

TRAVEL TALK ASIA

#1 IN CIRCULATION & READERSHIP - SRI LANKA'S ONLY TRAVEL TRADE MONTHLY

VOL 23 NO 12 2024 48 PGS



THASL Marks 59th AGM with Visionary Roadmap for Sri Lanka's Tourism Revival

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) celebrated its 59th Annual General Meeting (AGM) recently, with President M. Shanthikumar delivering a compelling address on the state of the tourism industry. Speaking to policymakers, industry leaders, and key stakeholders, he outlined a bold vision for



M. Shanthikumar

reviving Sri Lanka's tourism sector while addressing its pressing challenges and untapped potential.

In his address, Shanthikumar emphasized the urgent need for innovative policies to replace outdated models that are no longer effective. "The tourism industry needs new, robust policies to be adopted. The same old models on the books may not work," he said, urging the Government to implement exceptional financial and developmental strategies to revitalize the industry.

Highlighting the economic importance of the sector, Shanthikumar noted that Sri Lanka's hotel industry has attracted \$15 billion in investments and employs 70%

of the tourism workforce. He pointed out that tourism is the second-largest net foreign exchange earner for the country, surpassing apparel. "The ripple effects of our industry extend from grassroots communities to Government coffers," he said, underscoring its vast economic impact.

A key appeal made during the AGM was for the Government to grant tourism export status, recognizing the sector's ability to generate significant foreign exchange. "We seek your support to award tourism export status, which would benefit the industry and its stakeholders tremendously," Shanthikumar urged. With proper strategic handling, he expressed optimism that the industry could achieve \$10 billion in revenue in the coming years.

Shanthikumar also addressed the growing concerns about the informal accommodation sector, which he noted has grown

[Cont on Pg 2](#)

Pioneering Travel Solutions: Voyzant's Global Vision and Sri Lankan Focus

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Voyzant Inc., a leading global travel consolidator headquartered in Canada, has been reshaping the travel landscape with its innovative technology and tailored solutions. With a vast global presence and strategic operations across multiple markets, Voyzant stands as a key player in the industry. The company's commitment to innovation, collaboration, and excellence has driven its expansion into emerging markets like Sri Lanka, aligning with its overarching goal of enhancing travel experiences worldwide.



"Our strategic airline partnerships and diversified offerings, including corporate travel, group travel, and Voyzant Holidays, allow us to cater to a wide range of customer needs," says Chippy. "With our innovative multi-BSP flight application and automatic ticketing systems, we aim to simplify complex travel logistics and provide seamless experiences."

In an exclusive conversation with Chippy Jegathesan, CEO of Voyzant, Travel Talk Asia delves into the company's milestones, future goals, and its transformative vision for the travel and tourism industry.

Voyzant's operations are rooted in providing cutting-edge travel solutions, offering over 100 million flight options to clients globally. This extensive reach is complemented by localized service, ensuring that every market receives personalized attention while adhering to global standards.

The decision to establish a presence in Sri Lanka reflects Voyzant's forward-thinking approach. Situated at the heart of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka offers a strategic gateway to South Asia's growing travel market. Chippy emphasizes, "Our Sri Lankan office is not just about expanding our footprint; it's about creating localized solutions that meet the unique needs of the travel trade here. We see Sri Lanka as a hub that bridges global technology with local market dynamics." Voyzant's vision for Sri Lanka goes beyond operational goals. The company is dedicated to promoting the island as a premier tourist

[Cont on Pg 2](#)

Reviving Excellence: The Sri Lanka Tourism Awards Return in 2024

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

After a five-year hiatus, the Sri Lanka Tourism Awards are making a grand comeback and scheduled to be held on the 20th of December 2024. This marks the 7th edition of the prestigious event, celebrating the achievements of the travel and hospitality industry. The awards are set to benefit not only internationally renowned players but also small-scale entrepreneurs who contribute significantly to Sri Lanka's tourism ecosystem.

The primary objective of the event is to promote and enhance service standards, encourage best practices, and foster a culture of innovation and excellence within the tourism industry. By recognizing the achievements of individuals and organizations, Sri Lanka Tourism aims to inspire stakeholders to contribute to the sector's sustainable growth. The event will also spotlight the creativity, innovation, and promotional efforts of all

members of the travel and hospitality trade, positioning Sri Lanka as a world-class travel destination.

"This year's awards are a testament to Sri Lanka's resilience. By embracing inclusivity and recognizing the diverse contributions of all tourism stakeholders, we are charting a path forward that celebrates our country's potential," said Udana Wickramasinghe, Director Research and International Relations Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority.

The Sri Lanka Tourism Awards 2024 will not only showcase the promotional skills and products of seasoned professionals



and budding entrepreneurs but also shine a global spotlight on Sri Lanka. The partnerships Sri Lanka Tourism holds with international organizations such as the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) bring further credibility to the event, solidifying the island's reputation as one of Asia's most renowned travel destinations.

The awards have grown significantly since their inception in 2008. While the last event in 2018 celebrated the industry's excellence and innovation, the subsequent years saw disruptions due to the Easter Sunday attacks and the

COVID-19 pandemic. This year's revival is a milestone for the tourism sector, signifying its recovery and optimism for the future.

"This year, we are focusing on inclusivity, which is essential for the tourism industry to thrive. From local vendors to luxury hotels, everyone plays a role in creating a vibrant and sustainable tourism sector," said Upali De Silva, Consultant Sri Lanka Tourism Awards 2024, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority. The theme for this year's awards is Inclusive Tourism, emphasizing the importance of creating opportunities for all stakeholders, from grassroots entrepreneurs to multinational operators. Inclusivity and diversity are essential pillars of the tourism sector, Sri Lanka's second-largest foreign exchange earner and a vital driver of economic growth.

[Cont on Pg 2](#)

As we step into what promises to be one of Sri Lanka's most vibrant winter seasons since 2018, the tourism industry is abuzz with optimism and excitement. Having weathered unprecedented challenges over the years, the resilience and perseverance of our industry continue to shine, stronger than ever. Following one of the most peaceful elections in recent memory, there is a renewed sense of stability and hope as we prepare to showcase the island's beauty and diversity to the world.

Adding to this spirit of celebration is the recent recognition of Sri Lanka as the Most Desired Island in the World at the Wanderlust Readers' Choice Awards. This accolade is not just a testament to the allure of Sri Lanka but also a nod to the unwavering dedication of our tourism stakeholders. Every traveler drawn to our shores is a reflection of the hard work, creativity, and resilience that fuel this industry.

One of the standout products capturing the imagination of travelers is the Pekoe Trail, a stunning 300-kilometer hiking trail through the heart of Sri Lanka's tea country. Gaining significant traction in recent months, this unique experience is now a beacon for adventure seekers and nature enthusiasts alike, offering an authentic slice of Sri Lanka's cultural and natural heritage.

On the note of innovation and inclusivity, the Women in Tourism Collective has made waves with the launch of the island's first-ever mentorship program. This groundbreaking initiative aims to encourage and empower more women to join the tourism sector, fostering leadership and diversity in a traditionally male-dominated field. It's heartening to see such impactful steps being taken to build a more equitable industry.

We also extend our warm congratulations to Thema Collection on the opening of their newest property, Amba Yaalu in Dambulla. What makes this milestone even more special is that the property is entirely female-run, an inspiring example of what women in tourism can achieve. The aptly named "Amba Yaalu" embodies the spirit of friendship and collaboration, setting a benchmark for innovation and inclusivity in hospitality.

As the holiday season approaches, we take a moment to reflect on the journey of Sri Lanka Tourism in 2024. Despite the hurdles, we have made remarkable strides, united by a shared vision for a brighter future. To our partners, readers, and colleagues, we wish you a joyous holiday season filled with warmth and togetherness.

Let us bid farewell to 2024 with gratitude for the lessons learned and accomplishments achieved, and step into 2025 with renewed enthusiasm. Together, we can continue to redefine Sri Lanka as one of the world's most sought-after travel destinations. Here's to a season of hope, prosperity, and limitless possibilities for Sri Lanka Tourism.



Dinushka
Dinushka Chandrasena
Editor

DoubleDee
PUBLICATIONS

Editor / Managing Director
Dinushka Chandrasena

Directors
Firoze Munzeer
Dinesh Chandrasena

Head of Marketing
Anoj Tillekeratne

Digital Marketing & Communication
Lakshini Wanigesinghe

Lead Designer
Eshan Perera

Digital/ Website Associate
Navodh Jayasundara

Website Design
Antyra Hospitality

Printing/ Publishing
Printage (Pvt) Ltd

Traveltalk Asia is a Monthly publication
of DoubleDee Publications Private Limited

15A, Swarna Road, Colombo 6, Sri Lanka
Phone / Fax: +94-115345346
Mobile: +94-777756726,
+94-777756762,
E-mail: Dinushka@doubledee.lk
Anoj@doubledee.lk
Web: www.traveltalkasia.com

Travel Talk Asia is a publication of DoubleDee Publications. All information in Travel Talk Asia is derived from sources, which we consider reliable and a sincere effort is made to report accurate information. It is passed on to our readers without any responsibility on our part. Similarly, opinions/views expressed by third parties in abstract and/or in interviews are not necessarily shared by Travel Talk Asia. However, we wish to advise our readers that one or more recognized authorities may hold different views than those reported. Material used in this publication is intended for information purpose only. Content of this publication are protected by copyrights laws. Material appearing in Travel Talk Asia cannot be reproduced whole or in part without prior permission. The same rule applies when there is a copyright or the article is taken from another publication. Publications reproducing material either in part or in whole, without permission could face legal action. The publisher assumes no responsibility for returning unsolicited material nor is she responsible for material lost or damaged in transit. This publication is not meant to be an endorsement of any specific product or service offered. The publisher reserves the right to refuse, withdraw or amend or otherwise deal with all advertisements without explanation. All advertisements must comply with the Sri Lankan and International Advertisement Code. The publisher will not be liable for any damage or loss caused by delayed publication, error or failure of an advertisement to appear.

THASL Marks 59th AGM with....

to rival the formal sector in room numbers. He called for stricter regulation, including proper licensing, adherence to safety standards, and tax compliance. "The SME sector plays a critical role, as does the informal sector, but they must operate within a framework that ensures health and safety compliance while contributing their share to the tax net," he explained.

Another critical issue highlighted was the acute shortage of skilled and unskilled workers in the hospitality sector. Shanthikumar proposed large-scale training programs through the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM), focusing on empowering women and rural youth. "The female workforce in hospitality is still far below regional levels. By prioritizing human capital development, we can provide job opportunities close to villages and hometowns, enabling rural youth and women to thrive," he said.

Marketing and promotions were also identified as a major bottleneck, with Shanthikumar lamenting the absence of a global tourism campaign for over 15 years. "Time is of the essence. Competing destinations like the Maldives, Vietnam, and Thailand are running highly effective campaigns in key source markets. We need to act immediately if we are to achieve the proposed arrival targets," he stressed, urging Tourism Minister Vijitha Herath to expedite efforts in this area.

Shanthikumar also took the opportunity to call for

Cont on Pg 2

Pioneering Travel Solutions....

destination, leveraging its extensive global network to showcase Sri Lanka's natural beauty and rich cultural heritage.

Voyzant is poised to play a significant role in elevating Sri Lanka's travel and tourism industry. By collaborating with local destination management companies (DMCs) and tourism boards, the company aims to foster sustainable tourism growth.

"In the short term, we're focusing on bespoke travel experiences that not only attract inbound tourists but also create enriching cultural exchanges," explains Chippy. "Our long-term goal is to empower the local travel community through technology and innovation, ensuring Sri Lanka becomes a benchmark for travel excellence in the region."

The travel industry has faced unprecedented challenges in recent years, but Voyzant's adaptability sets it apart. The company has been at the forefront of technological integration, including the adoption of NDC content with leading airlines in North America. Chippy notes, "Our future-focused approach includes diversifying into verticals like Host Travel Agencies, Loyalty Memberships, and Health Concierge services.

Cont on Pg 2

Reviving Excellence....

The award categories reflect this inclusivity, covering areas such as youth contributions to tourism, sustainable practices, international award winners, and recognition for airlines, charter operators, cruise facilitators, and more. Special focus will be placed on sectors like nature, eco, and wildlife tourism, MICE tourism, and marketing and communications, alongside excellence in service.

The Sri Lanka Tourism Awards 2024 aims to rejuvenate the tourism sector by highlighting its contributions to

equitable treatment for the hospitality sector, highlighting the burdens of increased liquor license fees and turnover-based taxes. "Local Government authorities are demanding hotels pay a further 1% tax on turnover, while industries such as banks, supermarkets, and hospitals only pay Rs. 6,000 annually. Hotels, which generate significant foreign exchange, should not be penalized and discriminated against," he argued.

To ensure better coordination in policy-making, Shanthikumar proposed the establishment of an inter-ministerial committee led by the President. "Tourism activities span across 18 Ministries. Coordinated decision-making is essential for the sector's growth and sustainability," he said.

The THASL President commended Tourism Minister Vijitha Herath and SLTDA Chairman Buddhika Hewawasam for their efforts while stressing the importance of comprehensive policy work to sustain the momentum. "We are optimistic about the potential of Sri Lanka's tourism sector. With the right strategies, we can achieve a thriving and sustainable industry," he concluded.

The 59th AGM of THASL served as a clarion call for transformative action, aiming to position Sri Lanka as a competitive, sustainable, and globally attractive destination.

Innovation and resilience are at the core of everything we do."

As a driving force in the travel sector, Voyzant is committed to shaping the future of travel in Sri Lanka and beyond. The company's emphasis on collaboration, innovation, and sustainability is paving the way for transformative growth. "We believe in empowering the travel industry to contribute meaningfully to Sri Lanka's economy while preserving the enchantment that makes it an unforgettable destination," says Chippy.

With a clear vision and unwavering dedication, Voyzant is not just keeping pace with global trends—it's setting new benchmarks for others to follow.

Voyzant's journey is defined by its relentless pursuit of innovation and excellence. From its global operations to its strategic focus on Sri Lanka, the company continues to redefine travel experiences for businesses and travelers alike. As Chippy aptly puts it, "Voyzant's mission is to empower our partners, inspire travelers, and shape the future of travel."

the economy and global reputation. By celebrating the industry's accomplishments, the event hopes to encourage more stakeholders to join and innovate within the sector, ultimately enhancing Sri Lanka's appeal to travelers worldwide.

With over 150 participants already registered across various categories, the awards promise to be an energetic and inspiring celebration of Sri Lanka's unique hospitality, rich culture, and breathtaking attractions.



Browns

HOTELS & RESORTS

CHRISTMAS

MADE *tropical* FOR YOU

Trade snow for sunshine, sweaters for flip-flops, and the ordinary for the unforgettable this festive season with Browns Hotels & Resorts. Think feasts by the beach, island flavours and drinks, and festive joy in every breeze.

Whether it's snorkelling in Dickwella's jade-blue waters, surfing in Mirissa, strolling along Bentota's golden mile, relaxing on Pasikuda's calm shores, or celebrating sunsets in Negombo, we invite you to spend your winter where summer and spring are eternal. Savour a high tea in the hills or embark on adventurous escapes to the island's cultural triangle-where history and wonder come alive.

From the joy of festive traditions reimaged to the simple pleasures of sunsets and starry skies, this is where your Christmas stay feels like the best gift of all.



Villa Collection



REVEAL

Associate Hotel



SHERATON
Kosgoda Turtle Beach Resort



www.browshotels.com



A Million Eyes on Sri Lanka: Australian Influencers Set to Capture Its Magic

TTA BULLETIN

In an exciting initiative to bolster Sri Lanka's tourism industry, the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) is set to host four prominent Australian-based social media influencers this December. The campaign aims to capture the allure of Sri Lanka through the eyes of these digital content creators, whose combined reach spans millions of followers across Instagram and TikTok. The endeavor promises to spotlight Sri Lanka as a premier destination for travelers seeking unique cultural, natural, and luxury experiences.

From December 4 to 16, 2024, the influencers will embark on a captivating 12-day journey across the island, visiting iconic destinations such as Negombo, Trincomalee, Dambulla, Habarana, Sigiriya, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Ella, Little Adam's Peak, Yala National Park, Mirissa, Galle, and Colombo. Their travel experiences, captured through photos, videos, and stories, will highlight the island's rich heritage, diverse landscapes, and unparalleled hospitality.

The influx of influencers from Australia is a testament to Sri Lanka Tourism's

evolving digital marketing strategy, which aligns with current trends where social media and influencer marketing play pivotal roles in destination branding. With over 1.5 million followers collectively, these influencers hold significant sway over their audiences, primarily composed of fashion-conscious travelers, wellness enthusiasts, nature lovers, and adventure seekers – all potential visitors to Sri Lanka.

The four influencers—Luana Soares Ostling, Simran Gulati, David Yiu Wai Chin, and Dylan Mahoney—bring unique perspectives and diverse content styles to the table. Luana Soares Ostling, with her expertise in fashion, lifestyle, and luxury travel, and over 1 million followers on Instagram, is expected to offer an aspirational view of Sri Lanka's luxury offerings. Simran Gulati, a well-known model and actress, will highlight the intersection of wellness, beauty, and travel. Her 210,000 Instagram followers and collaborations with global brands such as Giorgio Armani and her media presence are sure to capture the attention of affluent Australian tourists.

Meanwhile, David Yiu Wai Chin, an

influencer and professional photographer, will use his skills to create stunning visual content that showcases Sri Lanka's landscapes and cultural heritage. With 161,000 followers on Instagram, David's creative photography is bound to capture the beauty of Sri Lanka in a way that resonates with his audience. Lastly, Dylan Mahoney, known for his travel and lifestyle content on Instagram and TikTok, will focus on the authentic, real-world experiences that Sri Lanka has to offer, particularly for younger, adventure-driven travelers. Dylan boasts 46,900 Instagram followers and 101,000 followers on TikTok, and his content blends personal narratives with vibrant visuals.

The campaign is further strengthened by the support of several local entities, which have generously offered complimentary services to ensure its success. These include Columbus Tours & Travels, Theva Residency, Sail Lanka (Pvt) Ltd, St. Andrews by Jetwing, Aliya Resort, Riff



Hikkaduwa, Blue Orbit by Citrus, Siddalepa Ayurveda, Ministry of Crab, Lotus Tower Entrance, and Dalada Maligawa Entrance. Their contributions underscore the collective effort of Sri Lanka's tourism stakeholders to elevate the country's global image.

This campaign comes at a crucial juncture for Sri Lanka's tourism industry, which is working to recover and grow amidst global competition. By leveraging the power of social media, the SLTPB seeks to inspire Australian travelers to explore Sri Lanka, positioning the country as a versatile destination offering everything from serene beaches and ancient landmarks to lush hill country and vibrant cityscapes.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister launches Cityscape Bahrain 2024

TTA BULLETIN

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, launched the third edition of Cityscape Bahrain 2024 at Exhibition World Bahrain in Sakhir.

His Royal Highness emphasised Team Bahrain's role in advancing the Kingdom's development paths towards achieving its goals across various economic and development sectors, contributing to furthering the Kingdom's achievements under the reign of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad highlighted that the Kingdom's real estate sector is a key driver of the national economy, supported by a favourable legislative and regulatory environment that aligns with efforts to position the Kingdom as a leading investment hub.

His Royal Highness reiterated the significance of Team Bahrain's efforts, emphasising their creativity and excellence in contributing to the Kingdom's achievements across various sectors.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister emphasised that Bahrain continues to progress through the contributions of its ambitious citizens, working together to build a brighter future for the Kingdom.

His Royal Highness affirmed the Kingdom's commitment to implementing plans, initiatives, and programmes that leverage the latest technologies, fostering creativity and innovation to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of

Bahrain's real estate sector.

His Royal Highness highlighted the event's significant role as one of the most comprehensive platforms for showcasing the Kingdom's lucrative investment opportunities, aligning with its economic diversification efforts to achieve its aspirations.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister stated that the Kingdom's hosting of prestigious exhibitions and conferences highlights its advanced infrastructure, skilled national workforce, and expertise, strengthening its global reputation as a hub for international events.

His Royal Highness expressed his gratitude to the event organisers and wished them further success.

For his part, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA), His Excellency Eng. Essam bin Abdullah Khalaf emphasised the significance of Cityscape Bahrain 2024 in positioning the Kingdom of Bahrain as a hub for investments and prestigious real estate exhibitions, in line with HM the King's visionary aspirations.

HE Eng. Khalaf expressed his gratitude for His Royal Highness's patronage of the exhibition, highlighting its ongoing success as a reflection of the Kingdom's commitment to fostering an investment-friendly environment and driving economic growth.

Sri Lanka's TWC facilitates innovative climate adaptation initiatives for Maldives' Tourism

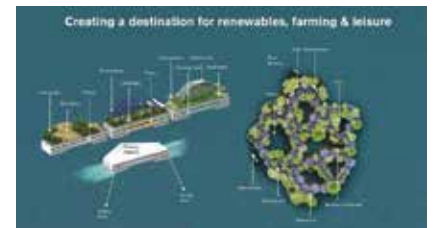
TTA BULLETIN

The Advisory arm of TWC Holdings (formerly TWC Corp), a company founded in 2012 by Thilana Wijesinghe, has emerged as a transformative partner in adapting tourism development to meet the impacts of climate change in the Maldives. Recently, the Maldives Fund Management Corporation (MFMC) was advised by Thilana, who is a specialist in Public Private Partnerships, to craft a comprehensive Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify an international firm of architects and master planners to design a "Climate Adaptive Vision Masterplan" for Gaafaru, an inhabited island of Kaafu Atoll.

Upon evaluation of the proposals received, Foster + Partners, the world-renowned architectural firm in London founded by Norman Foster, was selected by MFMC. Through a comprehensive study of Gaafaru, Foster's sustainability team and in-house ecologists have proposed a master plan built on six [06] key principles to ensure highly sustainable, climate-adaptive and inclusive development anchored on tourism.

Speaking on the initiative, Chairman & Managing Director, TWC Holdings, Thilana Wijesinghe, stated: "The Gaafaru project is a transformative step for the Maldives, showcasing how climate-adaptive planning can ensure sustainable growth in tourism while protecting fragile ecosystems. This initiative serves as a model for other small island nations, demonstrating the power of forward-thinking strategies to drive resilience and economic opportunity in the face of climate change."

The master plan is based on environmental



analysis and understanding rising sea levels over the next century. The land will be sustainably reclaimed - using low-impact building techniques - and built at a higher level to decrease the risk of sea-level rise over one hundred years. Reclaimed land area will be reduced by 45% (from business-as-usual building methods in the Maldives), and 70% of reclaimed land will be given over to marine and terrestrial habitats for native planting. Establishing Marine Protected Areas and a Marine Institute will aid in protecting and educating locals and visitors alike. The master plan for this integrated tourism project - which consists of private islands, two ultra-luxury resorts, tourist guesthouses in the inhabited island - aims to diversify economic opportunities in the Maldives.

Commenting on the initiative, Senior Vice President, TWC Holdings - Natasha Silva stated: "By connecting Foster's with SIGS we aim to bring in global best practices and knowledge to influence local island councils and guesthouse owners in the Maldives to adopt climate-adaptive building codes for private guesthouse investments. This initiative has the potential to set a new standard for sustainable tourism development, aligning local practices with global resilience strategies."

A LUXURY *wellness experience* BY THE LAGOON



Step into to our renewed sanctuary of wellness, nestled between the serene Negombo lagoon and the majestic Indian Ocean. Originally designed by the legendary architect Geoffrey Bawa, our haven has been recently refreshed to inspire a wellness lifestyle that extends beyond your stay, with every corner, even today, reflecting his ingenious touch.

Immerse yourself in a variety of wellness programs, activities, and a health-conscious fine dining menu, all crafted to rejuvenate and rebalance your mind, body, and soul.

Welcome to Jetwing Lagoon!



