

T3FS

Trendy Travel Trade with Food & Shop

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The Ultimate Honeymoon

Where Love Meets Luxury

Experience Kissimmee: A Perfect Blend
of Romance, Adventure and Relaxation

Slow Romance: Why Couples Are
Choosing Unhurried Honeymoons

Majestic Europe

12 Night/13 Days

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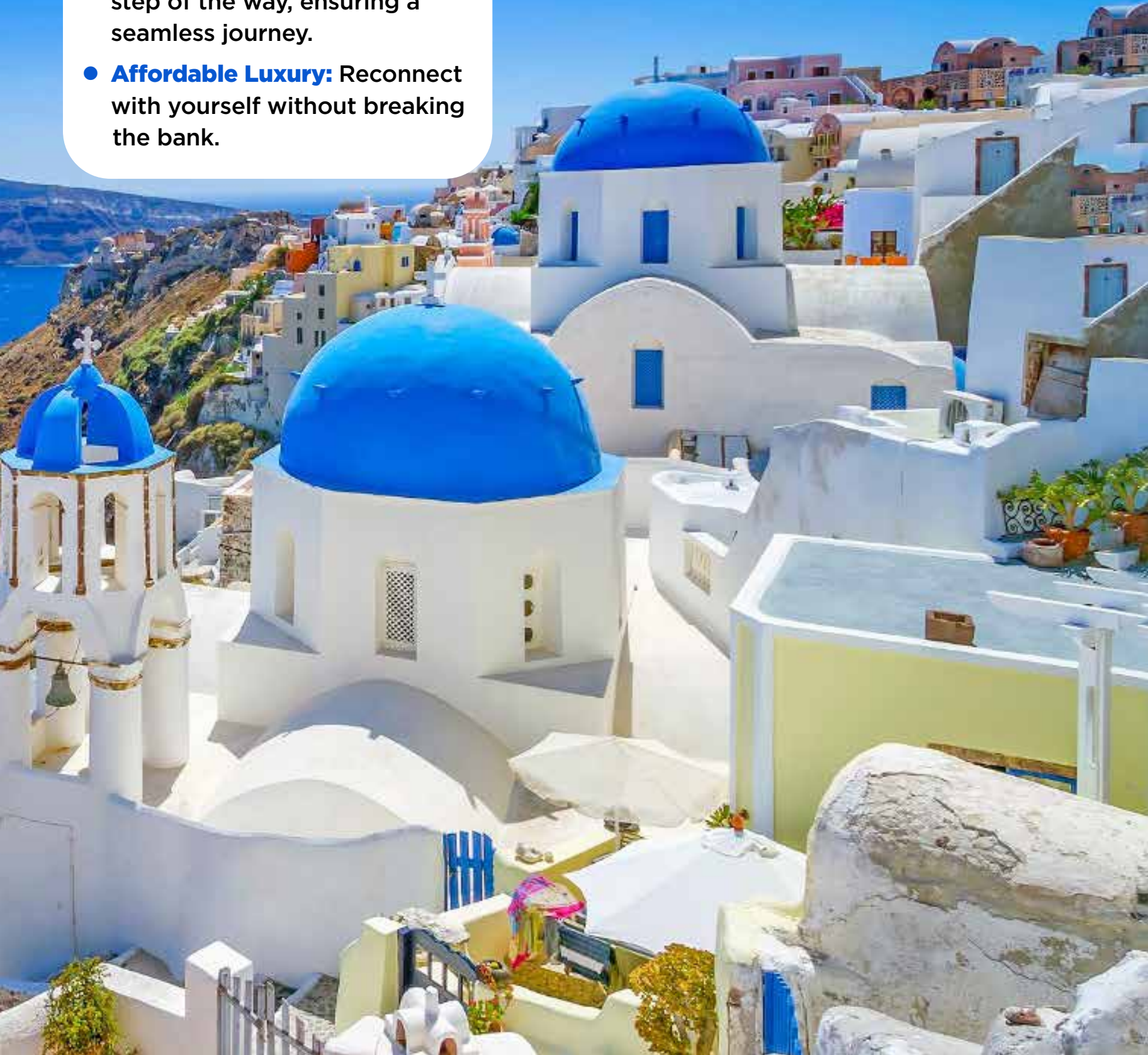
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Where Love Begins a New Journey

Some journeys take us to new places; others become cherished chapters of our lives. A honeymoon belongs to the latter. It is the first journey after saying “I do”—a time when two people step away from the excitement of the wedding and begin discovering life together.

Today’s honeymoon is no longer defined only by luxurious rooms, romantic dinners or picture-perfect beaches. Modern couples seek experiences that reflect their personalities and dreams—whether it is waking beside an endless ocean, exploring a heritage city, reconnecting with nature, discovering a new culture, embracing wellness or simply finding a quiet place where time seems to slow down.

In this special Honeymoon Issue, we explore this evolving world of romantic travel. We speak with leading hotels and resorts across some of the world’s most sought-after destinations to understand what newlyweds truly value. From the tropical charm of Mauritius and Bali to the cultural richness of India and Sri Lanka, hospitality leaders share how personalised service, privacy, fine gastronomy and thoughtful experiences are redefining the honeymoon.

We also take you to Kissimmee, Florida, where romance meets adventure. From private vacation homes and luxury resorts to airboat rides, hot-air-balloon experiences, culinary discoveries and vibrant

PUBLISHER'S NOTE



entertainment, it proves that a honeymoon can be both intimate and exciting.

And because every journey deserves its own style, we explore the modern honeymoon wardrobe—versatile pieces that effortlessly move from relaxed mornings to poolside afternoons and memorable evenings. Yet, beyond destinations and luxury, the greatest gift of a honeymoon is time: time to pause, reconnect and create memories together.

Because every great love story deserves a beautiful beginning—and sometimes, the best chapters begin with a journey.

Happy reading, and happy travels.

Vedika Sharma
vedika@fabianmedia.net

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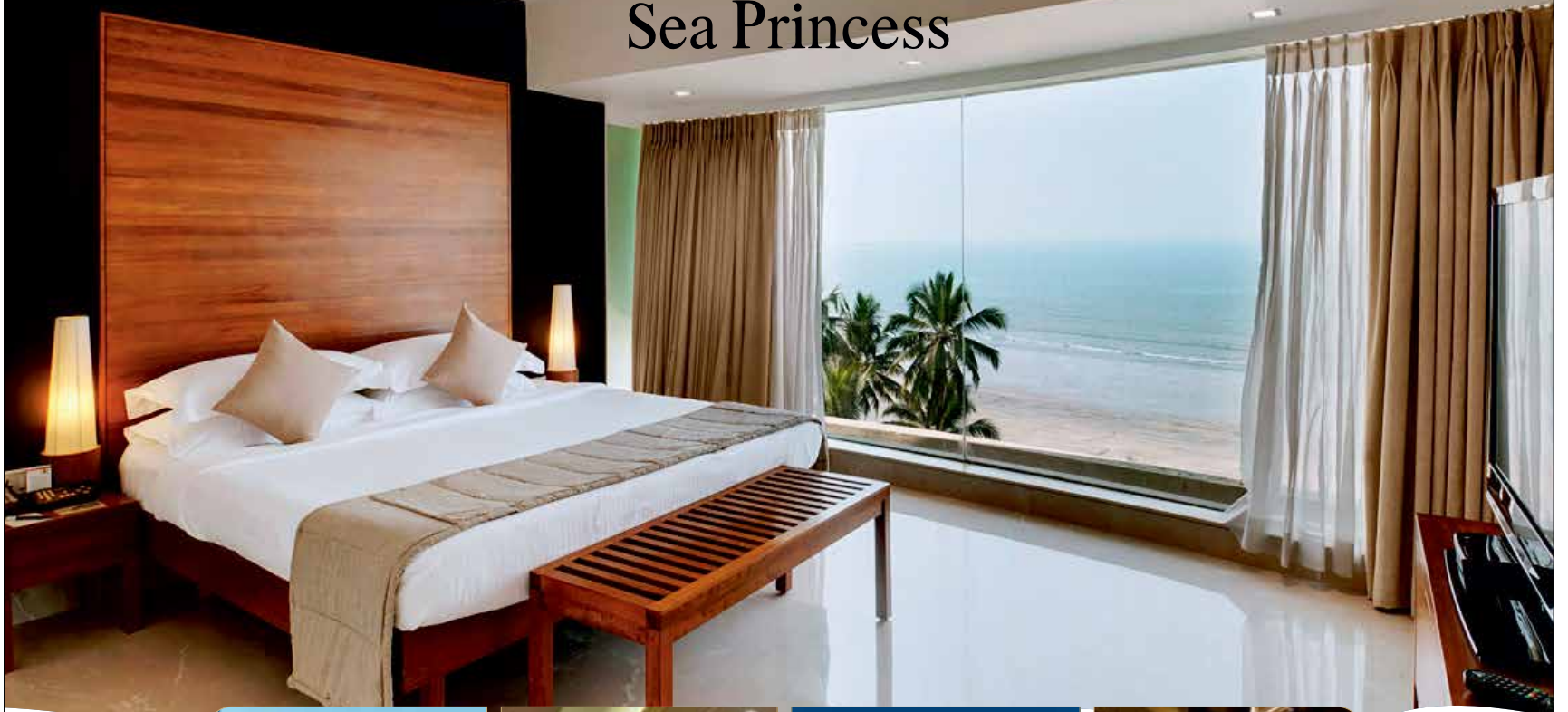
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RECENTLY RENOVATED & UPGRADED GUEST SERVICES

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We don't just sell rooms, We Deliver experiences

Air India and IHG Hotels & Resorts Join Hands to Enhance Loyalty Benefits



Air India and IHG Hotels & Resorts have announced a new loyalty partnership connecting Air India's Maharaja Club with IHG One Rewards, giving members greater flexibility to earn and exchange rewards across flights and hotel stays.

The partnership brings together IHG's portfolio of more than 7,100 hotels across over 100 countries and Air India's network spanning India and five continents. Maharaja Club members can earn 2 Maharaja Points for every US\$1 spent at most

IHG properties, while stays at select brands earn 1 point per US\$1. Members can also convert 1,000 IHG One Rewards Points into 200 Maharaja Points, expanding opportunities to use loyalty rewards for future travel.

Sudeep Jain, Managing Director, South West Asia, IHG Hotels & Resorts, said: "Our partnership with Air India brings together two leading travel brands and creates greater value for members across their journeys. By connecting IHG One Rewards with Maharaja Club, we are giving our members more choice and flexibility in how they use their rewards."

Sunil Suresh, Head of Marketing, Loyalty and E-commerce, Air India, said: "By partnering with IHG Hotels & Resorts, we are extending the programme's reach into another important part of the travel journey and making it easier for members to benefit from their loyalty across a broader range of travel experiences."

New Zealand Awaits: Tourism New Zealand and Malaysia Airlines Join Hands

Tourism New Zealand and Malaysia Airlines have launched a special consumer campaign to inspire Indian travellers to discover New Zealand, combining attractive promotional fares, seamless connectivity and destination experiences. The fare sale is valid until 6 September 2026, with travel permitted until 31 March 2027.

The campaign offers travellers one-stop connectivity to New Zealand via Kuala Lumpur from 10 gateways across India, with Malaysia Airlines' signature Malaysian Hospitality enhancing the journey. Travellers can explore New Zealand's landscapes, Māori culture, adventure and gastronomy, from Auckland and Wellington to Queenstown, Rotorua, Lake Tekapo and Milford Sound. Selected services also feature the airline's new A330neo, while Economy Flex fares provide added flexibility. Eligible passengers can further use the Bonus Side Trip programme to add a complimentary Malaysian stopover and experience destinations such as Penang, Langkawi or Kuching before continuing to New Zealand.

The World Is Carried Within' Explores Nature, Leadership and Working Life

Manoj Mathew V M FIIHM, Senior Vice President – Operations, Tamara Leisure Experiences, launched his fourth book, *The World Is Carried Within – Eighteen Essays on the Natural World and the Working Life*, at an event held at Verandah Boutique Lounge, Tamara Leisure Experiences Headquarters, Bengaluru, on September 3, 2026.

The book, the first volume of *The Third Eye Series*, was inaugurated by S.D. Shibulal, Chairman, Tamara



Leisure Experiences and Co-Founder, Infosys, with the first copy presented to Shruti Shibulal. The launch also featured an in-conversation session between Manoj Mathew and Ian Faria, Mind Coach, Corporate Trainer and Leadership Consultant. Bringing together 18 essays and original wildlife photographs captured

across Coorg, Nagarhole, Gokarna and Bentota, Sri Lanka, the book uses observations from nature to explore human behaviour, organisations, leadership and working life. Drawing on four decades of hospitality experience, including 33 years with the Taj Group, Mathew presents a reflective perspective on how observation can offer deeper insights into people and life. "This is not a nature book. It is not a leadership book. It is a book about seeing," he said.

Airbus Selects Indamer Technics for South Asia's First Radome Repair Facility

Airbus has selected Indamer Technics to establish South Asia's first comprehensive radome repair facility in Nagpur, strengthening regional aircraft aftermarket support and expanding India's aerospace MRO capabilities.

Under the agreement, Indamer Technics will become an authorised facility for the repair, storage and exchange of radomes

for Airbus A320, A330, A350 and A380 aircraft. The facility will provide structural inspections and testing, paint stripping and repainting, major and minor repairs, advanced Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) and certification for Release to Service. The initiative is expected to reduce turnaround times for airlines and support fleet expansion across South Asia. "This agreement with Indamer Technics is a major

milestone in our commitment to building a robust, localised aerospace ecosystem in India," said **Jürgen Westermeier**, President and Managing Director, Airbus in India and South Asia. **Prajay Patel**, Director, Indamer Technics, added, "Being selected by Airbus to set up this facility is a strong endorsement of Indamer Technics' quality and engineering capabilities, and we are proud to bring this expertise to Nagpur."

Gateway Expands Northeast Footprint with New Hotel in Agartala

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) has signed a 104-key Gateway hotel in Agartala, Tripura, marking the brand's second anniversary and further strengthening its presence across India's Northeast.

The brownfield project, developed in partnership with Samashti Hotels & Resorts Pvt Ltd, will feature an all-day dining restaurant, specialty restaurant and bar, spa, fitness centre, swimming pool, meeting rooms and banqueting facilities. **Leah Tata**, Vice President & Brand Leader, Gateway Hotels & Resorts, IHCL, said,



"Gateway brand expands in the Northeast with this signing, marking the second anniversary of the re-imagined brand. Agartala is witnessing increased demand for hospitality offerings led by the growth of economic activity in the region." With over 60 hotels in its portfolio, Gateway aims to reach 100 hotels by 2030. Alluri Harsha Varma, Director, Samashti Hotels & Resorts Pvt Ltd, added, "As the state capital continues to grow in prominence, we are happy to partner with IHCL and introduce the Gateway brand to Agartala."



Airbus Awards A320 Fuselage Skin Contract to Mahindra Aerostructures

Airbus has awarded Mahindra Aerostructures a contract to manufacture A320neo Family fuselage skins in Bengaluru, strengthening India's role in high-precision aerospace manufacturing and Airbus' global supply chain.

Under the multi-year contract, Mahindra Aerostructures will manufacture and supply fuselage skins for Sections 18 and 19—the rear fuselage and tail sections

of the A320neo Family—from its Bengaluru facility to Airbus Aerostructures' manufacturing facility in Augsburg, Germany. The scope covers eight fuselage skins for Section 18 and three for Section 19. The programme will involve advanced chemical milling, surface treatment and stretch-forming production lines, with initial manufacturing engineering activities already underway and final deliveries targeted for 2028.



