award in the 'Leading Beach Resort' and 'Leading Wedding Hotel/Resort' category.



The 7th edition of SATA saw a total of six South Asian countries competing, with more than 750 venues nominated for the awards, evaluated by an esteemed panel of international industry jury members at preliminary sessions conducted across the Maldives, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh. The glittering event, celebrated travel, tourism and hospitality icons that have established global standards, while empowering local communities.

Speaking on the occasion, Sibi Mathew, General Manager, Taj Bentota Resort & Spa, Srilanka said, "This award is testament to our unwavering commitment of providing exceptional facilities and service to our guests. Inspired by its iconic cliff-side location on the breathtaking Southwest Sri Lankan coast, the resort is energized to continue crafting extraordinary guest experiences, from idyllic beach getaways to spectacular weddings."

He added, "As custodians of a precious eco-system and a thriving community in the Indian Ocean, Taj Bentota's exceptional staff remains driven to create greener, safer, responsible and extraordinary travel experiences."

The award also underscores Taj Bentota's commitment to sustainability and responsible tourism. Having recently received the EarthCheck Platinum

recertification, the resort has doubled down on efforts to minimize environmental footprint while creating unexpected memories for beach vacationers. The science-backed recertification is in line with the global benchmark set by its parent company IHCL which has 77 EarthCheck certified hotels including the largest number of Platinum certified hotels in the tourism industry, anywhere in the world.

Established in 1903, Taj is the Indian Hotels Company Limited's (IHCL) iconic brand for the world's most discerning travellers seeking authentic experiences in luxury. It has been rated as the World's Strongest Hotel Brand by Brand Finance in 2022 for the second year in a row. It has also landed at number one, for the third time consecutively, on the list of the Strongest Indian Brands by Brand Finance in their 'India 100 2022' report. From world-renowned landmarks to modern business hotels, idyllic beach resorts to authentic Grand Palaces, each Taj hotel offers an unrivalled fusion of warm Indian hospitality, world-class service and modern luxury.

The unique portfolio comprises hotels across the globe including presence in India, North America, United Kingdom, Africa, Middle East, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Nepal.

ONYX Hospitality Group Shines Bright with Multiple Prestigious Awards at Luxe Global Awards 2023

TTA BULLETIN

ONYX Hospitality Group, a reputable force in Southeast Asia's hospitality industry with over five decades of hospitality management experience, is thrilled to announce that its esteemed Amari Brand has been recognised with several prestigious awards at the recent Luxe Global Awards 2023, held at Amari Bangkok (formerly Amari Watgate Bangkok) in Thailand on Saturday, September 30. These accolades celebrate Amari's unwavering dedication to excellence in the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) industry and its commitment to conducting business with a strong focus on environmental responsibility. Simultaneously, the Shama Brand Services Apartment has also garnered awards highlighting its dominance in the service apartment sector.



The awards received by Amari Brand fall into two significant categories. Firstly, Amari has been honoured for its outstanding contributions to the MICE industry, where it has consistently set benchmarks for excellence. Additionally, the brand was lauded for its commitment to conducting business with a strong emphasis on environmental responsibility, reflecting its dedication to sustainable practices.

Not to be outdone, the Shama Brand has asserted its prominence in the competitive service apartment landscape of the APAC region. These accolades reaffirm ONYX Hospitality Group's commitment to providing exceptional service and accommodations to its valued guests.

Looking forward to the future, ONYX Hospitality Group is excited to announce ambitious plans for the Shama Portfolio. In 2024, the group is gearing up to expand its

presence by adding five more locations, with a special focus on Malaysia and China. This strategic expansion reflects their confidence in the Shama Brand's growth potential and their commitment to offering top-tier service apartments in new and exciting destinations.

The remarkable achievements of Amari Brand, the Shama Brand, and Oriental Residence Bangkok were unveiled and celebrated at the prestigious ITB Asia 2023 event. The awards received by Amari Brand include: Amari Bangkok: Best Luxury MICE Hotel (Global), Best Luxury Sustainable Hotel (Global) Amari Don Muang Airport Bangkok: Best Luxury Conference and Event Hotel (Regional), Best Luxury Eco/Green Hotel (Continent), Best Luxury Airport Hotel (Global)

Oriental Residence Bangkok has received the following awards: Best Authentic Experience Hotel (Continent), Best Prime Location (Global), Best Luxury City Escape (Global), Best Luxury Private Residence (Global)

Meanwhile, the Shama Brand was recognised with the following awards: Shama Lakeview Asoke Bangkok: Best Luxury City Serviced Apartments (Continent), Best Luxury Business Serviced Apartments (Global), Best Luxury Hotel Residence (Global)



A 360° *Experience* at Ramada Colombo

Mastering the culinary magic and the art of hospitality, Ramada by Wyndham Colombo offers star-class luxury in the heart of Colombo. Catering to business and leisure travelers alike, Ramada Colombo truly offers a 360 experience.

- ▶ Spacious and modern-day rooms
- ▶ A range of restaurants serving flavours across the world
- ▶ Contemporary lounge bar
- ▶ Premium wellness therapies at AYU Balinese Spa
- ▶ Fully equipped gymnasium
- ▶ Blissful outdoors and pool
- ▶ Elegant banquet spaces to host events of any scale

the
GARDENIA
COFFEE SHOP

Alhambra

BAKED

Oasis Lounge
Spin your own tunes



TONE
fitness centre





Dotted along a palm-fringed stretch of unspoilt beach in Pottuvil and inspired by the intricate details of its surroundings, **Jetwing Surf** stands as one of Sri Lanka's leading eco-luxury beach resorts. Whether you choose to unwind by the infinity pool gazing at the ocean, embark on a thrilling wildlife adventure, catch the exhilarating waves at the world-renowned surf points or savour the flavours of our local cuisine, the 20 impeccably designed and sustainably built beach cabanas await to cradle you in comfort as you weave your east coast escape.



Nestled in a secluded bay known as the Pottuvil Point, where the rhythm of surf and sea harmonise to the melody of the swaying palms, **Kottukal Beach House by Jetwing** resonates the essence of island living amidst homely comforts. Comprising of two contemporary deluxe rooms and two chalets that look out over the azure ocean, this luxury villa is characterised by its expansive architecture, conveying an air of serenity and luxury, replete with the warmth of our authentic Sri Lankan hospitality. Just beyond our borders is a world of exhilarating experiences waiting to be discovered in the eastern corner of our island!



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Jetwing
HOTELS
SRI LANKA

TRULY THE HOME OF SRI LANKAN HOSPITALITY.



Scattered amidst the breathtaking backdrop of the Poonagala Mountain range, **Jetwing Kaduruketha** stands as Sri Lanka's pioneering agro-luxury resort. Embodying this legacy, the 25 private dwellings are inspired by the authentic charm of a traditional village home and offers personalized service, a glimpse into traditional agricultural practices, a world-class Sri Lankan dining experience and a host of excursions within the resort and beyond. Located in Wellawaya, a quiet town that is effortlessly accessible from the misty hills of Nuwara Eliya and Ella, Yala in the deep south, and the pristine beaches that stretch along the east, Jetwing Kaduruketha is the ideal haven that cocoons you in comfort as you embark on your island adventures.

A YEAR-ROUND SRI LANKAN DESTINATION

The East is a captivating year-round destination enticed by the promise of adventure, exotic cultures, diverse religions, and its spectacular wildlife. While the coast is widely popular for its world-renowned beaches and surf breaks including Arugam Bay, Whisky Point, and Pottuvil Point which are ideal for beginner, intermediate, and advanced surfers alike, this haven has unfurled its hidden treasures, welcoming contemporary seekers of wonder and inviting them to partake in a voyage of discovery that promises boundless marvels beyond surfing. Embark on a remarkable adventure to Kumana and Lahugala National Parks, where the untamed beauty of the wilderness awaits.

These lesser-explored parks offer an exciting glimpse into the plethora of wildlife including magnificent elephants, elusive leopards, and an array of exotic birds.

As you venture inland, you will uncover Wellawaya. A tranquil respite complemented by breathtaking views and a myriad of adventures, from chasing waterfalls to exciting hikes and encounters with the island's enthralling fauna. Come and experience the best of Sri Lanka and its eastern edge, embraced in the luxuries and warmth of our homes of authentic Sri Lankan hospitality.



Antyra Solutions Launches Hospitality Package Tailored for Small Businesses

TTA BULLETIN

Research is the most prominent part of the travel buying cycle, and today, it often takes place in the digital realm. This means that for a hospitality brand, discovery of the brand at the time of research creates top-of-funnel awareness. Whether someone is planning a family vacation, a solo adventure, or a business trip, their research journey typically starts with a simple query in a search engine or a browse through social media.