Scan here to book your escape:
+94 11 470 9400
resv.lagoon@jetwinghotels.com or
sales@jetwinghotels.com

  @jetwinglagoon

Jetwing
LAGOON
NEGOMBO • SRI LANKA

YOUR HOME OF LEGENDARY SRI LANKAN HOSPITALITY



More Airlines, More Business

Your Free and Easy Ticketing Solution

350 partner airlines, 10,000 routes, 2.2 million flights.
Hahnair is your gateway to more business with thousands of additional connections in your GDS.

- Gain incremental revenue by connecting with carriers that don't authorise ticketing in your market.
- Even plate airlines that are absent from your local BSP.
- Find more FOP choices: pick your preferred payment method.

→ Just choose Hahnair (HR) as the validating carrier.



Support around the clock


Our experienced Service Desk colleagues assist you with any ticketing questions. Contact us anytime at service@hahnair.com

→ More than 100,000 travel agents in 190 markets already trust in our ticketing solutions.

Hahn Air Lines GmbH

service@hahnair.com
www.hahnair.com



simply smarter solutions  hahnair.com

NEWS

Sri Lanka Tourism Warmly Welcomes Travelers for the Upcoming Season

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka Tourism extends a warm invitation to travelers from around the world to visit Sri Lanka during the upcoming tourist season. We ensure that all tourists can enjoy a safe and secure experience while exploring the beauty of our island. The highest levels of safety and security will be maintained for all visitors throughout their stay in Sri Lanka.

The Ministry of Defense has also assured Sri Lanka Tourism that necessary measures have been taken to guarantee the safety of tourists across all areas of the country, ensuring peace of mind for those currently staying in Sri Lanka and for those planning their visits.

We look forward to offering every traveler a memorable and enjoyable stay in Sri Lanka.

PATA Travel Mart 2025 Returning to Bangkok, Thailand

TTA BULLETIN

The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) has announced that PATA Travel Mart 2025 will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from August 26-28, 2025. This announcement, made by PATA CEO Noor Ahmad Hamid during the closing of the PATA Destination Marketing Forum 2024, marks the second consecutive year the event will take place in Bangkok.



PATA Travel Mart has long been a key platform for industry stakeholders to gain firsthand insights into the dynamic Asia Pacific market, establish new relationships, and seize emerging opportunities. To be organised at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center (QSNCC), the event will feature a one-day conference, a two-day business-to-business travel mart, and numerous networking opportunities. Building on the success of past editions, the event will bring together buyers and sellers from across the region and beyond, with thousands of expected business appointments and a broad representation of destinations across six regions.

travel trade shows, PATA Travel Mart 2025 is designed to connect global tourism and travel leaders in an environment dedicated to growth, collaboration, and opportunity. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage directly with decision-makers, explore new market opportunities, and strengthen relationships that drive the industry forward.

Further details about PATA Travel Mart 2025 will be shared in due course.

For further information, please contact Events@PATA.org, or visit www.pata.org/-calendar/pata-travel-mart-2025 for future updates.

Reflecting on the success of PATA Travel Mart 2024, which brought together more than 900 buyers and sellers in Bangkok, Noor remarked, "The Asia Pacific region continues to be a global leader in tourism, both as a major destination and a source of outbound travel. Bangkok, with its rich cultural heritage, spirit of resilience, and innovative edge, captures the essence of this vibrant region, making it an ideal setting for stakeholders to convene, collaborate, and celebrate the myriad opportunities and partnerships shaping the future of tourism."

Founded in 1951, the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) is a not-for-profit membership association that acts as a catalyst for the responsible development of travel and tourism to, from and within the Asia Pacific region. The Association provides aligned advocacy, insightful research, and innovative events to its member organisations, which include government, state and city tourism bodies; international airlines and airports; hospitality organisations, and educational institutions, as well as youth members across the world. The PATA network also embraces the grassroots activism of the PATA Chapters and Student Chapters, who organise numerous travel industry training programmes and business development events across the world. Thousands of travel professionals belong to the 31 local PATA Chapters worldwide, while hundreds of students are members of the 15 PATA Student Chapters globally. The PATAmPOWER platform delivers unrivalled data, forecasts, and insights from the PATA Strategic Intelligence Centre to members' desktops and mobile devices anywhere in the world. PATA's Head Office has been in Bangkok since 1998. The Association also has an official office in Beijing. Visit www.PATA.org.

He added, "PATA Travel Mart 2025 reaffirms the Association's commitment to driving sustainable growth, fostering innovation, and promoting partnerships within the Asia Pacific region—advancing the industry's reach and impact. We are excited to welcome industry professionals worldwide to PTM 2025 to share their unique offerings, explore new partnerships, and contribute to a thriving tourism landscape."

As one of Asia Pacific's most established



PEGASUS REEF
the city resort that's just right!

A tropical CHRISTMAS at Pegasus Reef!

25th December
2024

Tropical Christmas Party

26th December
2024

Boxing Day Lunch

A Tropical Christmas amidst the Sri Lankan sea breeze.

A beloved tourist destination, Pegasus Reef is adding a unique touch to its Christmas celebrations this year. Join the festivities to embrace the bountiful beach views, delicious cuisine, and star-class treatment to kick off the season.

Visit: www.pegasusreefhotel.com

www.facebook.com/Pegasusreefwattala www.instagram.com/pegasusreef_wattala

SCAN HERE
to access our complete
Christmas brochure.



SLCB hosts a strategic MICE Tourism session to establish Cultural Triangle as a key MICE hub

TTA BULLETIN



The Sri Lanka Convention Bureau, an entity under the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, Policy Formulation, Planning and Tourism successfully concluded the Cultural Triangle Hoteliers Training Program on MICE Tourism on the 15th of October 2024 at the Habarana Village by Cinnamon.

This is one of the series of training programs that had been organized by SLCB in many parts of the country during the past few years.

This educational session was attended by 30 plus senior and middle-level hoteliers from 18 hotels in the Cultural Triangle Region.

The event commenced with the opening remarks delivered by Ms. Kumudu Hennedige – Manager Research, Development & Training Sri Lanka Convention Bureau.

The session featured prominent speakers, including Ms. Shyana Jayalath, who is a Marketer, Volunteer, & Communicator along with Mr. Chamindu Abeywickrama, Founder of C A Corporate Training, Mr. Ziyen Ameen, General Manager, Aitken Spence Conventions & Exhibitions. Mr. Udara Dharmasena VP client success Meta ASP Sri Lanka and also the Secretary of the Digital Marketing Association of Sri Lanka and Ms. Gayathri Seneviratne, Country Director 3P Media and Google Media Representative Sri Lanka.

A panel discussion was held featuring prominent industry experts, including Mr. Saliya Dayananda, Immediate Past President of the Cultural Triangle Hoteliers Association; Ms. Shyana Jayalath; Mr. Asela Wawita, General Manager of Heritage Kandalama Hotel and Mr. Udara Dharmasena, VP Client

Success - Meta ASP Sri Lanka & also a lecturer in Digital Marketing at University of Kelaniya, SLIM & APIDM. The session was moderated by Mr. Ziyen Ameen, General Manager of Aitken Spence

Conventions & Exhibitions. The panel discussed various topics, including the expectations of Cultural Triangle hoteliers for the upcoming season in light of increasing tourism arrivals, and the contribution of MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions), sports, and general tourism segments to the region.

They also explored current trends in the event management sector, the future of tourism with Gen Z's focus on sustainability and community-based best practices and the need for technology in creating engaging event experiences, particularly in attracting a younger, tech-savvy audience.

This event also consisted of a practical working group session on "Identifying an Event to position the Cultural Triangle as a MICE hub". Participants came out with many interesting & creative MICE Experiences that Cultural Triangle can offer to the MICE Traveler.

At the end of the training program, all participants were presented with certificates of participation issued by the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau. The event concluded with a closing thank-you note, expressing gratitude to the speakers, panelists, and attendees for their contributions and engagement.

The next MICE Tourism educational session will be held on 26 and 27 of November in Jaffna targeting the Hoteliers in the Northern region as well as the students who are following tourism, hospitality and event management degrees/courses in the Northern region.



Kumudu Hennedige

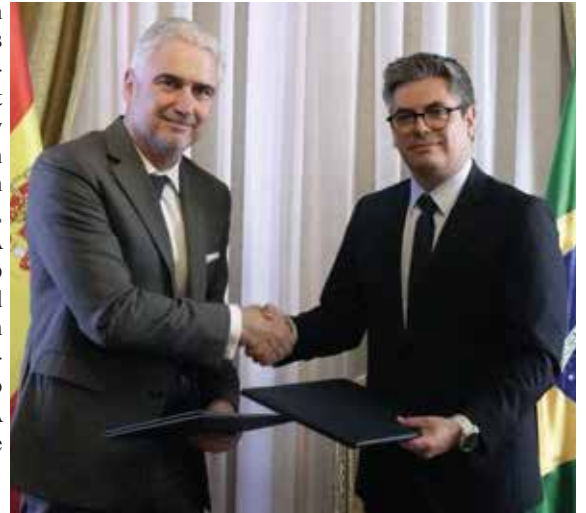


Brasil to be the Partner Country at FITUR 2025

The agreement, aimed at boosting the country's global positioning, was signed by Brazil's Ambassador Orlando Leite Ribeiro and IFEMA Madrid's Executive Vice President, Daniel Martínez, at the Brazilian Embassy in Spain.

TTA BULLETIN

The International Tourism Fair (FITUR) has announced today the participation of Brazil for the first time as the Partner Country for its 45th edition, which will take place from January 22 to 26, 2025, organized by IFEMA MADRID. The partnership agreement was formalized at the Brazilian Embassy in Madrid by Brazil's Ambassador to Spain, Orlando Leite Ribeiro, and IFEMA Madrid's Executive Vice President, Daniel Martínez.



In a context of tourism growth in Brazil, which, according to the latest data from Embratur, has increased the number of international tourists received by 13% as of October 2024 compared to the same period in 2023, FITUR emerges as the key strategic platform to enhance its global positioning and boost the potential of its diverse tourism offerings.

"Being the Partner Country at FITUR is an extraordinary achievement," stated Celso Sabino, Brazil's Minister of Tourism. "We're wrapping up a record-breaking year for Brazilian tourism, and 2025 promises to exceed our expectations in results and global visibility. FITUR will be our showcase to highlight the nation's potential, especially in a year when we will also host COP30 and BRICS".

Marcelo Freixo, president of Embratur, emphasized, "This milestone reflects the dedicated efforts of Embratur under President Lula's leadership. We'll use this prestigious platform to spotlight Brazil's diversity and position the country as a global tourism leader. We invite professionals to visit our stand, designed to foster business opportunities, strengthen strategic partnerships, and showcase the unique strengths of our market."

"Brazil and Spain are allied nations with a tradition of multifaceted cooperation. In tourism, we've been working to strengthen ties by combining Brazil's potential with Spain's expertise. Spain is not only a key source of tourists but also a strategic partner and a vital source of investment in our tourism sector, leveraging its extensive experience in this field", stated Brazil's Ambassador to Spain, Orlando Leite Ribeiro.

Daniel Martínez, Executive Vice President of IFEMA Madrid, emphasized that "this alliance reinforces the bonds between Spain and Brazil, opening new opportunities to promote Brazil's rich tourism assets through a world-renowned fair like FITUR, which is an essential meeting point for the global tourism market. Last year's edition attracted 250,000 visitors and featured 152

countries with 96 official delegations."

As FITUR's Partner Country, Brazil will not only expand its presence in the global tourism market but also amplify the impact of its promotional strategy in key markets like Spain. The country will feature prominently in the fair's visual communication and advertising campaigns across Madrid, with a focus on business generation and sustainability.

The tourism sector will benefit from initiatives such as the launch of a Europe-targeted advertising campaign, a continuous training platform on Brazil, and new strategic agreements with international organizations. Brazil's stand, located in Pavilion 3 of IFEMA Madrid, will be a major attraction at FITUR 2025, offering immersive experiences, cultural showcases, and business meetings designed to foster investments and collaborations.

Brazil will highlight its tourism diversity, bringing together destinations from all regions, airlines, operators, and hotel chains committed to innovation and excellence. The selection of co-exhibitors will focus on promoting high-quality, varied destinations, solidifying Brazil's status as a world-class destination. The aim is to diversify the country's tourism offerings, increase the length of visitor stays, and maximize international tourist spending.

Brazil is a tourism destination of exceptional richness, thanks to its vibrant culture, traditions, and landscapes. From the paradisiacal beaches of Rio de Janeiro and the Northeast to the lush nature of the Amazon, Pantanal, and Iguazu, and the dynamic urban life of São Paulo, Brazil offers a unique experience for every type of visitor. Additionally, its iconic festivals such as Carnival, New Year's Eve in Copacabana, or the Carimbó Festival in Pará; its globally renowned cuisine; and the warmth of its people make the country a benchmark for international tourism, establishing itself as one of the most fascinating and dynamic destinations.

eMarketingEye Partners with Small Luxury Hotels of the World™ as the Preferred Digital Marketing Provider

TTA BULLETIN

eMarketingEye, a leading digital marketing agency specializing in the travel and hospitality industry, is proud to announce its partnership with Small Luxury Hotels of the World™ (SLH).



the distinctiveness of each SLH property”, stated Rajitha Dahanayake, CEO of eMarketingEye. With successful partnerships already in place with several properties in the SLH portfolio,

eMarketingEye is eager to extend its expertise to new properties and further elevate their digital presence.

Richard Hyde, Chief Operating Officer, Small Luxury Hotels of the World said, “The digital space allows small independent hotels to reach a global audience directly in the most cost-effective manner. Therefore, it is important for us to recommend the best-in-class suppliers to our community of independently spirited member hotels. Being an agile company, eMarketingEye is able to customise and deliver relevant digital marketing solutions by market, thereby maximising our member hotels’ budgets and reducing their cost per booking.”

eMarketingEye has long been recognized for its industry-leading digital marketing expertise, trusted by top-tier hotels in the region. Through this partnership, SLH hotels will now have the opportunity to leverage eMarketingEye’s innovative, data-driven digital marketing solutions, empowering them to enhance their brand positioning and drive business growth.

As the preferred Digital Marketing Partner for the APAC region, eMarketingEye has been recognised by SLH to deliver bespoke digital marketing solutions to its prestigious portfolio of luxury boutique hotels. This partnership highlights eMarketingEye’s reputation as a trusted leader in the digital marketing space, supporting the growth and online presence of globally renowned luxury properties.

SLH is a prestigious collection of over 570 luxury boutique hotels spread across 90 countries, offering exceptional guest experiences in some of the world’s most intimate and characterful spaces. While united by a common spirit and exceptional service standards, each hotel offers a distinctive, intimate guest experience within a beautiful and uniquely charming setting.

“Becoming the digital marketing partner for Small Luxury Hotels of the World marks a significant milestone for eMarketingEye. We look forward to dispense our expertise in delivering tailored digital strategies that emphasize

Empowering Excellence in Hospitality: Sri Lanka Hospitality Graduates Association Holds 53rd AGM and Announces New Leadership

TTA BULLETIN



eMarketingEye, a leading digital marketing agency specializing in the travel and hospitality industry, is proud to announce its partnership with Small Luxury Hotels of the World™ (SLH).

intimate and characterful spaces. While united by a common spirit and exceptional service standards, each hotel offers a distinctive, intimate guest experience within a beautiful and uniquely charming setting.

“Becoming the digital marketing partner for Small Luxury Hotels of the World marks a significant milestone for eMarketingEye. We look forward to dispense our expertise in delivering tailored digital strategies that emphasize the distinctiveness of each SLH property”, stated Rajitha Dahanayake, CEO of eMarketingEye. With successful partnerships already in place with several properties in the SLH portfolio, eMarketingEye is eager to extend its expertise to new properties and further elevate their digital presence.

As the preferred Digital Marketing Partner for the APAC region, eMarketingEye has been recognised by SLH to deliver bespoke digital marketing solutions to its prestigious portfolio of luxury boutique hotels. This partnership highlights eMarketingEye’s reputation as a trusted leader in the digital marketing space, supporting the growth and online presence of globally renowned luxury properties.

SLH is a prestigious collection of over 570 luxury boutique hotels spread across 90 countries, offering exceptional guest experiences in some of the world’s most

Launch of Women in Travel Collective: Driving Equity in the Tourism Industry

TTA BULLETIN

The travel and tourism industry takes a bold step forward with the launch of the Women in Travel Collective, a transformative initiative dedicated to empowering women and creating a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive Travel and Tourism sector in Sri Lanka.



The Women in Travel Collective is the brainchild of Irstel Jansen partnered by co-founders Dee Gibson, Dinushka Chandrasena, Thushni De Silva and Andrea Goonasekera who are on a mission to break barriers and create opportunities for women, while addressing the challenges they face in the travel and tourism sector.

“The Women in Travel Collective represents a crucial step forward in our journey toward gender equality and inclusivity in the travel and tourism industry. By empowering women and building a supportive, solution-driven community, we can not only transform lives but also reshape the industry in progressive ways” said Irstel Jansen – Founder of WIT Collective.

Key focus areas of the Collective include empowering women—from grassroots participation to advancing women into senior leadership roles—creating a platform for advocacy and collaboration to promote gender equality, advancing women’s rights, and fostering partnerships with industry stakeholders to amplify efforts for inclusivity. Central to its mission is community building, which offers members access to events, training sessions, webinars, and resources, enabling them to connect, inspire, and uplift one another.

WIT Collective is aiming for a

solution-driven approach prioritizing actionable solutions to establish transformative opportunities for women to thrive in the travel and tourism sector. One of the Collective’s first solution-driven initiatives is the flagship Mentorship Program, which pairs women with experienced mentors to unlock career opportunities, provide guidance, and motivate them to take on leadership positions within the sector. By encouraging women to embrace their potential, the program aims to build a stronger network of female leaders in travel and tourism.

Recognizing the importance of male allies, the Collective also works closely with male champions who play a key role in advancing gender equality and fostering an inclusive industry. International collaboration is another key focus, with the Collective proudly collaborating with leading organizations such as Women in Travel CIC, a London-based initiative empowering women in tourism since 2016. This partnership will enhance the collective’s ability to expand its reach and impact on a global scale.

The Women in Travel Collective made its debut at the World Travel Market 2024 in London, where its vision and partnerships were showcased. This marked the beginning of an initiative dedicated to creating a more inclusive, resilient, and innovative tourism industry in Sri Lanka and beyond.

Sri Lanka Launches First-Ever Dedicated Honeymoon Guide Website

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka has unveiled its first dedicated honeymoon guide website, marking a significant milestone in the country’s tourism landscape. Designed to cater to the growing demand for romantic travel experiences, this innovative platform is set to become the go-to resource for couples planning their dream honeymoon on the island.



into the platform’s vision, saying, “The Honeymoon Guide is a concierge service catering to the high-end romance traveler. We take a hands-on, consultative approach to help discerning travelers plan, curate, and book the perfect honeymoon. Most importantly, our service is completely free to consumers as our revenue is made through listing fees, commissions, and other related sources.”

Honeymoon travel is one of the most resilient segments in the tourism industry, often postponed but rarely canceled. With interest in Sri Lanka as a honeymoon destination increasing by 170% year-on-year, the timing of this launch could not be better. The Honeymoon Guide combines curated recommendations, bespoke concierge services, and expert insights to showcase the best of what Sri Lanka has to offer for couples.

Co-founder Nilka Dabare shared insights

The website revolves around its key promise: Discover, Plan, and Book. This streamlined approach allows users to explore the island’s most romantic offerings, plan their itineraries with expert guidance, and book seamlessly. From luxurious beachfront resorts to private villas and intimate cultural experiences, the Honeymoon Guide caters to high-end romance travelers seeking bespoke and memorable getaways.

Sarawak Tourism Board Unveils Eco-Tourism and Cultural Heritage Revolution at World Travel Market 2024: From Culinary Delights to Adventure Tourism

TTA BULLETIN

Sarawak Tourism Board is thrilled to announce its participation in this year's World Travel Market (WTM) in London, led by YB Dato Sri Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, Minister for Tourism, Creative Industry, and Performing Arts Sarawak. Marking a year of dynamic growth and collaboration, 2024 introduces Sarawak's new brand marketing partnerships aimed at positioning Sarawak as a premier destination for eco-conscious and culturally immersive travel experiences.

Located on the island of Borneo, Sarawak invites visitors to explore its rich tapestry of ecotourism, vibrant cultural heritage, and adventure tourism against the backdrop of one of the world's most biodiverse landscapes.

To ensure the sustainability of tourism in Sarawak, the Sarawak Tourism Board remains dedicated to promoting responsible tourism practices that safeguard both the region's natural and cultural heritage. This commitment extends across key areas, including conservation efforts, eco-friendly practices, community engagement, and cultural preservation.

The latest initiatives, being launched at WTM, strongly reflect this focus, highlighting Sarawak's drive to foster sustainable tourism development:

Showcasing Authentic Experiences, Gastronomy, and Responsible Travel

At WTM, Sarawak will spotlight its dedication to immersive travel experiences with a special focus on its rich culinary heritage. A key highlight is the release of

the Sarawak Gastronomy Video by MasterChef Australia finalist Audra Morrice, showcasing the unique flavours and cultural significance of Sarawak's cuisine. This initiative reinforces Sarawak's emerging role as a premier destination for food tourism, seamlessly blending culinary exploration with eco-conscious travel.

Sustainability remains central to Sarawak's tourism initiatives. Among the latest responsible travel packages, the Borneo Green Bike Tour by Smart Leisure Travels offers travellers a low-impact way to experience Sarawak's natural beauty, promoting responsible exploration and environmental awareness.

In an era of evolving travel expectations, Sarawak Tourism Board is enhancing visitor engagement through cutting-edge digital innovation, setting a pioneering standard as the first DMO in the Asia-Pacific region to integrate AI-driven campaigns into its marketing strategy. This forward-thinking approach, achieved in partnership with Clicktripz - one of the world's largest travel-focused ad networks - gives Sarawak exclusive access to a global audience of 100 million travel shoppers per month. By implementing advanced digital solutions, the Board aims to create seamless, enriched travel experiences that also promote sustainable practices. Leveraging AI technology, Sarawak not only reaches potential visitors more effectively but also provides real-time information that encourages responsible travel behaviours, supporting both the environment and local communities.

TCEB Shows Impressive Performances

TTA BULLETIN

Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) showed impressive results of attracting international conferences and events to more MICE Cities and destinations in all 4 key regions of Thailand in 2024.

The highlight of the year is the International Horticultural Exposition 2029. The International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) decided in March 2024 to choose Nakhon Ratchasima province or Korat in the northeastern region as a host city following TCEB-led bid submission. The bid was a collaboration between TCEB, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, which will act as a host organization, and Nakhon Ratchasima province.

Mr. Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, TCEB President stated: "Of all 4 key regions of Thailand, the Northeast is the lesser-known destination. Hosting the International Horticultural Exposition in Korat will be a major showcase of the

region's capability in staging world events. It will be a significant milestone for the region in positioning itself for the MICE industry. Currently, TCEB has the northeastern bureau in charge of working in partnership with the region aiming to develop this part of Thailand as one more capable destination."

Looking into the southern region, Phuket, one of Thailand's MICE Cities, was chosen in April to host Global Sustainable Tourism Conference (GSTC) 2026. This conference helps reinforce the island's position because the city recorded two landmark achievements in the same year - a successful host of UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy Annual Conference 2024 and earner of the award '2024 World Festival & Event City' conferred by the International Festivals & Events Association (IFEA).

In the northern region, Phitsanulok province was selected by IFEA-Asia in September this year to host World Cultural Heritage City and Night Festival Confer-

Celebrating the 15th edition of promoting growth and opportunities in Northern Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Marked as the largest multi-trade exhibitions in the North of Sri Lanka, the Jaffna International Trade Fair (JITF) is all set to make its highly anticipated return with its 15th edition, from 24-26 January, 2025, at Muttraweli Grounds, Jaffna.