Corbett Hideaway – IHCL SeleQtions Opens in Uttarakhand

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) has announced the opening of Corbett Hideaway – IHCL SeleQtions in Jim Corbett, Uttarakhand, expanding its presence in the state through its partnership with Leisure Hotels Group. Located along the Kosi River, the 80-key resort is spread across seven acres and features private river-facing sit-outs, landscaped greens and open spaces. Dining options include Ija, serving Kumaoni cuisine alongside Indian and international favourites, and Himmaleh Bar & Deck overlooking the river.

Gaurav Pokhariyal, Chief Operating Officer, Full-Service Business, IHCL, said the addition strengthens the company's presence in Uttarakhand and marks the sixth resort from Leisure Hotels Group in the IHCL portfolio. Vibhas Prasad, Director, Leisure Hotels Group, said the opening combines the group's deep understanding of Corbett with IHCL's hospitality expertise. Guests can enjoy curated experiences including jungle safaris, birdwatching, river rafting and visits to Garjiya Devi Temple.



Taj Enters Luxury Branded Villas with Taj Mount Kusur Resort & Villas in Lonavala

Taj has entered the luxury branded villa segment with Taj Mount Kusur Resort & Villas, Lonavala, a 34-acre integrated development by Amavi in partnership with Indian Hotels Company (IHCL). Set amid the Western Ghats, the project will feature 32 branded villas and a 100-key Taj resort, offering panoramic lake and valley views, nature-led design and premium hospitality.

The development blends

private villa ownership with Taj's signature services, including concierge, housekeeping, maintenance and access to resort amenities. Inspired by contemporary barn-style architecture and Japanese Wabi-Sabiprinciples, the project will feature landscaped spaces, nature trails, wellness and recreational facilities, dining venues and Club Amavi, with the villas offered through a lease-back programme integrated into the resort inventory.

Taj Tadoba Resort & Spa, Nagpur Opens Doors to Luxury Wildlife Experiences



Taj Tadoba Resort & Spa, Nagpur has opened its doors on the edge of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, bringing Taj's signature hospitality to one of Maharashtra's most celebrated wildlife destinations. Spread across 17 acres, the luxury retreat features 35 private villas, along with Machan all-day dining, Panorama Bar, J Wellness Circle spa, swimming pool

and fitness centre.

Located near key safari gates, the resort offers immersive experiences including jungle safaris, birdwatching, stargazing and forest-view sundowners. Combining the region's rich biodiversity with contemporary luxury and wellness, Taj Tadoba provides travellers with an opportunity to experience the wilderness of Central India in comfort and style.

Polo Hotels Group Launches Chapter Hotels & Resorts, a New-Age Hospitality Brand

Polo Hotels Group has launched Chapter Hotels & Resorts, a new upscale boutique brand designed for modern, experience-led travellers seeking authentic local connections, distinctive design and destination-driven experiences. Built on the philosophy that the place comes first, Chapter brings together food, art, music, wellness and hospitality while drawing on Polo Hotels Group's three decades of experience across Northeast India.

The brand debuts with Chapter Lakeside, Tripura, a 17-key resort on Rudrasagar



Lake, followed by Chapter Resort Upper Shillong, Meghalaya, a 37-key property set amid paddy fields. With a growing pipeline across West Bengal, Nagaland and other Northeast destinations, Chapter aims to create character-driven stays rooted in local culture, cuisine and communities, while offering contemporary design, strong food and beverage experiences and a fresh, accessible approach to upscale hospitality.

ITC Hotels Signs Storii Assagao, Strengthens Presence in North Goa

ITC Hotels Limited has signed a management agreement for Storii Assagao, a 51-key hotel in Assagao, North Goa, under its fast-growing Storii by ITC Hotels brand. The property will offer well-appointed rooms and suites, an all-day dining restaurant, and a range of dining, social and recreational experiences, drawing inspiration from Assagao's vibrant character, culinary scene, natural beauty and boutique



lifestyle.

The signing further strengthens ITC

Hotels' presence in Goa and supports its strategy of expanding across high-potential leisure markets. Strategically located close to celebrated beaches and key tourism attractions, Storii Assagao is designed to cater to the growing demand for experiential leisure travel while blending the distinctive spirit of the destination with personalised service and memorable hospitality experiences.

Shangri-La Le Touessrok Celebrates 48 Years with Eight Days of Island Experiences

Shangri-La Le Touessrok, Mauritius will mark its 48th anniversary with an exclusive eight-day celebration from 18 to 25 November 2026, bringing together world-class gastronomy, wellness, culture and entertainment. The iconic resort, which has welcomed generations of travellers since 1978, will host a special programme featuring Michelin-starred chefs Edouard Loubet and Franck Reynaud, returning for an exclusive six-hands dining experience at Coco's Beach House, alongside award-winning



mixologist and rum expert Rafa Martin.

The celebrations will showcase the best of Mauritian island living through wellness rituals, sporting tournaments, artistic workshops, local festivities and barefoot dining on the resort's private island. The programme will culminate on 25 November with an Anniversary Gala Dinner at Coco's Beach House, featuring curated cuisine, live performances and a spectacular beachfront fireworks display, celebrating the resort's enduring legacy and its generations of loyal guests.



MODI YOGA RETREAT

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UTTARAKHAND, INDIA



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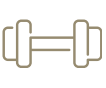
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Deluxe Ganges View Rooms

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Wow Ganges View Suite Rooms

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02. Diet Meal

Savor exquisite culinary delights crafted from fresh, locally sourced ingredients to nourish your soul deeply.

03. Physiotherapy

Regain your physical strength and mobility with customized rehabilitation programs guided by our skilled specialists.

Tents, Trails, Traditions: A New Address for *Luxury* in Madhya Pradesh

Imagine a luxury getaway that does not begin in the lobby of a hotel, but beside a vast lake, within sight of a medieval fort, or at the edge of a forest where cheetahs roam. Experience the spectacular landscape of Madhya Pradesh, where the Tent Cities at Gandhi Sagar, Hanuwantiya, Chanderi, and Kuno combine the comfort of premium hospitality with the thrill of waking up in *The Heart of Incredible India*.



01 **GANDHI SAGAR:** **Thrills, History & Wilderness**

Kick off September beside the magnificent Gandhi Sagar reservoir, where a year-round Tent City seamlessly blends serene tranquility with high-energy adrenaline within a lush wildlife sanctuary. Start your morning with lakeside walk, a scenic cycling expedition, or birdwatching, before pumping up the adrenaline with jet skiing and speed boating. Beyond the water, journey deep into the forest to explore the historic Hinglajgarh Fort and 30,000-year-old prehistoric rock art of Chaturbhujnath Nala. Finally, wrap up your day with breathtaking sunsets, authentic local flavors, and enchanting folk performances beneath an open sky.



02 **HANUWANTIYA:** **Water Sports & Sacred Trails**

In October, Hanuwantiya Jal Mahotsav set against the vast Indira Sagar reservoir. Running through March, this vibrant 100-plus luxury Tent City offers thrilling water sports alongside aerial adventures like paramotoring and hot-air ballooning. On land, enjoy scenic nature walks and trekking, before unwinding with stunning sunset views or taking a spiritual day trip to the sacred Jyotirlinga island of Omkareshwar.

03 **CHANDERI:** **Medieval Heritage & Master Weaves**

Explore the medieval charm of Chanderi on foot, stepping out from the Tent City to wander past historic gateways, bustling bazaars, ancient stepwells, and iconic monuments like the hilltop Chanderi Fort, Badal Mahal, and Koshak Mahal. Experience the town's living heritage by visiting local weaving communities, watching master artisans craft legendary Chanderi fabrics on their looms, and taking home an authentic, hand-woven piece directly from its source.



04 **KUNO:** **Cheetah Safaris & Stargazing**

From October to March, the Kuno Forest Retreat places you at the center of a landmark global conservation story: the return of the cheetahs. Beyond thrilling wildlife safaris, connect with the indigenous Sahariya tribal communities to experience their rich crafts and traditions, then wrap up your evening stargazing beneath brilliant, unpolluted night skies.

Perhaps it is time to rethink what a luxury getaway can be.

Pack your bags, leave the conventional hotel behind and head for the Heart of India. Your tent is waiting. And just beyond it, an entire world.



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A honeymoon is no longer simply about a beautiful room, a beachside dinner or a romantic getaway. Today's couples are looking for journeys that reflect their personalities, interests and dreams-whether that means escaping to a secluded island, discovering a heritage destination, reconnecting with nature, indulging in wellness or experiencing a new culture together.

Vedika Sharma

The ULTIMATE Honeymoon

Where Love Meets Luxury



For our Honeymoon special story, we speak to leading luxury hotels and resorts across some of the world's most sought-after romantic destinations to discover what makes their properties truly special for newlyweds. From the beaches of Mauritius and Bali to the heritage landscapes of India and the cultural charm of Sri Lanka, these hospitality leaders share their insights into the experiences, personalised service, privacy, gastronomy and thoughtful touches that are shaping the modern honeymoon.

Beyond the Destination: Creating Memories That Last

The modern honeymoon is increasingly about experiences over extravagance. Couples want privacy without isolation, luxury with a sense of place, and carefully curated moments that they can share and remember long after they return home. A private dinner under the stars, a sunrise at an iconic monument, a wellness ritual, an island escape, a cultural encounter or simply uninterrupted time together can become the defining memory of the journey.

Across our conversations with leading hotel and resort professionals, one theme stands out: personalisation is at the heart of the new luxury honeymoon. From bespoke dining and private experiences to wellness, adventure, local culture and intimate celebrations, hotels are going beyond traditional honeymoon packages to create journeys that are unique to every couple.

In this special feature, we bring together the voices of hospitality leaders who understand that a honeymoon is more than a holiday—it is the beginning of a new chapter. Their insights reveal how luxury hotels are redefining romance and creating extraordinary experiences for couples, with a particular focus on the evolving aspirations of today's Indian honeymooners.

Evolve Back Hampi

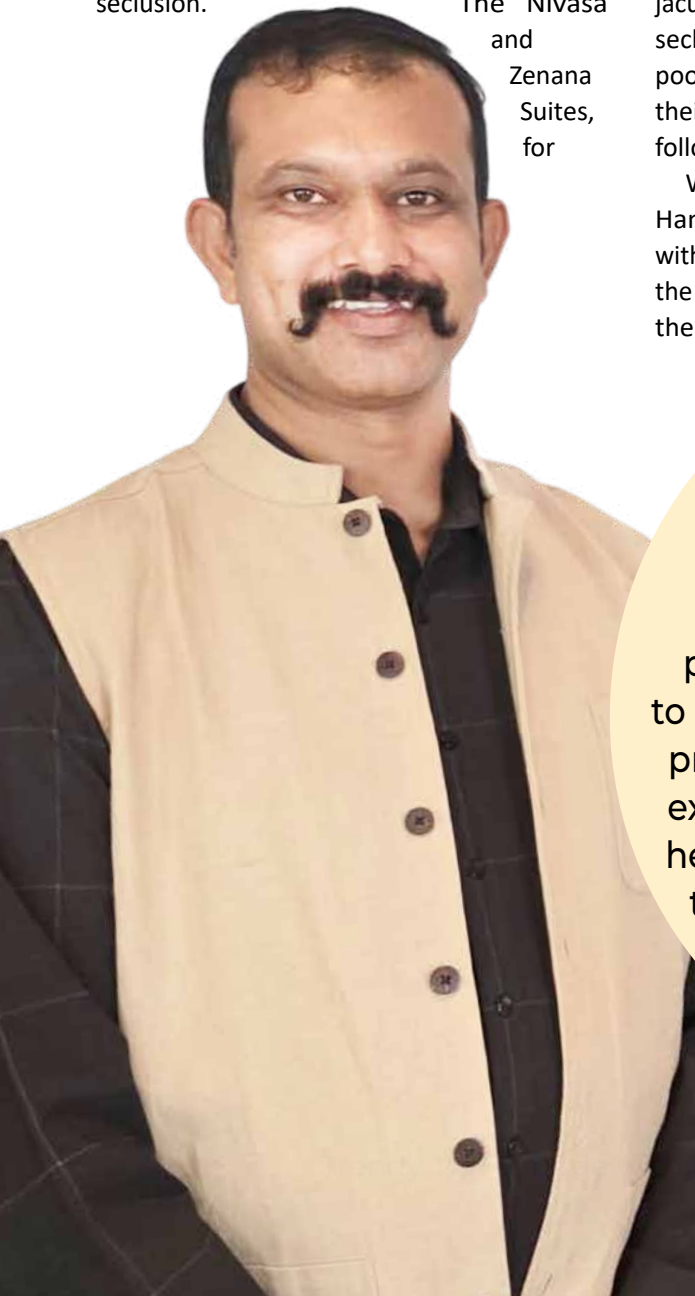
Where Heritage, Romance and Luxury Come Together

● What makes Evolve Back Hampi a distinctive choice for couples looking for a memorable and romantic honeymoon experience?

Bipin Biddappa: Hampi has a very particular character, and that becomes an important part of the honeymoon experience at Evolve Back. Rather than creating a honeymoon experience that feels separate from the destination, we draw from the architectural and cultural heritage of the Vijayanagara era that the resort reflects, while giving couples the privacy and unhurried pace that a honeymoon calls for.

Our accommodation offers different ways for couples to enjoy that sense of seclusion.

The Nivasa
and
Zenana
Suites,
for



instance, have private outdoor spaces and jacuzzis, while the Jal Mahal Villas offer a more secluded setting with a private courtyard and pool. This gives couples the flexibility to shape their stay around their own pace rather than follow a structured itinerary.

We also encourage couples to experience Hampi together rather than simply staying within the resort. A private guided walk through the historic landscape, a sunset coracle ride on the Tungabhadra,

or an intimate dining experience at settings such as Aanandha or Pushkarni can become part of the stay. For those looking for some downtime, the resort also offers Ayurveda experiences.

This way, Hampi itself becomes part of the honeymoon. Couples can spend a morning exploring the ruins, return to the resort for some quiet time and then experience the landscape again at sunset. There is enough to discover together, while the pace of the stay can remain entirely their own.

● How does the resort's unique location and proximity to Hampi's UNESCO World Heritage

Site add to the experience for honeymoon couples?

Bipin Biddappa: Being just 4 kilometres from the Hampi UNESCO World Heritage Site gives couples the flexibility to experience the destination without having to choose between exploring its heritage and having time to themselves at the resort. They can start the day with a private guided walk through the ruins, return to the resort during the warmer afternoon hours, and head out again later for a sunset experience on the Tungabhadra. That ease makes a difference for honeymooners, who may want to discover Hampi without making their entire stay feel like a sightseeing itinerary.

The setting of the resort also creates a natural continuity with the landscape and heritage of Hampi. The boulder-strewn terrain and scrub forests are part of the surroundings, while the architecture and design of Evolve Back draw from the Vijayanagara era. We have tried to retain that sense of place rather than create a landscape that feels disconnected from its surroundings. As a result, returning to the resort after exploring Hampi still feels like being part of the same destination, rather than stepping away from it.

Bipin Biddappa, General Manager, Evolve Back Hampi, shares how the resort blends Hampi's rich Vijayanagara heritage with contemporary luxury, privacy and personalised experiences to create memorable honeymoons. From private dining and wellness to heritage excursions and immersive experiences, he highlights how couples can discover the history, culture and landscape of Hampi at their own pace, while enjoying an intimate and indulgent stay.

● **What personalised and immersive experiences can couples enjoy at Evolve Back Hampi, from private dining and wellness to heritage excursions and romantic experiences?**

Bipin Biddappa: We try to customise a couple's stay down to the smallest details, so that they can experience Hampi in its entirety during their honeymoon and take away the most from not just the resort, but the region around it as well.