To successfully build your brand's footprint, it's essential to understand the online behaviour of potential travellers. What platforms do they frequent? How do they conduct their research? What type of queries are they researching? By delving into these questions, brands can tailor their digital strategy to meet the needs and expectations of their target audience.

Once you've gained insights into your potential customers' online behaviour and the queries they're researching, the next step is to position your brand as an authority in the travel space. This involves investing in building content, creating a robust digital platform, and crafting compelling stories that resonate with your audience.

Building a Funnel - Content is king in the digital age, and Search Engine Optimization is the process of making your content discoverable. Whether it's informative blog posts, SEO optimized landing pages, engaging videos or lovely

imagery, content is the cornerstone of your digital presence. Travellers are looking for information, inspiration, and guidance. By providing valuable content that addresses their questions and concerns, you can establish your brand as a reliable source.

Digital Platforms - Having a well-designed website and a strong presence on social media is essential. Your digital platform serves as the face of your brand in the online world. It should be user-friendly, visually appealing, and loaded with useful information. This platform is where potential travellers will engage with your brand, make bookings, and share their experiences.

Creating Stories - Travel is about experiences and emotions. Share the stories of your brand, from the heartwarming interactions between staff and guests to the picturesque destinations, and unique experiences you offer. Stories have the power to evoke a strong emotional connection, which can turn a casual browser into a potential customer.

Building a brand footprint online and targeting travellers at the top of the travel buying cycle is not just about awareness—it's also a strategic move to create a channel of direct distribution for your hospitality brand. One of the



Niranka Perera

significant advantages of direct distribution is lowering the cost of acquisition. When you rely on third-party booking platforms, you often have to pay substantial commissions and fees. However, by attracting travellers directly through your online presence, you can significantly reduce the cost of customer acquisition.

While many small-to-medium hospitality businesses may understand the need for an always-on digital strategy, limitations on capital expenditure, competition from bigger brands and resourcing constraints generally pose significant challenges in execution. This means that these businesses are often hesitant to invest in strategies that will ultimately result in better visibility, and lower the cost of acquisition through direct distribution.

“For many small-to-medium hospitality businesses, creating a structured approach to building digital visibility has been challenging. The digital landscape is vast and ever-changing, making it overwhelming for businesses with limited resources. Furthermore, in a post-recovery period, not many businesses are comfortable spending money upfront. This is where Antyra Solutions comes into the picture with a new hospitality solution focussed on

small businesses,” says Niranka T. Perera, CEO and Co-Founder of Antyra Solutions.

As hospitality industry specialists, Antyra Solutions brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the table with its new monthly subscription based solution, which offers small hospitality businesses a website, an online booking engine, and monthly SEO activities to build their online brand footprint.

“We are a team of experts who specialize in digital marketing for the travel and hospitality industry, which means that we understand the unique challenges and opportunities that these businesses face. Our tailor-made hospitality solutions for small-to-medium businesses are designed to help them navigate the complex world of digital marketing and establish a robust online presence, at affordable costs,” adds Niranka.

Offering specialized services such as Website Development, Search Engine Optimisation, Social Media Marketing and Paid Advertising, Antyra Solutions has experience working with 100s of travel and hospitality businesses globally.

Check out the new packages on the Antyra Solutions website and take the first step toward strengthening your brand's online presence and driving direct bookings.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts selects Sabre's SynXis platform as it eyes international growth

A leading Sri Lanka hotel group, including its flagship lifestyle complex Cinnamon Life Integrated Resort, will use Sabre Hospitality's SynXis Central Reservations System to support its new global distribution strategy

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts with a portfolio of hotels and resorts in both Sri Lanka and the Maldives, will be using Sabre Hospitality's comprehensive Central Reservations System (CRS) to drive growth and scale.

Through its cloud-based SynXis platform, Sabre Hospitality will support Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts ambitious international growth plans by driving accuracy, speed, and insight across channels; taking its distribution capabilities to the next level. The group has also added SynXis Booking Engine to its technology arsenal to capture more direct bookings.

“We are great pride in our integral role in shaping the Sri Lankan tourism industry,” commented Chief Commercial Officer of Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, Radhey Tawar. “Our new partnership with Sabre Hospitality marks a significant milestone in our journey, propelling us into the future of hospitality. Sabre's impressive SynXis platform will enable us to uphold our commitment to enhancing the guest experience across our diverse global guest segments. This collaboration reinforces our commitment in creating seamless guest reservation journeys

as we focus on global expansion.”

With a portfolio of 15 properties in Sri Lanka and the Maldives, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is Sri Lanka's largest hotel group. Located in some of the most picturesque locations in the region, including pristine beaches, lush forests, and historical sites, each property provides a bespoke and unique offering aimed to amplify and complement the guest experience as they discover and immerse themselves in the treasures of each locale.

Cinnamon Life Integrated Resort, set to open during the second half of 2024, is a true city icon and urban Integrated Resort at the centre of a metropolis, encompasses two residential towers, world-class retail spaces, an entertainment complex, two hotels and an office tower.

“This is an incredibly exciting time for the hospitality industry, and we're delighted that so many of our hotel partners share our commitment to growing the global travel marketplace,” said Frank Trampert, senior vice president, global managing director of community sales for Sabre Hospitality Solutions.

Thai PM chairs LOI signing between TAT and eight major Chinese tourism partners

TTA BULLETIN



Thailand's Prime Minister Mr. Srettha Thavisin, during his first official visit to China this week, presided over the signing ceremony of a letter of intent (LOI) between the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and eight leading tourism players in China – Huawei Technologies, Trip.com Group, Meituan.com, Spring Airlines, Sina News, Alipay, iQIYI, and Jago Trip – to boost Chinese tourists' confidence and quality tourism to Thailand.

The LOI signing ceremony was held at Kerry Hotel, Beijing, China. The agreement was signed between Ms. Thapanee Kiatphaibool, TAT Governor, and top executives of the eight strategic tourism partners – Huawei Technologies' Mr. Walter Ji, Trip.com Group's Mr. Sun Bo, Meituan's Ms. Lu Menxi, Spring Airlines' Mr. Wang Yu, Sina News' Mr. Cong Song, Alipay's Mr. Zhou Yi, iQIYI's

Mr. Yang Xianghua, and Jago Trip's Dr. Yong Ji.

The cooperation with eight of China's leading tourism players, including top tech companies, online tourism platforms, airlines, and online banking is expected to help strengthen cooperation in tourism-related technology for the Thai tourism industry as well as promote quality tourism to Thailand.

Ultimately, this will help reach the target of 4 million to 4.4 million Chinese tourists in 2023, generating over 200 billion Baht, and bringing the overall number of this year's tourist arrivals to 25-30 million.

From 1 January to 15 October 2023, Thailand recorded a total of 2,645,885 Chinese tourists, thus making it the second largest tourist market.

Appreciation Evening hosted by Minor Hotels Sri Lanka

Minor Hotels recently hosted a partner Appreciation Evening at the Shangri-La Colombo, a celebration of camaraderie and collaboration.

Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle, Anantara Kalutara Resort and Avani Kalutara Resort represent Minor Hotels

product offering in Sri Lanka and to acknowledge the support from the trade, Senior Vice President Operations Asia, William Costly and members from the Corporate team in Thailand attended the event.

This exclusive event served as an expression of gratitude

to their valued partners and stakeholders, recognizing their integral role in the group's continuous success.

Minor Hotels' shared insights into the company's future endeavors, strengthening the bonds that drive innovation and excellence in the hospitality industry.



HOTELS

Hilton Yala Resort - Your wildlife haven in the paradise island

TTA BULLETIN

Adjacent to the Yala National Park and commanding stunning views of the Indian Ocean, Hilton Yala Resort seamlessly blends adventure and relaxation. Wake up to the chirping of birds, the rustling of leaves, and the gentle roar of nearby wildlife. Set amidst captivating natural landscapes and delivering impeccable hospitality, the resort provides an unmatched haven for both nature enthusiasts and thrill-seekers.

Ocean. Designed by a multi-award winning architecture and design firm, it offers 42 rooms, suites and villas along with 3 dining outlets with the option to indulge in a bespoke dining experience. Equipped with all modern amenities, it boasts a full equipped gymnasium and Spa and for those who want to venture into the wild, the property offers FGASA certified rangers to make your visit a truly memorable experience.



The Hilton Yala Resort is adjacent to the Yala National Park, just 45 minutes' drive from Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport and is situated on a unique elevated platform offering scenic views of the Indian

The room categories includes deluxe rooms, premium suites with private pool and premium villas with private pool.