Under the theme "Your Gateway to the North," this premier event will bring together entrepreneurs, business professionals, and community members from Sri Lanka and abroad for a comprehensive showcase of the region's economic potential and thriving industries.

Organised by Lanka Exhibition and Conference Services (Pvt) Ltd. (LECS) in association with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Yarlpanam (CCiy), the JITF has grown significantly since its inception in 2002, becoming a dynamic hub where industry leaders, SMEs, and emerging entrepreneurs connect.

Now in its 15th edition, this event has firmly established itself as the flagship platform for business and industry in the North, delivering tangible economic and social impacts while enhancing livelihoods across the region.

Commenting on the event's significance, LECS Chief Executive Officer Aasim Mukthar stated: "We are excited to launch the 15th edition of the Jaffna International Trade Fair. This initiative has consistently provided a platform for individuals, SMEs, and entrepreneurs in the North of Sri Lanka to thrive. Through this endeavour, we aim to bridge economic disparities across provinces, paving the way for an inclusive and modernised Sri Lanka."

The Jaffna International Trade Fair has been successful in establishing international connections, attracting investors from India, Canada, Indonesia, and beyond. With a focus on economic development and bridging the networking gap, facilitating collaborations, this year's event offers entrepreneurs the chance to engage with conglomerates and companies nationwide.

The JITF 2025 is set to be an action-packed three days for SMEs, offering a unique chance to access new buyers, collaborations, and invaluable industry insights, thus strengthening both individual businesses and the wider Jaffna community.

This year's JITF is poised to break previous records, backed by an impressive line-up of 20 sponsors and a surge in expected attendance and exhibitors.

Diesel and Motor Engineering PLC has joined as the Platinum Sponsor, with Gold Sponsors including Adrian Solar Green (Pvt) Ltd., Tokyo Cement Company (Lanka) PLC, and House of S-lon. Additional support comes from Silver Sponsors such as Ceylon Biscuits Limited (Munchee), Sola Chemical Company, Fine Enterprises, Hayleys Fentons Ltd., Maxies and Company (Pvt) Ltd., Sun Match Company, Ruhunu Foods (Pvt) Ltd., LH Consortium (Pvt) Ltd., 4Ever Skin Naturals (Pvt) Ltd., Ellawala Horticulture (Pvt) Ltd., Rhino Roofing Products Limited, Phoenix Industries, Phoenix Industries (Super PVC), Deen Brothers Imports (Pvt) Ltd., Ferentino Tyre Corporation Pvt Ltd and Toyotsu Lanka (Pvt) Ltd.



ence 2025. This is the first international conference the city will be hosting, after it was selected by TCEB a MICE City.

Phuket's world-renowned appeal as a travel destination and rich history of Phitsanulok and its proximity to Sukhothai Historical Park, which is UNESCO World Heritage Site, will enable the two MICE Cities to become a fertile ground for the content enrichment of both conferences, stated TCEB President.

Close to Bangkok in the central region, Phetchaburi, a potential city in destination development plan of TCEB, had the opportunity to host PATA Destination Marketing Forum (PDMF) 2024. It was a platform for the city to exhibit its potential as a MICE destination as its wealth of history, nature and unique local way of life became attractive and content-rich itineraries for international delegates of the conference.

"TCEB has a strategy to sharpen the competitiveness of the Thai MICE industry

by developing local identities of city destinations across Thailand into unique selling points for planners, event owners and travelers. In this connection, we are highly satisfied with our support for bidding performances of our MICE Cities and potential destination in 2024. It is a real showcase of Thailand's capabilities in hosting international events in much more diverse city destinations throughout the country. We would like to invite overseas clients to explore more locations in Thailand as we now have proven track records to ensure their capabilities", concluded Mr. Chiruit.

For more information, contact TCEB at: pr@tceb.or.th

A RICH TAPESTRY OF LUXURY AND INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY AWAITS AT OCCIDENTAL EDEN BERUWALA!

Step into a sanctuary of luxury that is Occidental Eden, set along the sandy shores of Beruwala, bringing top-tier hospitality to the coast of Sri Lanka. With 158 cosy rooms designed with modern luxury and dreamy ocean views, it's a journey of luxury living that extends beyond one's stay, with every corner and every offering contributing to the perfect holiday. Get immersed in a seamless blend of culinary mastery and tranquil serenity, where each moment unfolds as a showcase of sophisticated luxury, offering rejuvenation and the creation of an enduring, memorable experience.

Welcome to Occidental Eden Beruwala!

☎ 0344 888 888 ✉ reservations.eden@brownshotels.com

Occidental
Eden Beruwala

[f](#) [@](#) [t](#) [v](#) [i](#) [y](#)
🌐 brownshotels.com


Brown's
HOTELS & RESORTS

Colombo West International Terminal to Receive Major Equipment Boost with Arrival of New Cranes

TTA BULLETIN

Colombo West International Terminal (CWIT), one of the premier container terminals under development in Sri Lanka, is on track for its planned development with the upcoming arrival of new equipment to enhance its operational capacity at the Port of Colombo. On December 1, 2024, the terminal will welcome a new batch of state-of-the-art equipment, that includes two Ship-to-Shore (STS) cranes and three Yard Gantry Cranes (CRMGs), as part of its ongoing development.



providing an excellent opportunity for businesses and trade partners to tap into the port's enhanced operational capabilities. Commencement of CWIT Operations will support the growing demand for container handling and ensure smooth facilitation for international shipping lines.

“The Sri Lanka CWIT project is progressing as planned. Phase 1 of the project is on schedule and is nearing completion. It will become commercially operational by Q1 2025. We already see business opportunities with the trade for a quick ramp up of CWIT port operations” CWIT officials confirmed.

The development of CWIT aligns perfectly with the broader development plans for the Port of Colombo, which is on a trajectory to double its container handling capacity over the next two years. With an ambitious goal of reaching 15 million TEUs by 2026, the development of CWIT and the Port of Colombo will ensure Sri Lanka remains a key trans-shipment hub for global trade.

Colombo West International Terminal (CWIT) is a state-of-the-art container terminal located at the Port of Colombo, Sri Lanka. The terminal is being developed in phases and will significantly increase the port's capacity to handle larger vessels and higher container volumes. Once fully operational, CWIT will play a vital role in supporting the growing trade and logistics needs of Sri Lanka and the surrounding region.

The terminal is progressing steadily in line with its Project development plans, nearing the completion of its first phase. Key infrastructure milestones have been achieved, including the completion of the 600-meter jetty deck, which has already received equipment vessels previously. The MV GHT Marinas has set sail, carrying the new STS cranes and Yard Gantry Cranes, with the vessel expected to berth at CWIT on December 1st, 2024.

With this delivery, CWIT's fleet of equipment will be significantly strengthened, bringing the total number of STS cranes to 4 and Yard Gantry Cranes to 11, adding to the existing 2 STS and 8 CRMG cranes that are already under commissioning. The terminal is also preparing to receive an additional 4 STS cranes in January 2025 which will increase the total STS count to 8 along with yard gantry Cranes increasing to 18.

The commissioning of this advanced equipment is well underway, and CWIT is on track to begin commercial operations by Q1 2025. This will allow Port of Colombo to significantly increase its capacity,

Race for talent to shape events industry in 2025, reveals IBTM World Trends Report

TTA BULLETIN

IBTM has shared a first glimpse of its highly-anticipated Trends Report 2025, due to be launched on the first day of its flagship IBTM World show in Barcelona. Analysing the forces shaping the meetings and events industry on a global scale, the report underlines the importance of talent to the future of the industry, and charts its evolution in a post-pandemic world.

Shining a spotlight on the changing dynamics of the industry since the pandemic, the report draws attention to the emergence of regions such as the Middle East and Africa, which have both developed significant events infrastructure in recent years, and are now looking for people to power it. Reflecting this, the report also highlights the sector's struggle to match recruitment to demand globally as the industry continues to grow rapidly post-pandemic.

To meet these changing dynamics, the

report identifies the emergence of a new type of event professional that no longer fits the traditional 'college graduate' mould. Whether this be older people looking for a new career or people travelling around the world for a new opportunity, the industry is looking at every area of society to find innovative and creative talent. It is this skill for adaptability that is driving growth in the global events market.

The annual report, written by Managing Director of Eight PR & Marketing, Alistair Turner, will be unveiled on IBTM World's Main Stage on day one of the show which runs from November 19 to 21. Alongside its focus on talent, the report will delve into other trends impacting human behaviour across the globe. These include transformationalism, digital rejection, globalisation, the influence of artificial intelligence, and the changing workplace.

Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2024: Ferrari, McLaren, and racing legends spark European tourism surge

TTA BULLETIN

Abu Dhabi is solidifying its status as a premier cultural and social hub in the Middle East, a reputation exemplified by the upcoming 2024 Formula 1 Grand Prix from December 6-8 at Yas Island. This globally renowned event not only enhances the city's profile as a leading tourism destination but also brings substantial economic benefits, drawing an influx of international visitors, particularly from Europe.

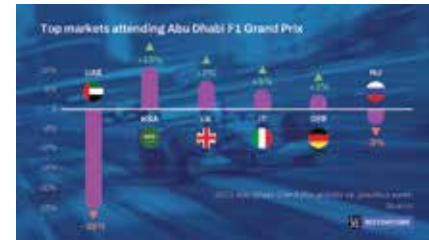
With accommodation rates expected to soar by up to 170% compared to the previous week, the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2024 is set to attract global motorsport enthusiasts, boosting international arrivals and reinforcing the city's global tourism standing. Notably, visitors from the UK, Italy, and Germany —collectively representing 15% of total attendees— are anticipated to play a significant role in this surge.

“Data shows that over 15% of visitors to Abu Dhabi during Grand Prix week come from the UK, Italy, and Germany, underscoring a strong and growing European interest in UAE destinations,” shares Mirko Lalli, CEO and founder of The Data Appeal Company - Almwave Group. “For destinations like Abu Dhabi, which are rapidly evolving on the global stage, having detailed insights into major events is transformative. It allows the DMO not only to design events that influence tourists' travel decisions but also to strategically extend the peak season. Moreover, a deep understanding of traveler behavior and preferences empowers the destination to elevate the visitor experience and sharpen future marketing strategies. In today's competitive tourism landscape, data-driven insights are no longer optional—they're fundamental to staying ahead.”

Projected attendance for the event aligns with last year's numbers, estimated at 170,000 people. According to Data Appeal and its data partner PredictHQ, the total predicted spending for the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix exceeds \$179 million (USD), with accommodation accounting for 85% of the total predicted event spend, restaurants making up 14%, and transportation comprising 1%. This data highlights the dominance of accommodation expenses, revealing significant demand for lodging during the event, while dining and transport account for smaller portions of the expenditure.

Accommodation prices in Abu Dhabi are expected to be 85% higher during the race week compared to 2023 and 58% higher than the previous week. The average rate during the event is forecasted at 1,798 AED (450 euros).

An analysis of hotel rates across major online travel agencies reveals that the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix surpasses other significant events, including ADIPEC (Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition



and Conference) and IDEX (International Defence Exhibition & Conference), in driving accommodation price increases and boosting tourist numbers.

Accommodation rates for the Grand Prix peak at 2,646.2 AED (approximately 668 euros), reflecting a rise of up to 170% compared to the previous week. This surge notably exceeds the price increases seen during ADIPEC (+3%) and IDEX (+15%), with the Grand Prix having a more sustained impact on hotel rates.

The top five countries for incoming flights during the Grand Prix week include a decline in visitors from India, the U.S., and Russia, but a strong increase from the UK (+28% compared to the prior week) and Italy, which has replaced Qatar in the rankings.

These statistics reflect the consistent interest from European markets, with the UK, Italy, and Germany forming the top three, accounting for 15% of visitors (2023 data). Enthusiasts of teams like Ferrari, Williams, and McLaren are especially prominent.

While premium areas like Saadiyat Island (home to the Louvre Abu Dhabi), Yas Island, and Al Maryah Island showcase the highest average accommodation rates, they do not necessarily align with top visitor sentiment scores.

Areas such as New Shahama, Madinat Al Riyad, Al Falah, and Al Raha Beach score highest in visitor satisfaction (97 to 99/100), highlighting a preference for less congested and more spacious options.

During the 2023 Grand Prix, Abu Dhabi's top attractions received excellent visitor feedback. The Louvre Abu Dhabi stood out with a sentiment score of 93/100, showcasing its cultural significance and appeal. Warner Bros World Abu Dhabi followed closely with a 92/100 sentiment, drawing families and entertainment enthusiasts. Ferrari World Yas Island, known for its thrilling rides and automotive heritage, maintained a strong sentiment score of 90/100, highlighting its popularity among motorsport fans.

Dining options during the Grand Prix showcased a preference for local flavors, fresh seafood, and grilled meats. The highly acclaimed Gandofly Seafood Restaurant achieved the top sentiment score of 99.1/100, praised for its menu and quality. Nasr Restaurant and Grill Muroor also impressed with a score of 99/100, while Phosphorus Kadoura Seafood Restaurant secured a notable 98/100, underlining its reputation for delicious and well-prepared dishes.

A PRISTINE SANCTUARY

AMIDST THE SPLENDOUR OF NATURE!

Step out from the room and into nature's serene embrace, where one will find a holiday haven filled with tranquility. Occidental Paradise's surreal pool, discretely located amidst a stunning rock formation and lush foliage beckons one to immerse themselves, while allowing the gentle breeze to soothe the soul. Seamlessly blending nature's wonders and unique cultural delights, Occidental Paradise Dambulla weaves a rich tapestry of multi-sensorial experiences, ensuring an unforgettable stay.

Come, explore the essence of bliss where every moment is paradise.

☎ 0662 286 300 ✉ reservation.paradise@brownshotels.com

Occidental
Paradise Dambulla

     
🌐 brownshotels.com


Brown's
HOTELS & RESORTS

IBTM World to welcome world-renowned hotel brands

TTA BULLETIN

Aligning with industry growth, IBTM World is set to welcome a record number of hotels to exhibit and will launch its new Hotel Pavilion at its upcoming event at Fira de Barcelona from November 19 to 21.

The leading global event for the meetings and events industry will see more than 400 hotels in attendance across the entire show, including the Hotel Pavilion. With the global hotels and resorts sector valued at \$1.5 trillion in 2023 and business travel spending expected to reach the same figure in 2024, the industry is going from strength-to-strength in a post-pandemic landscape. (Source: Statista)

Some of the world's biggest hotel brands will be descending on Barcelona next month. With 8,000 properties in its portfolio, Hilton is expanding its presence at IBTM World in 2024. Spain's two largest hotel chains Meliá Hotels International and Barceló Hotel Group will have independent stands on the show floor. West Africa's Azalaï Group Hotels will be exhibiting at IBTM World with a standalone presence for the first time

The new Hotel Pavilion is an exciting solution for hotels to showcase their brands in a bespoke environment which has been designed to have the feel and amenities of a luxury hotel reception. Gothia Towers, a landmark hotel for business on Sweden's west coast, and global hospitality enterprise, BWH Hotels, will both be making their debuts at IBTM World 2024. Likewise, Nobu Hotel London Shoreditch



will be bringing its signature Japanese minimalism and industrial-chic aesthetics to Barcelona. Also presenting their offering at the Hotel Pavilion will be Dokhan Luxury Hotels, The Romanos Resort, A Luxury Collection, JADA Hotels Collection, RIHGA Royal Hotel Osaka, OKU Hotels and The Westin Paris – Vendôme.

Those taking part in the Hotel Pavilion will have access to a bespoke appointment diary with up to 46 pre vetted qualified buyers, which will ensure they can make direct connections with decision makers who have the budget and intention to book events at hotels. They will also benefit from an enhanced company profile to boost brand visibility and access to an exclusive networking area within the pavilion.

Claudia Hall, IBTM World Exhibition Director, said: "We are delighted to welcome so many renowned hotel brands to IBTM World this year, which is testament to the industry growth we're seeing year-on-year. 2024 marks the first year of our Hotel Pavilion, which will provide a dedicated space for independent hotel businesses to showcase their offer in an exciting new setting. We are looking forward to building on the success of our previous shows in what will be a landmark event - our 20th anniversary of hosting IBTM World in Barcelona."

FiturNext Observatory announces the winning initiatives of the 2025 Challenge dedicated to sustainable food management in tourism

TTA BULLETIN

FiturNext, the FITUR Observatory dedicated to promoting good tourism practices in terms of sustainability, announces the winning initiatives of the 2025 Challenge focused on How tourism can contribute to sustainable food management.



With the collaboration in 2025 of Aqualia, a leading brand in end-to-end water cycle management, FiturNext has awarded Sustainable Gastronomic Routes of Extremadura, Hurtigruten Cruises and Too Good To Go in the categories of destinations and other territories, hotel, restaurant and catering sector and the transport sector and other agents in the food chain in tourism, respectively. The awards ceremony will take place on 22 January at the Madrid International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR).

As in previous years, the research has focused its efforts on analysing the replicability and positive impact of the initiatives through two barometers developed by the FiturNext Observatory: the Replicability Barometer, which examines how adaptable an initiative is in different contexts and by different actors with varied resources; and the Impact Barometer, which studies the potential of each initiative considering factors such as the level of participation in the project, previous work and the effect it generates in its environment of action. In addition, the selection of the final solution has integrated the recommendations of the FiturNext Advisory Board, which has provided an external evaluation with an international perspective.

Through circular systems, the promotion of recycling and composting, local and locally-sourced gastronomy and the reduction of food waste, the winning initiatives of FiturNext 2025 share common values.

Specifically, the Sustainable Gastronomic Routes of Extremadura is an initiative promoted by the Tourism Department of the Regional Government of Extremadura, which has launched three sustainable gastronomic routes (Cheese, Olive Oil and Iberian Products) based on local products that connect culture, nature and local gastronomy. The project has won awards in the category of destinations and other territories and has the support of 365 companies and 63 unique experiences where zero-km products are promoted and rural agrotourism is fostered. In addition, they carry out regular checks and training on food sustainability.

For its part, Hurtigruten Cruises: Towards zero food waste is a Norwegian cruise company that implements a circular food system on its voyages that reduces food waste per traveller, using AI and

composting. Awarded in the hotel, restaurant and catering (HoReCa) category and transport sector, the initiative has more than 50 local suppliers that promote sustainability and economic development on the coasts of the Nordic country, supporting local farms and communities, who receive the organic surplus as valuable resources for their productions.

Finally, the company Too Good To Go is an app with a surplus food marketplace that helps to prevent food waste in the hotel, restaurant and catering sector in 18 countries. Winner in the category other agents in the food chain in tourism, it connects establishments that have surplus food with users who can buy these products at a reduced price. With more than 100 million users, it promotes other initiatives to raise consumer awareness about food sustainability and the environment.

In addition to the winning initiatives, nine finalists of the FiturNext 2025 Challenge have been identified that stand out for their support of sustainable food management:

The WASP-Wines of Alentejo Sustainability Programme promotes sustainable wine production, food and surplus management practices and tools among its members generating that a third of the territory is sustainable production.

Hungry for Finland. The Finnish Food Tourism Strategy 2024- 2028 aims at creating networks and generating best practices within the food tourism industry to promote Finland as a sustainable food destination.

H10 - Stay Green implements a comprehensive AI-supported food sustainability system to reduce food waste in 67 hotels, saving 500 tonnes of food and reducing 1,466,300 kg of CO2.

Honest Food by Iberostar promotes a food sustainability system that combines the sourcing of local seafood products with efficient food management and the AI-based measurement of surpluses.

Gourmet Catering and Naria research the traceability, via blockchain, of the surpluses originating from the Valencia Congress Centre through collaboration between a catering company and AI. These surpluses are donated to the city's food bank for distribution to people with limited resources.

www.nnagendra.com

BUSINESS PROCESS & SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM FOR CORPORATE SENIOR MANAGEMENT



The Power of "WE"
Difference between Forecast & Budget
Analyzing Profitability
Key Indicators
Department Profit
Stakeholder Satisfaction

DATE 21st November 2024
TIME 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
COURSE FEE LKR 8,000/-
VENUE Ramada Meeting Room

FOR ENROLMENT
EMAIL nimalan_nagendra@yahoo.com
WHATSAPP / CALL +94 771116669



Course Director
Nirmalan Nagendra
 World reputed commercial expert with experience from the world's finest 5 star hotels such as Le Meridien & Hyatt and 10 countries worldwide.

** Upon completion of the workshop, participants would receive a soft copy of a hotel manual "Understanding Hotel Processes & Systems" free of charge.

SLAPCEO Hosts 20th AGM and Unveils Women in MICE Initiative

TTA BULLETIN

The Sri Lanka Association of Professional Conference, Exhibition & Event Organisers (SLAPCEO) held its 20th Annual General Meeting recently at the Imperial Hall, Mount Lavinia Hotel, which graciously hosted the venue.

The AGM marked a significant milestone for SLAPCEO, with President Mr. M. M. Imran addressing members and stakeholders. He provided an overview of the association's achievements and actions taken during 2023/2024, highlighting its contributions to Sri Lanka's Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) sector. Key resolutions were passed during the meeting.

A significant highlight of the day was the launch of the Women in MICE initiative, an effort supported by the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB) and organized by SLAPCEO in collaboration with BMICH, Aitken Spence Travels, Golden Isle Travels, and CDC Events & Travels.

This groundbreaking initiative aims to empower women in the MICE industry, providing a platform to foster leadership and inclusion in this dynamic field. The launch event featured a panel discussion



with esteemed speakers Paddy Paul (Golden Isle Travels), Kumudu Henneidge (Sri Lanka Convention Bureau), Rajani Pillai (ITC Ratnadipa) and Virazmi Aher (Sri Lankan Holidays)

These industry leaders shared valuable insights on creating opportunities for women in MICE, addressing challenges, and driving innovation and excellence within the sector.

The evening concluded with a fellowship session, creating an opportunity for networking and collaboration among MICE professionals and stakeholders.

SLAPCEO continues to lead initiatives that strengthen Sri Lanka's position as a premier destination for MICE tourism, demonstrating its commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and industry growth.

Zephyr Ceylon Unveils a Culinary Revolution Celebrating Sri Lankan Flavors and Local Talent

TTA BULLETIN

Zephyr Ceylon will soon be celebrating their 10 year anniversary, offering a fresh and innovative take on the island's rich culinary traditions. The restaurant and bar, owned by brothers Mahen & Chethaka Wijesekera, is setting new standards by blending local ingredients with a modern twist, all while championing the talents of the community.



"Our goal is to showcase the incredible potential of Sri Lankan ingredients while empowering local talent," said Chethaka Wijesekera head of the bar development programme at Zephyr. "What we serve is only the final step of a long, intricate process—behind each dish and drink lies meticulous preparation and a deep respect for tradition."

Their food philosophy extends to its seafood offerings, sourced daily from local fishermen using traditional methods. Every ingredient is carefully handpicked to ensure maximum freshness, creating a dining experience that is as sustainable as it is exceptional.

Zephyr continues to make waves, not just for its innovative menu but also for its commitment to uplifting the community. By combining bold flavors, artisanal craftsmanship, and a heartfelt mission, Zephyr is a cornerstone of Sri Lanka's culinary scene.



Sri Lanka Tourism Wins Best Stand Award at WTM London 2024

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka Tourism has been awarded the prestigious "Best Stand for doing business" accolade at the World Travel Market (WTM) London 2024, one of the travel industry's most significant global events.

Competing among hundreds of exhibitors, Sri Lanka's vibrant and immersive stand captivated the WTM audience, showcasing the country's rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, the Pekoe Trail and commitment to sustainable tourism.

With over 100 companies representing Sri Lanka Tourism, the B2B sessions were conducted with Agents, operators and Media from the UK and Europe. Designed to reflect Sri Lanka's unique blend of tradition and innovation, the stand featured elements that highlighted its diverse tourism offerings – from beaches and wildlife experiences to cultural landmarks, wellness retreats and the newest tourism offering – The Pekoe Trail. Through live cultural performances, interactive digital experiences, and an array of authentic Sri Lankan flavors, the

stand successfully conveyed the essence of Sri Lanka as a must-visit destination.