Our private dining experiences are a good example. At Aanandha, dinner can be arranged under the stars by the villa pool, while Pushkarni offers a more traditional setting within a mantapa overlooking the main pool. Katha, on the other hand, is an open-to-the-sky terrace overlooking Hampi's boulder-strewn landscape. We can also customise the menu and have a chef prepare the meal at a live counter, with dedicated service throughout the evening.

For couples who want to go beyond the better-known sights, our experience team can also arrange private excursions with guides who bring the history and stories of the region to life. The Anegundi Trail, for example, takes guests across the Tungabhadra to explore its older villages and landscapes, while excursions to Hemakuta Hill and the surrounding monuments offer a different way of experiencing Hampi's heritage.

For honeymooners, we also add personal touches to the villa. Sometimes, it is as simple as a special turndown arrangement or a romantic bath setting; at other times, it may be something prepared specifically around their celebration.

● **What are the key trends you are currently seeing among honeymooners, particularly in terms of privacy, luxury, wellness and experiential travel?**

Bipin Biddappa: One of the biggest changes has been how couples are becoming much more intentional about how they spend their honeymoon. They are not necessarily looking for a packed itinerary or trying to cover as many places as possible. Instead, they want the freedom to decide what the day looks like that morning, and that has made flexibility in offerings much more important. A private villa, an unhurried meal or an experience arranged just for the two of them can often mean more than a long list of activities.

We are also seeing wellness become less of a standalone spa experience and more a part of how couples want to spend their time together. After the intensity of a wedding, there is a real desire to slow down, sleep well, spend time outdoors and have experiences that leave them feeling refreshed rather than constantly occupied.

There is also a stronger interest in experiences



that give a honeymoon a sense of place. Couples want to understand where they are rather than simply stay in a beautiful resort that could be anywhere. At Hampi, that could mean exploring its heritage and discovering aspects of the region that they may not have encountered on a conventional sightseeing trip.

● **How does Evolve Back Hampi combine the rich history and culture of the region with contemporary luxury and personalised hospitality?**

Bipin Biddappa: For us, the idea is not to recreate the past, but to interpret Hampi's history in a way that feels relevant and comfortable for a guest today. You see that most clearly in the architecture. The stone arches, boulevards, water bodies inspired by traditional pushkarnis and other elements draw from the visual language of the Vijayanagara era, but behind that, guests have all the contemporary comforts they would expect from a luxury resort. The Jal Mahal Villas are a good example. Their design takes inspiration from the Water Palace, while the private pools and modern amenities make the experience very much of the present.

The same approach extends to the culinary experience. Our restaurants, including Tuluva and Bahmani, draw from the food traditions and historical influences of the region, but the presentation and execution are contemporary. It allows guests to engage with the history of Hampi through food that appeals to a modern palate.

Then there is the way we bring the destination to life for individual guests. Our Experience Captains can accompany couples on private excursions and go deeper into the stories, architecture and folklore depending on

what interests them. Within the resort too, we try to make the cultural elements feel natural rather than staged, whether it is the evening lighting of traditional diyas or classical music.

● **Looking ahead, how do you see heritage and experiential destinations such as Hampi shaping the future of honeymoon travel in India?**

Bipin Biddappa: I think we will see honeymoon travel become increasingly destination-led, and that will also change what couples expect from a luxury stay. The resort becomes a base from which they can understand the destination more deeply, but the experiences themselves need to feel personal. A private heritage experience with someone who can bring the stories of Hampi to life, a dining experience that introduces them to the region's culinary traditions, or simply having the time to explore the landscape at their own pace can become more meaningful than a conventional sightseeing itinerary.

I also see couples becoming more conscious about the kind of travel experiences they choose. They want to know that the place they are visiting has a genuine sense of identity and that their stay allows them to engage with it respectfully. For destinations like Hampi, that creates an opportunity to show that luxury and a strong connection to heritage do not have to be separate.

Essentially, the future of honeymoon travel will be about creating memories that belong specifically to the couple and to the destination they chose. Hampi is particularly well placed for that because there is so much depth here. Couples can come for the romance, but leave having discovered a place with a story, a landscape and a character of its own.

City of DREAMS Colombo

Redefining Luxury Honeymoons for Indian Couples

● **What makes Colombo and City of Dreams an attractive choice for Indian couples planning a luxury honeymoon?**

Kamal Munasinghe: For Indian couples, Sri Lanka offers the appeal of a destination that feels wonderfully different, while remaining close, accessible and easy to experience. Within a relatively short journey, couples can move between beaches, heritage, nature, culture, shopping and some of the island's most memorable culinary experiences.

Colombo brings many of these experiences together in one vibrant setting. It is a city where colonial heritage sits alongside contemporary architecture, where couples can spend the morning exploring historic streets, the afternoon by the ocean, and the evening discovering restaurants, bars and shopping. Beyond the capital, Sri Lanka also offers the opportunity to extend a honeymoon into the hill country, tea estates, wildlife experiences or the southern coast.

At the heart of that experience is City of Dreams, South Asia's first fully integrated resort destination. Set beside Beira Lake and close to the Indian Ocean, it gives couples a luxurious base from which to experience Colombo, while offering an experience in its own right through its accommodation, dining, wellness, retail and entertainment.

That combination is particularly appealing for a honeymoon. Couples can have the excitement of discovering a new destination, while also enjoying the comfort and convenience of having so much within one resort. It allows a honeymoon in Sri Lanka to feel both experiential and indulgent, with Colombo and the island beyond becoming part of the journey, rather than simply a backdrop to the stay.

● **How is City of Dreams creating personalised and memorable experiences for honeymooners and couples celebrating special occasions?**

Kamal Munasinghe: A honeymoon tends to be remembered for the small details rather than the big ones, so we think about the stay as a whole, from arrival through to the final evening.

One couple might want their room set up for the occasion, a private dinner, some wellness time together and an evening spent enjoying the property's own entertainment and nightlife. Another couple might prefer the opposite: a quiet, unstructured stay with very little on the agenda beyond being together.

Our concierge and guest experience teams work from what the couple actually wants to mark, rather than offering a single fixed package. That could mean coordinating a celebration dinner one evening and simply leaving the next one open.



Kamal Munasinghe, Senior Vice President, Colombo Hotels, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts and General Manager, Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams Sri Lanka, shares how Colombo and City of Dreams are creating personalised, experiential and luxurious honeymoon experiences for Indian couples. From luxury accommodation, diverse dining and wellness experiences to entertainment, shopping and Colombo's rich cultural and coastal charm, City of Dreams offers couples an integrated resort experience while keeping Sri Lanka's wider attractions within easy reach. Munasinghe also highlights the growing potential of the Indian honeymoon market, evolving traveller preferences and the resort's vision to become a leading luxury destination for couples from India.

That, to me, is what personalisation

means in hospitality: giving couples the freedom to shape a honeymoon that suits them, rather than handing every couple the same itinerary.

● **What romantic experiences, dining options, wellness offerings and accommodation choices can couples look forward to at the property?**

Kamal Munasinghe: Accommodation spans rooms and suites with city or ocean outlooks, and check-in itself takes place at the Sky Lobby on the 24th floor, with views across Colombo and the Lotus Tower before couples even reach their room.

Dining is one of the destination's strongest points, with 12 restaurants and bars covering Sri Lankan, Indian, Japanese, Cantonese and

Mediterranean cuisines, alongside an all-day dining venue and a range of more relaxed bars and lounges for the evening.

For wellness, Kurundu offers treatments alongside a steam room, sauna, cold plunge and vitality pools, a yoga pavilion and relaxation lounges, in addition to two outdoor pools, including an infinity pool on Level 9 overlooking the ocean, and a fitness centre.

Shopping and entertainment are built into the same destination, so a couple can move between all of these without leaving City of Dreams, while still having Colombo within easy reach whenever they want it.

● **With Sri Lanka being a convenient short-haul international destination from India, are you witnessing growing interest from Indian honeymoon travellers?**

Kamal Munasinghe: Yes. India is already Sri Lanka's largest source market, and its share of arrivals has continued to grow, so the honeymoon and celebration segment is a real opportunity for us, and one that fits naturally with what we have built at City of Dreams.

Connectivity is a big part of unlocking that. An example is the new direct FitsAir service between Ahmedabad and Colombo, connecting Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport with Bandaranaike International Airport in around three hours and forty minutes, three times a week. It was launched in partnership with Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, City of Dreams Sri Lanka and Walkers Tours, and it makes Sri Lanka considerably more accessible to travellers from Gujarat and the wider western India region.

We don't treat India as a single market. We look for where the strongest opportunities sit, city by city, and build the relationships and access that make it easier for those travellers to discover what Colombo and City of Dreams can offer.

Indian couples are already choosing Sri Lanka for important celebrations, and we want City of Dreams to be part of that decision when they're working out where to spend their first days together.

● **How are honeymooners' preferences evolving, particularly towards experiential travel, wellness, culinary experiences and personalised celebrations?**

Kamal Munasinghe: Couples increasingly want stories to bring home, not just photographs of a well-appointed room.

There's also a shift towards pacing. Couples



don't necessarily want every hour planned; they want room to slow down and simply spend time together, alongside the parts of the trip they do want

to be active for, whether that's trying local food, taking a wellness afternoon or exploring somewhere new.

That shift is relevant to us because it plays to a destination like ours, where a couple can move between different experiences—dining, wellness and entertainment—within a single stay, rather than having to choose one type of holiday over another.

● **What role does Colombo's combination of culture, beaches, cuisine and urban experiences play in creating a complete honeymoon itinerary?**

Kamal Munasinghe: What I like about Colombo is how close everything sits to everything else. A couple could walk through the Dutch Hospital or visit Galle Face Green in the morning, take in Gangaramaya Temple or the National Museum by midday, and still be back in time to catch the sunset over the water, without a single long transfer in between.



That density is what makes Colombo different from a resort-only honeymoon. It rewards couples who want to wander on foot and stumble upon things—from a street food stall and a gallery to a market lane in Pettah—rather than moving from one planned activity to the next.

It also works as a starting point rather than the whole trip. Couples often pair a few days in Colombo with Galle Fort on the south coast, a couple of nights among the tea estates around Nuwara Eliya, or a safari further inland, using the city as the easy first and last stop on a longer route around the island.

So the itinerary doesn't need to be built around one kind of holiday. Colombo can carry the city days, and the rest of Sri Lanka takes care of everything else.

● **What is your vision for positioning City of Dreams as a leading luxury destination for Indian honeymooners and couples?**

Kamal Munasinghe: Our goal isn't to be another hotel choice for Indian travellers visiting Colombo. We want to be a reason they choose Colombo in the first place.

Bringing hospitality, dining, wellness, entertainment and retail together under one destination is new to this region, and it gives us a chance to change how international travellers think about what's possible here.

For Indian couples travelling for a honeymoon or another important celebration, that means convenience and discovery in the same trip: they can explore Colombo and Sri Lanka more broadly, and still have a destination where they can properly slow down together.

If they leave remembering the experiences they shared and the people they met, rather than the hotel they stayed in, then we've done what we set out to do.

Shangri-La Le Touessrok

Redefining Luxury Honeymoons in Mauritius



Mauritius offers couples an exceptional blend of tropical beauty, culture, gastronomy, wellness and adventure, making it an ideal destination for a memorable luxury honeymoon. In this exclusive interview, **Frédéric de Marcy Chelin, General Manager, Shangri-La Le Touessrok, Mauritius**, shares how the resort combines ocean-facing accommodation, private islands, bespoke experiences, wellness, gastronomy and personalised service to create meaningful honeymoon journeys, while highlighting the evolving preferences of Indian couples and emerging trends in luxury honeymoon travel.

● What makes Mauritius, and particularly Shangri-La Le Touessrok, an ideal choice for couples seeking a memorable luxury honeymoon?

Frédéric de Marcy Chelin: Mauritius naturally lends itself to honeymoons, combining beautiful beaches, tropical landscapes, rich culture, gastronomy, wellness and adventure within one destination. At Shangri-La Le Touessrok, every room and suite faces the Indian Ocean, while six distinct beaches offer a wonderful sense of space. Ilot Mangénie, our exclusive island just a short boat ride away, creates a truly special feeling of escape.

For couples seeking greater privacy, our Signature Suites offer a particularly beautiful setting, with generous living spaces, direct access to the beach and uninterrupted views of the Indian Ocean. For an even more exclusive experience, our three 423-square-metre Beach Villas feature private pools and direct beach access. Three curated experiences—Signature, Icon and Elite—offer different levels of service and exclusivity, ranging from dedicated butlers and a private chef to a private boat, personal fitness coach, champagne and caviar experiences,



helicopter transfers and a luxury car, depending on the experience selected.

● What are the most sought-after honeymoon experiences at the resort, and how do you create personalised experiences for couples?

Today's honeymooners want experiences that feel personal rather than prescribed. We can build each stay around the couple, whether that means romantic dining, a day on our exclusive island, our Chic Champagne Cruise, time on the lagoon, spa rituals or personalised celebrations. We also offer a dedicated romantic stay designed especially for couples, with thoughtful touches including bubbles on arrival, a romantic turndown, a couples' massage at CHI, The Spa, and daily access to our exclusive island.

For Shangri-La Circle members, our One Night on Us offer also allows guests staying in a Signature Suite to book five nights while paying for four. For guests staying in our ultra-luxury Beach Villas, personalisation can go even further, with services ranging from dedicated butlers and a private chef to a private boat, personal coaching

and helicopter transfers, depending on the experience selected.

● **How are Indian honeymooners' preferences evolving, and what specific experiences or services does the resort offer to cater to the Indian market?**

Indian honeymooners are increasingly moving towards slower, more intentional journeys centred on privacy, wellness, gastronomy and meaningful experiences together. Mauritius is particularly well suited to this, allowing couples to combine a beautiful island escape with a rich variety of experiences without constantly moving between destinations.

At Le Touessrok, this could mean a day on Ilot Mangénie, exploring the lagoon, enjoying wellness experiences, playing golf or having an intimate dinner. Cuisine is also an important part of the experience, particularly at Safran, our signature Indian restaurant and a celebration of India's rich culinary heritage, bringing together the elegance of South Indian cuisine, the artistry of the tandoor and refined colonial influences. Alongside our wider collection of international and Mauritian dining experiences, our teams can also tailor stays around individual preferences, dietary requirements and special occasions.

● **Could you share some of the romantic experiences available for couples, from private dining and beach experiences to wellness and bespoke celebrations?**

Romance at Le Touessrok is about creating moments that feel personal. Our Dine by Design experiences can transform a beautiful stretch of beach into an intimate dinner for two, while couples can retreat to their own cabana on Ilot Mangénie. Our signature Chic Champagne Cruise begins with breakfast and champagne on board before exploring the turquoise lagoon and spectacular coastline of eastern Mauritius.

Couples can also discover the destination



together through mangrove exploration or an e-bike journey along the east coast and through the vibrant Flacq Market, balanced with wellness rituals at CHI, The Spa, and time on the lagoon. It is this combination of indulgence and genuine discovery that makes each honeymoon memorable.

● **How important are privacy, wellness and experiential travel in shaping today's luxury honeymoon choices?**

They have become fundamental. Luxury today is increasingly about time, space, freedom and experiences that feel genuinely personal. Couples want privacy, but they also want to return home feeling restored and with stories they have experienced together.

Our Signature Suites, Beach Villas, six beaches and exclusive island provide that sense of space, while wellness, nature, gastronomy and destination-led experiences allow couples to shape a honeymoon around how they genuinely want to spend their time.

● **What emerging trends are you witnessing in the luxury honeymoon segment, and how**



is Shangri-La Le Touessrok adapting to these changing expectations?