The dining options start with 'Vanya, the lounge which provides a relaxing atmosphere for both a quick caffeine boost and leisurely meals. "Dhira" the regions kitchen, offers diverse all-day dining with a focus on contemporary Asian cuisine coupled with an extensive range of beverage options.

While enjoying the myriad of facilities at Hilton Yala, you can also embark on thrilling adventures at the resort, which include explore winding trails on a Bush Walk, encountering wildlife at the Yala National Park during a Game Drive, and strolling along the Coastal Dune Walk with

"Sandali", the grill, specializes in Western-inspired cuisine, particularly seafood, with an al fresco setting transitioning into an elegant evening experience. "Lanthaaruma", is known for crafting bespoke culinary adventures, transcending settings and offering customized meals for an unparalleled epicurean journey.



panoramic views of the Indian Ocean. A mere 10-minute ride reveals the ever-changing dunes and the Amaduwa Fishing Village, a local treasure. Witness the fishermen set sail into the deep blue sea to make their harvest, returning to the shore when the sun sets at the center of the sky. These unique experiences, within 20 minutes of the resort, offer a captivating blend of nature, wildlife, and local life.



WHERE NATURE
Nurtures
HILTON YALA RESORT



Nestled within the spectacular landscapes of Yala National Park

Hilton

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WALDORF ASTORIA

L X R

CONRAD

canopy

Signia
by Hilton

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CURIO
COLLECTION

DOUBLETREE

TAPESTRY
COLLECTION

EMBASSY
SUITES

TEMPO

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tru

spark

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SUITES

HOME2
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GRAND VACATIONS

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HONORS

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts secures quadruple win across its Sri Lanka and Maldives portfolio at SATA 2023

TTA BULLETIN



Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, a key player in shaping hospitality excellence, has once again demonstrated its prowess by clinching four prestigious awards at the recently concluded South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) 2023. The brand's success reaffirms its dedication to setting new standards and shaping and driving Sri Lanka's thriving tourism landscape.

The four categories emerging victorious were; Cinnamon Grand Colombo securing the Gold Award for the Leading Food & Beverage Hotel of South Asia 2023 with the award received by Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, Area Vice President for Colombo and General Manager of Cinnamon Grand Colombo, Kamal Munasinghe. Cinnamon Dhonveli Maldives secured the Gold Award for Leading Surf Resort of South Asia region 2023 with the award received by the General Manager of Cinnamon Dhonveli Maldives, Sanjeeva Perera. Cinnamon Wild Yala securing the Gold Award for the Leading Wildlife Lodge/Tented Camp of South Asia 2023 with the award accepted by Lashanthan Gopalan, Resort Manager for Cinnamon Wild Yala and finally Cinnamon Citadel Kandy received the Silver Award for the Leading Riverfront Hotel/ Resort of South Asia 2023, with the award accepted by Resort Manager, Keerthi Wimalasooriya.

SATA, an annual event dedicated to recognising and celebrating excellence in the travel and tourism industry across South Asia, has been a significant platform since its inception in 2016 and continues to be an influential platform. This platform not only recognises the achievements of government and private organisations and fosters partnerships and collaborations, contributing to the growth and prosperity of the travel and tourism industry across the region.

SATA's exclusive focus on the South Asian region, which encompasses countries like India, the Maldives, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and others, accentuates the significance of these wins for Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts. This recognition

validates Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts' dedication to excellence, further elevating its status as a key player in the regional hospitality industry. By collaborating with industry partners and stakeholders to curate unparalleled experiences, the brand's continuous success will drive consistently to shape the country's tourism landscape and grow its reputation as a world-class travel destination.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is a diverse chain of hotels spanning Sri Lanka and the Maldives and a member of John Keells Holdings PLC, one of the largest listed conglomerates in Sri Lanka, with diverse interests in sectors ranging from Leisure, Transportation, Property, Consumer Food & Retail, Financial Services, Information Technology, Business Process Operations to Plantations.

This pioneering hotel chain was launched at The World Travel Market in London on 14 November 2005. Since its launch, it has come to represent a uniquely Cinnamon experience and has steadily risen to become the leading choice for travellers in Sri Lanka. The Cinnamon brand boasts a portfolio of vibrant and modern hotels, colourful and inspiring, unwaveringly hospitable and committed to satisfying our patrons' varied and discerning needs.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is the pinnacle of Sri Lankan hospitality through comfort, creativity, discovery, and inspired living. Each property is designed to showcase and complement the local environment, character, culture, and traditions of the area it serves. From Jungle cabanas to city luxury, water villas in the Maldives to beach chalets in Sri Lanka, each resort is designed to take you on a memorable journey into discovery. With three City properties in Colombo, eight Resort properties around Sri Lanka and four Resorts in the Maldives, and a host of new and exciting projects on the horizon, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is your partner and faithful guide to 'The Jewel of the Indian Ocean' and its timeless and fascinating 'Emerald Isle'.

WTM London to reveal worldwide trends in annual WTM Global Report

TTA BULLETIN

World Travel Market London 2023, the world's most influential travel & tourism event, will reveal the latest trends shaping the industry when it releases its Global Report on the opening day - 6th November.



well as unique industry insights, the report gives a comprehensive outlook on tourism."

The exclusive WTM Global Travel Report, compiled in association with renowned researchers at Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics company, shows how leisure travellers' needs and desires are changing – and shines a spotlight on emerging and growing destinations for 2024 and beyond.

Attendees will gain valuable insights into the shifting landscape of travel and learn about consumer demands, helping them shape their business and plan for the future.

During the panel discussion, industry figureheads from across the sector will share their thoughts about how the trends will affect their plans for marketing, sales, innovation and investment in the coming months and years.

Juliette Losardo, WTM London Exhibition Director, said: "We're thrilled to launch the first ever - WTM Global Travel Report – it demonstrates our commitment to ensuring the travel community have the freshest insight into trends shaping the sector and will support discussions, meetings and planning taking place during the three days at WTM."

"We partnered with Oxford Economics, a leader in tourism data and economics and the report presents findings from international research, using an expansive databank covering nearly 185 countries worldwide as destinations and as origin markets and all major bilateral tourism flows in terms of visits, nights and spend, as

"The worldwide outlook and vast, informative findings will give delegates invaluable insights to ensure they stay ahead in the travel sector."

The report will detail how the market has fared in 2023 and forecasts how domestic and international leisure travel will develop in 2024.

It considers the impact of challenges such as inflation and the cost-of-living squeeze – and compares the varying fortunes of different regions and markets.

The WTM Global Travel Report will delve into the drivers of demand in this post-pandemic era, examining how and why travellers are prioritising their holidays above other types of expenditure, and considering the outlook for different demographics.

The authors have also studied issues affecting the travel trade, which has had to deal with crises such as wildfires, strikes and staff shortages while the sector has rebounded.

Losardo, concluded: "We've heard many a positive story over the past few months, from exhibitors and partners, regarding the success of 2023 trading, despite many headwinds. This report will back up the hearsay, with up-to-date data and expert commentary.

"As we look to 2024, this report is there to help delegates build their strategies for the year ahead and beyond, armed with a deeper understanding of the forces shaping the future of our sector."

LTI announces the World's Best Luxury Hotel Brands 2023

TTA BULLETIN

Global members only organization LTI – Luxury Travel Intelligence – has used the past 12 months to apply the perfect assessment process: a rigorously defined algorithm that measures the performance and values of luxury hotel brands.

This year, our algorithm has 130 touch points relevant to the luxury hotel sector. Each has its own weighted score value with a total maximum accumulative score of 4663.

The touch points relate to overall brand performance, not the performance of individual properties. The focus is on a brand's ability to deliver: its passion, commitment, ethos and values, as well as the quality of its management and staff.

Continuing investment and how it is utilised is also a major factor – particularly regarding new properties and the refurbishment of existing ones. Here are this year's results, reflected as percentages, with last year's positions in brackets:

1. Mandarin Oriental 81.4% (2)
2. Oetker Collection 81.3% (6)
3. Auberge 79.6% (4)
4. Six Senses 79.0% (1)
5. Aman 78.8% (5)
6. Belmond 76.3% (8)
7. Four Seasons 76.1% (9)
8. One&Only 75.1% (7)
9. Rocco Forte 73.8% (11)
10. Rosewood 72.1% (3)
11. Peninsula 69.8% (New Entry)
12. Raffles 68.5% (New Entry)

Other brands that rated sufficiently to be monitored throughout the year are (in alphabetical order): 1 Hotels, Alila, Anantara, Banyan Tree, COMO, Dorchester Collection, Firmdale, Jumeirah, Leela, Oberoi, Park Hyatt, Ritz Carlton, Shangri-La, Soho House, Red Carnation, St. Regis, Taj, The Luxury Collection, Viceroy.