Praising this achievement, Sri Lanka Tourism Chairman Buddhika Hewawasam said, "Winning the Best Stand award at WTM London is a testament to the dedication and creativity of our industry partners and the team at Sri Lanka Tourism. Our goal was to give visitors a true taste of Sri Lanka, and this recognition affirms the growing global interest in our island. We are excited to welcome more travelers to experience the warmth and wonders of Sri Lanka firsthand."

This award along with bagging Gold as the most desired island at the Wanderlust readers Choice awards marks a significant milestone for Sri Lanka Tourism as it reinforces the country's position as a top destination in South Asia. With visitor numbers on the rise and a renewed focus on sustainable practices, Sri Lanka Tourism is set to inspire travelers worldwide and boost its status on the global stage.

Aitken Spence Travels wins top German brands Sustainability Award 2024

TTA BULLETIN

Aitken Spence Travels (Pvt) Ltd won as the most sustainable Tour Operator/ DMC at the "Sustainability Awards 2024," organized by the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka (AHK Sri Lanka), in collaboration with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF) for the tourism industry. This is the second time Aitken Spence Travels has won this award.



one of the leading DMCs in Sri Lanka's tourism industry, sustainability is deeply rooted into our company's core values".

The primary objective of this recognition program was to acknowledge the exceptional efforts of tourism sector stakeholders in promoting sustainability within their businesses. Additionally, it aims to create a competitive platform to increase visibility, highlights achievements through success stories, enhances reputations among industry peers and stakeholders, and utilizes this recognition to foster future partnerships and business opportunities.

This year the awards focused on two main segments; namely the Tour Operators/Destination Management Companies (DMCs) and Hotel & accommodation service providers. Within each category, there was a sub-category awards for both large enterprises and small to medium-sized enterprises.

The evaluation of the awards took into consideration factors such as the organizations holistic approach towards sustainability, the company's visionary leadership, innovative capability, and resistance to external factors when implementing sustainability practices.

Stasshani Jayawardena, Head of the Tourism Sector for Aitken Spence PLC, commented "We are delighted to receive this recognition for the second time, as the last award ceremony was held in 2022. As

Nalin Jayasundera, Managing Director of ASTL, commented, "The company has a dedicated sustainability team to ensure consistency and high standards in our sustainable approaches. We carry out all our activities under the umbrella brand of 'Travel Kindly'. We embrace CSR practices in key areas, including Youth Skill Development, Cultural Preservation, and Biodiversity Conservation. Particularly in biodiversity, we place special emphasis on addressing the human-leopard conflict in the Central Highlands of Sri Lanka, underscoring our commitment to both environmental and social responsibility".

Together, both Stasshani Jayawardena and Nalin Jayasundera extend their sincere appreciation to their dedicated staff, valued customers, trusted suppliers, and esteemed partners as their unwavering support has been instrumental in upholding Aitken Spence Travels' sustainability principles and policies. The Company is deeply grateful for their belief in its mission and their continued collaboration.

At Aitken Spence Travels, we work within the industry to safeguard and strengthen the livelihoods of communities, promote social integration and peace through cultural exposure, and help to foster goodwill among different communities.

Exhibition World Bahrain Welcomes the 9th UN Tourism World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism with Ultramodern Amenities

TTA BULLETIN

Exhibition World Bahrain (EWB) is gearing up to welcome the 9th UN Tourism World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism on 18-19 November 2024, marking a significant milestone as this prestigious event makes its debut in the Middle East. With an anticipated attendance of over 500 visitors and participants from over 50 countries, the forum underscores Bahrain's growing role in gastronomy tourism.

The Kingdom of Bahrain's recognition as the host city reflects collective efforts by the Ministry of Tourism and the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA), to position Bahrain as a leading MICE (Meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions) destination, and a destination with a unique culinary offering, drawing gourmet enthusiasts and event professionals alike.

EWB's ultramodern facilities are primed for an event of this scale, which will utilise the Grand Hall, Pre-Function Area and 11 versatile and technologically-equipped meeting rooms. EWB seamlessly blends functionality and elegance, setting the stage for international collaboration. The Grand

Hall's adaptable layout accommodates up to 4,000 guests, suitable for conferences, concerts, and gala events, while the Pre-Function area serves as a stylish and comfortable networking space, setting the tone for the event ahead.

EWB offers over 1,400 main parking spaces, with an additional 2,800 overflow spaces, complemented by a well-coordinated shuttle service for seamless transport to and from the venue.

As the 9th UN Tourism World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism approaches, Bahrain is poised to showcase its culinary heritage and vibrant culture, which make it a must-visit destination for gastronomes and tourism professionals alike.

At the heart of EWB's offerings is a culinary team dedicated to providing bespoke food and beverage services. Operating from a state-of-the-art kitchen facility spanning over 3,600 square meters, the team is well-prepared to meet diverse catering requests. Attendees can look forward to an impressive range of cuisines, including Asian, Mediterranean, and

European flavours.

The culinary experience at EWB complements the excitement and quality of the events it hosts, with capacity to welcome up to 10,000 guests at once. Every detail is meticulously crafted to reflect EWB's commitment to delivering an unforgettable, culturally enriching experience, reinforcing Bahrain's status as a premier destination in international culinary tourism.

Sara Ahmed Buhiji, CEO of the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) and Chairman of Exhibition World Bahrain, emphasised the significance of this event, stating, "Bahrain offers travellers a unique blend of hospitality and gastronomy. Hosting the 9th UN Tourism World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism is a historic milestone not only for the Kingdom, but for our region, showcasing our rich heritage and Bahrain's rising prominence in gastronomy tourism. This first-of-its-kind event highlights Bahrain's commitment to elevating its global status, while EWB's world-class facilities underscore our role as a leading player in the MICE industry. Together, we celebrate the fusion of culture,



cuisine, and commerce."

Mr. Joxe Mari Aizega, Director General of the Basque Culinary Center (BCC), shared his perspective on Bahrain's hosting of the forum: "The 9th UN Tourism World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism in Bahrain is a landmark moment in celebrating culinary diversity and innovation. This event not only brings Bahrain's cultural heritage to the forefront but also highlights the essential role of gastronomy in sustainable tourism. Exhibition World Bahrain is an outstanding venue for this forum, embodying Bahrain's dedication to fostering global dialogue around culinary arts and sustainable tourism."

As the 9th UN Tourism World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism approaches, Bahrain stands ready to share its culinary heritage with the world.

WTM London contributes £200m to London economy

TTA BULLETIN

World Travel Market London, the most influential travel and tourism event in the world, will contribute approximately £200 million to the London economy in just a week's time. Held at Excel London (5th-7th November) over 40,000 travel professionals are set to attend the 44th edition.

On track to host the most exhibitors the show has ever seen, WTM London has reported a 7% growth in exhibitor numbers this year, with over 4,000 global tourism boards, hoteliers, transport services, technology brands, associations and experiences set to will take to the halls of Excel London for three days of business. It's

estimated that in excess of £2.2 billion worth of business deals will be signed this year at the event.

According to VisitBritain data, international delegates visiting the UK for a trade show on average spend £352 per day, which estimates a total visitor spend of £71,215,218. In a recent report from Deloitte, they suggested that for every £1,000 spent, a further £1,800 is generated in direct tourism gross value, totalling an impressive £200m injection from WTM London into the economy.

WTM London estimates that 82% of attend-

ees are international visitors who are spending money on transport, accommodation, and entertainment during their time in the city. 40% of visitors are spending three days in London for the event, 33% are spending at least seven days in city and 9% of international visitors are staying in the capital for at least nine days.

Juliette Losardo, Exhibitor Director, WTM London, comments: "While the travel trade are busy curating that £2.2 billion worth of travel and tourism deals during World Travel Market, we're proud that WTM also has such a significant impact on our host city of London. The range of accommoda-



tion, world-class dining and wealth of attractions the city has to offer, are a real draw for our attendees, many of whom use WTM London as an opportunity to tag on leisure days and, in doing so, boost spend for the economy."

ITB Asia 2024 Achieves Record Breaking Business Appointments, solidifying its position as the must-attend event for travel professionals in APAC

TTA BULLETIN

Asia's leading travel trade show concluded with remarkable success, hosting over 45,000 business appointments, attracting more than 18,500 attendees from 85 countries, and featuring 1,950 exhibitors. Additionally, over 1,400 high-quality buyers contributed to a dynamic business and networking environment. 160 top speakers shaped the future of travel at the ITB Asia Conference.

This year's edition broke records with unprecedented growth and innovation, setting the stage for a groundbreaking 2025 edition. ITB Asia is poised to expand its highly popular Travel Tech Asia cluster next year, providing deeper insights into cutting-edge hotel technology. The dedicated platform will showcase the latest advancements in reservation systems, equipment, AI tools, CRM platforms, design, and sustainability initiatives — set

to redefine the future of accommodation and guest experiences.

Exhibitors from around the globe praised ITB Asia for its ability to bring together the travel industry's key players under one roof. Ingunn Sakshaug, Market and Travel Trade Specialist at Visit Norway, expressed her enthusiasm: "ITB Asia provides us with a unique opportunity to connect with travel organisers from multiple countries in one place, and this year's event exceeded our expectations". Similarly, Thorleifur Thor Jonsson, Senior Manager, Trade Delegations, at Visit Iceland, stated: "ITB Asia is an invaluable platform for Iceland to engage with the Southeast Asian market. The highly efficient meeting system ensures we maximize results." Xiaolong Wu, Marketing Manager – APAC and MENA Market, at the Malta Tourism Authority, added: "ITB Asia is one of the best platforms for

connecting with Asia-Pacific travel trade partners. We look forward to deepening these relationships further."

Joyce Wang, Executive Director of Messe Berlin Asia Pacific, stated: "ITB Asia remains the leading platform for the travel industry in the Asia-Pacific region. The remarkable growth and innovation displayed this year highlight the resilience and forward-thinking nature of our global travel community. We are excited to continue shaping the future of travel together, pushing the boundaries of what's possible."

This year's conference programme was nothing short of extraordinary, with over 4,000 minutes of high-powered content delivered through 100 sessions by 160 leading industry figures. The discussions focused on the future of MICE, corporate travel, leisure travel, and travel technology.



Among the highlights were keynote speeches by Liz Ortiguera, Managing Director Asia Pacific & Sr Advisor to CEO of World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), and Kevin Goh, CEO of Lodging, Capitaland Investment Limited and The Ascott Limited, who shared valuable insights into sustainability trends and technological innovations reshaping the future of travel.

The conference showcased high-powered discussions over three days in three distinct theatres, featuring impactful content. Esteemed industry leaders and C-suite speakers contributed their insights, making the event a significant platform for knowledge exchange.



THE
HABITAT

Tropical beach and Sri Lankan hospitality

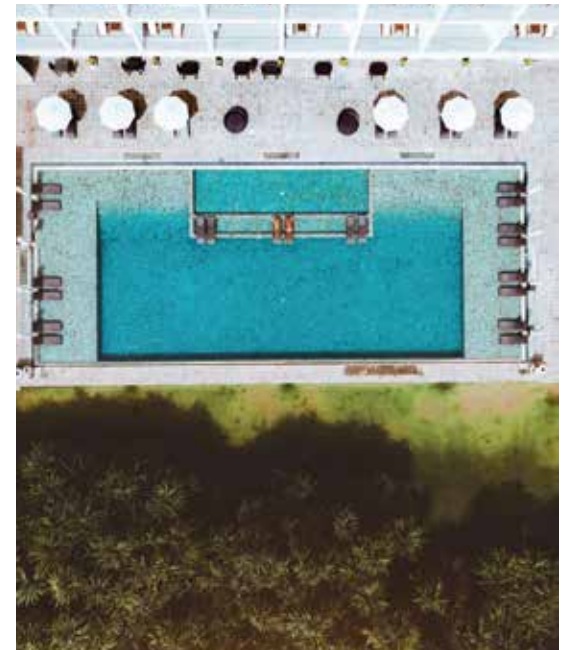
A renown Sri Lankan welcome, our relaxed comfort and true islander spirit will seep in. Sounds of waves, feisty beach vibes, aroma of spicey cuisine; days of sunny smiles and tranquil nights.

Our sole purpose is living up to our name, The Habitat, the tropical beach home.



Food & beverages

Our familiarly traditional dishes are served warmly, as from a Sri Lankan hearth. An indoor and pool bar serve tropical cocktails to keep smiles cheerily on the rocks.



Fun & frolic

Never a dull day. A large pool for water polo or a lazy swim. Perfectly located with a 360° surround of marine life, botanical gardens, history, archaeology, beach sports, traditional artisans and lapidaries.

Contact us

Reservations : 6th Floor, No 46/46,
Greenlanka Towers, Nawam Mawatha,
Colombo 02, Sri Lanka
Hot Line : +94 704909500
Email : reservations@asialeisure.lk
Website : thehabitat.lk

facebook.com/habitatkosgoda
instagram.com/habitatkosgoda

THE
HABITAT
KOSGODA BY ASIA LEISURE

Amari Offers the Best of Both Worlds in Thailand: Vibrant City Escape and Serene Beach Retreat

TTA BULLETIN

Amari, the distinguished hotel and resort brand under ONYX Hospitality Group, is delighted to offer travellers the ultimate blend of adventure and relaxation with a 14-night twin-centre holiday package in Thailand, starting from just £1,949 per person, including flights.

Available to book with Trailfinders, this exceptional journey combines the vibrant pulse of Bangkok with the tranquil allure of Phuket, providing two contrasting yet complementary experiences in one trip. Guests will immerse themselves in the dynamic urban culture at Amari Bangkok before unwinding in the tropical paradise of Amari Phuket. Perfect for those seeking both excitement and serenity, this package caters to a wide range of travellers, offering something for everyone.

As more families, couples and groups are opting for long-haul adventures to embrace unique cultures, tropical climates, and excellent value for money, this package captures the essence of immersive travel. Designed for those who value experiences, the offer provides an accessible and affordable way to enjoy an unforgettable holiday filled with diverse experiences. The package includes flights from the UK, daily breakfast, and private transfers, ensuring a seamless and stress-free journey across Thailand.

The adventure begins with a three-night stay at Amari Bangkok, an elegant and highly regarded hotel located in the heart of the city's vibrant Ratchaprasong district. Known for its modern elegance and authentic Thai hospitality, Amari Bangkok offers guests an urban sanctuary within easy reach of world-class shopping, lively markets, and cultural landmarks. Whether exploring local sights or relaxing at the award-winning Breeze Spa, guests can indulge in a perfect mix of tradition and modern comfort.

Food enthusiasts will enjoy a range of dining options, from the newly opened ChomSindh, which celebrates heritage Thai seafood cuisine, to the coastal Indian flavours of NILA and refined Italian dining at Prego Bangkok.

After the vibrant energy of Bangkok, the holiday continues with an 11-night retreat at Amari Phuket, an oasis set on a secluded part of Patong Beach. Surrounded by lush greenery and crystal-clear waters, this



beachfront resort is a haven for relaxation and adventure alike. Guests can unwind by the pool, enjoy a mood-based treatment at Breeze Spa, where the body and mind become one with nature.

For those looking for a unique dining experience, Amari Phuket's eco-friendly TreePods provide an elevated setting high among the treetops, offering panoramic views of the Andaman Sea and a romantic atmosphere perfect for special occasions. Meanwhile, The Jetty offers spectacular sunset views, cocktails, and gourmet dining, making every meal unforgettable and Samutr Bar provides the perfect spot for light bites and beverages amidst unobstructed ocean views from the hilltop.

Whether exploring Bangkok's vibrant city life or relaxing on Phuket's beautiful

beaches, Amari's twin-centre holiday package with Trailfinders offers an unforgettable blend of urban excitement and island tranquillity.

This perfect contrast between the vibrant excitement of city life and the calm allure of the beach ensures a truly well-rounded and fulfilling travel experience. Whether you're a couple seeking a romantic getaway, a family looking for diverse activities, or friends in search of adventure and relaxation, this package offers the ideal blend of elegance, culture, and leisure. With so much on offer, this holiday package is designed to cater to every traveller's desires, allowing all to experience the best of both urban adventure and tropical retreat, all while being immersed in the warm hospitality and world-class service that Amari Hotels is renowned for.

Minor Hotels Reports Strong Growth in Q3 Results

Strong performance in Europe and Thailand drives revenue and profit growth beyond expectations

TTA BULLETIN

Minor Hotels has continued its robust growth trajectory, with Q3 results revealing significant increases in core profit and revenue. The group, which owns and operates more than 560 hotels across eight brands globally, announced a core net profit of THB 3.1 billion for the first nine months of 2024, marking a 13% year-on-year increase, despite the negative impact of an unrealised foreign exchange loss.

Year-to-date core revenues reached THB 100.2 billion, 11% stronger than last year and exceeding budget projections. This impressive performance was mainly led by hotels in Europe and Thailand. The company's ability to outperform forecasts underscores its operational efficiency and market responsiveness, marked by successful revenue optimisation strategies and a strategic focus on key markets.

The strong third-quarter growth was fuelled by robust demand in both business and leisure travel across Europe, with Minor's home base of Thailand also benefiting from a strong low season. Occupancy rates across the global portfolio reached 69% in Q3, up one percentage point from the previous year. Systemwide Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) grew 6% in Q3 compared to the same period last year and was up 12% year-to-date.

Minor Hotels Europe & Americas achieved a notable 9% year-on-year RevPAR increase and a 7% gain in ADR. The high season spurred gains in Spain, Central Europe, and

the Benelux region, supported by rising visitor numbers from the US and UK. Capitalising on this positive backdrop, Minor Hotels successfully executed strategic pricing and marketing initiatives to maximise the strong travel trends.

For the first nine months of 2024, Minor Hotels Europe & Americas posted EUR 1,789 million in revenue, a 10.9% increase over the same period in 2023.

This performance translated into a significant 52% growth in recurring net profit, totaling EUR 141 million.

The third quarter continued this upward trend with revenues of EUR 644 million, a 10% increase over Q3 2023, driven by a 7.3% rise in ADR to EUR 152. This ADR uplift accounted for 83% of RevPAR growth, with Spain and Central Europe demonstrating particularly strong performance.

Despite the Q3 marking the traditional low season in Thailand, RevPAR grew 12% in the quarter, thanks to a steady influx of international tourists and thriving domestic travel. Occupancy increased two percentage points year-on-year to 66%. Minor's yield optimisation strategy drove a 9% ADR increase and a 2% occupancy increase, showcasing the company's ability to attract diverse and lucrative traveller segments year-round.

New launches in Asia for Q3 included an



NH Resort and NH Collection hotel in Sri Lanka, an NH Hotel in Bangkok, and the announcement of an NH Collection Resort in Koh Samui. Half of these new openings are under management contract, aligning with Minor's strategy to boost profitability while leveraging its management infrastructure to expand in key high-growth markets. These additions strengthen the company's market position and appeal to a broader range of travellers.

Our outstanding performance this quarter underscores the strength of our strategic focus on high-growth markets and our agility in adapting to evolving travel dynamics. The robust expansion in Europe, coupled with Thailand's continued recovery, showcases the success of our revenue optimisation initiatives and our unwavering

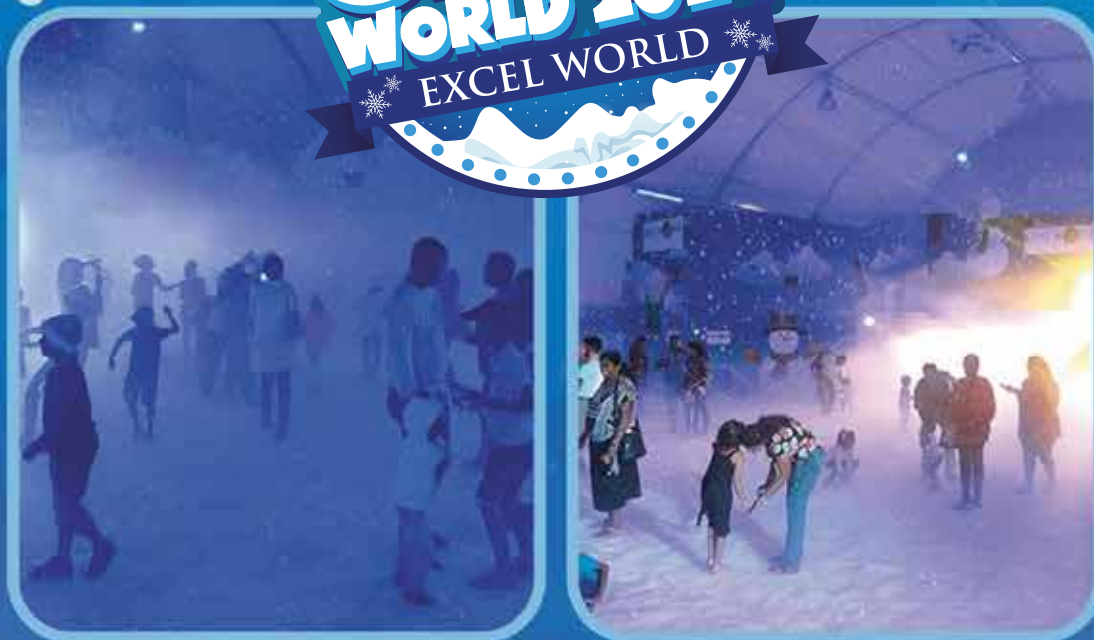
commitment to delivering exceptional guest experiences. As we approach the high season, we are well-positioned to capitalise on rising demand, driving sustained growth and delivering substantial value for our stakeholders. Dillip Rajakarier, CEO of Minor Hotels and Group CEO of Minor International ;

With the high season ahead, Minor Hotels is well-positioned to capture strong demand across its key markets. Forward bookings in popular destinations like Thailand and Bali are on the rise, driven by exclusive holiday experiences targeted at high-end travellers. In Europe, corporate travel demand remains steady, and December holiday bookings are gaining momentum.

EXCEL WORLD

ENTERTAINMENT PARK

EMBRACING THE MAGIC OF WINTER A JOURNEY INTO EXCEL WORLD'S SNOW WORLD



As the air turns crisp and the festive spirit begins to swirl around us, there's a place where winter's wonder truly comes to life. Step into Excel World's Snow World, where the charm of the North Pole is just a heartbeat away. Here, the enchanting allure of shimmering snowflakes drifting through the air, invites families and friends to create unforgettable memories together.

Imagine a realm where larger-than-life snowmen greet one and all with open arms, and the twinkling lights of a starry galaxy illuminate the way. Upon entering Snow World, be transported into a magical landscape that beckons visitors of all ages to embrace the spirit of the season. With the return of this much-loved annual attraction, spectators can revel in the frosty fun and festive cheer that fills the atmosphere.

On the 5th of December 2024, the exclusive media launch of Snow World revealed a dazzling new look, showcasing the collaboration between principal sponsor Pepsi Co., and main media sponsor Voice of Asia Network. The event buzzed with excitement as leading media figures mingled with officials from Excel Restaurants and the Browns Group, celebrating the start of a month-long winter extravaganza.

Snow World opens its doors to the public from the 6th-31st of December from 4-10pm ensuring everyone can partake in the festivities. Featuring an all-new North Pole experience, complete with a life-sized Santa sleigh surrounded by friendly reindeer, visitors are beckoned to wander through the whimsical wonderland, dotted with the sight of towering snowmen paired with frosty air.

"At Excel World, we're not just creating an experience; we're celebrating joy, family and the enchanting essence of winter right here in Colombo." said Thyaga Perera General Manager of Excel World. "Our aim is to immerse every visitor in a magical world, bringing the allure of the North Pole to the heart of our city."

Whether one may be six or sixty, Snow World promises a variety of snow-filled games and entertainment this season. Be prepared to gather those loved ones, don the cosiest winter attire and embrace the magic of the season. Get ready to be whisked away on a journey filled with enchantment, laughter and the spirit of togetherness as we celebrate in style at this extraordinary winter wonderland.