We are seeing a move away from highly structured honeymoons towards more individual journeys, with greater emphasis on privacy, wellness, culinary discovery, nature and slower travel. Even the format is evolving, with some couples choosing a short "minimoon" after their wedding, followed by a longer journey later.

Our strength is the diversity we can offer in one place. Couples can retreat to our beautiful ocean-facing suites in the more secluded Frangipani wing, escape to our exclusive island, explore the lagoon, enjoy destination dining and wellness, or play at two championship golf courses, with the freedom to shape each day around themselves.

● **What is your vision for further strengthening Shangri-La Le Touessrok's position as one of the leading luxury honeymoon resorts in Mauritius?**

Our vision is to continue evolving while remaining true to what makes Le Touessrok distinctive: its extraordinary sense of place, generous space, Mauritian warmth and highly personalised approach. We will continue developing experiences around privacy, gastronomy, wellness and discovery, with our Signature Suites, Beach Villas and Ilot Mangénie playing an important role.

Ultimately, we want couples to leave feeling that their honeymoon could only have happened here—shaped around who they are and the memories they wanted to create together.

Relevant Offers

- A Romantic Stay with Bubbles, Couples Massage and More
- One Night on Us – Signature Suites
- Full Board Plus





Jiva Hoa Lu Retreat

A Soulful Escape for the Modern Honeymooner

Nestled amid the limestone karsts and cultural landscapes of Ninh Binh, Jiva Hoa Lu Retreat offers couples an intimate escape that blends nature, heritage, wellness and personalised hospitality. In this exclusive interview, **Minh Nguyen, CEO, Jiva Hoa Lu Retreat**, shares how the retreat is creating meaningful honeymoon experiences through private villas, romantic dining, wellness rituals and immersive cultural encounters, while highlighting the growing appeal of Ninh Binh among Indian honeymooners.

● **What makes Ninh Binh an ideal destination for honeymooners, and how does Jiva Hoa Lu Retreat enhance the romantic experience for couples?**

Minh Nguyen: Ninh Binh offers honeymooners a rare balance: spectacular natural beauty and cultural depth, yet a sense of tranquillity that is difficult to find in more crowded destinations. Its limestone karsts, rivers, rice fields and thousand-year-old heritage create an atmosphere that feels cinematic, intimate and deeply connected to place.

What makes it especially compelling for honeymooners is that the landscape is vast, but within it there are countless pockets that feel entirely private—along the river, around temples, among the karsts and down smaller paths—without the destination itself being remote or difficult to reach. For couples whose everyday lives are already spent in dense, busy cities, another city break can feel like more of the same. Ninh Binh offers real distance from that, while still giving couples plenty of discovery and comfort.

Jiva Hoa Lu Retreat takes that idea one step further. We are, in a sense, off the beaten path within an already off-the-beaten-path destination—tucked into Thai Vi Temple Valley and rooted in the landscape, architecture and history of Hoa Lu. Privacy here doesn't



start with a private dinner or a closed door; it starts with where the retreat sits. From that foundation, our villas, dining and wellness experiences allow couples to step away from everyday life, reconnect with each other and begin their journey together at an unhurried pace.

● **What unique and personalised experiences can honeymoon couples enjoy at Jiva Hoa Lu Retreat?**

Minh Nguyen: Our romantic experience package, Serenade by the Karsts, is designed to

make a honeymoon feel deeply personal rather than simply luxurious. Couples are welcomed with fresh flowers in their villa and a bottle of wine, followed by a private dinner for two and a 90-minute couples' spa ritual. In the evening, we create a personalised turndown incorporating a chosen fragrance, music and a handwritten message of love, along with matching embroidered bathrobes and late check-out until 2:00 p.m.

But the package is really just a starting point. We've gone to local flower shops with couples to help them pick out exactly the right flowers, and asked what music genuinely means something to them as a couple rather



than defaulting to a generic playlist—because that's what tells us we've actually listened, not just upgraded the room. The intention isn't to add romantic touches for their own sake, but to create a stay that feels unmistakably theirs.

● **How are honeymooners' preferences evolving towards nature, wellness, privacy and experiential travel, and how is the retreat responding to these trends?**

Minh Nguyen: Today's honeymooners increasingly see their honeymoon as a rare chance to pause after the intensity of wedding preparations—and, often, after years spent working in dense, busy cities. Rather than filling every day with sightseeing, many couples are looking for privacy, meaningful rest and time to reconnect with themselves, with nature and with each other. Another city, however beautiful, can feel like an extension of the working life they're trying to step away from.

There's also a growing preference for journeys that feel personal rather than standardised. At Jiva, we respond by designing our villas specifically for couples—private terraces, double vanities and spaces made for two rather than adapted for two—and by tailoring experiences around each couple's interests, dietary preferences and desired level of privacy, from private dining and spa rituals to yoga, meditation and cultural encounters. Our setting naturally encourages a slower rhythm. For us, modern luxury lies not in excess, but in space, time and thoughtful personal attention.

● **What romantic dining, wellness or private experiences would you particularly recommend for couples staying at the retreat?**

Minh Nguyen: One of our most memorable experiences is a private dinner on the veranda

of the couple's villa, surrounded by limestone karsts and the sound of water moving through the landscape. With the evening unfolding entirely in privacy, the setting becomes as much a part of the experience as the cuisine itself.

We also recommend our signature Tea Ceremony, guided by Jiva's Tea Master. It invites couples to slow down, share a moment of stillness and experience the Vietnamese tradition of tea as an expression of hospitality and human connection—a shared ritual rather than simply an activity. A couples' spa ritual, private yoga session or personalised turndown can round out a beautifully balanced stay.

● **Are you seeing growing interest from Indian honeymooners in Ninh Binh? What preferences or expectations do Indian couples typically bring?**

Minh Nguyen: We are seeing growing interest from the Indian market in Vietnam, and I believe Ninh Binh is particularly well positioned for couples looking beyond the more established beach destinations. Its dramatic scenery, cultural depth and peaceful atmosphere offer a very different expression of romance, while remaining within easy reach of Hanoi.

From our conversations with Indian guests and travel partners, some recurring priorities are warm hospitality, attentive service, beautiful and photogenic settings, privacy and the flexibility to personalise the stay. We're also always glad to accommodate vegetarian and other dietary requirements.

There's also something I find genuinely moving: we've noticed some Indian guests respond naturally to Vietnam's living spiritual and temple traditions. We once had an Indian honeymoon couple visit Thai Vi Temple,

directly across from the retreat, to light incense and pray together for their marriage. It was a different tradition from what they knew, but the devotion itself felt familiar to them—not unlike visiting a temple back home in India—and it became one of the most meaningful moments of their stay. That's something Ninh Binh, and Vietnam more broadly, can offer that few honeymoon destinations can.

● **Looking ahead, how do you see Ninh Binh and Jiva Hoa Lu Retreat positioning themselves in the growing luxury honeymoon market?**

Minh Nguyen: I believe Ninh Binh has the potential to become one of Asia's most distinctive luxury honeymoon destinations—not by replicating the traditional island or beach experience, but by offering something more immersive and soulful. Its UNESCO World Heritage landscape, thousand-year cultural history and proximity to Hanoi make it especially appealing to couples seeking both discovery and tranquillity.

Within that, Jiva Hoa Lu Retreat aims to represent a more thoughtful form of luxury: intimate, rooted in place and centred on wellbeing. A honeymoon shouldn't simply be somewhere beautiful—it should create space for two people to reconnect after the intensity of a wedding and everyday life. Our answer to that is vast nature, deep history, a hidden location, private villas, wellness, meaningful cultural rituals and very personal gestures.

As honeymooners increasingly seek slower, more meaningful journeys, we see Jiva as a sanctuary where couples can begin married life with time to reconnect, discover and simply be together.

Resplendent Ceylon

A Luxury Honeymoon Journey Through Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's diverse landscapes, rich culture and distinctive luxury experiences make it an ideal destination for couples seeking a honeymoon beyond the conventional. In this exclusive interview, **Chamindra Goonewardene, Senior Vice President – Brand & Marketing, Resplendent Ceylon**, shares how the brand brings together the country's tea country, wildlife, beaches and culture with personalised experiences to create memorable luxury honeymoons, while highlighting the evolving expectations and growing potential of the Indian market.



● **Sri Lanka offers a combination of beaches, tea country, wildlife and culture. How does Resplendent Ceylon bring these diverse experiences together to create a memorable honeymoon journey for couples?**

Chamindra Goonewardene: Sri Lanka lets you do a lot in a short space of time – wake up in the tea hills, go on safari the next day, and end the trip by the ocean. Our five properties are built for exactly that journey. Each one shows couples a different side of the island, so the honeymoon feels like discovering Sri Lanka together, not just hopping between hotels. That's what we try to give couples when they ask us for the best luxury honeymoon itinerary: a journey, not a checklist.

● **What makes the "Tea, Sea & Safari" experience particularly appealing to honeymooners looking for more than a conventional beach holiday?**

Chamindra Goonewardene: It's the change of pace. Slowing down in the tea country, the thrill of a safari, then a few days by the sea

with nothing to do – that mix of adventure and stillness is what makes it romantic.

Couples get Sri Lanka's full range of moods – adventurous, intimate and restorative – in one itinerary.

● **What personalised and romantic experiences can honeymoon couples enjoy across your properties, from private dining and wellness to intimate nature and cultural experiences?**

Chamindra Goonewardene: The best moments are personal, not just luxurious – a private dinner at one of Cape Weligama's lookout points, or dinner under the stars on a sand dune at Wild Coast Tented Lodge. Wellness gets woven in naturally, not bolted on. Couples can tailor a morning around a tea estate walk, kayaking on a lagoon, or learning to paint traditional masks.

It's this kind of personal touch that puts our five hotels among the best luxury honeymoon hotels in Sri Lanka. But often, it's the unplanned moments – tea on the verandah, a long breakfast, watching the sunset – that couples remember most.

● You have previously highlighted Sri Lanka's appeal for Indian honeymooners. What are you currently seeing in the Indian market, and how are couples' expectations around luxury honeymoons changing?

Chamindra Goonewardene: Indian honeymooners are getting more sophisticated about what luxury means. It's not just the room anymore – privacy, personalisation, food, wellness and a real connection to the destination matter more. Itineraries are getting less rigid too, with more room to breathe between activities.

Sri Lanka's edge here is that it packs wildlife, mountains, beaches, culture and top-tier hospitality into one short-haul trip, with plenty of room to make it personal.

● How important are authenticity, sustainability and a strong sense of place to today's honeymooners, and how does Resplendent Ceylon incorporate these elements into the guest experience?

Chamindra Goonewardene: Guests want to know an experience could only happen in that specific place – a working tea estate at Ceylon Tea Trails, the wilderness at Wild Coast, or the coast at our southern properties.

Sustainability runs through this too, via our ties to the MJF Foundation and Dilmah Conservation. Luxury shouldn't sit apart from the place – it should help protect it. For honeymooners, knowing that matters.

Looking ahead, how do you see Sri Lanka's luxury honeymoon market evolving, and what new experiences or opportunities does



Resplendent Ceylon see for Indian couples?

Chamindra Goonewardene: The market is heading further towards experience over consumption – couples want to discover things together, which means more demand for nature, food, wellness and cultural experiences woven into the trip.

For Indian couples especially, Sri Lanka can offer something effortless and distinctive, with itineraries built around what they actually care about – food, wildlife, wellness, adventure, or just time together. The goal is simple: Sri Lanka as the place where a marriage starts, not just where a honeymoon happens.

The Ritz-Carlton, Bali

Where Romance Meets Balinese Soul

Bali's natural beauty, rich culture and warm hospitality make it an exceptional destination for couples seeking a memorable honeymoon. In this exclusive interview, **Go Kondo, General Manager, The Ritz-Carlton, Bali**, shares how the resort combines its spectacular beachfront setting, personalised service, Balinese culture, wellness and immersive experiences to create meaningful journeys for honeymooners, while highlighting the evolving expectations of Indian couples and the future of luxury honeymoon travel.



● **What makes Bali, and particularly the setting of The Ritz-Carlton, Bali, an ideal choice for couples seeking a memorable honeymoon?**

Go Kondo: Bali offers a unique combination of natural beauty, rich culture and warm hospitality, making it an exceptional destination for couples beginning their life together. At The Ritz-Carlton, Bali, this is complemented by our spectacular beachfront setting, where couples can enjoy a sense of space, privacy and tranquillity overlooking the Indian Ocean.

What truly distinguishes The Ritz-Carlton is our steadfast dedication to service excellence. Our Gold Standards are the foundation of The Ritz-Carlton around the world, and our Ladies and Gentlemen bring these values to life every day. For honeymooners, this means that beyond

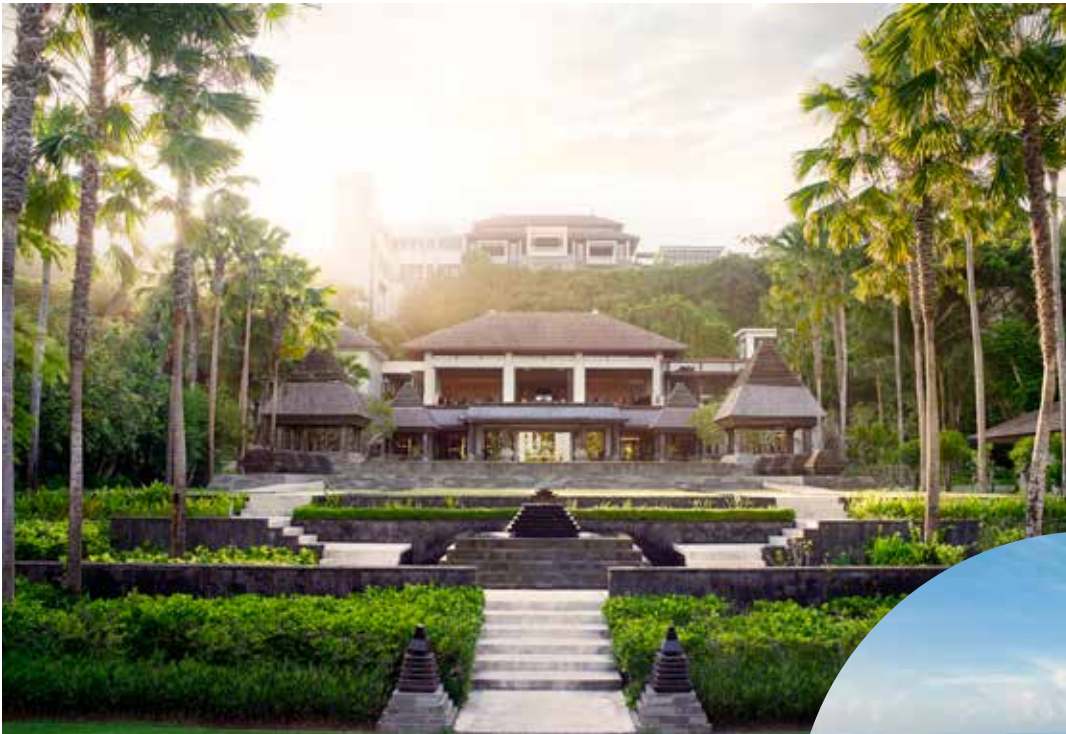
the beautiful surroundings, every detail is thoughtfully considered to create meaningful moments and lasting memories.

● **What exclusive or personalised experiences can honeymoon couples enjoy at the resort, from romantic dining and private beach moments to wellness and cultural experiences?**

Go Kondo: We believe the most memorable experiences are those that feel personal and connected to the destination. Couples can enjoy intimate dining experiences in beautiful settings, private moments by the beach, as well as wellness rituals designed to encourage relaxation and reconnection.