No other organisation connects with the global luxury hotel industry as LTI does.


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HOTELS

Heritage Hotels & Resorts Pioneers Sustainable Tourism for a Brighter Tomorrow

TTA BULLETIN

At the heart of Heritage Hotels and Resorts lies a holistic dedication to sustainability. This commitment is not merely a nod to global trends but is deeply embedded in the brand's DNA. Far from being just comfortable abodes, these establishments stand as environmental pillars, striking a harmonious balance with the nature that surrounds them.

Proudly adorning the Heritage banner are accolades that matter. The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and Travelife Gold certifications are testaments to the socio-economic and environmental impacts that reinforce the commitment to sustainability. Heritage Hotels and Resorts has been recognized as a pioneer in sustainable tourism and continuously strives to sustain and innovate processes that reduce the impact of its operation on its surroundings. While guests unwind in the tranquil atmosphere of a Heritage hotel, they can be assured that their experience is planet friendly.

Within the Heritage portfolio, the essence of sustainable comfort shines brightly through many gems.

Heritage Aarah (LEED Gold)

Heritage Aarah is the first LEED certified property in the Maldives. Since its opening in 2019, the resort has consistently demonstrated its dedication to sustainability and responsible tourism. The resort actively supports local communities by sourcing seafood locally, reducing food miles and benefiting both guests and the regional economy. The property eliminated single-use plastic bottles through an in-house water bottling plant and embraced eco-friendly tableware to minimize waste. Rainwater harvesting and wastewater recycling support island gardening while an organic herb and vegetable garden provides fresh, sustainable ingredients for their kitchens. The resort also procures local produce, strengthening the local economy and enhancing culinary offerings.



Heritage Aarah

Moreover, Heritage Aarah celebrates Maldivian culture with a Live Maldivian Village Museum, offering an immersion into the nation's rich history. The resort prioritizes sustainable energy initiatives with heat recovery, solar power, and energy-efficient fixtures. An innovative waste management system converts wet garbage into eco-friendly soil additives, reducing waste and enriching the island's gardens. Lastly, the resort hosts sustainability awareness and educational programs to engage and inspire both staff

and guests, ensuring a commitment to ecological preservation and a sustainable future.

Heritage Kandalama (Travelife Gold)

Nestled amidst a verdant tropical landscape and in proximity to two UNESCO world heritage sites lies the architectural masterpiece, Heritage Kandalama. As well as being the creation of the legendary architect Geoffrey Bawa, this was the first LEED certified hotel. Furthermore, Heritage Kandalama has largely invested in enhancing its biodiversity footprint, adding 13 more acres into its conservation forest, resulting in a total of 211 acres.



Heritage Kandalama

This complex ecosystem is home to 128 species of native flora, 64 species of butterflies, 183 endemic and migratory bird species, 19 species of reptiles (some rare and endangered), and 17 mammals. The sanctuary is crisscrossed by 11 protected natural streams that nurture the local ecosystem sustaining life throughout the landscape and feeding the Kandalama tank. These water sources contribute to the flourishing biodiversity and serve as vital lifelines for the myriad species within the forest.

Heritage Ayurveda (Travelife Gold)

Set amidst a spectacular ocean view and vibrant gardens, Heritage Ayurveda is a sanctuary for holistic well-being. As guests embark on rejuvenating journeys through Ayurvedic treatments, the resort remains committed to environmental harmony. From the organic, homegrown herbs used in therapies to the eco-friendly practices powering its daily operations, sustainability is at the heart of Heritage Ayurveda. The organic vegetable garden brings wholesome food from farm to plate. Here, every healing



Heritage Ayurveda



Heritage Tea Factory

touch and therapeutic ritual is a testament to the resort's dedication to well-being—not just for its guests but for the planet too.

Heritage Tea Factory (Travelife Gold)

Nestled amidst Sri Lanka's vibrant tea country, Heritage

Tea Factory stands as a symbol of ingenuity and sustainability. Once a colonial tea processing factory, this property has been ingeniously transformed into a distinctive hotel that pays homage to its historical roots while championing environmental stewardship. Embracing a deep commitment to sustainability, one of the hotel's many impactful initiatives involves fostering a local village in the community, offering employment opportunities for adults and educational support for their children. Furthermore, the estate is renowned for producing some of the finest high-grown organic tea, tending to the fertile soil with the gifts of nature.

Heritage Negombo (LEED Gold & Travelife Gold)

Overlooking the waters of the Indian Ocean, Heritage Negombo provides contemporary comfort fused with sustainability. Conscious efforts, such as waste-reducing practices and sourcing local produce, reflect its dedication to ecological preservation. More than its breath-taking beachfront setting, Heritage Negombo prides itself in being a part of the local narrative by supporting artisans and craftsmen. Guests indulge not just in oceanic views but also participate in an eco-conscious journey that reverberates through the

Negombo community.

Heritage Ahungalla (Travelife Gold)

Amidst the sands and swaying palms of Sri Lanka's southern coast, Heritage Ahungalla was the first five-star beach resort in Sri Lanka. Today it stands as an architectural icon of comfort fused with sustainability. Crafted with an understanding of the fragile coastal



Heritage Ahungalla

ecosystem, the hotel's practices prioritize marine conservation and beach preservation. As guests enjoy the beauty of Ahungalla, they are also welcomed to witness and contribute to turtle conservation and mangrove reforestation initiatives. Heritage Ahungalla is deeply intertwined with a commitment to the environment and the local community, ensuring that a stay here resonates with purpose, pleasing guests while championing eco-centric initiatives.



Heritage Negombo

The Heritage philosophy transcends mere hospitality, it explores travel as not just a journey across lands but a transformative exploration of self and society. It beckons guests from around the globe to be part of a movement, where every stay contributes to broader perspectives, supporting local communities and a harmonized planet. The Heritage experience is more than just a stay; it's a commitment to a brighter sustainable future.



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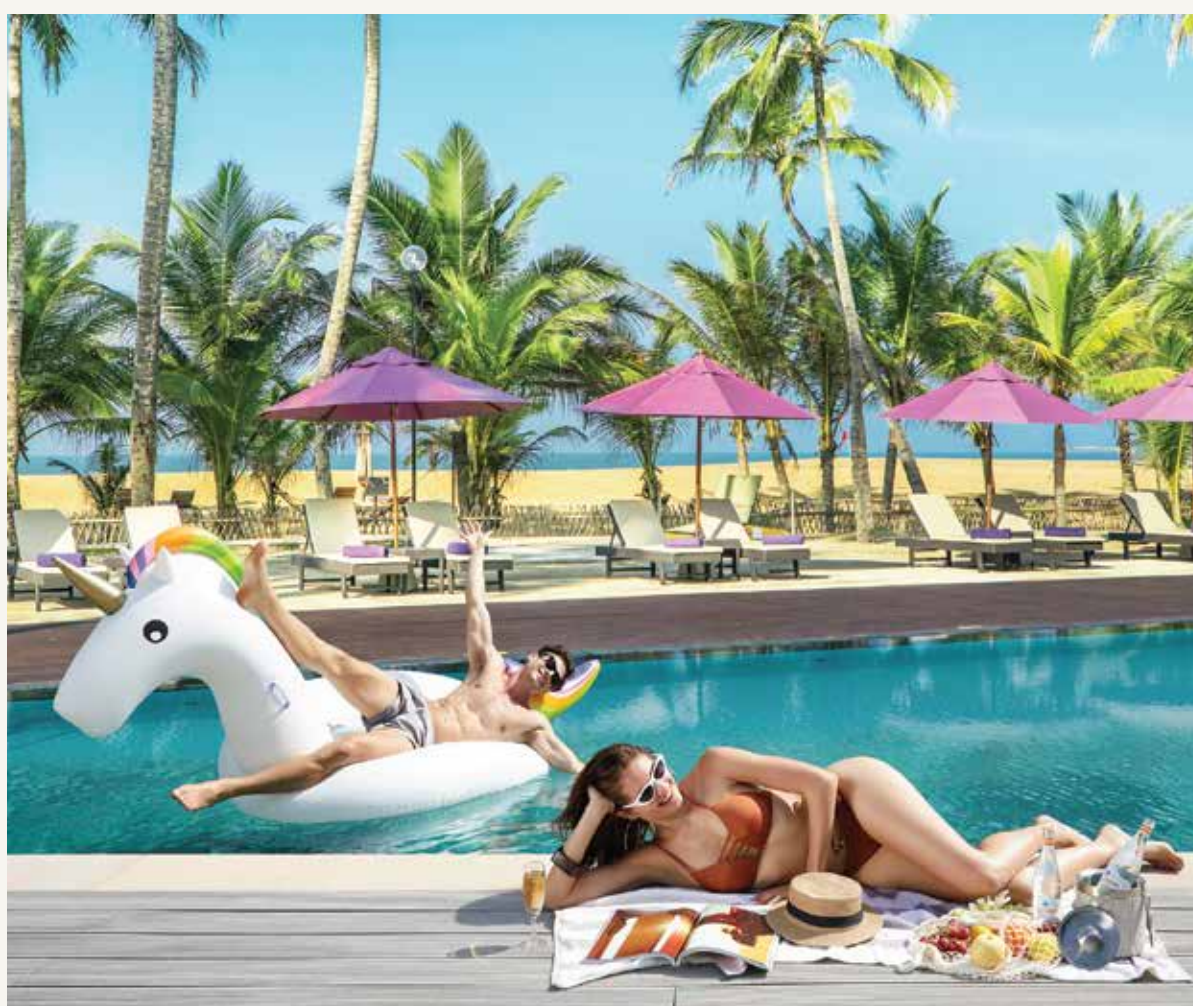
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HOTELS