EXCEL WORLD ENTERTAINMENT PARK - NO. 338, T.B. JAYAH MAWATHA, COLOMBO 10

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
077 308 2529 / 076 757 1642 / 077 788 1088**

Voyzant Sri Lanka Hosts Aviation Partnership Appreciation Evening

Voyzant Sri Lanka recently held an exclusive Aviation Partnership Appreciation Evening at the prestigious Cinnamon Life Colombo. The event, hosted by Voyzant Group CEO Chippy Jegathesan, brought together key stakeholders from the aviation industry to celebrate partnerships and strengthen collaborative efforts.

The gathering was attended by all major airline partners with both online and offline operations in Sri Lanka, alongside representatives from leading Global Distribution System (GDS) providers, Amadeus and Sabre

Corporation. The evening served as a platform to acknowledge the pivotal role these partners play in driving innovation and enhancing travel solutions.

In his address, Chippy Jegathesan expressed gratitude to the attendees, highlighting the importance of strategic partnerships in Voyzant's journey. "Our collaborations with airlines and GDS providers are the backbone of our success, enabling us to deliver cutting-edge travel solutions tailored to global and local markets," he remarked.

The event underscored Voyzant's commitment to fostering industry relationships, promoting excellence, and reinforcing Sri Lanka's position as a growing hub in the travel and aviation sectors. Guests enjoyed an evening of networking, insightful discussions, and a renewed sense of camaraderie within the industry.

With such initiatives, Voyzant continues to pave the way for innovation and collaboration in the travel ecosystem.



Cape Weligama Reopens: The Crown Jewel of Sri Lanka's South Coast Returns

TTA BULLETIN

Cape Weligama, the iconic cliff-top resort spanning 12 acres of tropical gardens with breathtaking 270-degree ocean views, has reopened following a comprehensive refresh.



Dubbed the 'Crown Jewel of the South Coast' the property now offers expanded guest experiences, including curated marine excursions, culinary journeys, and a newly unveiled Cove Beach. These enhancements aim to deepen connections between guests and the vibrant culture and natural beauty of Sri Lanka's South Coast.

The South Coast remains a cornerstone of Sri Lanka's tourism industry, hosting the highest density of resorts and playing a pivotal role in the country's global positioning as a premier travel destination. Cape Weligama's revitalization underscores the critical role of investment in luxury travel to elevate Sri Lanka's appeal on the global stage.

Malik J Fernando, Chairman of Resplendent Ceylon, emphasized the broader

economic impact; 'A bucket list property like Cape Weligama raises demand across the hospitality spectrum, benefiting everything from five-star hotels to smaller accommodations. It also attracts high-net-worth travellers, amplifying the country's profile internationally for trade, investment, and diplomacy—not just tourism'

The reopening symbolizes a turning point for Sri Lanka's tourism industry, moving from a survival phase to a period of growth and opportunity. Fernando called for robust government action to sustain this momentum: 'Sri Lanka must launch a global consumer communication campaign and address key guest experience issues, such as visitor management at cultural and wildlife attractions, through effective coordination'

Cape Weligama's commitment to excellence in luxury and sustainability sets a benchmark for the future of tourism in Sri Lanka, helping to position the nation as a sought-after destination for discerning travellers worldwide.

Cinnamon Colombo Hotels Light Up Colombo With Festive Elegance

TTA BULLETIN



Cinnamon Colombo Hotels officially welcomed the festive season with a trio of spectacular Christmas Lighting Ceremonies across Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo, Cinnamon Red Colombo, and Cinnamon Grand Colombo. Each event was a unique celebration of tradition, innovation, and holiday cheer, drawing guests and the local community into the warmth and magic of the season.

On November 29th, Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo hosted its highly anticipated Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, marking the start of the holiday season with grandeur and joy. The annual event, a cherished tradition at the waterfront hotel, brought together guests and the community for a memorable evening of lights, music, and festive cheer.

The evening's centerpiece was the lighting of the majestic Christmas tree, a symbolic moment that illuminated the hotel in a spectacular array of colors. As the tree came alive, the front façade of the hotel was bathed in a warm, elegant glow, enhancing the festive ambiance. Guests were captivated by the dazzling display, with the joy and awe of the crowd echoing throughout the venue.

Adding to the enchantment, the junior choir from the British School in Colombo delivered a heartwarming performance of classic carols. Dressed in festive attire, the young singers created an atmosphere that resonated across generations, their harmonies a perfect complement to the evening's celebrations.

The hotel's décor masterfully blended traditional Christmas elements with contemporary word art, creating a visually stunning environment. This fusion of classic and modern styles transformed the space into an Instagram-worthy haven that appealed to all ages.

A highlight for families was the Goodies Counter inspired by European Christmas markets. This charming wooden stall, brimming with festive treats like gingerbread cookies, mince pies, and handcrafted chocolates, became a favorite destination, especially for children.

Under the guidance of General Manager of Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo, Mr. Nazoomi Azhar, the event brought together tradition, elegance, and community spirit.

Minor Hotels' First NH Collection in Thailand Officially Opens Its Doors

TTA BULLETIN

Travelers seeking tranquillity and elevated service can check into the latest gem in Minor Hotels' premium NH Collection brand, NH Collection Samui Peace Resort. A serene beachfront oasis lined with coconut trees, nestled right at the water's edge on Bophut Beach officially opened its doors following a renovation as of 1st December 2024.



Marking the debut of the NH Collection brand in Thailand, the opening is part of Minor Hotels' strategy to expand the NH brand in Asia, following the earlier launch of NH Bangkok Sukhumvit Boulevard in October 2024, and NH Boat Lagoon Phuket Resort in November 2022. The company plans further regional openings, including properties in China, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.

The serene resort unfolds over 122 rooms, suites and villas sheltered by a lush hill that gently slopes towards Bophut Bay. The idyllic location on an endless stretch of silky golden sand is shared with the characterful Fisherman's Village, where traditional wooden shop houses, boutique

stores and a vibrant night market inject plenty of local character. Nearby, a mix of cultural, natural and recreational experiences make the northern side of Koh Samui an area popular with solo adventures, couples and families alike.

NH Collection's nine villa categories are a major drawcard. Fanning off the walkway like fronds, the 42-square-metre Premier Villas rest among gardens scented with tropical flowers. Beachfront villas, all with a deep plunge pool and a shower exposed to the stars, sit right by the water. Set apart in its own private corner of the resort is the 230-square-metre Presidential Pool Villa, featuring an infinity pool, sunken living room and a BBQ area for sharing intimate moments against a dreamlike backdrop.

Sippi at Occidental Eden: An Unforgettable Dining Experience on the Southern Coast

TTA BULLETIN

Located along the sandy shores of Beruwala, Sippi at Occidental Eden Beruwala invites guests to indulge in a remarkable culinary experience set against the breath-taking backdrop of Sri Lanka's sun-kissed southern coastline. The menu at Sippi is meticulously curated by an expert culinary team, blending international recipes with the vibrant spices and flavours of Sri Lanka to elevate one's dining experience to new heights.



At Sippi, the experience transcends mere dining, unfolding into a captivating culinary journey. The open kitchen beckons guests to witness the artistry of the restaurant's chefs, who craft each dish with finesse and precision, turning the art of cooking into a visual spectacle. With its 24/7 operation, Sippi ensures that exquisite dining is always available, no matter the hour. The scan-and-order feature adds an element of convenience, allowing guests to place orders effortlessly from anywhere at Occidental Eden Beruwala, seamlessly merging the charm of luxury with everyday accessibility.

At Sippi, every dish weaves a story and each flavour leaves a lasting impression. The offerings reflect Sippi's unwavering commitment to quality and presentation, promising a true feast for the senses. The picturesque setting enhances the experience, allowing guests to savour their meals while soaking in the surrounding natural beauty. Guest can indulge in bespoke meals of their choice, some of which include freshly-caught Barramundi, mixed

seafood platters, succulent grilled jumbo prawns, black mushroom purée soup, a contemporary take on the traditional Sri Lankan lamprais with lemongrass curry sauce and coconut jaggery pudding—signature dishes beloved by guests that exemplify culinary excellence. Leading this gastronomic journey is Corporate Chef, Deepal de Alwis, a culinary master with over decades of experience in the industry. Armed with a rich global portfolio, he is dedicated to creating gourmet cuisine, while masterminding dishes that are visually captivating as they are memorable. Each creation invites guests on an epicurean adventure, striking a perfect balance between tradition and innovation.

Channa Ekanayake, General Manager of Occidental Eden Beruwala stated that Sippi was a premier destination for those seeking exceptional dining experiences. He highlighted the significance of Sippi as the go-to choice for artfully curated dishes paired with a thematic ambience that perfectly encapsulates Occidental Eden's beachfront ethos.

Sippi is open to everyone, welcoming all who are eager to enjoy extraordinary meals along the southern coast. The beverage selection includes refreshing options such as zero-proof detox drinks and kombucha, infused with turmeric, ginger, hibiscus and green tea, promoting health benefits alongside a range of freshly brewed coffees.

HOTELS

Girithale Hotel's Early Christmas Spirit: A Heartwarming Cake Mixing Event

TTA BULLETIN

The festive season kicked off early this year at Girithale Hotel with a joyful Christmas cake mixing event on the 8th of November. This cherished annual tradition was filled with laughter, camaraderie, and the delightful aroma of festive spices and fruits.

The hotel staff, fondly known as the "lovely Girithale team," gathered to mix the ingredients for the much-anticipated Christmas cake. The atmosphere was full of joy, reflecting the strong sense of togetherness that defines the Girithale Hotel family.

The event was a beautiful reminder of the holiday spirit and the joy that comes from sharing such traditions. It wasn't just about the cake, but the shared moments and the bonds of friendship that made the



celebration special.

As the event came to a close, the staff eagerly looked forward to the next steps in the cake-making process. But it was the sense of community and togetherness that

truly defined the occasion.

With the holiday season officially underway, Girithale Hotel is ready to continue spreading holiday cheer, offering warm hospitality, and creating lasting memories

for all who visit. The hotel's commitment to fostering a welcoming and festive atmosphere will undoubtedly shine throughout the season, as they continue to offer guests a memorable and heartwarming holiday experience.

Hilton Sri Lanka Unveils Festive Experiences Across Their Iconic Destinations

TTA BULLETIN



Hilton Sri Lanka is set to welcome the holiday season with a vibrant array of festive experiences across its esteemed properties. This year, the festivities are carefully crafted to evoke the warmth of home, where traditions are celebrated and new memories are created. Spanning multiple hotels—from the bustling city of Colombo to the serene landscapes of Yala and Weerawila—Hilton Sri Lanka's holiday offerings promise unique celebrations infused with local flavor and global flair.

Hilton Colombo began the festive season in style with a Christmas tree lighting ceremony on 13 November 2024. The ceremony was attended by Mr. Manesh Fernando, Area General Manager of Hilton Sri Lanka and General Manager for Hilton Colombo. Embracing the theme 'Home for Christmas,' the hotel's dining establishments will host a lineup of holiday events complete with choral performances, fine dining, and seasonal treats. Guests can look forward to culinary highlights, such as the special Christmas Eve and Christmas Day meals at Graze Kitchen, SunsetBlu, and Emperor's Wok.

Hilton Colombo Residences introduces 'Hilton Holidays,' a series of festive experiences designed for families and business gatherings alike. From 1 – 29 December 2024, the property will offer a blend of holiday dining, festive brunches, and exclusive treats at Basico Bar and

Lounge, Level3, and Flow. Highlights include BBQ brunches, festive buffets, and live entertainment—all crafted to bring people together during this joyous season.

DoubleTree by Hilton Weerawila Rajwana Resort invites families to create unforgettable memories with a schedule packed with holiday activities for all ages. Themed 'A Festive Escape,' the festive plan includes highlights such as a Grand Christmas Eve Gala, children's crafting events, poolside activities, and a delightful Christmas lunch and dinner. The resort's holiday programming is designed to bring loved ones together while enjoying the natural beauty of the surroundings.

Set against the stunning backdrop of Yala National Park, Hilton Yala Resort offers guests an immersive festive experience amidst nature. Executive Chef Jerome Tissera has curated a holiday dining experience that includes Christmas Eve dinner, Christmas Day breakfast, and special themed meals throughout the season. Guests can enjoy a unique blend of nature, fine dining, and Sri Lankan warmth, with events like the General Manager's Christmas cocktail, high teas in the wilderness, and wildlife conservation activities. Themed 'Holiday in the Wild,' this celebration brings a new way of connecting with the wild and embracing the festive spirit.

Discover the Joy of Giving with Aitken Spence Hotels' Santa's Secret Christmas Market

TTA BULLETIN

This festive season, Aitken Spence Hotels invites you to transform the art of gift-giving with the enchanting Santa's Secret Christmas Market. Dive into a world of seasonal delights and discover the perfect blend of tradition and creativity.

The online market brims with festive goodies, offering everything from stollen, Christmas bread, cakes, chocolates, cookies, gingerbread house and Christmas jams to other delectable treats. What makes this market truly magical is the option to mix and match your favourite items to create a gift as unique as the recipient, making holiday shopping not only hassle-free but also deeply personal.

Beyond the festive treats, Aitken Spence Hotels elevates the holiday spirit with an array of vouchers, including cash, stay and experience vouchers. These vouchers can be redeemed at any Aitken Spence Hotel across

Sri Lanka, ensuring that your gift offers unforgettable experiences.

Imagine gifting a dreamy honeymoon escape at Heritance Kandalama for the adventurous couple, a romantic under-the-stars dining experience at Sentido Heritance Negombo as a heartfelt birthday surprise, or an immersive evening high tea at Heritance Ahungalla to express gratitude during this season of giving. And why stop at gifting others? Treat yourself to these extraordinary experiences for a holiday season filled with joy and indulgence.

This season, Aitken Spence Hotels has truly redefined gifting by offering thoughtful options that create lasting memories. Whether it is a personalized hamper or an unforgettable getaway, each gift embodies the spirit of the season, thoughtful, meaningful, and memorable.



Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Wins Prestigious Connections Award at Luxperience 2024

TTA BULLETIN

Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort becomes the only Sri Lankan hospitality provider, winning the Connections Award at the Luxperience 2024 Luxe Awards, held at the Sofitel Sydney Darling Harbour. The prestigious accolade celebrates the resort's excellence in the high-end luxury travel sector, recognising its innovation, meticulous execution, and commitment to meaningful connections within the travel industry.



unparalleled support for the travel advisor community. The campaign fostered strong connections between advisors and hotel partners, elevating the resort's position as a leader in luxury experiential travel. The awards ceremony was attended by key players in the global luxury travel community. This year's Luxperience Awards saw a record number of entries.

Commenting on the win, Erik Billgren, General Manager of Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle, said: "This award highlights our approach to connecting with diverse audiences and delivering exceptional, memorable experiences for our guests and travel partners. We are honoured to receive the Connections Award and remain committed to excellence in everything we do."

Champika De Silva, Area Sales Director for Minor Hotels Sri Lanka, added, "Winning this award highlights the strength of our collaborations with travel advisors and partners across the globe. It is

The Luxperience Awards are renowned for setting benchmarks in luxury travel, honouring exceptional contributions to the evolving nature of high-end travel experiences. Judged by a panel of travel industry experts, the awards spotlight inspiring campaigns, meaningful collaborations, and innovations that resonate with discerning travellers.

Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle stood out to the judges for its thoughtful execution, which engaged a diverse audience through multiple channels while showcasing

Galle Face Hotel Celebrates 160th Anniversary with Traditional Red Lantern Procession and Christmas Tree Lighting

TTA BULLETIN

On December 6, 2024, the Galle Face Hotel celebrated the season with its cherished Traditional Red Lantern Procession and Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, blending tradition, community, and festive joy. This year holds special significance as the hotel marked its 160th anniversary in December, further enriching the celebration with a deep sense of history and legacy.

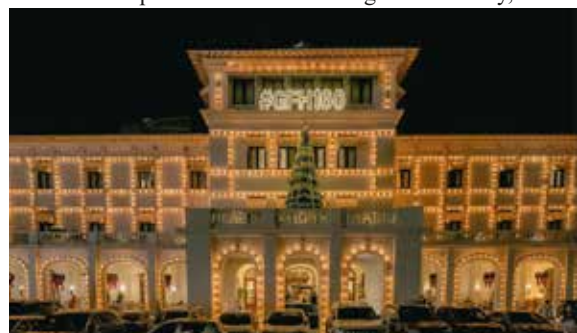
The evening began with the Red Lantern Procession, a luminous tribute to hope and generosity. Participants carried glowing lanterns as they walked from the Regency Wing Lobby, along Galle Road, and back through the Heritage Wing Lobby, with the proceeds supporting a charitable cause.

Throughout the event, the St. Lawrence's Convent Choir graced the evening with enchanting carols, setting a serene and festive tone. The festive atmosphere was further energized



by the vibrant music of the band Switch, creating moments of joy and togetherness for all in attendance.

The evening culminated with the lighting of the Christmas tree in the Heritage Wing Lobby, a dazzling display of lights and ornaments symbolizing the unity and joy of the season.



This beloved tradition marks the start of the festive season at Galle Face Hotel, inviting everyone to celebrate the magic of Christmas in a setting that honours both heritage and the spirit of giving.

Shangri-La Colombo Ushers in the Festive Season with a Spectacular Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

TTA BULLETIN

The festive spirit came alive at Shangri-La Colombo as the hotel hosted its much-anticipated Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on 28th November 2024. This enchanting evening marked the beginning of the holiday season, bringing together guests, families and the community to celebrate in style and splendor.



This year's theme, Christmas in the Air, added a whimsical touch to the occasion. The event unfolded in the Lobby Lounge, adorned with lights, enchanting hot air balloons and the centerpiece of the night - a magnificent Christmas tree standing tall as a beacon of joy. Guests were welcomed with the harmonious melodies of a live choir performing classic Christmas carols, setting a magical tone for the evening.

General Manager, Herve Duboscq addressed the crowd, expressing gratitude and sharing the joy of the season. "The holiday season is a time to come together, reflect and create lasting memories. We are delighted to begin this cherished tradition, bringing the warmth and magic of Christmas to our guests and the vibrant city of Colombo," said Duboscq.

The highlight of the evening was a heartwarming countdown as Herve Duboscq, joined by excited little children, lit up the towering Christmas tree. The dazzling display of lights and ornaments drew cheers of delight from the crowd. Adding to the festive cheer, Santa Claus made a surprise appearance, spreading joy and gifting sweet treats to delighted children. Guests indulged in a curated selection of holiday delicacies, including mulled wine, Christmas sweets and savory delights.

The sense of celebration was complemented by the launch of Shangri-La Colombo's festive offerings, which promise something for everyone. From a specially curated Festive Afternoon Tea at Sapphyr Lounge to an exquisite Christmas feast featuring live action stations at

Central, the season is filled with indulgent culinary experiences. Guests can also toast to the holidays with signature cocktails at Capital Bar and Grill in the New Year with a grand feast accompanied by spectacular fireworks across the city.

Adding to the magic of the season, the Christmas Goodie Hut offers a treasure trove of treats, including gingerbread houses, Christmas cookies, handmade chocolates and traditional cakes and puddings. Luxurious gourmet hampers, crafted with the finest ingredients, make for perfect gifts for loved ones, business partners or a personal indulgence.

This year, Shangri-La Colombo unveils the exclusive Hazelnut & Passion Yule Log, a masterpiece crafted with 64% Madagascan chocolate, zesty passion fruit and layers of hazelnut praline. This decadent creation blends exceptional ingredients from around the globe with an artistic design inspired by Sri Lanka's iconic train journeys, such as the world-famous Ella route. Representing the joy of the festive season and the transition into 2025, the Yule Log pays homage to Shangri-La's signature restaurant, Central, which captures the elegance and nostalgia of train travel.

With only 24 pieces crafted for the season, this limited-edition dessert is the ultimate indulgence for connoisseurs. Exquisite and symbolic, the Hazelnut and Passion Yule Log is a must-have centerpiece for your holiday celebrations. Guests are encouraged to secure this culinary treasure early and make their Christmas truly extraordinary.

Shangri-La Colombo invites guests to immerse themselves in a season of joy with gala dinners, exciting entertainment, luxurious wellness experiences and delightful family moments. With every detail thoughtfully crafted, the hotel promises to create everlasting colourful moments of joy.



HOTELS

Global Adventurer Roma Wells Explores the First Ecolodge in Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Deep in the heart of Sri Lanka, amidst the vibrant chaos of the Sinharaja Rainforest, lies the Rainforest Ecolodge, a sanctuary where nature and sustainability coalesce. Nestled on the scenic Enselwatte Tea Estate bordering the pristine Sinharaja Forest, a biodiversity hotspot and UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Rainforest Ecolodge offers a unique experience for explorers.

Recently, this hidden gem welcomed Roma Wells, author, presenter, and founder of Curious Fox Travel. And here's Roma talking about her experience at Rainforest Ecolodge.

Upon arrival, Roma was drawn to the lodge's exquisite chalets, made from eco-friendly material. "The ecolodge felt like a hidden gem," she shared. "As I settled into my chalet, the sounds of tropical birds surrounded me, providing a genuine connection to nature." Before starting her adventures, Roma explored the mini rainforest courtyard, which offered a preview of the experiences to come. "It's a great introduction to what's ahead," she said, clearly excited.

The Rainforest Ecolodge provides a range of excursions designed to immerse guests in the region's extraordinary biodiversity. Highlights include birdwatching experiences, where guests can observe the remarkable phenomenon of flock feeding. Guests may spot iconic species such as the Sri Lanka Blue Magpie, Black Drongo, and the elusive Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler, showcasing the vibrant life within this enchanting forest. Each activity is thoughtfully curated to enhance the connection between visitors and the rich natural environment surrounding the ecolodge.

Wearing their leech socks, Roma and her friends set out into the lush wilderness with their enthusiastic interpreter, Jagath. "Hiking through the rainforest with Jagath was unforgettable," she said. "He brought the forest to life, pointing out hidden wonders like the Blue Morphos fluttering by and rare orchids blooming among the foliage."

The waterfall trekking adventure at the Rainforest Ecolodge is a highlight for many guests. This 2-kilometer trek leads to Kollawa Dola Ella and Pitamangala Dola Ella, where the cool waters invite visitors to

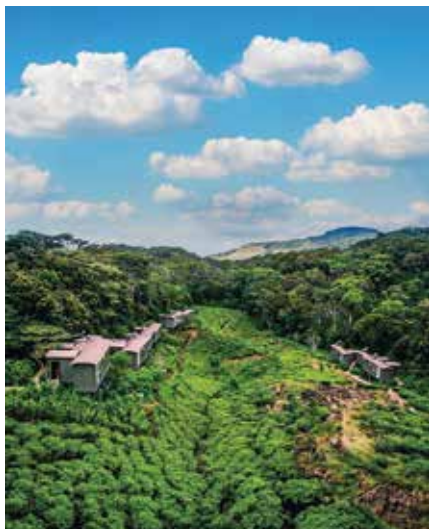


dip their toes. Along the way, guests may experience the playful sensation of endemic Ceylon stone sucker fish nibbling at their feet. The trek offers a perfect blend of exploration and relaxation, with serene spots ideal for meditation amidst the natural beauty of the rainforest.

Nature Trails at the Rainforest Ecolodge guide guests through lush tea plantations and into an arboretum rich with diverse flora. Visitors can marvel at captivating water features and the vibrant greenery along the way, creating a picturesque experience. As day turns to night, the forest transforms into a realm of wonder during the Night Trekking excursion. Guests venture into the darkness, where they may encounter nocturnal creatures like the elusive Loris, along with an array of frogs, moths, and geckos. The sounds of the forest create an exhilarating atmosphere as participants uncover its hidden secrets.

Roma beautifully captured her experience saying "Sinharaja is an oasis that marines all the senses. The Rainforest Ecolodge not only offers a place to stay but an invitation to connect deeply with nature. Here, every moment is a reminder of the wild beauty that surrounds us." This sensational ecolodge is truly a gateway to experiencing the heart of Sri Lanka's rich biodiversity.