Our cultural experiences also allow couples to discover Bali in a more meaningful way. One example is our Soul Purification experience, where a Balinese priest guides





guests through a traditional blessing using the sacred element of water. Our Market to Table experience offers another perspective, inviting couples to explore a traditional local market, select fresh ingredients and return to the resort to learn authentic Balinese recipes with our culinary team.

These experiences allow couples not simply to visit Bali, but to connect with its culture and traditions together.

● **How are today's honeymooners moving beyond traditional luxury towards more meaningful, immersive and personalised experiences, and how is the resort responding?**

Go Kondo: Today's luxury traveller is increasingly looking for experiences that have meaning rather than simply focusing on material luxury. Honeymooners want to create memories that are personal to them, discover the destination and share experiences that they may remember for many years to come.

This aligns closely with our philosophy at The Ritz-Carlton. Our brand promise is about creating indelible marks and building strong relationships with our guests. At The Ritz-Carlton, Bali, we achieve this by combining our global service standards with experiences that are deeply rooted in the destination.

Our Scenography, inspired by the Source of Life, reflects this approach. It is rooted in four elements that sustain Balinese life: culture, water, sun and wellness. Through these pillars, we create experiences that feel distinctly Balinese while maintaining the thoughtful and personalised service for which The Ritz-Carlton is known.

● **How does the resort's beachfront location, Balinese culture and wellness offering contribute to creating a sense of romance**

and privacy for couples?

Go Kondo: Our beachfront setting naturally creates a sense of

intimacy and tranquillity.

The expansive views of the Indian Ocean, tropical surroundings and spacious resort environment allow couples to slow down and enjoy time together away from the pace of everyday life.

This is enhanced by the Balinese philosophy of wellness and our connection to local culture. Our Morning Ritual, for example, is our defining daily moment, where our Balinese Ladies and Gentlemen perform a traditional prayer before beginning their day. Experiences such as Soul Purification further introduce guests to Bali's spiritual traditions in a respectful and meaningful way.

For couples, romance is not only about a beautiful setting; it is also about having the space and time to reconnect, reflect and create shared memories.

● **What trends are you seeing among Indian**

honeymooners, and how is The Ritz-Carlton, Bali catering to the expectations of this important market?

Go Kondo: India is an important and growing market for Bali, and we see strong interest from Indian travellers in experiences that combine luxury, comfort, culture and personalisation.

Indian honeymooners increasingly appreciate having experiences tailored around their individual preferences, whether that is a private dining occasion, wellness journey, cultural discovery or simply uninterrupted time together. They also value thoughtful hospitality and attention to detail.

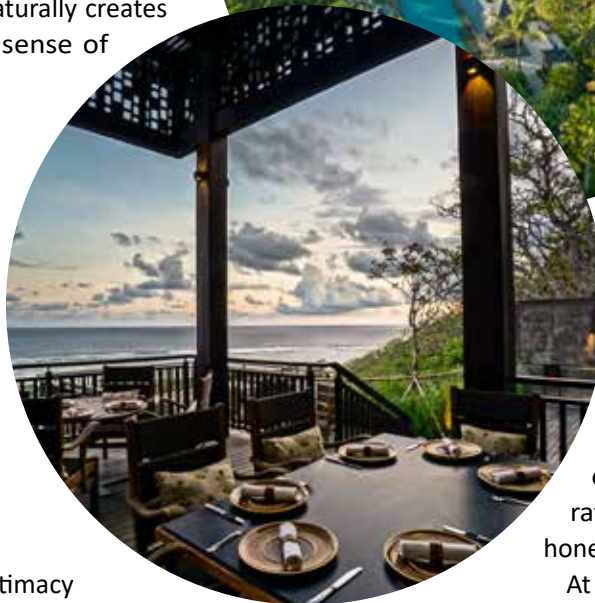
Our approach is to understand each couple and personalise their stay while ensuring they experience the distinctive character of Bali. The Ritz-Carlton's commitment to service excellence allows us to provide a high level of care, while our local experiences provide a genuine sense of place.

● **Looking ahead, what new experiences or initiatives do you believe will shape the future of luxury honeymoons at The Ritz-Carlton, Bali?**

Go Kondo: I believe the future of luxury honeymoons will be increasingly centred around personalisation, wellbeing and meaningful connection. Couples will continue to look for experiences that are unique to them rather than simply following traditional honeymoon itineraries.

At The Ritz-Carlton, Bali, we will continue to evolve our experiences while remaining rooted in our Source of Life philosophy and the cultural character of Bali. Our focus will be on creating thoughtful moments that connect couples with the destination, with each other and with our Ladies and Gentlemen.

Ultimately, luxury is not only about what we provide, but how we make our guests feel. One of our recent WOW stories involved a couple celebrating their engagement at our chapel. Our Catering Sales team arranged for two of our Ladies and Gentlemen to sing the couple's favourite song as they walked down the aisle. It was completely unexpected, and the couple were moved to tears. These are the kinds of personal, heartfelt moments that we believe will continue to define the future of luxury hospitality and create Ritz-Carlton guests for life.





Capella Ubud

Where Romance Meets Nature and Balinese Culture

Set amidst the lush rainforest of Ubud, Capella Ubud offers honeymooners an intimate escape where privacy, nature, wellness and Balinese culture come together. In this exclusive interview, **Ida Ayu Putu Mahayuni, Guest Experience Manager, Capella Ubud**, shares how the resort creates personalised experiences for couples—from private dining and restorative wellness to cultural encounters and immersive adventures—while highlighting the evolving preferences of Indian honeymooners.

● **What makes Ubud an ideal destination for honeymooners, and how does Capella Ubud create a distinctive romantic experience for couples?**

Ida Ayu Putu Mahayuni: Ubud is an ideal destination for honeymooners because it offers couples a more intimate and meaningful experience, surrounded by nature, culture and a strong sense of community. Located in the heart of Bali, it provides a peaceful setting for couples to slow down and reconnect.

One of the unique aspects of Ubud is the Balinese tradition of living within a family compound, where several generations of a family often live together and share the same

space. This way of life reflects Balinese values of togetherness, harmony and mutual care. The close connection between couples, family members and the wider community creates a warm and welcoming atmosphere where relationships and human connection are highly valued. This sense of connection is also reflected in the way Ubud interacts with nature and tradition.

At Capella Ubud, romance is expressed through a sense of discovery and experiences that feel personal rather than prescribed. Our intimate tented camp comprises just 23 accommodations immersed within the jungle, with each one-bedroom tent featuring its own

private pool. Couples can retreat into their own world while still enjoying thoughtfully curated dining, wellness, nature and cultural experiences throughout their stay.

Romance is created through a collection of memorable moments that couples can experience together and carry with them long after they leave Bali.

● **What personalised and intimate experiences can honeymooners enjoy at Capella Ubud, from private dining and wellness to nature and cultural experiences?**

Ida Ayu Putu Mahayuni: Personalisation begins with understanding how each couple would like to spend their time. Some may prefer complete privacy and long, unhurried mornings in their tent, while others may wish to explore the culture and landscapes surrounding the camp.

A honeymoon might include a private dining experience surrounded by the forest, an intimate tasting journey at Api Jiwa, or cocktails beside the Campfire as evening settles over the jungle.

At Auriga Spa, treatments are inspired by the cycles of the moon and incorporate Balinese healing traditions, offering couples an opportunity to reconnect through restorative wellness. Ideal for honeymoons or a romantic wedding anniversary getaway, the Confined to Quarters journey allows couples to temporarily disconnect from the rush of modern life and reconnect with one another.

Beyond the camp, experiences such as a traditional Melukat water purification ritual, an adventurous sunrise journey across Mount Batur's dramatic lava landscape by vintage





4WD followed by a romantic bamboo boat cruise across the lake, walks through Keliki's rice terraces, encounters with local artisans, and our Bring Back the Light firefly conservation programme allow couples to discover the destination together in a deeply personal way.

At the heart of the experience is the Capella Culturist, who thoughtfully curates each stay around the couple's interests and creates a rhythm that feels entirely their own.

● **How are honeymooners' preferences evolving towards privacy, wellness, slow travel and immersive experiences, and how is Capella Ubud responding to these trends?**

Ida Ayu Putu Mahayuni: We are seeing couples place greater value on how a honeymoon makes them feel, rather than simply how many places they can visit.

Privacy remains important, but increasingly, it is being combined with wellness, nature, cultural discovery and meaningful time together. There is also a shift away from heavily scheduled itineraries towards slower travel, where couples spend longer in one destination and develop a deeper connection with the place.

This aligns naturally with the philosophy of Capella Ubud. The intimate scale of our camp, private tented accommodation and jungle setting create an inherent sense of seclusion, while our Capella Culturists shape each stay around the couple's individual interests and pace.

We encourage couples to leave space in their itinerary for spontaneity—whether that means an unhurried afternoon by their private pool, a walk through the forest, taking part in a Balinese ritual, or simply pausing together to listen to the sounds of the jungle.

How does Capella Ubud's setting in the Balinese rainforest and its connection with local culture enhance the honeymoon experience?

Ida Ayu Putu Mahayuni: Our setting is fundamental to the experience. Capella Ubud was designed to exist in harmony with the surrounding rainforest rather than dominate it,



allowing couples to feel completely immersed in nature.

There is something inherently romantic about waking to birdsong, stepping onto a terrace surrounded by layers of green, or returning to your tent as the rainforest changes character in the evening.

Equally important is our relationship with Keliki, the village we call home. Through encounters with local artists, traditional rituals, rice farming and community-led experiences, couples gain a more meaningful understanding of Bali beyond its beautiful landscapes.

For honeymooners, these shared discoveries can become some of the most memorable moments of the journey. They leave not only with photographs, but with stories they experienced together.

● **Are you seeing growing interest from Indian honeymooners? What preferences or expectations do Indian couples bring to a luxury Bali honeymoon?**

Ida Ayu Putu Mahayuni: India continues to be an important market for Bali, particularly for couples looking for a destination that combines accessibility, beautiful landscapes, culture, wellness and exceptional hospitality.

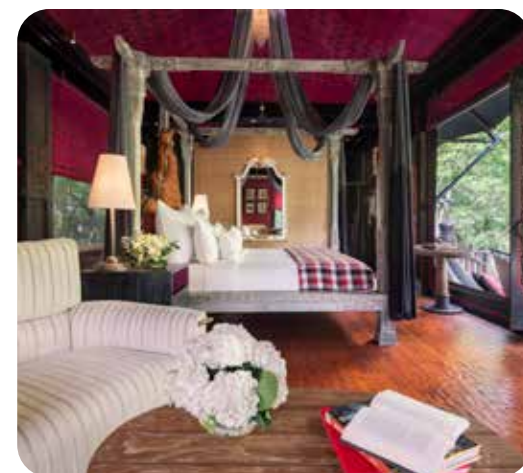
What is interesting is the increasing diversity in what Indian honeymooners are seeking. Alongside beautiful accommodation and

celebratory experiences, many couples now value distinctive dining, wellness and experiences that offer a genuine sense of place.

We also find that a Bali honeymoon often works beautifully when couples combine different dimensions of the island. They may enjoy the energy and coastline of southern Bali before travelling to Ubud for a quieter, more immersive experience surrounded by nature.

At Capella Ubud, that transition can feel particularly special. The forest, tented accommodation and personalised experiences allow couples to slow their pace and enjoy a more intimate chapter of their honeymoon.

● **Looking ahead, how do you see Ubud and Capella Ubud evolving as a luxury honeymoon**



destination, and what new experiences can couples look forward to?

Ida Ayu Putu Mahayuni: The future of luxury travel, particularly for honeymoons, will increasingly be defined by meaning, time, personal connection and discovery. We believe discovery is becoming a new expression of luxury—the opportunity to encounter a destination in a way that feels personal, enriching and unexpected.

Ubud is exceptionally well positioned for this because its appeal extends beyond traditional luxury. Its landscape, spirituality, craftsmanship, cuisine and community give travellers many different ways to engage with the destination and uncover something new together.

For Capella Ubud, our focus is not on adding experiences simply for novelty, but on continuing to deepen the connection between our guests, the jungle and the culture of Keliki. We will continue evolving our wellness, culinary and cultural programming while creating more opportunities for couples to discover meaningful experiences privately and at their own pace.

Ultimately, we believe the most memorable honeymoon is not necessarily the most elaborate one. It is the journey in which two people have the time and space to discover somewhere extraordinary and one another together.

Taj Agra

Where Timeless Romance Meets Luxury



With the Taj Mahal as its iconic backdrop, Taj Agra offers couples a romantic blend of luxury, heritage, fine dining, wellness and personalised hospitality. In this exclusive interview, **Rajesh Chakraborty, General Manager, Taj Agra**, shares how the hotel creates bespoke honeymoon experiences that combine the timeless romance of Agra with the legendary warmth and attention to detail of Taj, while highlighting evolving traveller preferences and the growing potential of the luxury honeymoon segment in India.

● **What makes Taj Agra an ideal choice for couples looking for a memorable honeymoon experience, particularly with the Taj Mahal as its backdrop?**

Rajesh Chakraborty: At Taj Agra, we believe a honeymoon should be more than a holiday—it should be the beginning of a lifetime of cherished memories. With the iconic Taj Mahal, the world's greatest symbol of love, as our backdrop, we offer couples an experience that is both deeply romantic and authentically Indian.

Our hotel seamlessly blends warm Taj hospitality with thoughtfully curated experiences designed for couples—from luxurious accommodations with breathtaking views of the Taj Mahal to intimate dining experiences, rejuvenating spa therapies

and personalised celebrations.

Whether it is watching the first rays of the sun illuminate the marble monument, enjoying a candlelit dinner under the stars or exploring Agra's rich cultural heritage together, every moment is crafted to create lasting memories.

What truly distinguishes Taj Agra is our ability to combine the timeless romance of the destination with the legendary service and attention to detail that Taj is known for. Every couple is unique, and our teams take pride in creating bespoke experiences that reflect their individual preferences, ensuring that their honeymoon is as extraordinary as the love story they are celebrating.

● **How does the hotel combine luxury, privacy, fine dining and personalised hospitality to create a romantic experience for honeymooners?**

Rajesh Chakraborty: At Taj Agra, every aspect of the guest journey is thoughtfully designed to create an atmosphere of romance, exclusivity and comfort. Our spacious rooms and suites offer elegant interiors, many with stunning

views of the Taj Mahal, providing couples with a serene and intimate retreat. Fine dining is at the heart of the experience, with our signature restaurants offering curated culinary journeys, private dining settings and bespoke menus that transform every meal into a celebration. Whether it is a candlelit dinner overlooking the illuminated Taj Mahal or a specially crafted in-room dining experience, every detail is tailored to the couple's preferences.

Our legendary Taj hospitality elevates these experiences even further. From personalised welcome amenities and customised itineraries to surprise celebrations, wellness rituals at the J Wellness Circle and attentive yet discreet service, our team ensures that every interaction feels warm, intuitive and memorable.

Luxury at Taj Agra is not just about exceptional facilities—it is about creating meaningful moments. By combining refined comfort, privacy, world-class cuisine and highly personalised service, we offer honeymooners an experience that is as unique and unforgettable as the occasion they are celebrating.

● **What special experiences or bespoke arrangements can couples enjoy at the hotel during their honeymoon?**

Rajesh Chakraborty: At Taj Agra, we believe every couple deserves a honeymoon that reflects their unique love story. Our bespoke

experiences are thoughtfully curated to create unforgettable moments, combining the romance of Agra with the warmth of Taj hospitality.

Couples can enjoy private candlelit dinners in enchanting settings, personalised in-room celebrations with floral décor, curated welcome amenities and indulgent breakfast experiences. For those seeking relaxation, signature therapies at J Wellness Circle provide the perfect opportunity to unwind and reconnect in a tranquil setting.