Hill Country's Hideaway Get-away: The Lavender House by Reveal the Collection

TTA BULLETIN

Amidst one of the most picturesque and oldest tea estates lies Sri Lanka's hill country's best-kept secret, The Lavender House by Reveal the Collection. The exquisite English-style bungalow in Pussellawa blends colonial charm with modern comfort and casts an enchanting spell entirely on its own.



The Lavender House, residing in the historically rich Hellbode tea estate, offers standout experiences like a delightful evening high tea in the estate's gardens and an opportunity to observe and join the tea-plucking ladies. In 1854, Maurice Worms, who made history by introducing tea sampling sourced from China to Ceylon, planted the first tea plant in the Hellbode tea estate, which was then known as the Condegalla estate alongside the famous Rothschild estate.

room, a bar with the finest wine and brew, and a unique Mirror Wall that contains signatures of the first owners, governors, and estate's senior planters from the colonial days. The living area with chestnut brown, grey, and white colour blended aesthetic interiors and furniture features its lavish style.

The journey at The Lavender House extends beyond its walls. The lush landscapes of Pussellawa offer a playground for adventurers and a haven for those seeking tranquility. Cascading down Pussellawa, the Gerandi Ella Waterfall remains a picturesque masterpiece—an exclusive secret shared only with the fortunate few. As part of the guest travel experience, The Lavender House orchestrates an exquisite breakfast picnic at the top of this waterfall upon request, tantalizing your taste buds while treating your eyes to



The Lavender House offers premium accommodation with five beautifully designed rooms: Plum, Lilac, Violet, Magenta, and the Lavender Suite. One can book a single room for an intimate getaway or can reserve the entire villa for a group of family or friends seeking a stress-free and detoxifying getaway experience. The bespoke hospitality of Reveal the Collection continues at The Lavender House with personalized butler service and specially curated culinary offerings from expert chefs.

The bungalow boasts a heated infinity pool overlooking misty mountains, a billiard



Travel experiences in Pussellawa are endless, starting from the excursions to the famous Pekoe trail, Ramboda Falls, Peacock Hill, Kotmale Reservoir, Chariot Path, and so much more, which are only a few minutes away from The Lavender House.

The bungalow boasts a heated infinity pool overlooking misty mountains, a billiard



The exquisite Reveal the Collection, which falls under the flagship of Browns Hotels & Resorts, features four stunning beachfront villas in Mirissa: Two Ubuntu Beach Villas, The Lantern Boutique Hotel, The Beach House, and another bungalow in the hill country; Stafford Bungalow in Ragala apart from The Lavender House in Pussellawa.

Tamara Leisure Experiences – Where hospitality meets Serenity

TTA BULLETIN

Tamara Leisure Experiences is a leading hospitality brand based in India, currently operating The Tamara Coorg, a luxury resort nestled within an expansive coffee plantation in Coorg, The Tamara Kodai, a luxury heritage resort in the hills of Kodaikanal, and O by Tamara, a business hotel in the lively city of Trivandrum. The group also operates Lilac, a chain of mid-segment hotels in the heart of South Bangalore, and Amal Tamara, an Ayurvedic Hospital, in Alleppey Kerala. Additionally, the group operates four business hotels in Germany.



Responsible and Memorable Hospitality is the core ethos of Tamara Leisure Experiences, making the organisation an industry leader in the shift toward holistically sustainable hospitality.

At Tamara Leisure Experiences, we are committed to the principles of sustainability and ethical tourism. We believe that we have a responsibility to protect the environment, support local communities, and create a positive impact on society while also ensuring profitability. Our "People, Planet, Profit" philosophy is at the core of everything we do. We believe that by focusing on triple bottom-line, we can create long-term value for all our stakeholders, including our guests, employees, shareholders, and the environment.

The Tamara Coorg, is a 56-key luxury resort lying within a 180-acre organic coffee plantation cradled in the Western Ghats of Coorg. It commenced operations in 2012 and has since been awarded for excellence in hospitality and its state-of-the-art spa and wellness centre.

The Tamara Kodai is the most recent addition to The Tamara brand of luxury resorts. Located in the historical La Providence building in Kodaikanal, The Tamara Kodai launched in May 2018 and is set to transform tourism in Kodaikanal. It includes 53 suites of French provincial design, tastefully created to take you back to a time when La Providence was a monastic retreat.

The resort houses many facilities, including a French-styled dining bistro, an all-day dining restaurant, and conference facilities including a ballroom able to accommodate over 200 guests. Wellness facilities include The Elevation Spa, a fitness centre,

Kodaikanal's only temperature-controlled swimming pool, and a pool lounge.

A European-themed hotel, Lilac is a collection of 28 rooms tastefully designed for business and leisure travellers. Amenities include a gymnasium, complimentary Wi-Fi, ample car parking, and more. Situated in the heart of Jayanagar, in Bengaluru, it began operations in 2014.

This hotel, a second property in the Lilac series, comprises of 20 rooms and a large meeting space, located in Jayanagar, Bangalore.

O by Tamara, a world-class business hotel located in Trivandrum, Kerala, will be Tamara Leisure Experience's first step into God's Own Country. The newly-launched property comprises 152 exquisite rooms and features amenities including the largest hotel convention center to date in Trivandrum, four restaurants, a decadent spa, a gym, a sprawling lawn, and a luxury infinity pool.

AMAL by TAMARA is a distinctive Ayurveda hospital that follows authentic Ayurvedic treatment principles in a contemporary sphere to cure and optimize a state of natural health with the support of therapeutic yoga and personalized diet concept.

Our mission is to create and nurture a community of Amal Yatris by way of excellent and empathetic Ayurvedic care focused on long-term wellness while also providing Responsible Hospitality. Our vision is for our team of doctors, therapists, and caregivers to collaborate and collectively guide all Amal Yatris, leading each one on an authentic, personalized Ayurveda journey for long-term health and well-being.

The Tamara Group has expanded its operations out of India and has the Holiday Inn Express – Guetersloh Germany which is a 126-room business hotel. The Prizeotel Hannover, The Courtyard by Marriott Wolfsberg and The Moxy Bremen which is also in Germany.



The properties under development includes O by TAMARA Coimbatore, Guruvayoor Project in Kerala, Kannur Project also in Kerala and the Kumbakonam Project located in Kumbakonam.

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Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts: Inspiring Stories That Transcend Ordinary Travel

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is all set to unravel the heart of its narrative 'Inspiring Stories' at World Travel Market 2023. A theme that encapsulates the heart and soul of the brand, the senior team representing the Sri Lanka and Maldives portfolio will share its journey, one that goes beyond curating experiences to encompassing unwavering commitment to sustainability and responsible tourism.

The Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts delegation at WTM 2023 is led by the architects of its vision, inspiring stories, and success. Leading the delegation are Radhey Tawar, Chief Commercial Officer; Vijai Singh, Area Vice President for Maldives Resorts; Johan Aschan, Area Vice President for Sri Lankan Resorts and key senior representatives from Sales & Marketing. Find them at the Sri Lanka Stand No: S11-200 and at the Maldives Stand No: S10-202.



Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is more than just a collection of hotels; we are the storytellers of bringing the best of Sri Lanka, to the world. We curate authentic experiences that transcend the ordinary, creating memories that linger deep within the heart.