A property managed by Aitken Spence Hotels, Rainforest Ecolodge is the first classified ecolodge in the country. This unique tourism project was initiated by industry stakeholders and like-minded investors and is also part of a USAID-sponsored study aimed at positioning Sri Lanka as a global leader in eco-friendly hospitality. The ecolodge holds the prestigious LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification, making it the first hotel in Sri Lanka, the fourth in Asia, and the fifth in the world to receive this accolade. The property features 20 eco-chalets ingeniously constructed from reclaimed shipping containers, with decks made from repurposed railway sleepers. Rainforest Ecolodge exemplifies the symbiotic relationship between development and environmental stewardship, enhancing the destination's biodiversity and supporting the local community.



Cinnamon Grand Colombo Kicks Off The Festive Season With A Grand Christmas Cake Mixing Ceremony

TTA BULLETIN



The holiday spirit was officially ignited at Cinnamon Grand Colombo with a delightful and heartwarming Christmas Cake Mixing Ceremony, held on the 18th of October. This time-honored tradition, marking the beginning of the festive season, brought together guests and staff for a memorable evening of celebration, unity, and joy.

The grand lobby of Cinnamon Grand was transformed into a scene of festive enchantment, adorned with elegant decor. The sound of bagpipes echoed through the air, accompanied by swirling white smoke that added a magical touch to the event's ambiance. The picturesque setting welcomed guests with a sense of wonder, perfectly capturing the essence of the holiday season.

Mr. Mikael Svensson, Chief Executive Officer of Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, graced the occasion and joined in the festivities, making the event even more special. His presence underscored the importance of this cherished tradition, as the gathering reflected the values of togetherness and community, which are at the heart of the festive season.

At the heart of the celebration was the ritual of cake mixing, where participants enthusiastically gathered to combine an assortment of ingredients — from dried fruits to nuts and warming spices. This shared experience symbolized unity and togetherness, as attendees came together to prepare the rich, flavorful mixture that will soon become Cinnamon Grand's signature Christmas cake.

The ceremony was more than just an indulgence in holiday flavors; it was a celebration of friendship, love, and the spirit of giving. As the delightful aromas filled the air, laughter and camaraderie spread throughout the venue. The occasion culminated in a celebratory toast, where guests raised their glasses in a gesture of good cheer, welcoming the upcoming festive season with open hearts.



The hotel's culinary team complemented the event with an exquisite array of cold canapés and refreshing drinks, ensuring that every guest enjoyed a taste of the season while savoring the joy and warmth of the moment.

Commenting on the event, Mr. Kamal Munasinghe, Area Vice President – Cinnamon Colombo Hotels & General Manager – Cinnamon Grand Colombo said, "We are delighted to host our annual Christmas Cake Mixing Ceremony at Cinnamon Grand Colombo, as it serves as a perfect way to bring people together in the true spirit of Christmas. This tradition is not only about preparing for the festive season but also about celebrating unity, joy, and the bonds that connect us all."

Cinnamon Grand Colombo continues to honor this beloved tradition, creating cherished memories and celebrating the spirit of Christmas with its guests. As the festive season unfolds, the hotel looks forward to welcoming more guests to partake in the joy and togetherness that define the holidays.

Located in the heart of the city, Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo offers tranquil getaways in its unique offering of a 'Resort in the City' with expansive lakefront and garden views. Unveiling elegance and grandeur is Colombo's most luxurious, modern, and truly 'grand' city hotels, Cinnamon Grand Colombo, located near Colombo's Galle Face Green, overlooking views of the majestic Indian ocean and upcoming Port City. Completing the Colombo city collection is the first of its kind in South Asia, Cinnamon Red Colombo. Walking distance to shopping centers, historical sites and nightlife precincts of Colombo, this pioneering addition to the Cinnamon Colombo Hotel collection embodies the 'Lean Luxury' concept. Inspired by the arts and modern design, panoramas of Colombo's cityscape and of course the innovative food and beverage options within the property, Cinnamon Red is the popular choice for urbanites and tech enthused travelers.



Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts To Energise Sri Lanka's Hill Capital With The Launch Of Kandy Myst By Cinnamon

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, in partnership with Indra Traders, is set to expand its footprint in Sri Lanka's hill capital, at the start of 2025, with the launch of the Kandy Myst by Cinnamon - a vibrant new addition to the brand's portfolio. This strategic collaboration reflects the brand's commitment to elevating Sri Lanka's tourism landscape, bringing a fresh, modern experience to one of the country's most popular cultural hubs.

Developed to meet the needs of both leisure and business travellers, Kandy Myst by Cinnamon is strategically located on Kandy Katugastota Road, offering unmatched convenience to the city's key attractions and transport routes. With 215 contemporary rooms and the largest inventory in Kandy, this new hotel will transform the local hospitality landscape, providing a fresh, vibrant stay experience that integrates modernity with the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Commenting on the upcoming opening, Area Vice President of Cinnamon Sri Lanka Resorts, Johan Aschan, commented, "Kandy remains a top destination for visitors to Sri Lanka and our vision for Kandy Myst by Cinnamon, was driven by the growing demand for a fresh, contemporary experience in the city. We are creating a space where both locals and international travellers can enjoy a vibrant, dynamic experience that elevates Kandy's hospitality offering."

In addition to the 215 contemporary rooms, it will feature 18 interconnecting rooms designed for family groups and business travellers, an infinity rooftop pool and a sky bar to enjoy stunning views, dining options to include both buffet and a la carte cuisine and a café to welcome both hotel guests and local patrons.

Chief Executive Officer of Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, Mikael Svensson commenting on expanding its footprint in Kandy said, "With the opening of Kandy Myst by Cinnamon, we are not only expanding our footprint but also reaffirming our commitment to driving tourism growth that benefits local communities. We believe in creating opportunities for local talent, supporting sustainable development and bringing meaningful experiences to the destinations we call home. This expansion reflects our strategy to contribute positively to the areas we operate in, delivering value that uplifts both our guests and the local economy."

As a long-term management partnership between Indra Traders and Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, Kandy Myst by Cinnamon will be a vibrant, modern retreat that connects guests with the essence of Kandy while offering all the comforts and

**Kandy
Myst**
by Cinnamon

luxury that today's travellers seek.

Chairman of Indra Group of Companies, Indra Silva also shared his thoughts on the partnership, "We are proud to partner with Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts on this milestone project, which marks our strategic entry into the leisure and tourism sector. Kandy Myst by Cinnamon reflects our commitment to enhancing Kandy's appeal as a top destination in Sri Lanka and creating economic value for the region. Together, we aim to deliver a world-class hospitality experience that blends modernity, with the essence of Kandy."

By enhancing the city's offering, Kandy Myst by Cinnamon together with Cinnamon Nature Trails (the wildlife and nature-based tourism arm of Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts) will also contribute to boosting Kandy's appeal to international and local markets in the curation of holistic travel experiences with deep local insights.

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'.

Revealing Ayr Castle 1922: Where Scottish Grandeur Meets Sri Lankan Serenity

TTA BULLETIN

In the midst of city life, many long for a retreat where time slows down and tranquillity takes over. What if this serene escape were just an hour's drive from Colombo? Nestled in the picturesque landscapes of Padukka, Ayr Castle 1922 is the newest addition to the exquisite boutique collection, Reveal the Collection. Here, guests are invited to escape the hustle and bustle of city life and experience a sanctuary where history and luxury beautifully intertwine.

The opening ceremony of Ayr Castle was a heartfelt celebration of its rich history, as the 1922 story was brought back to life by the Reveal The Collection team and the individuals who played a key role in its revival. Guests were welcomed by Scottish bagpipers, their tunes echoing through the hills of the misty mountains and by the warm hospitality of Appu, the traditional caretaker, who transported everyone back to the colonial era. It was a beautiful evening, with cozy weather, exquisite cuisine and live acoustic music setting the perfect atmosphere. Eksath Wijeratne, CEO of Browns Hotels & Resorts, graced the occasion and raised a toast to commemorate this remarkable moment.

In the golden era of 1922, amidst the lush estates of colonial Ceylon, young tea planter J.F. Arley Elford found himself captivated by a woman of Scottish nobility. His humble dwelling failed to impress her, prompting Elford to embark on a labour of love to build a grand residence that would win her heart. Choosing a breath-taking vantage point on his estate, he crafted Ayr Castle 1922 to reflect the grandeur of Scottish castles—a tangible expression of his devotion and affection. However, fate had other plans. By the time the castle stood in all its splendour, she had



moved on, tired of waiting. To make matters worse, Elford's employers disapproved of his ambitious endeavour, leading to his dismissal. Heartbroken and defeated, he left Ceylon, leaving behind a legacy of love carved in stone.

Perched high on a cleared hilltop overlooking panoramic views of mountains and a rubber estate, Ayr Castle 1922 rises like an eagle's eyrie, its striking stone facade standing as a timeless landmark. Constructed entirely of stone, with double walls ingeniously filled with sea sand, the castle remains refreshingly cool even on the warmest days. Designed to echo the majesty of Scottish architecture with unique stone arches, this 1922 marvel embodies both the romantic allure and enduring charm of its creator's love story.

Stepping into Ayr Castle is akin to stepping back in time, where colonial charm is beautifully preserved through antique décor, including Old Ceylon picture frames, ebony Dutch boxes, timber sideboard cupboards and antique almirahs.

The castle boasts five spacious suites—the Elford Suite, Edinburgh Suite, Turnberry Suite, Governor's Suite and Ayr Suite—each thoughtfully named to reflect both the colonial days of Sri Lanka and Scottish inspiration. Suites feature plush beds, elegantly designed living spaces and luxurious bathrooms with scenic bathtubs, spacious balconies with mountain views that, on a clear day, extend to the buildings and lights of Colombo and Adam's Peak.

Galle Face Hotel Celebrates 160th Anniversary with Traditional Red Lantern Procession and Christmas Tree Lighting

TTA BULLETIN

On December 6, 2024, the Galle Face Hotel celebrated the season with its cherished Traditional Red Lantern Procession and Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, blending tradition, community, and festive joy. This year holds special significance as the hotel marked its 160th anniversary in December, further enriching the celebration with a deep sense of history and legacy.

The evening began with the Red Lantern Procession, a luminous tribute to hope and generosity. Participants carried glowing lanterns as they walked from the Regency Wing Lobby, along Galle Road, and back through the Heritage Wing Lobby, with the proceeds supporting a charitable cause.

Throughout the event, the St. Lawrence's Convent Choir graced the evening with enchanting carols, setting a serene and festive tone. The festive atmosphere was further energized by the vibrant music of the band Switch, creating moments of joy and togetherness for all in attendance.

The evening culminated with the lighting of the Christmas tree in the Heritage Wing Lobby, a dazzling display of lights and ornaments symbolizing the unity and joy of the season.

This beloved tradition marks the start of the festive season at Galle Face Hotel, inviting everyone to celebrate the magic of Christmas in a setting that honours both heritage and the spirit of giving.

Amari Colombo: Where Heritage Meets Luxury in a Contemporary Jewel of Design

Blending Sri Lanka's storied past with modern sophistication, Amari Colombo sets a new standard in Colombo's hospitality scene through the vision of FBEYE International and PLD Singapore.

TTA BULLETIN

In the vibrant heart of Colombo, a new chapter in hospitality unfolds with the opening of Amari Colombo, an elegant and timeless addition to the city's skyline. Designed by the creative minds at FBEYE International, led by visionary designer Warren Foster-Brown, and enhanced by the expertise of renowned lighting designer Stephen Gough of PLD Singapore, Amari Colombo offers guests a seamless blend of Sri Lanka's rich colonial heritage and modern luxury.

From the very first steps into Amari Colombo, guests are enveloped in a unique ambience where history and sophistication are intertwined. "Our vision was to create an immersive experience that resonates with the soul of Sri Lanka while seamlessly blending the essence of Thai culture, the home base of the Amari brand, and delivering the luxury and modernity expected by today's discerning travellers," explains Warren Foster-Brown. "We achieved this by combining local materials and cultural motifs with contemporary elegance, so each space resonates with both charm and refinement."

Amari Colombo's design is a contemporary masterpiece that pays homage to Sri Lanka's colonial past while offering every modern comfort. Inspired by the island's historical architecture, the design showcases subtle details that evoke a sense of nostalgia—a touchstone for locals and a cultural journey for international guests. Faceted details, intricate geometric patterns, and local materials infuse a sense of place into every corner, emphasising the property owner's pride in Sri Lanka's legacy as a gem of the Indian Ocean.

Foster-Brown elaborates, "Amari Colombo is a contemporary jewel, reflecting the spirit of Sri Lanka through nuanced details like sapphire-inspired lighting and touches

of Thailand's celadon green to honour Amari's Asian roots. We wanted each element to not only stand out but to create a luxurious yet intimate atmosphere that celebrates the country's rich heritage."

In partnership with PLD Singapore, the lighting design plays a key role in defining Amari Colombo's aesthetic, with each space carefully illuminated to balance ambience and functionality. "Lighting here is more than a feature—it's a language that conveys mood, intimacy, and timeless charm," shares Stephen Gough. "We focused on enhancing every detail, from the grandeur of the drop-off area to the subtle sparkle reminiscent of Sri Lanka's treasured sapphires. Lighting creates layers within the spaces, allowing guests to experience the design's depth at every turn."

The interplay of light and shadow, accentuated by thoughtful textures, brings a distinctive elegance to Amari Colombo. Each room and public space is enhanced by warm, inviting lighting that exudes luxury without overpowering the natural beauty of the design elements.

Creating a destination that appeals to sophisticated travellers with a taste for history and luxury posed its own set of challenges. One of the most significant was balancing the scale and intimacy of each space. "We wanted Amari Colombo to be both grand and personal," says Foster-Brown. "The scale of the public areas, like the Prego Bar with its 3D ceiling details, required intricate planning to create a space that feels exclusive while still exuding a warm welcome."

Guests staying at Amari Colombo can explore thoughtfully curated details in every facet of their experience. From the textures in the hallways to interactive lighting setups, each aspect of the design invites visitors to slow down and engage with the environment. This immersion adds a new dimension to the guest experience, inviting them to connect deeply with the space and leaving a lasting impression.

Amari Colombo is more than just a hotel; it's a destination crafted for gourmets, connoisseurs, and travellers with a refined sense of style. "We aimed to create a sense of place, soul, and romance here," Foster-Brown reflects. "Amari Colombo offers guests a truly unique environment that feels timeless yet fresh, a place to be savoured and remembered."

The design of Amari Colombo not only enhances the guest experience but also elevates the brand's presence in Colombo's competitive hospitality scene. "In a market where many properties can feel soulless, we wanted to set Amari Colombo apart as a landmark of luxury with depth and character," adds Gough. The combination of historical reverence and modern sophistication gives Amari Colombo a distinctive identity, positioning it as a new standard in the city's luxury hospitality sector.



With its seamless blend of elegance, history, and modernity, Amari Colombo stands as a testament to the transformative power of design in hospitality. Each space is an invitation to explore, connect, and savour, ensuring that Amari Colombo will be remembered as a remarkable experience on Sri Lanka's evolving hospitality landscape.

For more insights, reach out to Warren Foster-Brown on warren@f-b-eye.com and Stephen Gough on stephen@pld.com.sg, as they share the journey and inspirations behind this masterpiece.

Amari Colombo, situated in the heart of Colombo's dynamic commercial district, is a testament to design excellence, blending the artistry of FBEYE International and the lighting mastery of PLD Singapore. Every detail has been meticulously crafted to offer a refined and immersive experience for discerning guests, where heritage meets luxury and contemporary aesthetics.

A particularly striking feature of the hotel's design is the graphic pattern inspired by the owner's profound passion for sapphires—a tribute to their family's illustrious heritage in the gem industry. This elegant motif not only reflects Sri Lanka's renowned legacy as the "Island of Gems" but also imbues the space with a timeless brilliance, celebrating the beauty and sophistication synonymous with the Amari experience.

Stephen Gough is a leading figure in architectural lighting design, bringing over 20 years of expertise to his role as Director at Project Lighting Design (PLD) Singapore.

Renowned for his ability to integrate light as a transformative design element, Stephen enhances architectural spaces with depth, functionality, and emotional resonance.

Under Stephen's leadership, PLD Singapore has delivered numerous high-profile projects across Asia and beyond, collaborating with architects and designers to create visually striking and sustainable lighting solutions. His portfolio includes iconic landmarks such as the Royal Atlantis in Dubai and the Four Seasons Hotel and Residences in Bangkok—both award-winning endeavours that showcase the power of innovative lighting design.

Stephen has also contributed to other globally celebrated projects, including the Waldorf Astoria Maldives and Marina Bay Sands, where his designs turn architectural spaces into immersive, memorable experiences. Combining technical precision with artistic vision, Stephen's work exemplifies the fusion of functionality and creativity, delivering dynamic and beautifully crafted lighting solutions that redefine the built environment.

FBEYE International, founded in 2005 by visionary designer Warren Foster-Brown, is a globally acclaimed interior design firm specialising in luxury hospitality, casinos, yachts, and exclusive residential projects. With headquarters in Singapore and additional offices in Manila and Bangkok, the firm delivers bespoke, timeless designs that harmonise with their surroundings while meeting the evolving needs of today's discerning clientele.

FBEYE International's impressive portfolio includes iconic projects such as Marina Bay Sands and The St. Regis Hotel in Singapore, The Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai, and Victoria Jungfrau in Switzerland.

The firm's design philosophy is rooted in meticulous research, a deep sense of place, and a commitment to creating enduring elegance. Every project, from resorts and city hotels to private yachts and residences, is crafted with an unwavering attention to detail, ensuring that the original vision remains intact, even years later when the doors finally open to guests.



Christmas Cake Mixing at the Taj Samudra Colombo

The Christmas season officially began at Taj Samudra, Colombo with the annual Christmas cake mixing ceremony at the stunning Samudra Ballroom!

Hosted by Samrat Datta - Area Director of Taj Maldives and Sri Lanka, the event was a festive delight, complete with an elegant cocktail spread and joyful vibes. Cheers to a season filled with warmth, tradition, and sweet memories!



HOTELS

Connaissance De Ceylan Redefines Inbound Travel to Sri Lanka: An Inspiring Journey of Inclusivity Across Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

A group of 22 differently abled individuals with hearing and speech impairments embarked on an extraordinary 10-night, 11-day tour of Sri Lanka from 8th to 18th November. Covering iconic destinations such as the Cultural Triangle, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Tissamaharama, Kalutara, and Colombo, this journey showcased not only Sri Lanka's rich heritage but also the potential for inclusivity in tourism.

Organized by Transuniverse France and managed locally by Connaissance De Ceylan, the tour was a milestone in Sri Lanka's inbound tourism sector. Accompanied by two interpreters from France, the group experienced the island's cultural and natural wonders through tailored itineraries that addressed their unique needs.

This initiative by Connaissance De Ceylan highlights a novel approach to tourism, emphasizing accessibility and inclusivity for travelers with special needs. By offering comprehensive ground handling services and ensuring seamless communication for the group, they have demonstrated Sri Lanka's potential to be a welcoming destination for all.

The success of this tour not only enriches Sri Lanka's reputation as a diverse travel destination but also sets an inspiring precedent for the global tourism industry to embrace inclusivity. It reflects a growing commitment to making travel a universally enriching experience, regardless of physical or sensory abilities.



One Galle Face Toasts to Five Years of Hosting People to the Colorful Joys of Life and Celebrates with Singapore Airlines

TTA BULLETIN

One Galle Face (OGF) recently toasted to five years of celebrating the colourful joys of life here in the heart of Sri Lanka. As the leading shopping complex on the island, the dynamic mall commemorates five years of delivering on its brand promise of delivering the best-loved hospitality in every moment across live, work and play, bringing unparalleled family, shopping, dining and entertainment experiences to Sri Lanka.



One Galle Face is a member of the Shangri-La Group, who are pioneers of Asian hospitality and one of the world's most iconic hospitality brands. The shopping complex opened its doors and welcomed guests for the first time in the heart of Colombo on 08 November 2019.

"As we reflect on five years of hosting people to the colorful joys of life here in Colombo, we want to thank our guests and dedicated staff for the continued support over the years. Despite the challenges in recent years, One Galle Face is proud to uphold the resilient spirit of Sri Lanka, while delivering a world class shopping experience and creating memorable moments. As we mark five years, we are not just celebrating our past but looking towards the future as we embark on an exciting new chapter," said Mr. Sid Solanki, Centre Director of One Galle Face.

To celebrate this milestone, One Galle Face proudly partnered with Singapore Airlines to bring visitors an elevated shopping experience filled with exclusive rewards and world-class experiences. This collaboration offered our valued shoppers a unique opportunity to enjoy a blend of luxury and excitement, including chances to win exclusive prizes, travel perks, and curated experiences that reflect the best of One Galle Face's global and local appeal. With Singapore Airlines by our side, we were thrilled to make this anniversary celebration truly unforgettable for our valued guests.

"Singapore Airlines has been providing air services between Sri Lanka and Singapore for more than 5 decades. At Singapore Airlines, service excellence is deeply ingrained in our DNA, and we are committed to delivering a world-class

experience to our customers. Therefore, we are delighted to celebrate this milestone. We wish One Galle Face many more years of success," said Mr. Biren Poh, General Manager Sri Lanka, Singapore Airlines Ltd.

One Galle Face curated a series of experiences for visitors from 01st to 09th November 2024, allowing them to explore the best the mall has to offer, seamlessly blending fun, excitement and quiet sophistication with a local touch.

The mall celebrated five incredible years with a BIG Birthday Sale on 08th November where guests could enjoy 5 times the fun at half the price across the entire mall with up to flat 50% off on selected items. The Level 1 Ocean Atrium was transformed into a playscape with slides, ball pit, and photo opportunities for kids and adults who are young at heart! Plenty of exclusive offers such as flash sales, double points promotions and exciting giveaways took place throughout the weeklong celebrations, with shoppers winning exclusive dining experiences from Cucina, Bombay Borough, Chili's and Basilur Lounge, as well as a staycation at Shangri-La Colombo.

For more information about One Galle Face, please follow us on our social media platforms, @onegallefaceofficial (Instagram and Facebook) and One Galle Face (LinkedIn).

Shangri-La Group is one of the world's premier developers, owners and managers of hotel and investment properties which comprises office buildings, commercial real estate and serviced apartments/residences. The Group's other principal activities include hotel management services as well as property development for sale. It currently owns and/or manages over 100 hotels globally in

more than 75 destinations under the Shangri-La, Kerry, JEN by Shangri-La and Traders brands. Prominently positioned in Asia, the Group has a substantial pipeline of upcoming hotel and mixed-use development projects in Australia, Mainland China, Cambodia, and Japan. For more information, please visit <https://www.shangri-la.com>



Historic Splendor Reinvented: Grand Hotel Nuwara Eliya Unveils Renovated Spaces

TTA BULLETIN

The Grand Hotel Nuwara Eliya, affectionately known as the "Grand Old Lady" of Sri Lanka's hill country, is set to embark on an exciting new chapter in its illustrious history. Following a year-long renovation, the iconic property will reopen its doors this month, unveiling reimagined interiors that harmoniously blend its rich colonial legacy with modern luxuries.

Gerard Ondaatjie, Deputy Chairman of the Grand Hotel, expressed his pride in the transformation, stating, "Our mission is to seamlessly combine Sri Lankan heritage with world-class luxury. This renovation reflects our commitment to creating meaningful experiences that resonate with modern travelers while preserving the hotel's timeless elegance."

Established in 1891 as the residence of Sir Edward Barnes, a British governor of Ceylon, the Grand Hotel has long been a symbol of colonial charm. Its Tudor-style architecture, sprawling gardens, and cool climate have earned Nuwara Eliya the nickname "Little England." The hotel has

hosted British royalty, dignitaries, and generations of travelers seeking respite in the highlands.