Beyond the hotel, we curate exclusive experiences that allow guests to discover the timeless charm of Agra. From guided sunrise or sunset visits to the Taj Mahal and heritage walks to customised cultural experiences and luxury city explorations, every itinerary can be tailored to individual preferences.

Our dedicated team takes pride in adding thoughtful touches—whether it is arranging a surprise proposal, celebrating a special milestone or creating personalised keepsakes that commemorate the occasion. It is this attention to detail, combined with the legendary service that defines Taj, that transforms a honeymoon into a truly memorable and deeply personal experience.

● **How has the honeymoon traveller evolved, and what are today's couples looking for when choosing a luxury hotel for their romantic getaway?**

Rajesh Chakraborty: The honeymoon traveller has evolved significantly over the years. Today's couples are seeking experiences that are authentic, meaningful and highly personalised rather than simply luxurious. They value destinations and hotels that allow them to create lasting memories through unique experiences, exceptional service and a genuine sense of place.

Modern honeymooners are also looking for privacy, wellness, immersive local experiences and opportunities to celebrate their journey together in a way that reflects their individual personalities. They appreciate bespoke

itineraries, intimate dining experiences, curated cultural encounters and thoughtful gestures that make them feel truly special. Sustainability and responsible luxury are increasingly influencing their travel decisions as well.

At Taj Agra, we have embraced this evolution by focusing on experience-led luxury. Our iconic location near the Taj Mahal, combined with personalised hospitality, world-class culinary offerings, wellness experiences and tailor-made romantic moments, allows us to cater to the aspirations of today's discerning travellers. We believe true luxury lies not only in elegant surroundings, but in creating emotional connections and unforgettable memories that couples will cherish for a lifetime.

● **Beyond visiting the Taj Mahal, what experiences would you recommend to couples staying at the property to make their honeymoon truly memorable?**

Rajesh Chakraborty: While the Taj Mahal is undoubtedly the highlight of any visit to Agra, the city offers a wealth of experiences that allow couples to connect with its rich heritage, culture and culinary traditions. We encourage our guests to explore Agra beyond its iconic monument and discover the many stories that make the destination so special.

Couples can enjoy a sunrise or sunset visit to the Taj Mahal, followed by explorations of Agra Fort, Fatehpur Sikri and the serene gardens of Mehtab Bagh, which offer breathtaking views of the monument from across the Yamuna River. A guided heritage walk through the old city, visits to traditional marble inlay and artisan workshops, or discovering the city's vibrant local markets provide an authentic glimpse into Agra's timeless craftsmanship and culture.

At Taj Agra, we complement these experiences with thoughtfully curated moments within the hotel—from indulgent spa therapies at J Wellness Circle and romantic candlelit dinners to bespoke celebrations, private dining experiences and personalised surprises that reflect each couple's unique story. For those celebrating a special milestone, our concierge

team can curate tailor-made itineraries that seamlessly blend the destination's cultural richness with the legendary warmth and attention to detail that define Taj hospitality.

For honeymooners, Mathura–Vrindavan can also be positioned as an excellent addition to the Agra itinerary, especially for couples looking to experience the spiritual and cultural side of the region.

We believe the most memorable honeymoons are those that combine iconic landmarks with meaningful, personalised experiences. It is this blend of destination, culture and heartfelt hospitality that creates memories our guests cherish long after they return home.

● **What is your outlook for the luxury honeymoon segment in India, and how is Taj Agra preparing to meet the changing expectations of couples?**

Rajesh Chakraborty: The luxury honeymoon segment in India has a very promising outlook. Today's couples are increasingly looking beyond conventional luxury and seeking experiences that are personal, immersive and meaningful. They want their honeymoon to reflect who they are as a couple, with greater emphasis on privacy, wellness, gastronomy, cultural discovery and memorable experiences rather than simply a luxurious room or a traditional sightseeing itinerary.

India is particularly well positioned to benefit from this trend because of its extraordinary diversity of destinations, heritage, cuisine and experiences. For a destination like Agra, the enduring romance of the Taj Mahal provides a powerful emotional anchor, while the wider region offers opportunities to explore history, culture, spirituality and local craftsmanship.

At Taj Agra, we are preparing for this evolution by focusing on experience-led and personalised luxury. We are continuously looking at ways to curate bespoke experiences for couples, from intimate dining and wellness journeys to customised celebrations and destination experiences. We also see significant potential in encouraging guests to extend their stay and explore the wider region, including Mathura and Vrindavan, as part of a more immersive journey.

Most importantly, our focus remains on understanding the individual couple—their preferences, interests and the moments they want to celebrate—and empowering our teams to create thoughtful, intuitive experiences around them. We believe the future of luxury honeymoons will be defined by personalisation and emotional connection, and Taj Agra is well placed to deliver that through its iconic location, exceptional hospitality and ability to create experiences that couples can truly call their own.



Honeymoon in Rishikesh

Where Love Meets Wellness



Rishikesh is emerging as a compelling choice for couples who want their honeymoon to be more than a traditional romantic escape. With the serenity of the Ganga, Himalayan surroundings and a rich legacy of yoga and wellness, the destination offers couples an opportunity to slow down, reconnect and begin married life on a meaningful note.

For today's conscious couples, a honeymoon is no longer just about luxury resorts and candlelit dinners. It is about creating a foundation of health, mindfulness and shared experience. Rishikesh, with its ancient spiritual heritage and modern wellness infrastructure, has become the perfect destination for this new kind of romantic journey.

Ajay Singh Thapa, CEO of Modi Yoga Retreat, Rishikesh, shares his perspective on the growing trend of wellness-led honeymoons, personalised experiences and mindful luxury for today's couples.



● **Rishikesh is known for yoga, spirituality and nature. What makes it an ideal destination for couples looking for a unique honeymoon experience?**

Ajay Singh Thapa: Rishikesh offers a beautiful combination of nature, tranquillity, wellness and spirituality. For newlyweds, it provides an opportunity to step away from the excitement of the wedding and spend meaningful, quality time together. The Ganga, surrounding hills

and peaceful environment create the perfect setting for couples seeking a honeymoon that is both romantic and rejuvenating.

Unlike conventional beach or city destinations, Rishikesh allows couples to experience something deeper. Here, romance is not just about grand gestures; it is about shared silence by the river, morning yoga sessions together, and the simple joy of watching the sunset over the Himalayas. For couples who

want their honeymoon to be both a celebration and a reset, Rishikesh offers an environment that nurtures both love and wellbeing.

● **How can wellness add a new dimension to the traditional honeymoon experience?**

Ajay Singh Thapa: A honeymoon is about beginning a new chapter together, and wellness can make that beginning even more meaningful. Couples can use this time to relax, reconnect and focus on their physical and mental wellbeing.



Yoga, meditation, spa therapies, mindful dining and time in nature allow couples to slow down and truly enjoy being together.

Wellness does not replace romance; it enhances it. When couples are relaxed, energised and mentally present, they can connect on a deeper level. A wellness honeymoon is not about rigid schedules or strict routines; it is about creating space for each other without the distractions of everyday life. It is about starting married life with a sense of balance, clarity and shared purpose.

● What experiences at Modi Yoga Retreat can particularly appeal to honeymooning couples?

Ajay Singh Thapa: Couples can enjoy personalised wellness programmes, yoga and meditation, rejuvenating therapies, healthy cuisine and peaceful time surrounded by nature. We also encourage guests to experience Rishikesh beyond the retreat. The idea is to create a balanced stay where couples have time for wellness, exploration, relaxation and, most importantly, each other.

At Modi Yoga Retreat, we design experiences that cater to the unique needs of honeymooners. This could include private yoga sessions by the Ganga, couples' spa treatments using Ayurvedic therapies, mindful dining experiences with locally sourced ingredients, or guided nature walks. We also help couples explore Rishikesh's spiritual side—whether it is attending an evening Ganga Aarti, visiting ancient temples, or simply sitting by the river in quiet contemplation.

The goal is to offer a holistic experience where wellness, romance and exploration come together seamlessly.

● Today's honeymooners increasingly seek personalised and experiential luxury. How is Modi Yoga Retreat responding to this changing demand?

Ajay Singh Thapa: Today's luxury traveller values personalisation, privacy, meaningful experiences and wellbeing. At Modi Yoga

Retreat, we understand that every couple is different, with their own expectations and interests. Our approach is therefore focused on creating experiences that can be tailored to their needs, whether they are looking for relaxation, wellness, mindfulness or simply uninterrupted time together.

Personalisation is at the heart of what we do. Before arrival, we understand the couple's preferences—whether they want an active wellness programme with daily yoga and treks, or a more relaxed stay focused on spa therapies and meditation. We then customise their itinerary accordingly. This could include private dining by the river, in-room wellness treatments, or curated excursions to nearby attractions.

True luxury today is not about opulence; it is about attention, time and experiences designed specifically for you. At Modi Yoga Retreat, we strive to create exactly that.

● How important are privacy, nature and tranquillity in creating a memorable wellness honeymoon?

Ajay Singh Thapa: They are extremely important. After the celebrations and activity surrounding a wedding, couples often appreciate having a peaceful environment where they can simply be together. Nature and tranquillity allow them to disconnect from everyday distractions and reconnect with each other. Some of the most memorable honeymoon moments can come from simple experiences—watching the river, enjoying a quiet meal or taking time to relax together.

In Rishikesh, nature is not just a backdrop; it is an integral part of the experience. The sound of the Ganga, the sight of the Himalayas, the freshness of mountain air—these elements create an atmosphere that is inherently calming and romantic. Privacy ensures that couples can enjoy these moments without interruption, whether it is a private yoga session, a secluded dining experience, or simply time alone in their room or villa.

At Modi Yoga Retreat, we have designed our spaces to maximise privacy and connection with nature. Rooms and suites are positioned to offer river or mountain views, and common areas are designed to provide both social spaces and quiet corners for reflection.

● What is your message to couples who want their honeymoon to be both romantic and restorative?

Ajay Singh Thapa: I would encourage couples to look beyond the conventional definition of a honeymoon. Romance is also about meaningful conversations, shared experiences and creating memories together. A wellness honeymoon gives couples the opportunity to begin married life with a sense of calm, balance and connection. Rishikesh provides the perfect environment for that journey.

My advice to couples is to approach their honeymoon with an open mind and heart. Do not worry about ticking off a list of activities or visiting every tourist spot. Instead, focus on being present with each other. Take time to talk, to listen, to laugh and to simply be. Let the natural beauty of Rishikesh and the calming influence of wellness practices help you create a foundation of love, health and happiness that will last a lifetime.

Your honeymoon is the first chapter of your married life. Make it a chapter you will want to revisit again and again.

● Why Rishikesh for Your Honeymoon?

- Spiritual Heritage: Home to ancient temples, ashrams and the sacred Ganga
- Natural Beauty: Surrounded by the Himalayas, forests and rivers
- Wellness Infrastructure: World-class yoga retreats, Ayurvedic spas and meditation centres
- Adventure Options: River rafting, trekking, bungee jumping and nature walks
- Mindful Luxury: Boutique retreats offering personalised, intimate experiences
- Cultural Immersion: Evening Ganga Aarti, local cuisine, and spiritual discourses

Beyond Romance

How Luxury Honeymoons Are Becoming More Personal and Experiential

● **How has the luxury honeymoon market evolved in India, and what are today's honeymooners looking for beyond traditional romantic getaways?**

Anshul Bhargava: The honeymoon market has become far less formulaic. Earlier, couples largely chose from a familiar set of destinations and packages. Today, they are more travelled, research extensively and want the trip to reflect their personalities. Privacy remains important, but so do wellness, food, nature, adventure and authentic local experiences. We are also seeing couples prefer fewer, more meaningful experiences rather than packed sightseeing schedules. In that sense, the resort itself has become a much bigger part of the honeymoon—the choice is increasingly about how they want to spend their time together, not simply where they want to go.

● **What makes Black Rock Hotels & Resorts an attractive choice for couples seeking a memorable and personalised honeymoon experience?**

Anshul Bhargava: What works for us is that our properties don't offer the same experience in different locations. AamaGhati Wildlife Resort in Ranthambore offers wilderness, safari, holistic wellness and quiet time against the Aravallis, while Ananta Jaipur offers a completely different resort experience with expansive landscaped spaces, private-pool accommodation and strong wellness and dining elements. Pushkara offers another pace altogether. We believe personalisation starts with giving couples genuinely different choices, then letting the stay evolve around their interests rather than selling everyone a standard honeymoon package.

● **What kind of bespoke experiences can couples expect at your properties, from accommodation and dining to wellness, adventure and private celebrations?**

Anshul Bhargava: Luxury that is tailor-made does not necessarily have to be complex. It might simply boil down to small considerations, such as a private dinner, a spa treatment session after an early-morning safari, or arranging your day around the couple's interests rather than the hotel's schedule. At AamaGhati, couples can combine their Ranthambore safari adventure with Ayurvedic treatments at the Sri Sri Tattva Centre for Holistic Wellness, as well as regional cuisine and an infinity pool with views of the surrounding scenery. Ananta Jaipur presents another option.



Anshul Bhargava, Founder & Chairman, Black Rock Hotels & Resorts, on evolving

honeymoon preferences, personalised experiences and the growing appeal of India's diverse luxury destinations.

The luxury honeymoon market in India is undergoing a significant transformation. Today's couples are more travelled, more informed and increasingly interested in experiences that reflect their individual personalities rather than traditional, one-size-fits-all romantic getaways.

From privacy and wellness to gastronomy, wildlife and authentic local experiences, the modern honeymoon is becoming less about ticking destinations off a list and more about creating meaningful moments together.

In this exclusive conversation, Anshul Bhargava, Founder & Chairman, Black Rock Hotels & Resorts, shares his perspective on how honeymoon travel is evolving, the growing demand for experiential and offbeat destinations, and how the group's properties are adapting to the expectations of a new generation of luxury travellers.



● **Are you witnessing a growing demand for experiential and offbeat honeymoon destinations among Indian couples? What trends are emerging?**

Anshul Bhargava: Definitely, and I feel that this is one of the most interesting developments in the segment. People are now looking at wildlife destinations, spa getaways and lesser-travelled leisure segments along with the tried-and-tested honeymoon destinations. This trend is also accompanied by growing interest in slow travel, where people spend three or four good days in one place rather than covering many locations. Ranthambore is an ideal example: while a safari might be the reason for a couple to visit, other factors like wellness, nature, local cuisine and culture are part of the complete holiday package.

● **How important are privacy, personalised service, wellness and culinary experiences in shaping the modern luxury honeymoon?**

Anshul Bhargava: They are no longer extras but play an increasingly crucial role in the experience. This is especially true of privacy, since honeymooners do not necessarily have

every moment planned. Today's great service means knowing when to step in and when to respect guests' privacy. Young travellers have become very wellness-conscious, while food is something couples usually remember from their vacation. This is where hotels can integrate these aspects seamlessly into the package. If all couples get the same "romantic experience", then there is no personalisation at all.