Cinnamon Bentota Beach, nestled along the pristine shores of Bentota Beach, is an ode to adventure seekers and cultural enthusiasts. Designed by the legendary Geoffrey Bawa, this property showcases Sri Lankan artistry's vibrant and colourful heritage. It is a place where every corner of the hotel narrates untold stories. From the captivating batik ceiling that welcomes guests to the memorable peacock sculpture in the lobby, Cinnamon Bentota Beach reflects the essence of Sri Lankan architectural and artistic heritage. Guests can enjoy serene canoe rides, thrilling water sports, a relaxing pool and family-friendly amenities. The dining options, set in Geoffrey Bawa's vibrant interiors, offer native favourites and fresh seafood.

Cinnamon Velifushi Maldives, located on a private island, offers a haven for marine life enthusiasts. Guests can witness magnificent nurse sharks gliding

gracefully past their chalets, creating unforgettable moments even for the youngest visitors. After a day of relaxation, the spa awaits, offering an array of rejuvenating massages. The restaurant provides a diverse selection of cuisines to delight discerning palates in a romantic atmosphere.

At Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, we believe in planting seeds, not just leaving footprints. Our sustainability initiatives are deeply rooted in the communities we serve. We invest in eco-friendly practices, empower local communities, and promote responsible tourism. From reducing single-use plastics to supporting local conservation projects, our initiatives, such as the Cinnamon Rainforest Restoration project and the Live and Let Live human-elephant mitigating project, go beyond words. They are living, breathing actions that will inspire you.

Our coral conservation project in the Maldives and the installation of ocean temperature data loggers testify to our dedication to preserving our planet. Learn more about the local communities we empower, the waste we reduce, and the ecosystems we protect.

An exciting chapter in our story unfolds in



August 2024, with the opening of the Cinnamon Life Integrated Resort in Colombo. This iconic development will serve as a catalyst for transforming Sri Lanka's tourism landscape. Encompassing a luxury hotel, upscale residences, 80,000 sq feet of meeting and event spaces, a shopping mall, fifteen restaurants and bars and more, Cinnamon Life will redefine urban living and offer a unique experience to both international travelers and local residents. With its strategic location in the heart of Colombo, this integrated resort is set to become a cultural and entertainment hub, contributing significantly to the country's economic growth and appeal as a world-class destination.

Join us at the Sri Lanka Stand and the Maldives Stand, where the future of travel, sustainability, and luxury converge. Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts – where 'Inspiring Stories' come to life and the journey begins. Do not miss this opportunity to be inspired and join us as we shape the future of travel and tourism.

Experience Sri Lankan Serenity at Holistic Resorts and Villas

TTA BULLETIN

The Holistic Resorts and villa collection is a group of personalized boutique villas ideally situated throughout Sri Lanka's central and UVA provinces



Ensuring the preservation of the nature's delicate beauty, you are privy to stepping into a poetic journey as you begin your stay with Holistic Villas.

"We redefine the concept of luxury while celebrating the island's unique charms at Holistic Villas. Our Sri Lanka luxury holiday hotels invite you to unwind and immerse yourself in authentic Sri Lankan experiences with a Sri Lankan smile. Our intimate holistic villas are a stunning blend of heritage, history, and nature" said Srijith Gooneratne Managing Director and Co-founder.

With over 33 years of experience in Sri Lanka's hospitality industry, Srijith is a creative hotelier and concept creator with a robust approach to ensure guest satisfaction.

"Hanthana is recognized as one of Sri Lanka's most picturesque regions and the panoramic view from our villas will not

disappoint" These Villas are reminiscent of a bygone era, revived to accommodate every requirement and request from a modern-day traveler.

A personal butler is on hand to attend to all guest's requirements and a holistic holiday awaits each and every one who steps in through the villa doors. "Come and experience the vivid charm of Holistic Villa's and live a be pampered in a mountain haven" added Gooneratne

Holistic River Villas is surrounded by sweeping green hills, misty mornings and the country's longest river. This villa is ideal for truly relaxing and unwinding with the use of 'Heritage' red representing royalty and white spaces symbolizing a modern, chic and sophisticated ambience.

Holistic Villas Lake scheduled to open in the last quarter of 2023 is a luxuriously natural Holistic Villa in Sigiriya, surrounded by a lake and flowing water ways. A modern paddy harvesting design that looks out over Sigiriya's 2,000-year-old paddy harvesting fields is a visual masterpiece,

Minor Hotels Excels in Condé Nast Traveler 2023 Readers' Choice Awards

TTA BULLETIN

Minor Hotels, the parent company behind the Anantara, Elewana Collection, Tivoli and NH Collection hotel brands, is delighted to announce a total of 18 accolades awarded to its hotels and resorts worldwide in the 2023 Condé Nast Traveler US and UK Readers' Choice Awards – the longest-running and most prestigious recognition of excellence in the travel industry, as voted by the publications' audiences.

In the 2023 awards, more than 520,000 Condé Nast Traveler readers across the US and UK shared their recent travel knowledge of the hotels, cruises, airlines and other industry players at the very top of their game. Leading this year's great results for Minor Hotels are three Elewana Collection camps in Kenya and Tanzania, which have been recognised in the prestigious global list that celebrates the most beloved and cherished travel experiences in the world. In the Best 50 Resorts in the World, Elewana Elsa's Kopje Meru was named #7, Elewana Arusha Coffee Lodge #13 and Elewana Elephant Pepper Camp Masai Mara #29, all representing an outstanding



Dillip Rajakarier

achievement for the luxury boutique safari experience brand.

In Asia, in Minor Hotels' home market of Thailand, wellness-centric retreat Anantara Bangkok Riverside Resort was voted the #9 resort, while in the broader Asia category, Anantara Hoi An Resort in

Vietnam took home the #8 spot – a strong showing following the launch of The Vietage by Anantara, the luxury train experience connecting two of the brand's resorts in Vietnam.

Elewana Collection dominated the listings in the Rest of Africa category, winning the top #1 spot for the romantic Elewana Elsa's Kopje Meru in Kenya, #4 for Elewana Arusha Coffee Lodge in Tanzania and #5 for Elewana Elephant Pepper Camp Masai Mara, also in Kenya.

"We are deeply grateful to the readers of Condé Nast Traveler for their continuous support and recognition of our brands," said Dillip Rajakarier, CEO of Minor Hotels and Group CEO of Minor International.

“Thema Collection” unveiled at Sri Lanka High Commission in London

TTA BULLETIN

“Thema Collection's array of Resorts, Retreats and Boutique Hotels was unveiled at a prestigious reception hosted at the Sri Lanka High Commission in London. The event drew the presence of notable British media personnel and esteemed tour operators, affording them an exclusive preview of Thema Collection's diverse product portfolio. This gathering served as a platform to introduce

Thema's rebranding initiative, undertaken last year under the visionary leadership of Chairman Chandra Wickramasinghe, centered around the concept of "Different Themes, Authentic Experiences."

The presentation of Thema Collection's hotels, distinctive experiences, and its unwavering commitment to sustainable practices was expertly delivered by



Maxime Wickramasinghe, the Director of Marketing & Business Development.

This remarkable event catered to top-tier journalists and tour operators in the London area and included the esteemed presence of Her Grace, the Duchess of Rutland, Ms. Emma Manners, Ms. Saroja Sirisena, the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to the United Kingdom, and Mr. Chinthaka Weerasinghe, Regional Manager of Sri Lankan Airlines Mr. Thierry Macquet, Representative (UK & Nordic Countries), Thema Collection & Connaissance De Ceylan

Guests were treated to a delightful spread of authentic Sri Lankan cuisine, featuring a Kottu station, complemented by Lion Beer, Ceylon Arrack, and Colombo Gin, offering a taste of the rich local culinary heritage that Thema Collection embraces.”



Serenity in Kalpitiya at Villa Sante

TTA BULLETIN

Nestled amid the natural splendour of Kalpitiya Peninsula, Villa Santé is a luxurious holiday escape that seamlessly integrates with its surroundings. Designed by the renowned architect Hirante Welandawe, the villa's unique structure resembles a ship's wooden hull, perfectly complementing its lagoon-side location.

Perched atop Kalpitiya Lagoon, Villa Santé offers convenient access to the tranquil beach from November to March and becomes a kite surfer's haven from April to October.



With its minimalist design, crisp white decor, and wood accents, the villa provides a serene setting amidst swaying coconut trees and unobstructed views of the lagoon and ocean.

Inside, Villa Santé boasts five beautifully furnished luxury rooms, each with its own style and theme, ranging from King to Deluxe categories. Whether you're a couple seeking a romantic getaway or a large group of friends, Villa Santé promises an unforgettable coastal retreat where the grandeur of a tailor-made holiday home meets the natural beauty of Kalpitiya Peninsula.