Under the visionary guidance of Gerard, internationally acclaimed interior architect Sahran Abeyesundara was tasked with the renovation project aimed to retain the hotel's nostalgic charm while infusing contemporary comforts. Key spaces such as the Magnolia Restaurant, Dilmah Tea Veranda, and the Garden Room have been thoughtfully transformed to elevate the guest experience while paying homage to the property's storied past.

Nadeem Lebbe, Head of Contracting & Marketing, added, "Exquisite hospitality is at the core of our service philosophy. Every guest interaction is an opportunity to create extraordinary moments that exceed expectations." Under the Deputy Chairman's leadership, alongside Suresh Abbas, General Manager, the hotel is focusing on curating a bespoke, "exquisite hospitality"



service delivery. This approach is designed not only to meet guest expectations but to exceed them by providing extraordinary experiences that leave a lasting impression.

Among the many enhancements, the revamped dining experiences are poised to delight guests:

- **The Garden Room:** Inspired by the lush surroundings and wildlife, including the Sri Lankan hill country leopard, this vibrant venue features plush seating, hand-painted murals, and a fusion menu by acclaimed chefs Augustus Lowe and Ralf Vogt.
- **The Magnolia Restaurant:** Paying tribute to the hotel's colonial roots, this space boasts art deco touches and a menu celebrating local and global flavors with locally sourced ingredients.
- **The Dilmah Tea Veranda:**

Known for its legendary afternoon tea, the veranda now doubles as a chic jazz lounge in the evenings, offering signature cocktails and live music.

The renovation project also underscores the Grand Hotel's dedication to sustainability. By integrating eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient technologies, the hotel aims to minimize its environmental impact while preserving its cultural heritage for future generations.

The Grand Hotel has garnered numerous accolades over the years, including: Top 100 Luxury Hotels of the World (Hotel of the Year Awards), National Geographic Travel's Must Visit Place and Asia's Top Heritage Hotels (CNN Travel)

The reopening marks a momentous occasion for the Grand Hotel Nuwara Eliya, cementing its position as one of Sri Lanka's premier luxury destinations. Guests are invited to immerse themselves in this rejuvenated haven where history meets sophistication.

59th Annual General Meeting of The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) 2024

The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) celebrated its 59th Annual General Meeting (AGM) recently, with President M. Shanthikumar delivering a compelling address on the state of the tourism industry



SriLankan Airlines Celebrates Seven Years of Service in Melbourne

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines recently celebrated the seventh anniversary of its Melbourne-Colombo route, launched in 2017. Since then, the airline has successfully connected many Sri Lankan expatriates and students to Melbourne, while providing seamless travel options for tourists travelling between Melbourne, Sri Lanka and beyond, particularly destinations across India.



SriLankan Airlines operates Airbus A330-300 and 200 series aircraft on the Melbourne route, ensuring modern in-flight comforts for passengers. Flights UL604 and UL605 currently operate a daily service between Colombo and Melbourne. Passengers can expect the award-winning service for which the airline is renowned for when travelling with SriLankan Airlines.

In addition to the robust flight service, SriLankan Airlines has further solidified its presence in Australia by actively engaging with the local community. This includes regular support for events organized by Sri Lankan expatriate organizations, reaching many thousands with the brand's message as well as sponsorship of major sporting events in Australia, such as the Melbourne Half Marathon and the Great Ocean Road Running Festival to boost brand visibility. These sponsorships are part of a broader strategy to foster connections within the local community and support events that resonate with both Sri Lankan and Australian cultures. By collaborating with 'Invest Victoria,' the airline has also strengthened its ties with the state government, furthering its mission to promote tourism and cultural exchange.

The seventh anniversary of SriLankan Airlines in Melbourne is not just a celebration of successful flights; it symbolizes the deepening bonds between two vibrant cultures and the exciting opportunities that lie ahead for travellers from both nations.

With steady growth in traffic, including tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka, the Melbourne-Colombo route has become popular among travellers visiting friends and relatives or vacationing between Australia and South Asia, strengthening cultural and economic ties between the two regions. The route is also one of SriLankan Airlines' top performers, both as a direct flight and a convenient connection, especially for Indian passengers.

Dimuthu Tennakoon, Head of Worldwide Sales & Distribution of SriLankan Airlines, stated, "As we celebrate this milestone, SriLankan Airlines will continue exploring potential expansion opportunities across its network to support the envisioned growth of this important route. With a strong foundation built over the past seven years, the airline is well-positioned to enhance connectivity and promote tourism between Sri Lanka and Australia."

V. Ravindran, Regional Manager Asia Pacific of SriLankan Airlines, added, "We are excited and overwhelmed by the success of our operations. This achievement is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our entire team, and I extend my heartfelt appreciation to each member for their contributions. As we move forward, we look forward to continuing to provide exceptional service and to strengthening our connections between Australia and Sri Lanka. Our commitment to our passengers remains unwavering, and we are eager to explore new opportunities for growth and enhanced travel experiences."

Hahnair celebrates the holiday season with an exclusive Advent Calendar for travel consultants

TTA BULLETIN

Hahnair is excited to launch an exclusive Advent Calendar designed to thank its valued travel consultant partners worldwide. Running from December 1st to December 24th, this festive activity offers 24 days of exciting prizes, featuring vouchers from top brands including Swarovski, Amazon, Ikea, Apple and Spotify, with values reaching up to 500 EUR.



seven days. If a particular brand is not available in a winner's market, the voucher provides alternative redemption options to ensure everyone can enjoy their prize.

Travel consultants are invited to join in the holiday festivities and try their luck each day starting December 1st.

The Advent Calendar is open exclusively to travel consultants. Daily, participants can open a new door, revealing the prize of the day. After registering, consultants will automatically enter a lucky draw for the prize, with winners notified by email within

Emirates joins the Move to -15C Coalition

As the first airline to join the global coalition, Emirates harnesses expertise from its cargo arm to help reimagine the future of the frozen foods supply chain

TTA BULLETIN



Emirates, the world's largest international airline, has joined the Move to -15oC global coalition, securing its place as the first airline to bring its expertise to the initiative. As a world-leader in the transport of perishable goods, Emirates will lend its wealth of knowledge and experience in handling and shipping to the practical application of this potentially industry-changing initiative.

First launched at COP28 hosted in the UAE, the Move to -15oC coalition aims to redefine frozen food temperature standards and reduce energy consumption in the frozen food supply chain. The working hypothesis suggests that a three-degree change in temperature could make a significant environmental impact with no compromise on food quality and safety. By bringing together cross-industry partners, the coalition will explore the real-world implementation of this research through data sharing, suggested operational revisions, collaborating with members and stakeholders, as well as engaging with policymakers and regulators to educate and advocate.

Perishables represent Emirates SkyCargo's largest business unit by tonnage, with 900 to 1,000 tonnes of fresh food travelling around the world on Emirates' flights every day. While frozen foods may represent a small percentage, the airline has built outstanding cool chain infrastructure, employed proprietary innovations and established strong working relationships across the supply chain that would provide key insight when reimagining the frozen food supply chain.

Dennis Lister, Senior Vice President of Product and Innovation, Emirates SkyCargo said, "We have long been leaders in the movement of perishable food, connecting the global agricultural community with their customers across the globe and delivering freshness you can taste. The Move to -15oC coalition is a future-looking concept, bringing together likeminded partners to evolve the industry in line with current advancements in technology, equipment,

facilities, packaging and more. We are excited to offer our insight and expertise to help shape the next phase of food logistics while driving meaningful environmental impact."

Thomas Eskesen, Chairman of the Move to -15°C Coalition, says, "We are excited to welcome Emirates to our Coalition. The airline industry plays a vital role in the global cold chain, and having a leading airline like Emirates on board represents a key step forward to us.

"Ambitious climate action across the complex frozen food supply chain – which includes food production, ports, shipping, road, rail and air freight, cold storage and retail – can only happen through cross-sector collaboration. By joining the Coalition, Emirates is demonstrating that change is possible through industries joining forces."

The Move to -15°C coalition was established in 2023, following the launch of the Three Degrees of Change report, an academic paper supported by global logistics firm, DP World, and delivered by experts from the Paris-based International Institute of Refrigeration, the University of Birmingham, and London South Bank University, among others.

Emirates is focused on sustainable and environmental initiatives that drive impact, both in its own operations and across the industry. Recognizing that no one entity can achieve far-reaching results alone, a key part of the airline's strategy is to find solutions to the biggest challenges in partnership with wider industry. In addition to the Move to -15oC coalition, Emirates is also an industrial partner of Aviation Impact Accelerator (AIA), marking the first disbursement from the airline's USD\$ 200 million Sustainability Fund, dedicated to research and development projects focussed on reducing the impact of fossil fuels in commercial aviation. Emirates also joined The Solent Cluster in the UK, a cross-sector collaboration aimed at reducing CO2 emissions and producing low-carbon fuels.

SAIL LANKA CHARTER:

CRAFTING YOUR ULTIMATE OCEAN EXPERIENCE



Luxury isn't one-size-fits-all. At Sail Lanka, we shape every voyage around what you value most, offering a personalized touch to every aspect of your journey. Whether you're chasing the thrill of water sports, soaking in the beauty of marine life on our whale-watching trips, or simply unwinding on deck, our yachts deliver a unique blend of elegance and adventure.

With world-class comfort, attentive service, and tailor-made experiences, we invite you to embrace the freedom of the open ocean and enjoy each moment on your terms. From the adrenaline rush of water activities to the quiet luxury of sunset views, Sail Lanka Charter ensures every detail is as unforgettable as the destination itself.

Phone: +94 71 440 5000 | www.saillanka.com | contact@sail-lanka-charter.com

 [saillankacharter](#)

 [saillanka](#)

 [Sail Lanka](#)

AIRLINES

SriLankan Airlines Recognized as 'Best Airline Partner' at Tamil Nadu Tourism Awards

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines received the prestigious title of 'Best Airline Partner' at the Tamil Nadu Tourism Awards Night, held on 19 November 2024, validating the airline's outstanding contributions to boosting tourism in the Southern Indian state. This accolade marks the airline's second significant honour in recent months, following its win as the Leading International Airline in South Asia under the Visitors' Choice Awards category at the South Asian Travel Awards in September.



The Tamil Nadu Tourism Awards celebrates airlines that have made a substantial impact on the state's tourism sector. With nearly 35 weekly flights connecting Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, and Madurai in Tamil Nadu to Colombo, SriLankan Airlines has established itself as one of the leading international airlines serving the state, supporting inbound tourism for shopping, pilgrimage, and medical travel. The airline is operating close to 90 weekly flights pan-India, spanning Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Cochin, and Thiruvananthapuram, in addition to Tamil Nadu.

Dimuthu Tennakoon, Head of Worldwide Sales and Distribution at SriLankan Airlines commented on the award, stating, "We are deeply honoured to receive the 'Best Airline Partner' award at the Tamil Nadu Tourism Awards Night. This recognition underpins our unwavering commitment to excellence in service and connectivity in the region, and we will

continue to scale up our footprint in Tamil Nadu, which has immense potential to become one of the most preferred travel destinations in this part of the world."

Kasun Welaratne, Sales Manager of SriLankan Airlines in Chennai, added, "We are delighted to be recognized as the best among leading airlines operating to Tamil Nadu. This is a testament to the trust our loyal customers have placed in SriLankan Airlines, and their affirmation drives us to keep pushing ourselves to further enhance our services in the region."

With an emphasis on customer satisfaction and connectivity, the airline aims to further enrich the travel experience for passengers in the region. As SriLankan Airlines continues to be one of the most decorated airlines in South Asia, this latest accolade serves as a reminder of the pivotal role the airline plays in promoting tourism in both its home base and the rest of South Asia.

Emirates boosts services between Madagascar and Seychelles with fifth weekly flight during busy travel period

TTA BULLETIN



Emirates has announced a fifth weekly flight on its Dubai - Antananarivo route, starting 13 December 2024 for a period of four weeks to meet demand from holidaymakers during the busy travel period. The additional weekly flight on Fridays will provide more capacity from the world's fourth largest island nation to more than 1,800 seats in each direction per week and will support seasonal demand for travel.

Following the success of the launch of services to Madagascar in September, Emirates' increase of capacity on its Dubai/Seychelles/ Antananarivo route will help the airline to meet market demand and allow customers to enjoy greater flexibility, choice, and connectivity, when planning their travel.

The additional weekly frequency on the two linked services will operate as EK707 and EK708 in a 3-class configuration. Tickets can be booked immediately on emirates.com, Emirates World retail stores, the Emirates App, and through travel agencies.

The temporary boost to capacity during the four-week period will complement Emirates' services on EK707 and EK708, utilising Emirates' Boeing 777-300ER aircraft and offering 360 seats on each flight, across First Class and Business Class in addition to Economy Class.

Boosting connectivity to the Seychelles and Madagascar provides more convenience for customers travelling between these countries and other popular destinations in Emirates' network including the UAE, Sri Lanka, France and other select points in Europe, UK, mainland China and the U.S. With Madagascar's populations being comprised of communities originating from Sri Lanka, France, China, and India, to name a few, the boosted capacity is expected to meet demand from travellers flying to these countries. Nationals of Seychelles can also enjoy the convenience of visa-free travel to Dubai, making it a popular destination for holidays and short stopovers.

Travellers flying with Emirates can enjoy the best experience in the sky with an unmatched culinary experience, thanks to regionally inspired multi-course menus developed by a team of award-winning chefs and complemented by a wide selection of premium beverages. Customers can sit back and relax with more than 6,500 channels of carefully curated global entertainment content featuring movies, TV shows, music, podcasts, games, audiobooks and more with ice, Emirates' award-winning inflight entertainment system.

oneworld lands 'Best Airline Alliance' award from Business Traveler USA

oneworld's success was hailed at the award ceremony in Miami, Florida

TTA BULLETIN

oneworld® is continuing its winning streak, having been named 'Best Airline Alliance' by the leading North American travel magazine, Business Traveler USA, at last week's awards ceremony.

The victory makes this the ninth year oneworld has been crowned the winner in this category, as frequent business travellers continue to value the alliance's world-class airlines offering a superior and seamless travel experience.

The awards ceremony, hosted at SGWS Wynwood in Miami, Florida, saw Loren Neuenschwander, oneworld Vice President, Membership, collect the award on behalf of the alliance.

Now in its 35th year, the Business Traveler North America Awards pay tribute to the top providers of services and products in the travel industry. Composed of premium global business travellers, the magazine's readership has determined the award winners since the competition's inception in 1988, alongside a hand-selected group of aviation experts, hospitality leaders and editors.

Several oneworld member airlines were praised at the ceremony, taking home a combined five awards across four airlines.

Domestically, Alaska Airlines was awarded 'Best In-Flight Food & Beverage', while fellow member American Airlines took home two awards for 'Best Frequent Flyer Program' and 'Best Airline App'.

British Airways' Executive Club was named as the 'Best Frequent Flyer Program' and Qatar Airways' Qsuite received 'Best Business Class' award.

Loren Neuenschwander, oneworld Vice President, Membership, said: "To be named the 'Best Airline Alliance' at the Business Traveler North America Awards is an extraordinary honour for oneworld, especially with this being our milestone 25th anniversary year.

"This accolade truly shows the collective strength and dedication of our member airlines, who work tirelessly to provide customers with a seamless and superior global travel experience."

This news comes just days after oneworld's

success at the Business Traveller Awards in London, having secured the title of 'Best Airline Alliance' for the 12th consecutive year.

The winning streak comes as the leading airline alliance celebrates its 25th anniversary, with oneworld continuing to raise the bar in premium air travel, having opened its first-ever branded lounges in Amsterdam's Schiphol and Seoul's Incheon airports earlier this year.

To learn more about oneworld and its member airlines, visit oneworld.com

oneworld brings together 13 world-class airlines – Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, British Airways, Cathay Pacific Airways, Finnair, Iberia, Japan Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, Qantas, Qatar Airways, Royal Air Maroc, Royal Jordanian and SriLankan Airlines, and more than 20 of their affiliates. Oman Air is set to join the alliance as the 14th member airline in 2024 and current oneworld Connect member,



Fiji Airways, as its 15th member. oneworld member airlines work together to deliver consistently a superior, seamless travel experience, with special privileges and rewards for frequent flyers, including earning and redeeming miles and points across the entire alliance network. Top-tier members (Emerald and Sapphire) enjoy access to airport lounges and are offered extra baggage allowances. The most regular travellers (Emerald) can also use fast track security lanes at select airports. Learn more about the oneworld Alliance at oneworld.com. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.

SportsEvents365 appoints AirPark as its Representative in Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Airpark (Pvt) Ltd is delighted to announce its appointment as the General Sales Agent (GSA) for SportsEvents365 in Sri Lanka. Established in 2006, SportsEvents365 is a leading vendor and reseller of tickets for live events, specialising in a wide range of sports matches and concerts around the globe.

Through this partnership, sports and music fans in Sri Lanka will now be able to easily access tickets for major, sought-after events around the world such as football league matches, cricket, rugby, tennis, UFC, golf and Formula One. Tickets to concerts featuring top international artists such as Coldplay, Taylor Swift and Oasis at venues worldwide are also readily available.

Whether a European football league match in Europe, a tennis tournament in Australia or a UFC tournament in the USA, tickets for these and countless other exciting events can be booked by SportsEvents365. Furthermore, buyers can choose their preferred section in the venue or stadium, ensuring a personalised event experience, and VIP experiences and hospitality boxes can also be booked for a truly special and memorable experience.

Tickets can be purchased instantly online via www.sportsevents365.com or now,

thanks to the partnership with AirPark, fans in Sri Lanka can also buy the tickets from Airpark's office located at Galle Road in Kollupitiya., Colombo 3, or through their preferred travel agent.

Speaking on the partnership, Sefi Doner, Founder and CEO of SportsEvents365, expressed his enthusiasm:

"We are delighted to partner with Airpark to introduce SportsEvents365 to the Sri Lankan market. We know that Sri Lanka has a passionate fanbase for both sports and music, and we're thrilled to work with AirPark to provide fans with access to their favorite teams, athletes, and performers at events around the world, all with a few clicks or a phone call."

Dougie Douglas, Vice President of Airpark, added:

We are thrilled to be partnering with the worldwide market leader in tickets for sports and music events and helping Sri Lankan fans to access tickets to experience their favourite events in person. Beyond offering access to global sports and music events for Sri Lankans, we are also excited about the opportunity to offer Sri Lankan events to fans in other countries. This two-way partnership holds tremendous potential."



SriLankan Airlines' Mumbai Team Completes Agents' Educational Tour to Gan Island

TTA BULLETIN

The SriLankan Airlines' Mumbai team, in collaboration with the airline's Maldives team and Canareef Resort, recently hosted a successful agents' educational tour to the stunning Gan Island in the Maldives. Famed as a



diver's hotspot, Gan is rapidly transforming into a popular family holiday destination in the Maldives, celebrated for its eclectic mix of natural beauty, rich history, heritage and vibrant marine life – not to mention a lower departure tax than in the Male international airport. The tour welcomed tour operators from Mumbai and Pune, offering them an unforgettable stay in Canareef's luxurious Premium Beach Villas. The itinerary included snorkelling in vibrant coral reefs, dolphin-spotting excursions, sunset

cruises, rejuvenating spa treatments featuring traditional Balinese massages, yoga amidst lush greenery and the delightful flavours of Maldivian cuisine. This initiative is part of SriLankan Airlines' strategy to boost tourism along the Mumbai-Gan Island route via Colombo. The tour's success is expected to inspire renewed interest among Indian travellers in visiting the Maldives by choosing SriLankan Airlines' seamless connections through Colombo. SriLankan conveniently connects Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai,

Emirates comes on top again with multiple accolades at the 2024 World Travel Awards and World

TTA BULLETIN

Airline crowned 'World's Leading Airline' in four categories – recognised for its brand image, luxurious First Class cabins, inflight entertainment system, and loyalty programme

Emirates also won 'Best Airline App Worldwide' and 'Best Airline App in the Middle East' at the World Travel Tech Awards

Emirates has taken home multiple gongs at the World Travel Awards 2024, including 'World's Leading Airline - First Class,' 'World's Leading Airline - Brand,' 'World's Leading Airline - Inflight Entertainment' and 'World's Leading Airline - Rewards Programme.' The airline was also recognised as 'Best Airline App Worldwide' and 'Best Airline App in the Middle East' at the World Travel Tech Awards 2024.

The world's largest international airline is on a roll this year, recently winning top honours at the 'ULTRAs 2024,' 'Telegraph Travel,' 'Forbes Travel Guide's Air Travel Awards,' and has also ranked as a 2025 APEX World Class Airline.

The ceremony was held at the Savoy Palace in Madeira, Portugal. David Quinto, Emirates' Country Manager in Portugal accepted the awards on behalf of Emirates. The World Travel Awards (WTA) is one of the industry's most prestigious events – acknowledging, rewarding and celebrating excellence across all sectors of the global travel and tourism industry. The World Travel Tech Awards recognises and celebrates excellence in travel technology.

Emirates is focused on consistently delivering the best service, continually investing to elevate the onboard experience, and launching industry-first concepts to expand the ecosystem of loyalty, including:

- Rolling out 36 fully refurbished aircraft (26 A380s and 10 Boeing 777s) with new interiors that include highly lauded Premium Economy as part of its multi-billion dollar retrofit programme.

- Emirates' First-Class experience

continues to set the industry benchmark for excellence with fully enclosed private suites, 'dine on demand' service, and A380 Shower Spa. The airline recently enhanced its wine in the sky experience with the launch 'L'art du vin' – a bespoke wine course for cabin crew to serve customers even better with acclaimed wines and rare vintages.

- Emirates recently expanded its already vast inflight entertainment catalogue, collaborating with Spotify – the world's most popular audio-streaming subscription service – to offer customers a wide array of podcasts and playlists in the sky.

- Emirates Skywards' 33 million members worldwide 'earn better' and 'spend better' with more than 200 brand partnerships, ranging from airlines, hotels, and car rentals to financial, leisure and lifestyle brands. Skywards attracts more than 120,000 new members every month who redeem Miles on a range of fantastic rewards including flight tickets and upgrades on Emirates, flights with partner airlines, hotel stays, gift cards, hospitality at sporting and cultural events, tours, and money can't buy experiences.

- Emirates continues to enhance its digital experiences and integrate new technologies to make the travel experience even more seamless for customers. Recognized for offering the best functionality, user experience and a range of features – the Emirates app offers customers real-time flight updates, baggage tracking, an airport map guide, a chance to explore all fleet cabins in 3D, and the option to create bespoke playlists ahead of the flight. Earlier this year, Emirates was ranked top 3 in an independent benchmarking report of airline websites by Catchpoint, where Emirates.com was recognized as the only website to fall within the recommended page load time (total time for a page to fully display to a visitor) of under 5 seconds.

For more information or to book tickets, visit emirates.com. Tickets can also be booked on Emirates App, Emirates Retail stores, Emirates contact centre, or via travel agents.



Halloween Extravaganza at Pegasus Reef Hotel: Sweet Memories & Spooky Surprises!

The Halloween celebration at Pegasus Reef Hotel on October 26th, 2024, was nothing short of a thrilling success, packed with spooky fun, exciting activities, and unforgettable memories for the entire family. This year, we ramped up the excitement with even more surprises for the little monsters and their families, making the event truly special!

Spooky Costumes & Thrilling Competitions

The costume contest was a massive hit, showcasing the creativity of our young guests. From spooky ghosts to hilarious monsters, the kids came dressed to impress. The winners not only took home the title of "Best Dressed" but were also rewarded with exciting prizes, adding to the fun and competitive spirit of the event.

Fun Games, Face Painting & Dance Parties

The evening was jam-packed with fun for everyone. The little ones enjoyed face painting, interactive games, and a lively dance party with our DJ spinning Halloween tunes. The atmosphere was electric, with families coming together to make the most of every moment.