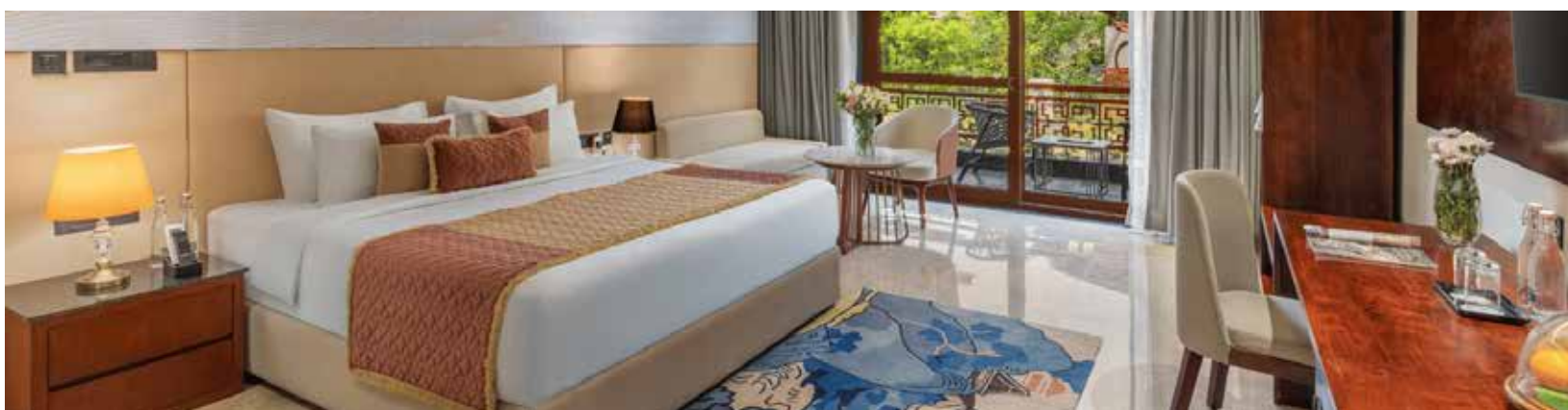
● **How is Black Rock Hotels & Resorts adapting its offerings to meet the changing expectations of the new generation of honeymoon travellers?**

Anshul Bhargava: We are deliberately moving away from rigid packages towards choice. Younger travellers want control over how they spend their holiday, so a resort needs enough depth for them to create their own experience. That affects room categories, dining flexibility, wellness, private spaces and the experiences available around the destination. At the same time, we don't want to standardise properties in the name of consistency. A honeymoon at AamaGhati should feel unmistakably like Ranthambore, while a stay at Ananta should

have its own Jaipur identity. Maintaining that sense of place is increasingly important to the new generation of luxury travellers.

● **What is your vision for the future of luxury hospitality and honeymoon travel in India, and where do you see the biggest opportunities for growth?**

Anshul Bhargava: India itself represents the biggest opportunity. We have wildlife, heritage, mountains, wellness, beaches and remarkably diverse regional cultures, but luxury leisure demand has historically concentrated around a relatively small number of destinations. That is changing as connectivity improves and quality hospitality moves into newer leisure markets. I expect honeymoon travel to become much more fragmented and experience-led, with couples choosing destinations around specific interests rather than conventional lists. For hospitality companies, the opportunity is not to recreate the same luxury resort everywhere, but to provide international standards of comfort while preserving what makes each destination worth travelling to in the first place.





Brij Lakshman Sagar

An Intimate Escape into Offbeat Rajasthan

Set amid the rugged landscape of Pali, Brij Lakshman Sagar offers couples an intimate and offbeat honeymoon experience that blends heritage, privacy, nature and contemporary luxury. In this exclusive interview, **Sarthak Awhad, Lodge Manager, Brij Lakshman Sagar, Brij Hotels**, shares how the restored hunting lodge creates personalised experiences through secluded cottages, private pools, outdoor dining, adventure and slow travel, while highlighting the growing appeal of lesser-explored Rajasthan among modern honeymooners.

● **What makes Brij Lakshman Sagar an ideal choice for couples looking for an intimate and offbeat honeymoon experience in Rajasthan?**

Sarthak Awhad: I always feel the charm and attraction lie in the design's intimacy and the resort's isolated location. Every cottage is unique in its placement across the landscape, ensconced within the contours of the hills and offering complete privacy to its guests. The experiences are also crafted to suit the desires

of couples, including rooftop sundowners, candlelit lakeside dining, kayaking, hiking and stargazing.

● **The property combines a historic hunting lodge, private pools, nature and contemporary luxury. How do these elements come together to create a distinctive experience for honeymooners?**

Sarthak Awhad: The very fact that this is a restored late 19th-century hunting lodge



evokes a sense of awe and mystery. We are noticing a tremendous shift in modern lifestyles, with people seeking to spend time in nature, solitude, spirituality and wholeness. Brij Lakshman Sagar endeavours to reflect this philosophy in its services and practices.

This beautiful blend is evident in the resort's distinctive concept, which combines zero-kilometre design with contemporary luxury.

● **What romantic experiences would you recommend for honeymoon couples, from private dining and starlit dinners to sundowners, floating breakfasts and nature experiences?**

Sarthak Awhad: I would recommend a sundowner on the rocks, breakfast in the fields, hiking to Fatehgarh Fort, kayaking and stargazing. I particularly love hosting sundowners, and we have six different scenic locations for the experience.

● **How are couples increasingly looking for privacy, local culture, nature and personalised experiences rather than conventional luxury, and how does Lakshman Sagar respond to this shift?**

Sarthak Awhad: People want to create memories with their loved ones. Memories are created through unique life experiences, and I



feel Brij Lakshman Sagar takes care of that in every possible way whenever a guest checks in.

● **Are you seeing growing interest from Indian honeymooners in offbeat Rajasthan destinations such as Pali? What preferences are you noticing among couples?**

Sarthak Awhad: Indeed, the boutique luxury segment in Pali, outside the heavily travelled routes of the Golden Triangle, is doing wonderful work when it comes to providing personalised experiences in remote, offbeat locations. From my experience of over five years at Brij Lakshman Sagar, I have noticed that people are increasingly inclined towards slow living, privacy, experiential travel and exploring contemporary brands.

● **Looking ahead, how do you see boutique heritage properties and lesser-explored destinations shaping the future of Rajasthan's honeymoon market?**

Sarthak Awhad: As I mentioned, couples are increasingly inclined towards slow travel, privacy and exploring boutique heritage brands over shine and glamour. This reflects a co-evolving relationship between customer needs and the products being offered.

From a conservation standpoint, I am very hopeful and eager to witness how this growing demand will not only shape the market but also contribute to preserving the heritage, culture and natural beauty of the land.



BLTM 2026 Concludes in New Delhi with Record Trade Visitor Turnout

Three-day B2B travel show attracts 13,000+ trade visitors, with a strong focus on MICE, destination weddings, experiential and rural tourism

The ninth edition of BLTM 2026 concluded at Yashobhoomi, Dwarka, New Delhi, bringing together destinations, tourism boards, hotels, resorts, DMCs and travel professionals to explore new opportunities across India's rapidly expanding travel and MICE ecosystem. The three-day B2B show recorded 13,000+ trade visitors, representing a 23 per cent increase over the previous edition, along with 500+ exhibitors and 450+ hosted buyers from five countries and 18 Indian states and union territories.

With India's travel and tourism economy contributing 6.6 per cent of GDP and projected to reach 7 per cent by 2030 and 10 per cent by 2047, BLTM 2026 focused on strengthening business opportunities across MICE, destination

weddings, premium leisure, experiential and rural tourism. Discussions also explored the growing role of AI and technology in business events and the changing expectations of Indian travellers.

The event also hosted the ICRT Indian Subcontinent Responsible Tourism Awards 2026, presented by ICRT India Foundation with the support of the Ministry of Tourism. The awards recognised initiatives advancing responsible and sustainable tourism. Shri Suman Billa, IAS, Additional Secretary & Director General, Ministry of Tourism, attended as Chief Guest, while Ms. Kanta Singh, Deputy Country Representative, UN Women India, was the Guest of Honour.

Speaking at the event, Shri Suman Billa highlighted India's growing potential in MICE and stressed the importance of responsible growth that benefits local communities. Sanjiv Agarwal, Chairman & CEO, Fairfest Media Limited, said the 23 per cent increase in visitor turnout reflected the growing business appetite across MICE, destination weddings, experiential travel and emerging domestic and international destinations.

BLTM 2026 featured Sri Lanka as Partner Country, Israel as Feature Country and Saint Petersburg as Focus Destination, while Delhi served as Host State. Odisha and Goa participated as Partner States, with West Bengal, Punjab and Tamil Nadu as Feature States. International participation from Sri Lanka, Israel, Saint Petersburg, Nepal and Thailand further expanded opportunities for Indian buyers to connect with global suppliers.

Rural tourism also received dedicated attention, with destinations from Madhya Pradesh, Delhi NCR, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand showcasing homestays, village experiences, local cuisine, handicrafts and community-led tourism. The BLTM Forum further brought together industry leaders to discuss MICE trends, AI, technology, destination competitiveness, business outcomes and the future of destination weddings, alongside B2B speed networking sessions.

overview of the event's speaker and attendee line-up, interactive agenda and networking opportunities. Key themes include AI-driven growth, search and discovery, personalisation, omnichannel customer journeys, data strategy, conversion and revenue optimisation, and content, social and creator-led marketing.

Designed around peer-to-peer learning, practical case studies and strategic benchmarking,

Digital Travel 2026 will offer senior decision-makers an opportunity to exchange insights and explore solutions to the most pressing challenges facing the travel industry.

Previous attendees have included senior representatives from Air France, British Airways, easyJet Holidays, NH Hotels, P&O Cruises, Qatar Airways, Travelodge, Tripadvisor and YOTEL, among other leading travel organisations.

Digital Travel 2026 Releases Official Event Brochure Ahead of 17-18 November Event



Europe's leading digital travel gathering returns to London on 17-18 November, bringing together 200+ senior leaders from leading travel brands

Digital Travel 2026, Europe's leading event for digital innovation in travel, has released its official event brochure ahead of its 12th edition, taking place on 17-18 November 2026 at The Hurlingham Club, London.

The event will bring together more than 200 senior leaders across digital, marketing, ecommerce and data from leading airlines, hotels, OTAs and travel brands. With the industry navigating rapid digital disruption, evolving customer expectations and the rise of AI, the two-day gathering will focus on practical strategies for sustainable growth, customer experience and digital transformation.

The newly released brochure provides an



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TOFT announces the 9th TOFT Nature & Wildlife Tourism Awards. Under the theme "Nature Positive Travel: Driving Conservation, Empowering People." The Awards recognise eco-lodges, wildlife guides, tourism operators, community initiatives, photography & documentary experts and Climate guardians in India and Nepal for their leadership in sustainable tourism and conservation. With over 250 global supporters, TOFT continues to advance a vision in which tourism actively supports the preservation of wildlife and natural heritage.

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5. Lodge Naturalist
6. Wildlife Promotion Company
7. International Wildlife Tour Operator
8. Wildlife Harmony Homestay Award

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1. "Rising Star" Lodge
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3. Wildlife and Tourism Initiative
4. Sustainable Homestay Award
5. Wildlife Conservation Photography
6. Wildlife Conservation Documentary

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Nominations closing midnight 7th August 2026.

T3FS Desk

In an exclusive conversation, Juliana Leveroni, Vice President of Communications, Experience Kissimmee, highlights how Kissimmee is attracting couples with its romantic experiences, outdoor adventures, culinary offerings and convenient location at the heart of Florida. She also shares insights into the growing interest from Indian travellers, including honeymooners, and the destination's evolving accommodation and tourism landscape.

● **Kissimmee is known for its proximity to Orlando's attractions, but what makes the destination an exciting choice for couples planning a honeymoon?**

JL: Kissimmee offers couples a balance of adventure, relaxation and memorable experiences, making it more than simply a convenient base for Central Florida's theme parks. The destination combines easy access to world-famous attractions with scenic lakes, outdoor adventures, entertainment districts, dining and a wide range of accommodation options, including resorts, hotels and vacation homes. One aspect we would like to highlight is the variety of hotels that offer resort-style amenities highly recommended for couples. These resorts feature beautiful pools, transportation to the theme parks, relaxing spa services, fitness centres, and much more. Many of them also provide convenient access to a wide array of dining experiences just steps away. Great examples include Celebration Town Center and the Promenade at Sunset Walk, both of which are surrounded by hotels that place guests within walking distance of dining, entertainment, and nightlife options.

For those staying in a vacation home, there are also plenty of amenities to enjoy, such as private pools, chef-curated dining experiences, fully equipped kitchens, themed rooms and many other unique offerings. Kissimmee



Experience Kissimmee

A Perfect Blend of Romance, Adventure and Relaxation

For honeymooners, Kissimmee offers much more than proximity to Orlando's famous theme parks. From luxury resorts and private vacation homes to airboat adventures, hot-air-balloon rides, diverse dining and vibrant entertainment, the destination provides couples with a versatile mix of experiences.

is a fantastic destination for a honeymoon, combining exceptional accommodations with fun and unforgettable experiences.

● **Beyond theme parks, what romantic and memorable experiences would you recommend for honeymooners visiting Kissimmee, from nature and outdoor adventures to dining and entertainment?**

JL: There is a strong range of experiences for couples beyond the theme parks. For outdoor adventures, couples can take an airboat tour at Wild Florida Adventure Park, explore the headwaters of the Everglades and spot wildlife, or enjoy a hot-air-balloon flight offering views of Central Florida from 1,000 feet above the ground.

Couples can also explore Celebration Town Center, with its lakefront setting, tree-lined streets, shops and restaurants. While there, we recommend taking a guided bike tour with Celebration Bike Rental to experience the town from a different perspective. Along the way, couples can explore this beautiful neighborhood, admire scenic trails, golf courses, and many other hidden gems that make Celebration a unique destination for couples.

For dining and evenings out, Kissimmee offers date-night restaurants, international cuisine, live entertainment and dinner shows. Experience Kissimmee also highlights areas such as Disney Springs and Promenade at Sunset Walk for dining, music, entertainment and nightlife.

We also recommend that couples explore the Latin Culinary Trail, which features more than 40 restaurants showcasing flavors from across Latin America and the Caribbean, including cuisines from Mexico, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Brazil, and more. The trail offers visitors a unique opportunity to try authentic dishes while discovering the rich cultural diversity that makes Kissimmee so special.

● **How is Experience Kissimmee positioning the destination for couples seeking a mix of adventure, relaxation and unique experiences on their honeymoon?**

JL: Experience Kissimmee positions the destination around the combination of thrilling adventures and relaxing moments. The destination also promotes unique experiences such as wildlife encounters, airboat adventures, zip lining and hot-air-balloon rides alongside its established theme-park offerings.

We encourage couples to visit our website, where they can explore dedicated content, including Romantic Getaway Guides designed to help them plan the perfect honeymoon in Kissimmee. These guides feature curated recommendations, itinerary ideas, and





unique experiences tailored to a variety of interests and travel styles. Couples can also enjoy exceptional accommodations in Kissimmee staying in a vacation home with many amenities or staying in a resort style hotel that will help them have everything they need.

● **Are you seeing growing interest from Indian honeymooners? What preferences or travel trends are you noticing among couples from the Indian market?**

JL: Through our research, we have identified that the traveller segment from India visiting our destination includes groups of friends, families, and especially couples. One of the key trends we discovered is that Indian travellers rely on the internet and social media for trip planning, with strong engagement on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook. According to our research, 48% of Indian travellers use social media platforms when choosing a destination. This insight is particularly important because it helps us better understand how to connect with this audience and inspire Indian travellers to visit Kissimmee.

In addition, another significant finding is that Florida ranks among the top U.S. destinations of interest for Indian travelers, with 20% expressing interest in visiting the state compared to other destinations across the United States. This is an interesting insight, as it suggests that Indian travellers are drawn to the Sunshine State's unique combination of entertainment, recreation, and leisure experiences. Understanding this preference provides an opportunity for Kissimmee to further position itself as an attractive destination that aligns with the interests and travel motivations of the Indian market.

● **How can couples combine Kissimmee with other destinations in Florida to create a longer and more diverse honeymoon itinerary?**

JL: Kissimmee can serve as a base for exploring more of Central Florida and beyond. Visitors can easily add day trips to nearby cities, beaches, springs and even the Space Coast. Tampa is about an hour away, and Jacksonville about two hours away.