Revealing Stafford Bungalow's timeless elegance and bespoke hospitality

TTA BULLETIN

In the emerald embrace of Nuwara Eliya's outskirts lies Stafford Bungalow by Reveal the Collection, an enchanting retreat that invites travelers to immerse themselves in a living canvas of refined tranquility. This exclusive haven cocooned by Eucalyptus forests unfolds its allure with meticulous stone pathways, manicured lawns, and vibrant flower beds amidst a 50-acre tea estate.

While preserving the colonial charm of the 19th century, Stafford Bungalow also offers chic interiors and contemporary comforts with luxurious rooms awash with



rooms seamlessly connected by a cozy sitting room lead to an expansive outdoor space, offering a sanctuary of serenity.

Guests are invited to indulge in the contemporary dining pavilion with vistas of the Tea plantation—a culinary haven where flavors blend seamlessly with the ambiance. The exquisite menus crafted by private chefs with cuisine sourced from on-site organic gardens and fresh local suppliers are served with care with personalized butler service. A game room with satellite television, a

natural light and garden vistas. The original bungalow, a symphony of heritage and elegance, beckons guests with its two deluxe rooms, a family suite, and a master suite—all opening to private terraces that unveil panoramic views of the surrounding paradise. The newly appointed Owners Cottages at Stafford Bungalow epitomize sophistication. Two premium



well-stocked bar, and a crackling fireplace make an idyllic setting for evenings filled with fellowship and bonding. For those seeking a touch of recreation, a spirited game of croquet awaits. Guests are welcome to experience the tea planters' pioneering spirit and the Tea journey by immersing in guided tours and tea tastings. A soak in the heated Jacuzzi or the inviting infinity pool in this intimate retreat would bring a luxurious finale to a day filled with sensory delights.

Reveal the Collection, one of Sri Lanka's premier boutique villa collections, offers Stafford Bungalow in the hill country not just as a mere ordinary getaway but as a narrative of colonial opulence, contemporary indulgence, and natural splendor.

Emirates now offering Inflight Meal Preordering Service across 92 destinations

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates Inflight Meal Preordering Service is now live across 92 routes globally, with 30 new routes including Riyadh, Jeddah, Delhi, Mumbai and Kuala Lumpur offering the service from today. More than 10,000 preorders have already been delivered on over 3,000 flights, and more than 600 meal preorders are made by Emirates customers daily.



choose from a selection of regionally inspired dishes with locally sourced ingredients, up to a fortnight before a flight.

The new service allows passengers in Business Class to preselect their main course between 14 days and 24 hours in advance of their flight departure, ensuring they get their preferred choice every time as well as helping to reduce food wastage. The most popular preorder dishes so far are pan-fried beef tenderloin with thyme jus, roasted new potato wedges and steamed asparagus, as well as the grilled beef tenderloin with creamy wild mushroom sauce, Kenya beans and potato gratin, and finally Suffolk roasted chicken with black garlic and potato fondant.

Ensuring Emirates passengers enjoy a fine dining experience in the sky, passengers are invited to browse the onboard menu on Emirates.com or on the Emirates app to

meals include a choice of chef crafted dishes such as chocolate hazelnut pancakes with apricot compote and ricotta sour cream for breakfast, Moroccan-style Pacific cod served with coriander pesto, moghrabieh with saffron tomato salsa, broccoli and roasted pumpkin with cardamom for lunch, and pan-fried salmon trout with saffron cream, blanched green beans, braised beetroot and polenta with spring onions for dinner.

Onboard the aircraft, cabin crew will use Apple devices to view the preordered selection and serve the passenger their choice of dish. Meal preordering is an addition to the existing suite of AI-enabled customer preference tracking data and cabin crew reports onboard Emirates, which facilitate menu planning, optimal food loading and waste minimization.

Cathay Pacific to resume flights to Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Cathay Pacific, the award-winning Hong Kong-based airline, has announced the resumption of flights from Colombo beginning 2 February 2024.



After a hiatus of four years, Cathay Pacific is set to soar Sri Lankan skies once again, serving valued local customers and continuing its commitment to connect people across the globe. Cathay Pacific is returning with its Airbus A330 aircraft offering three flights a week operating from Colombo, ensuring a comfortable and premium travel experience for all customers.

The aircraft is configured in a two-cabin-class layout with 293 seats, comprising 28 in Business class, and 265 in Economy.

The resumption marks the revival of a long-standing aviation partnership between Hong Kong and Sri Lanka. For both business and leisure travellers, the flights will serve as a gateway, offering exceptional connectivity via Hong Kong to the Chinese Mainland, North America, Northeast Asia, and the Southwest Pacific.

As Sri Lanka continues to welcome a growing number of leisure and business travellers, while recognising the diversity of Colombo's travellers, Cathay Pacific is gearing up to embark on a new chapter of connectivity, convenience, and customer satisfaction.

Anand Yedery, Regional Head of Customer

Travel and Lifestyle, South Asia, Middle East and Africa said: "This is an important occasion as we announce the relaunch of flights from Colombo. Cathay Pacific's return not only signifies our commitment to our customers, but also showcases the vital role Sri Lanka plays in our network.

"In the past few years, we have invested in our product and inflight experience, including the dining menu, entertainment and more. We are excited to have our customers experience these service enhancements, convenient connections to key destinations worldwide such as Melbourne and Toronto, and our intermodal air-to-sea ferry options for travel into the Greater Bay Area. We look forward to welcoming Sri Lankan travellers aboard our flights and delivering a journey that exceeds their expectations."

In addition to passenger services, Cathay continues to play a significant role in the economy by supporting local industries and connecting them to the world through its air cargo services. Cathay Cargo's expertise ensures vital goods reach their destinations swiftly and securely, re-enforcing its brand ethos – "We Know How".

Customers can book their tickets on the Cathay Pacific website or through the airline's travel partners. Additionally, for travel before February, they can choose to fly with our interline partners via Bengaluru, India and onwards to their preferred destination.

Qatar Airways Group Announces Appointment of New Group Chief Executive

TTA BULLETIN

Qatar Airways Group confirms after 27 years of remarkable service, Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive - His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker, will be stepping down from his current position as Group Chief Executive effective 5 November 2023, and will be succeeded by Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer as Group Chief Executive for Qatar Airways.



Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer

standards. The national carrier of the State of Qatar has achieved an unprecedented seven-times win of the "World's Best Airline" award, and its state-of-the-art Hamad International Airport, which is under its management and

operation, has also been recognised as the "World's Best Airport".

Under H.E. Mr. Akbar Al Baker's leadership, Qatar Airways has grown to become one of the most recognisable and trusted brands globally, synonymous with customer service quality and the highest of

The Qatar Airways Group's contribution to helping deliver the best ever FIFA World Cup showcased to the world its capability, commitment to excellence, and its passion for bringing the world together.

SriLankan Airlines Crowned the Leading International Airline - South Asia at SATA 2023

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines was crowned the Leading International Airline - South Asia at the South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) in Bangalore, India on 10 October 2023. SriLankan further secured the title of Leading Airline Class - Business Class at the awards ceremony. Touted as the most prestigious travel industry awards in the region, SATA recognizes the most outstanding performers in South Asia's hospitality and travel industry annually based on the votes of industry professionals and passengers.



Having also received the accolade of 'Visitors Choice - Airline of the Year' at last year's SATA, SriLankan Airlines continues to prove its enviable position in South Asia with this year's dual wins. SriLankan currently operates 140 flights between Colombo and multiple South Asian cities across India, the Maldives, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal on a weekly basis.



as a trailblazer in South Asia and give our customers the best in Sri Lankan service and connectivity as we move forward into the future."

The airline's extensive South Asian network covers key points pan India including Chennai, Mumbai, Bangalore and Delhi; Karachi and Lahore in Pakistan; Kathmandu in Nepal; and Dhaka in Bangladesh. SriLankan Airlines is moreover the only international carrier to operate to both Male and Gan Island in the Maldives to date, making it a preferred choice of passengers heading from Europe, the Middle East, India and the Far East to the picturesque Maldives.

Ravindran V, Regional Manager India, Bangladesh & Nepal of SriLankan Airlines commented on the wins stating, "We are profoundly happy to have our efforts valued by our South Asian associates. This region has been key to our progress and represents a significant percentage of SriLankan Airlines' operations. Being recognized inspires us to remain and grow



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Qatar Airways Expands Its Presence in Saudi Arabia With the Opening of Two New Gateways: AIUla, Tabuk and The Reopening of Yanbu

TTA BULLETIN

Qatar Airways, the World's Best Airline, is proud to announce its expansion in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the launch of services of two new gateways: AIUla, Tabuk and the reopening of Yanbu. These additions to the airline's rapidly growing network mark a significant milestone in Qatar Airways' commitment to connecting travellers across the globe.



three weekly flights. Travelers to Tabuk will have the opportunity to explore its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage.