Capture the Fun at Our Halloween Photo Backdrop

Guests had the opportunity to capture the spook-tacular memories at our Halloween-themed photo backdrop, preserving the night's fun for years to come. There were smiles, laughter, and lots of spooky poses as families enjoyed the chance to create lasting memories.

A Heart-Full of Happy Memories

As the night came to a close, every child and family left with smiles on their faces and a heart full of happy memories. From the sweet packs and costume fun to the exciting games and dance party, the Halloween celebration at Pegasus Reef Hotel was truly a spook-tacular event that brought families together for a night of joy, laughter, and plenty of surprises.

Sweet Surprises for the Kids

One of the highlights of the evening was the Halloween-themed sweet packs handed out to every child who attended. Each treat-filled pack contained a spooky assortment of chocolates, creepy candies, Halloween cookies, and other delicious goodies — the perfect way for kids to indulge in the fun and take home a sweet reminder of the night!

A big thank you to everyone who joined us for this

unforgettable event! We look forward to hosting even more exciting Halloween adventures in the future, continuing to create magical moments for families to share and treasure.

Pegasus Reef Hotel is a premier four-star resort located by the beach in Colombo, offering a perfect getaway for families and couples alike. Our facility features 126 elegantly designed rooms, delightful dining options such as the seafood restaurant "The Fishery", and expansive banquet and conference facilities with capacity for up to 520 guests indoors and 2,500 outdoors.

For more information or to plan your next visit, contact us at +94 11 2049600 or visit our website at www.pegasusreefhotel.com.

We look forward to welcoming you for your next unforgettable experience at Pegasus Reef Hotel!

The event featured sessions by Niranka T. Perera, CEO and Co-Founder of Antyra Solutions; Marisa Nolan, Senior Business Development Manager for Profitroom; Ivan Cintado, Director APAC for The Hotels Network; and Shaham Naufer, Country Manager for Hoteltime Solutions.



SriLankan Cares Commemorates Children's Day with Galle Face Hotel and Ebert Silva Holidays

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Cares, the community development arm of SriLankan Airlines, in partnership with Galle Face Hotel and Ebert Silva Holidays, marked World Children's Day on October 14, 2024, with a special programme for the children of Certified Schools, Ranmuthugala and Makola. The group of children enjoyed an activity-filled day that combined fun and learning, focusing on the travel and tourism industry of Sri Lanka.

The children travelled on a colourful double-decker coach, courtesy of Ebert Silva Holidays, from Colombo to Katunayake and back. The programme included a visit to SriLankan Airlines' 747 hangar, an opportunity to board an aircraft and a tour of the Bandaranaike International Airport, which rounded off with a delicious lunch at the Palm Strip Restaurant. Once back in Colombo, the children enjoyed a festive tea party organized by the Galle Face Hotel, complete with music and dancing.

Saminda Perera, Head of Marketing of SriLankan Airlines, stated, "Children are our most precious asset, and at SriLankan Airlines, we believe in creating opportunities to nurture their wellbeing and potential. We collaborate annually with Galle Face Hotel and Ebert Silva Holidays for our Children's Day project, and it's heart-warming to see the joy we bring to children each year. Whether it's seeing an aircraft or visiting the airport for the first time, or enjoying delicious food and music, these experiences are special for them."

Rohan Fernandopulle, General Manager of Galle Face Hotel, stated, "We are delighted to have partnered with SriLankan Cares and

Ebert Silva Holdings for this year's Children's Day initiative. It was an honour to host and inspire the future leaders of our country. We are deeply grateful to the schools for their invaluable support in allowing the children to be part of this celebration. Watching their eyes light up with possibility reminds us of the incredible potential within each of them. Together, we are nurturing dreams that will shape the future of Sri Lanka."

Rajini de Silva Mendis, Chairperson of Ebert Silva Holidays, said, "We are delighted to have come together with our two gracious partners once again to offer children the future pillars of the nation, a splendid experience that gives them confidence to overcome challenges and motivation to dream big and set their goals high, with the sincere hope of seeing them become responsible and worthy citizens of our motherland."

Peshala Abeysooriya, the Commissioner of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services (WP), commented on the programme stating, "It not only provided enjoyment to the children, but also a valuable educational experience. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to SriLankan Cares, Ebert Silva Holidays and Galle Face Hotel for helping to fulfil the dreams of these children."

SriLankan Cares is dedicated to inspiring hope and creating opportunities for a bright future for the children of Sri Lanka. This event is one of many that SriLankan Cares initiates throughout the year to make a positive difference in the lives of children.



Malaysia Airlines and IndiGo Cement Codeshare Partnership for Enhanced Connectivity Between Two Key Tourism Markets

TTA BULLETIN

Following the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in April 2024, Malaysia Airlines and IndiGo are pleased to enter a strategic codeshare partnership that aims to boost connectivity and elevate the traveller experience across its key hubs within Malaysia and India.

Through this partnership, Malaysia Airlines customers will gain wider access to destinations within India, as the airline's flight code "MH" will be added to seven (7) domestic destinations in India, including Kolkata, Varanasi, Patna, Tiruchirappalli, Goa, Bhubaneswar, and

Visakhapatnam. This complements the airline's current direct routes to 10 key hubs in India, including New Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kochi, Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Trivandrum and Kolkata.

Meanwhile, IndiGo's "6E" flight code will be added to Malaysia Airlines domestic flights from its main hub at KL International Airport Terminal 1 to destinations including Penang, Langkawi, Johor Bahru, Kota Kinabalu and Kuching; allowing holiday goers added travel options to explore the beauty of Malaysia.

Oman Air Expands Footprint with new Qantas Partnership

TTA BULLETIN

Oman Air and Qantas, Australia's largest airline, have taken their partnership to new heights with the launch of a new and exciting loyalty programme offering. Sindbad members will soon be able to redeem their Miles on flights with Qantas, which operates an extensive network including Australia, New Zealand, the South Pacific, with Qantas members able

to access the same benefits on Oman Air's network.

The airlines, who have an existing interline partnership, will add more attractive benefits, such as Mile-earning opportunities, as Oman Air prepares to join the oneworld alliance in 2025.

Singapore Airlines To Elevate Premium Travel Experience With S\$1.1 Billion Airbus A350 Cabin Retrofit Program

TTA BULLETIN

Singapore Airlines (SIA) is investing S\$1.1 billion in a multi-year program to install its all-new long-haul cabin products across 41 Airbus A350-900 long-haul and ultra-long-range (ULR) aircraft, redefining the premium travel experience on its network.

In a significant milestone, the Airline will introduce a luxurious First Class cabin in its seven A350-900ULR aircraft, setting new industry benchmarks for travel on the world's longest routes. Designed with increasingly discerning travellers in mind, these plush First Class seats promise to deliver an unparalleled in-flight experience.

Business Class customers can look forward to an elevated travel experience with SIA's upcoming Business Class seats, featuring innovative designs that will offer even greater levels of privacy, comfort, and convenience in all 41 aircraft.

These A350-900 First Class and Business Class products are designed from the ground up, with a spacious layout and ergonomic elements that cater to every customer's needs. These are the same seat designs that will feature on SIA's upcoming Boeing 777-9 aircraft.

Premium Economy Class and Economy Class cabins will also be refreshed to enhance the travel experience for customers.

Complementing the cabin products, the next version of SIA's KrisWorld in-flight entertainment (IFE) system will offer greater personalisation and an extensive range of lifestyle options across all cabin classes. First Class and Business Class seats will also feature new in-flight entertainment screens.

The aircraft will be retrofitted by SIA Engineering Company in Singapore. The first retrofitted A350-900 long-haul aircraft is expected to enter service in the second quarter of 2026, while the first A350-900ULR variant will follow in the first quarter of 2027. The entire programme is targeted for completion by the end of 2030.

Post-retrofit, the 34 A350-900 long-haul aircraft will be configured with 42 Business Class seats, 24 Premium Economy Class seats, and 192 Economy Class seats. The seven A350-900ULR variants will feature four First Class seats, 70 Business Class seats, and 58 Premium Economy Class seats.

Full details on the entire range of SIA's forthcoming long-haul First Class, Business Class, Premium Economy Class, and Economy Class cabin products, as well as the latest version of the KrisWorld IFE system, will be revealed closer to the entry into service of SIA's first Boeing 777-9 and retrofitted A350-900 aircraft.

Emirates ramps up operations in Africa to serve growing demand

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates, the world's largest international airline, has further bolstered its presence across Africa, with the introduction of additional flights to Entebbe, Uganda; Addis Abba in Ethiopia; and Johannesburg, South Africa.



touches, a premium gastronomic selection of dishes and fine beverages, and one of the biggest screens in the sky, all in midst of comfort and privacy.

Since the inaugural flight into Africa with Cairo as its first destination in 1986, Emirates has progressively grown its presence on the continent and now serves 20 passenger and cargo gateways, boosting Africa's connectivity and air transport market development.

Ringed in the new year, Emirates will also increase frequency in Ethiopia, with a daily flight connecting Dubai and Addis Abba from 1 January 2025. Visitor numbers to Ethiopia continue to grow, guided by the vision to make Ethiopia one of the top five tourist destinations in Africa by 2025. By boosting its flight frequencies, Emirates will provide more convenient access, particularly for travellers from the Middle East and Far East.

Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer said, "Africa has long been a priority region for Emirates, and we will deepen our strategic focus of expansion and continued investment on the continent, as an important anchor for our future network. The introduction of frequencies to our existing points in Uganda, South Africa and Ethiopia help support the region's growth and provide critical links using Dubai as a key gateway to emerging economies across Asia and the Middle East.

This will be swiftly followed by the fourth daily flight to Johannesburg, which, from 1 March 2025, will introduce a morning slot to and from South Africa's largest and busiest international airport. The additional flight brings Emirates' operations back to pre-pandemic levels, with 49 weekly flights into South Africa, one of the airline's most in-demand destinations in Africa.

"Over the last 30 years Emirates has played a pivotal role in the development of the region's aviation and tourism sectors, not just through scaling our operations but by establishing strategic partnerships with local governments, tourism boards and likeminded airline partners across the travel ecosystem, to nurture the industry and realise its untapped potential."

Once the additional frequencies are activated, Emirates will provide 161 weekly flights between African destinations and Dubai.

From 27 October, Emirates ramped up operations between Dubai and Uganda from five weekly flights to a daily service. Operated via a Boeing 777-300ER the additional flight will add 718 seats to and from Dubai-Entebbe every week, connecting to popular onwards destinations from Dubai such as Canada, the US, India and the UK, to name a few. As the only airline offering First Class in and out of Entebbe, the additional flights will enable more passengers to experience Emirates' unrivalled experience with luxurious

Tickets can be booked now on emirates.com, the Emirates App, Emirates Retail stores, Emirates contact centre, or via travel agents.

With 17 countries in Africa and a further 63 countries and territories globally, Emirates offers near-unrivalled connectivity, further amplified by its extensive partnership network. In Africa, the airline's footprint expands to over 210 regional points through five codeshare and 18 interline partners, providing access to more regional points via frictionless, one-ticket travel and simplified baggage throughput.

Taiwan's EVA Air activates NDC connection with Sabre

The addition of EVA Air advances Sabre's multi-source content strategy by expanding booking options for travel agencies

TTA BULLETIN

Sabre Corporation (NASDAQ: SABR), a leading software and technology provider that powers the global travel industry, today announced New Distribution Capability (NDC) connectivity from Star Alliance member and five-star SKYTRAX airline, EVA Air, through Sabre's global multi-source content platform.

months.

"Implementing our NDC connection to Sabre's global travel marketplace is an exciting milestone for EVA Air as we continue to expand our distribution strategy," said EVA Air Vice President, Digital and Information Planning, Eric Chiu. "By participating in Sabre's extensive global marketplace and activating NDC capabilities, we are able to deliver an even higher level of service to travellers."

NDC is designed to enhance airline retailing by enabling carriers to distribute more diverse and real-time travel options through third parties. By integrating and normalizing NDC offers, Sabre gives travel agencies and corporate buyers an efficient

way to shop, book and service airlines' NDC offers alongside traditional content and low-cost carrier options by using Sabre's APIs and travel agency booking platforms, Sabre Red 360 and Sabre Red Launchpad™. Travel sellers will have more options to customize the travel experience for their clients.

"We're delighted that EVA Air has chosen to join the growing number of airlines globally who are activating NDC connections through Sabre," said Kathy Morgan, Senior Vice President of Product Management, Distribution Experience, Sabre Travel Solutions. "It is another proof point of our commitment to providing airlines with the solutions they need to retail fares and offers in a way that makes

sense for their business growth, while providing travel agencies with a seamless way to shop, book, and manage all types of airline content."

Established in 1989, EVA Air now offers around 60 international routes. EVA Air's network includes regional and international services to destinations across Asia Pacific, Europe, Canada, and the United States.

Cleared for Take-off: oneworld debuts its global marketing campaign

oneworld has launched its first marketing campaign in five years

TTA BULLETIN

oneworld® has taken to the skies with its newest global marketing campaign, as it continues to soar during its 25th anniversary year.

The campaign, targeted at premium globetrotters travelling for business and leisure, marks the alliance's first major initiative in five years.

With the aim of expanding its reach to new audiences globally, oneworld's latest promotion is set to engage over 40 million travellers worldwide up until early December, with new digital out-of-home advertising at a number of key airport locations across the world, including at member airline hubs.

Customers can catch the new campaign at London Heathrow, Los Angeles, and Sydney International Airport, alongside oneworld lounge locations, Amsterdam-Schiphol and Seoul's Incheon Airport.

As part of this investment, oneworld has also launched a new sonic identity alongside its campaign, becoming the first airline alliance to introduce a sound logo as part of its identity.

The new audio logo is a unique sound designed to identify the oneworld brand, becoming the acoustic equivalent of - and working alongside - the existing visual logo.

Created to capture the bright optimism of the oneworld brand, and aimed at evoking a world of opportunity, the new short, melodic sequence has been named 'The Take-Off', inspired by its ascending and descending notes which follow the journey of flight.

Bespokely designed for oneworld by award-winning London-based content marketing agency, SUNDAY, the audio



identity was created using digital music composition software, with a mixture of digital and live instruments.

Maria McKinnon, Director of oneworld Global Brand and Marketing, said: "We are extremely excited to be launching our new marketing campaign, showcasing the best of oneworld during its 25th anniversary year.

"oneworld has always been an industry leader and innovator, so to be launching our new sonic identity - a first for airline alliances - is also an exciting chapter in our history.

"Our commitment has always been to provide customers with a seamless and superior travel experience, and we are confident our signature sonic will be a unifying sound that brings together people of different cultures, no matter what language they speak."

Tom Coulson, Head of Video at SUNDAY, said: "The oneworld signature sonic is a short, melodic sound sequence that amplifies the bright optimism of the oneworld alliance. It shares the joyful, forward-looking world of opportunity oneworld offers members. We're excited to hear it roll out across the globe."

Customers will initially experience this sonic branding across a variety of digital marketing channels, in addition to a number of popular podcasts in both the UK and the US.

To learn more about oneworld and its member airlines, visit oneworld.com



Sri Lanka Tourism at the World Travel Market UK 2024!

Sri Lanka tourism together with industry stakeholders proudly represented brand 'Sri Lanka' at the recently concluded World Travel Market in the UK. With vibrant displays, cultural performances, and engaging experiences, the Sri Lanka pavilion stood out among hundreds, ultimately winning the coveted "Best Stand" award from the event organizers, Reed Travel Exhibitions. This recognition celebrates Sri Lanka's commitment to sharing its heritage, natural beauty, the enchanting 'Pekoe Trail' and warm hospitality with the world



SriLankan Airlines FlySmiLes Goes Live with Reimagined Website

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines' frequent flyer programme, FlySmiLes, has gone live with a reimagined website that introduces several standout features, offering seamless access and reward redemptions alongside many other intuitive functionalities for its nearly 800,000 global members. The platform is designed to bring exceptional ease and privileges, enhancing the travel experience for FlySmiLes members throughout their journeys and beyond.



Dimuthu Tennakoon, Head of Worldwide Sales and Distribution of SriLankan Airlines, stated, "The new FlySmiLes' website exemplifies our unwavering commitment to delivering a superior customer experience. It marks a significant step forward in how we engage with and reward our loyal customers. With its enhanced, user-friendly features, the website empowers members to access exclusive rewards and personalised offers anytime, anywhere."

Chamara Perera, Group Head of Information Technology of SriLankan Airlines, added, "Developed entirely in-house, this project reflects the remarkable talent and innovation within our airline. The collective efforts of our teams ensured that every detail and feature of the website met the specific needs of our frequent flyers. By integrating cutting-edge technology, the website strikes the perfect balance between practicality and aesthetics, serving as a comprehensive digital front for FlySmiLes and providing solutions for nearly every member requirement."

Members can now effortlessly navigate their personalised dashboard, check their

FlySmiLes miles balance and track their membership tier progress. What's more, buying, transferring, and gifting miles has never been simpler. The platform also offers a seamless user experience with social login, enabling members to sign in using their Google or Facebook accounts.

Facebook accounts.

For added security, an OTP (One-Time Password) has been enabled for transactions, all integrated smoothly with a range of payment options, including American Express, Visa and MasterCard.

The website makes managing redemption vouchers a breeze, by making it possible to request, redeem, modify or cancel with just a few clicks. It also offers easy access to a variety of other vouchers, such as lounge access vouchers for co-branded cardholders, excess baggage vouchers and vouchers from non-airline partners.

FlySmiLes offers Platinum, Gold, Classic and Blue membership levels, while Silver membership is exclusively available for SriLankan Airlines' co-branded credit card holders. As a member of the oneworld® Alliance, FlySmiLes is part of an elite group of the world's leading airlines working as one to give frequent international travellers a superior travel experience.

Members can enjoy special privileges and rewards, including access to over 600 lounges in over 1,000 destinations worldwide. Members can earn and redeem FlySmiLes miles whenever they travel, whether with SriLankan Airlines, oneworld member airlines, oneworld affiliate airlines or any partner airlines.

Cathay Pacific enhances winter schedule with additional flights from Colombo

TTA BULLETIN

Enhancing convenience for Sri Lankan customers travelling to Hong Kong and beyond

Hong Kong's home carrier Cathay Pacific has announced a new winter schedule for 2024-2025. The airline will be operating four return flights per week — up from the current three — between Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport and Hong Kong from 2 January 2025 to 1 March 2025, with plans to further increase the frequency to five return flights per week from 2 March 2025 to 30 March 2025.

These flights will be operated by the airline's Airbus A330 aircraft, equipped with flatbeds in Business class, as well as Premium Economy and Economy cabins.

Customers wishing to continue their journey to onward destinations can connect onto flights to other cities in the

Greater Bay Area as well as popular destinations in the Chinese Mainland, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand via Cathay Pacific's home hub, Hong Kong.

Cathay Regional General Manager for South Asia, Middle East, and Africa Rakesh Raicar said: "As we continue to strengthen our network, we are excited to boost connectivity between Colombo, Hong Kong and beyond, which will provide our customers with greater flexibility and choice. We look forward to welcoming them on board.

"The additional frequency also means additional belly capacity for our cargo services from Colombo. This increased capacity allows Cathay to offer more priority shipment solutions for the Colombo market, meeting the growing demand for efficient and reliable cargo services.

Jetstar Asia Commences Direct Flights Between Singapore and Colombo

TTA BULLETIN

Jetstar Asia celebrated the launch of its inaugural direct flight between Singapore and Colombo, marking its entry into Sri Lanka as the only low-cost airline to operate on this route.



With five return flights weekly operated by Jetstar Asia's fleet of Airbus A320s, the route offers passengers the flexibility of morning or evening departures, catering especially to those transiting through Singapore.

The new connection introduces over 90,000 low-fare seats annually, welcoming Singaporeans and regional travelers to explore Sri Lanka while attracting thousands of tourists and business visitors to the Lion City.

Jetstar Asia CEO, John Simeone, highlighted Sri Lanka as a compelling addition to the airline's expanding network saying "Our customers are always in search of unique destinations, and Sri Lanka's scenic coastlines, diverse landscapes, rich culture, and warm hospitality make it a perfect choice for adventure seekers"

The inaugural flight landed at Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) with 179 passengers onboard and was ceremonious-

ly welcomed with a water salute by Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) (Private) Limited (AASL).

"We're thrilled to offer low fares that make Sri Lanka more accessible than ever before.

These flights will not only help boost tourism but also support local businesses and provide affordable travel options for passengers across Southeast Asia. We extend our gratitude to our partners, particularly Changi Airport Group and Hayleys, for their unwavering support in making this route a success " added Simeone

Commenting on the commencement of flight operations, Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) Harsha Abeywickrema, Chairman of AASL, stated, "The launch of Jetstar Asia's scheduled flights between Singapore and Sri Lanka is a significant boost for the growth of our tourism sector. This new connection promises an enhanced travel experience for both local and international passengers. We are delighted to see Jetstar Asia contributing to Sri Lanka's aviation and tourism landscape."

With this new route, Jetstar Asia reinforces its commitment to offering affordable and accessible travel while supporting the growth of tourism and trade in the region.

Emirates officially unveils its first A350 aircraft

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates has officially unveiled the very first Airbus A350-900 to join its fleet at an exclusive event showcase in Dubai.

The event, led by Sir Tim Clark, President Emirates Airline in the presence of His Excellency Abdulla Bin Touq Al Marri, UAE Minister of Economy, was attended by VIP guests, aerospace partners, government officials and dignitaries, members of the media, as well as aviation enthusiasts. Guests were able to experience the aircraft's interiors, equipped with its next generation products and latest technologies.

The Emirates A350 features three spacious cabin classes, accommodating 312 passengers in 32 next-generation Business Class lie-flat seats, 21 Premium Economy seats and 259 generously pitched Economy Class seats. The latest onboard products reflect the airline's commitment to delivering a premium passenger experience while optimising operational efficiency. The Emirates A350 is the first new aircraft type to join Emirates' fleet since 2008.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive, Emirates Airline & Group said: "Today is an exciting milestone for Emirates as we showcase our first A350 and usher in a new era for our fleet and network growth. This aircraft sets the stage for Emirates to

spread its wings farther by offering added range, efficiency and flexibility to our network, enabling us to meet customer demand in new markets and unlock new opportunities in the cities that we serve. Onboard, our updated interiors and seating configurations will help us deliver a more elevated and comfortable experience to travellers across every cabin class. The 65 Emirates A350s joining our fleet in the coming years fit into the airline's broader plans to support our visionary leadership's Dubai's D33 Strategy, which will transform the city into a pivotal hub in the global economy by expanding its connectivity and reach."

Phillipe Mhun, Executive Vice President Programmes & Services for Airbus said: "We are proud to further expand our strategic partnership with Emirates which has flourished nearly 4 decades ago with the A300, the A330, the A340 and the A380. Marking a new chapter for Airbus, we expect the A350 to become an integral member of the Emirates' fleet and support its continued growth and sustainability ambitions."

Omar Ali Adib, SVP Customer – Middle East and Africa for Rolls-Royce, said: "The collaborative effort between Emirates, Airbus and Rolls-Royce exemplifies what can be achieved when we share a commitment to excellence

NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA DINNER DANCE

BLAST THRU 2024



COMPERE
FAIZAL BONGSO

WITH
GYPSIES

DJ KAPPA

Get ready to blast thru 2024 and welcome 2025 with a bang of excitement and merry-making at the Liberty Ballroom

31ST DEC, 2024 | 8PM ONWARDS

LKR 19,500

What Awaits

International Gala Dinner & Breakfast Buffet
Complimentary bottle of Spirits & Wine for every table of 10
Return Air Tickets | Prizes & Surprises

Inquiries:

+94 771 262 696 | +94 777 313 280 | +94 112 422 001



GYPSIES
LIVE IN HARMONY

RAMADA
BY WYNDHAM
COLOMBO



Thema
COLLECTION



INTRODUCING



Amba Yaalu

KANDALAMA

The first women-led hotel in Sri Lanka

Opening this December



www.themacollection.com

Different Themes, Authentic Experiences