Effective 29 October 2023, Qatar Airways will commence operations to AIUla, followed by Yanbu on 06 December 2023, and Tabuk on 14 December 2023. These new routes will offer passengers even more options to explore the rich cultural heritage and natural wonders of Saudi Arabia.

Qatar Airways now operates to nine cities in Saudi Arabia, operating more than 125 flights weekly. These cities include AIUla, Dammam, Gassim, Jeddah, Medina, Riyadh, Tabuk, Taif, and Yanbu, providing travellers with a comprehensive network to explore the diverse landscapes and cultures of this dynamic country.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker, said: "We are thrilled to introduce AIUla, Yanbu, and Tabuk as our newest destinations in Saudi Arabia. These cities offer a wealth of cultural, historical, and natural experiences, and we are proud to connect travellers from around the world to these remarkable places."

Passengers in Saudi Arabia traveling from these exciting new gateways will enjoy seamless connectivity to over 160 destinations worldwide, including the China, Europe, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Thailand and the United States. Qatar Airways continues to be a global leader in connecting travellers to some of the most sought-after destinations across the globe.

AIUla, known for its breath-taking landscapes and historical treasures, will be serviced with two weekly flights. Travelers can look forward to experiencing this UNESCO World Heritage Site's wonders, including the ancient rock formations and archaeological marvels.

Qatar Airways' new routes to AIUla, Yanbu, and Tabuk are expected to facilitate business and leisure travel, further strengthening economic ties and cultural exchanges between Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The airline is dedicated to providing passengers with the highest level of service and comfort during their journeys.

Yanbu, a vibrant port city, will be connected with three weekly flights. With its beautiful beaches and diverse marine life, Yanbu is the perfect destination for those seeking sun, sea and adventure.

Tickets for flights to AIUla, Yanbu, and Tabuk are now available for booking through the Qatar Airways website, mobile app, and travel agencies.

Tabuk, nestled amidst stunning mountains and valleys, will see Qatar Airways operate

Emirates deploys 20,000 Apple products to Cabin Crew to transform inflight services

TTA BULLETIN

Renowned for its commitment to cutting-edge technology and innovation, Emirates has launched a new strategy called 'One Device' leveraging Apple products, whereby all 20,000 Emirates Cabin Crew receive iPhone 13 or iPad Air configured with custom Emirates apps to improve and streamline passenger service onboard, as well as enhancing the overall crew experience.

Emirates has already invested more than AED 32 million into the initiative and began giving out Apple devices one year ago. Today, more than 7,000 Emirates crew members use iPhone across 450 daily flights in the global network. In the coming months, an additional 5,000 cabin crew will receive iPhone and iPad featuring new apps and features that build on the successful deployment.

Emirates in-house Service Delivery and IT teams conducted an extensive user research campaign with cabin crew before designing and building a range of native, custom-built



apps to revamp the user experience for cabin crew and to ensure passengers receive the world class service experience expected from Emirates. Feedback to date shows that Apple products are empowering cabin crew to feel better prepared at work and enabling them to offer highly personalised service to passengers.

Custom-built applications include an app to improve the inflight meal order-taking process in Business Class, ensuring swift and precise service and allowing cabin crew to see each passenger's profile and Skywards status. Another app ensures cabin crew can access up-to-the-minute roster and flight information, view seat changes and upgrades, and an overview of which cabin crew are onboard.

KrisFlyer Is Official Lifestyle Rewards Partner For Ed Sheeran's The + - = ÷ × Tour 2024 In Singapore

TTA BULLETIN

KrisFlyer, the Singapore Airlines (SIA) Group's lifestyle programme, is the official Lifestyle Rewards Partner for Ed Sheeran's upcoming + - = ÷ × Tour (pronounced The Mathematics Tour) in Singapore.

The concert will take place at Singapore's National Stadium on 16 February 2024, and KrisFlyer members will have exclusive early access to purchase the concert tickets through the KrisFlyer Reserve Sale and miles-for-tickets redemption options.

KrisFlyer members will have the opportunity to purchase Categories 1 to 7 concert tickets via the KrisFlyer Reserve Sale from 30 October 2023 at 1000hrs (Singapore time). To purchase the tickets, members need a unique access code that allows them to buy up to six tickets across the seven categories on Ticketmaster.

KrisFlyer UOB credit and debit card holders, who have subscribed to receive KrisFlyer and SIA Group promotional emails via their KrisFlyer account preferences, will receive a unique access code from KrisFlyer via an email on 27 October 2023.

Members who are not KrisFlyer UOB credit or debit card holders may download Kris+, the SIA Group's lifestyle rewards app, and spend 150 miles (equivalent to S\$1) between 20 and 25 October 2023 to redeem a unique access code. All proceeds from the redemptions on Kris+ for the access code will be donated to KidSTART Singapore, a charity dedicated to supporting young children and families in need.



Each KrisFlyer member is entitled to only one access code, either via their KrisFlyer UOB credit or debit card membership, or access code redemptions on Kris+.

KrisFlyer members may also redeem Categories 1 to 4 concert tickets using their miles via KrisFlyer Experiences from 30 October 2023. Tickets from Categories 1 to 4 may be redeemed with 49,000, 38,000, 29,000, and 19,000 miles respectively. KrisFlyer members may redeem up to six tickets per category.

Please click here for a detailed guide on how to obtain an access code or make KrisFlyer Experiences redemptions. Limited number of tickets are available for sale and redemption via the KrisFlyer Reserve Sale and KrisFlyer Experiences respectively.

Mr Dai Haoyu, Acting Senior Vice President Marketing Planning, Singapore Airlines, said: "KrisFlyer is the passport to a world of extraordinary experiences for our members. Beyond earning miles during their travels with SIA and Scoot, members can also accrue miles and maximise their value through a wide range of on-ground spending and redemption opportunities. Our exciting partnership with Ed Sheeran's upcoming The + - = ÷ × Tour is our latest offering, giving KrisFlyer members early access to tickets and allowing our members to redeem their miles for a memorable experience."

Turkish Technic Brings Together 700 Aviation Professionals in Istanbul

TTA BULLETIN

Turkish Technic, one of the world's largest aircraft maintenance-repair (MRO) companies, is hosting the 128th International Airlines Technical Pool (IATP) conference this year.

Representatives at the event, which took place in Istanbul from October 7th to 11th and saw participation from 198 companies and 700 individuals from six continents, focused on topics aimed at reducing technical-related flight costs in flight operations.

The opening speech of the event, attended by 125 airlines, 41 technical maintenance, and 32 aircraft supply companies, was delivered by Prof. Dr. Ahmet Bolat, Chairman of the Board and Executive Committee of Turkish Technic. In his speech, Prof. Dr. Ahmet Bolat stated: "We are delighted to host this valuable gathering of aviation professionals here in Istanbul. The conference shares the goal of discussing the challenges facing the global



aviation industry and finding collective solutions to these issues. It holds significant importance in fostering innovative ideas and shaping the future of the sector. Furthermore, it serves as a crucial platform for strengthening collaborations and developing joint projects. We believe that this important event, combined with Istanbul's rich historical and cultural heritage, will provide participants with an unforgettable experience."

The 700 participants from around the world who attended the conference had the opportunity to explore the natural and historical beauty of Istanbul through organized tour programs. These tours also contributed to promoting Türkiye. The participants visited historical sites such as the Sultanahmet and Hagia Sophia Mosques, as well as the Basilica Cistern. They also enjoyed a boat tour on the Bosphorus to witness the sunset.

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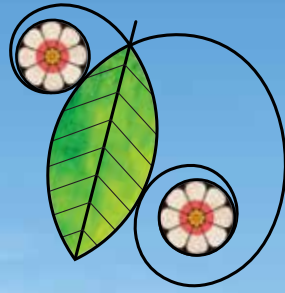


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Located among breathtaking vistas, each property is conceptualized by our founder Chandra and the Thema team around a particular theme that will bring out the culture, nature & history of the region.

We are always committed to the sustainable development of society and encompass some key impact areas of the tourism industry; such as environment, employment, local community, local culture & heritage.

All initiatives in this regard have been curated to suit the resorts' environment, adding value to enhance guest experiences.

Introducing the most recent additions to our distinguished travel portfolio: "Vis Ta Vie" in Mirissa, a charming beachfront haven, and the eagerly anticipated opening of "Waraka" in Yala, scheduled for the upcoming year.

Our ideology has always been to deviate from the traditional "hotel chain" concept and present ourselves as a distinctive property collection which offers a "Thematic & Experiential" accommodation option.



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