In addition to that, visitors can also take advantage of the Brightline train, which offers convenient service to destinations such as Miami and West Palm Beach from Orlando International Airport. The station is easily

accessible from Kissimmee, located just about 30 minutes away.

As Kissimmee sits in the heart of Florida, it provides a convenient home base for exploring many of the state's most popular destinations and attractions. This central location allows visitors to enjoy everything Kissimmee has to offer while also taking day trips to other points of interest throughout Florida.

● **Looking ahead, what new experiences or developments can honeymooners look forward to in Kissimmee, and how do you see the destination evolving in the luxury and romantic travel segment?**

JL: Kissimmee continues to evolve, offering families and couples even more exciting developments to look forward to.

In terms of accommodations, Kissimmee recently welcomed the Kompose Boutique Hotel, adding another excellent lodging option for couples seeking a convenient stay near the world-famous theme parks.

The destination's hospitality landscape will continue to expand with other several anticipated developments, including Everest Place, a luxury resort currently under construction that will feature a Nickelodeon Hotel, bringing a unique experience to the area. Additional projects include Ovation, a mixed-use development located at the northeast corner of Interstate 4 and U.S. Highway 192, directly across from the entrance to Celebration, and the Azure Hotel, which is set to become Downtown Kissimmee's first hotel.



At the same time, Kissimmee already offers a broad range of accommodation choices, from luxury resorts and hotels to professionally managed vacation homes, giving couples flexibility in how they experience the destination. Experience Kissimmee's couples itineraries also demonstrate an increasing breadth of romantic experiences, from resort and spa relaxation to outdoor adventures, dining and entertainment.

Malta Tourism Authority Joins WTTC as Destination Partner

Partnership strengthens collaboration ahead of WTTC Global Summit 2026 in Valletta

T3FS Desk

The Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) has joined the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) as a Destination Partner, strengthening collaboration with one of Europe’s dynamic tourism destinations. The partnership comes as Malta prepares to host the WTTC Global Summit 2026 in Valletta from 7–9 October 2026.

As the organisation responsible for promoting Malta, the MTA works with government, tourism industry partners, local communities and



**Jo Etienne Abela,
Minister for Tourism**

Malta’s partnership with the World Travel & Tourism Council comes at an important moment for our tourism sector and for our country as we prepare to welcome the world to Valletta for the 2026 Global Summit. This Destination Partnership strengthens Malta’s engagement with leading voices in the global tourism industry and provides an important platform to share our experience, while also learning from international partners and identifying new opportunities for sustainable growth. We want Malta to remain a destination that offers quality, authenticity and memorable experiences, while ensuring that tourism continues to create value for our economy, our communities and future generations. Hosting the WTTC Global Summit is a recognition of Malta’s growing role on the international tourism stage, and we look forward to using this opportunity to showcase the very best of the Maltese Islands and our vision for the future of tourism.

international stakeholders to support economic growth while safeguarding the destination’s cultural heritage. With a focus on quality, collaboration and sustainability, the authority also supports workforce development, industry standards and Malta’s global visitor experience.

Malta’s distinctive combination of history, culture, natural beauty, hospitality and world-class experiences continues to strengthen its position in the international tourism landscape. Through its role as regulator, industry partner

and destination promoter, the MTA works to maintain high standards and build strong relationships across the sector.

The WTTC Global Summit in Valletta will bring together CEOs, ministers, investors and tourism leaders from around the world to discuss the future of Travel & Tourism. The event will also showcase Malta’s tourism success story while highlighting its commitment to sustainable growth, innovation and stronger public-private collaboration.



**Gloria Guevara,
WTTC President
& CEO**

We are delighted to welcome the Malta Tourism Authority as a Destination Partner at a particularly exciting time for the destination. As Malta prepares to host WTTC’s Global Summit in Valletta, it will have the opportunity to showcase its unique heritage, hospitality, and vision for sustainable growth to industry leaders from around the world. We look forward to working together to highlight Malta’s position as one of Europe’s most compelling tourism destinations.



**Carlo Micallef
Malta Tourism
Authority CEO**

Becoming a Destination Partner with the WTTC is a major step for the Malta Tourism Authority. This partnership gives Malta a direct platform to connect with top decision-makers across the global travel industry. As we prepare to host the 2026 Global Summit in Valletta, aligning with the WTTC highlights our strong commitment to continue developing a sustainable and resilient tourism industry for the Maltese Islands building on the unique experiences and rich heritage that only Malta can offer.

Georgia's Thermal Heritage

Where History Meets Wellness

From the historic sulphur baths of Tbilisi to the mineral-rich springs of Borjomi, Georgia's centuries-old thermal traditions are gaining a new dimension through European recognition.



T3FS Desk

Georgia is drawing renewed attention to its centuries-old thermal heritage with its membership of the European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA). Known for its naturally warm and mineral-rich waters, historic bathhouses and mountain spa destinations, the country offers travellers an opportunity to discover a different side of Georgia—one where wellness, culture, history and nature come together.

The European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA) was founded in Brussels, Belgium, in 2009 by six founding members: Acqui Terme (Italy), Bath (United Kingdom), Ourense (Spain), Salsomaggiore Terme (Italy), Spa (Belgium) and Vichy (France). Today, EHTTA is one of the leading organisations representing historic thermal resorts and

regions in Europe.

In 2010, EHTTA was officially recognised as a Cultural Route by the Council of Europe, joining the network of outstanding cultural routes across the continent. By 2025, the association had developed into a strong international non-profit organisation, uniting more than 50 members in Europe and international partners operating outside Europe.

Georgia is now a member of EHTTA, further highlighting the country's rich thermal heritage and making its naturally warm waters, historic bathhouses and restorative mountain escapes an increasingly interesting proposition for travellers.

The membership is particularly significant for Georgia, which has a centuries-old history of balneological resorts and healing waters. The tradition of using thermal waters in

Georgia dates back to the 5th century BC, while the development of modern thermal resorts began almost two centuries ago. Today, there are 129 balneological resorts and thermal resorts in Georgia, representing almost half of the country's 271 officially recognised resorts and health resorts.

The membership also creates new opportunities for Georgia to share knowledge and experiences, promote its tourist destinations and support the sustainable development of its resorts, while strengthening its position within Europe's wellness and cultural tourism network.

A Tradition Rooted in Georgian Life

Thermal bathing has been part of Georgia's story for centuries, with hot and mineral-rich



springs found across the country. What makes the experience particularly special is that these waters are not simply part of a modern wellness offering; they are closely connected to the history and everyday culture of Georgian cities and resort towns.

One of the best places to experience this tradition is Abanotubani, Tbilisi's historic sulphur-bath district. Located in the heart of Old Tbilisi, the neighbourhood is instantly recognisable by its traditional domed bathhouses. The city itself takes its name from *tbili*, meaning "warm", reflecting the importance of its natural hot springs. After exploring Tbilisi's cobbled streets, historic churches, cafés and viewpoints, relaxing in

a traditional sulphur bath offers a distinctly local way to slow down and unwind.

Borjomi Brings Wellness into the Mountains

A visit to Borjomi offers a completely different thermal experience. Surrounded by green forests and the Lesser Caucasus Mountains, the charming resort town is famous for its naturally mineral-rich water and long-standing spa tradition.

Travellers can stroll through Borjomi Central Park, taste the famous mineral water directly from its spring and explore the surrounding landscapes. Those looking for a more relaxing experience can also enjoy the outdoor sulphur

pools, soaking in naturally warm waters while surrounded by the peaceful mountain scenery.

More Than Just a Spa Experience

Georgia's thermal heritage can easily become part of a wider holiday rather than a standalone wellness trip. Indian travellers can combine a few days in Tbilisi with the sulphur baths of Abanotubani, continue to Borjomi for its mineral springs and mountain landscapes, and then explore destinations such as Tskaltubo or Abastumani, both known for their historic spa traditions.

The appeal lies in its simplicity. There is no need to set aside an entire holiday for wellness. A warm sulphur bath after a day of sightseeing, a walk through a mountain resort or a glass of naturally mineral-rich water can become memorable parts of a broader Georgian journey.

A New Side of Georgia for Indian Travellers

With its EHTTA membership, Georgia is shining a light on a part of its heritage that many international travellers may not yet know. For Indian visitors, this offers an opportunity to discover the country at a slower pace, combining history, nature, culture and wellness in a single journey.

From the atmospheric bathhouses of Tbilisi to the mineral springs of Borjomi, Georgia's thermal heritage invites travellers to do more than simply see the country. It encourages them to pause, unwind and experience Georgia through its waters, landscapes and centuries-old traditions.





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5 Monsoon Getaways near Mumbai for Camping and Trekking

From misty mountain trails to lakeside camps, these Sahyadri escapes bring together the best of Maharashtra's monsoon landscapes

T3FS Desk

When the monsoon arrives, Maharashtra's Sahyadri ranges transform into a lush wonderland of waterfalls, mist-covered valleys and vibrant green landscapes. For travellers from Mumbai and Pune, it is the perfect season to combine trekking with camping amid nature. From the tranquil shores of Pawna Lake to the historic trails of Rajmachi, these five destinations offer memorable outdoor experiences during the rains.

Pawna Lake is one of the region's most popular camping destinations, surrounded by rolling meadows, wildflowers, misty valleys and views of forts such as Tikona and Tung. Located near Lonavala, it is around 3–4 hours from Mumbai and 1.5–2 hours from Pune, with camps offering waterproof tents and cottages during the monsoon.

Bhandardara, nestled in the Sahyadris

within Ahilyanagar district, offers lakeside camping near Shendi village and Arthur Lake, along with forested landscapes and views of the Pravara River. Adventure seekers can take on Kalsubai Peak, Maharashtra's highest peak at 1,646 metres. Bhandardara is approximately 165 km from Mumbai and 170 km from Pune, around a 4–5 hour drive from either city.

Rajmachi Fort, built in the 17th century under Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, offers a rewarding combination of history, trekking and camping. The trek from Lonavala to Rajmachi village (Udhewadi) is around 16 km through dense forest and rugged mountain terrain, with ancient caves, seasonal waterfalls and sweeping green views along the route. Rajmachi is approximately 90–100 km from Mumbai and 80–85 km from Pune.

Panchgani takes on a magical character during the rains, with misty hills, lush valleys and seasonal waterfalls. Camping

with waterproof or luxury tents with solid flooring is recommended during the monsoon. The iconic Tableland, one of the longest mountain plateaus in Asia, offers spectacular 360-degree views, often surrounded by clouds and mist. Panchgani is 20 km from Mahabaleshwar, 108 km from Pune and 250 km from Mumbai.

Igatpuri, set in the Sahyadri ranges, is another monsoon favourite, with mist-covered mountains, dense forests and cool weather. Its trekking trails include Tringalwadi Fort, located at 3,238 feet (987 metres) above sea level and known for its accessibility, natural surroundings and ancient Jain caves.

With greenery at its peak and waterfalls in full flow, the monsoon is an ideal time to explore these destinations. However, travellers should avoid trekking during extremely heavy rainfall or weather warnings and consider using trained local guides for a safer experience.

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Himachal Pradesh to Welcome Yoga Practitioners from 15+ Nations

'The Journey of the Himalayas' brings global Yoga, wellness and Himalayan knowledge together across the state

Himachal Pradesh is set to become a global meeting point for Yoga, wellness and Himalayan knowledge as Himalayan Siddhaa Akshar leads Masters, instructors, teachers and practitioners from more than 15 countries on 'The Journey of the Himalayas', a 10-day immersive programme across the state. Participants from the US, UK, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, China and other countries will explore destinations including Chandra Taal, Kullu-Manali, Vashisht and Jogini Waterfall.

The programme will combine advanced Yoga and meditation, breathwork, spiritual exploration, cultural learning, nature and community engagement, encouraging participants to experience Himachal Pradesh as a living centre of Himalayan knowledge and



across the Kullu, Manali and Mandi regions.

The initiative will focus on Yoga education, advanced teacher training, meditation and mental wellbeing, traditional knowledge studies, research, youth development and international cultural exchange. Through 'The Journey of the Himalayas', Himalayan Siddhaa Akshar and Akshar Yoga Kendraa aim to strengthen Himachal

traditional wellness practices. Alongside the journey, Akshar Yoga Kendraa will conduct free Yoga, health and wellness initiatives in schools and communities, while working towards a long-term vision of dedicated Yoga, wellness, educational and cultural-heritage institutions

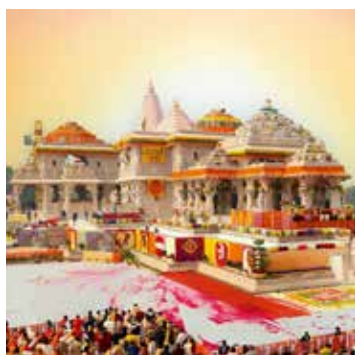
Pradesh's identity as an important centre for Yoga, wellness, education and Himalayan cultural heritage, connecting traditional knowledge with a growing global community of practitioners.

UPSTDC Launches Five-Day 'Spiritual Triangle' Tour

One curated journey connects Varanasi, Prayagraj and Ayodhya with temples, sacred ghats, VIP darshan and cultural landmarks

With the festive season approaching, the Uttar Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation (UPSTDC) has launched a five-day, four-night 'Spiritual Triangle' Tour Package under the 'Visit My State' campaign, connecting the sacred cities of Varanasi, Prayagraj and Ayodhya in one curated itinerary. The package will remain available through the festive season, taking travellers from the ghats and temples of Kashi to the Sangam in Prayagraj and Ram Mandir in Ayodhya.

The journey begins in Varanasi at 1:00 PM with visits to Sankat Mochan Temple, Durga Kund Temple and Assi Ghat, followed by a boat ride and the Ganga Aarti. Day two includes VIP darshan at Kashi Vishwanath



Temple, Annapurna Temple and Kaal Bhairav Temple, along with visits to Sarnath and Banaras Hindu University. The itinerary then moves to Prayagraj for Anand Bhavan, a holy dip at the Sangam and Lete Hanuman Ji Temple, before continuing to Ayodhya for Hanumangarhi, Kanak Bhawan, Dashrath Mahal, VIP darshan at Ram Mandir and Aarti at Saryu Ghat.

Priced at ₹14,400 per person in a Sedan for a minimum of four travellers and ₹13,000 per person in a Crysta for a minimum of six travellers, the package includes AC transport, a boat ride, guide services, four nights of AC accommodation on double sharing and breakfast. Lunch and dinner are payable directly by travellers.

Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh said the initiative will make pilgrimage travel easier while strengthening Uttar Pradesh's spiritual tourism circuit. UPSTDC Chairman and Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism, Culture and Religious Affairs, Amrit Abhijat, added that the package offers a seamless way to experience the state's diverse spiritual and cultural heritage while supporting pilgrimage tourism.

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Air India and Drukair Strengthen India–Bhutan Connectivity with New Interline Partnership

Seamless Single-Ticket Travel Opens Wider Access Between India, Bhutan and Global Destinations

Air India and Drukair, Royal Bhutan Airlines, have announced a new interline partnership aimed at enhancing seamless travel between India, Bhutan and destinations across the global network. Under the agreement, passengers can travel on a single ticket combining Air India and Drukair flights, with coordinated baggage handling and through-transfer services via key Indian gateways including Delhi, Guwahati and Kolkata.

Expanding Access to Bhutan and Beyond
The partnership will enable Air India passengers from its expanding international network to travel seamlessly to Paro via Delhi, with convenient onward connections to Bumthang, Gelephu and Yonphula within Bhutan. Reciprocally, Drukair passengers will gain access to Air India’s extensive domestic and international network, including destinations such as Bengaluru, Mumbai, Kochi, London, Paris, Frankfurt, New York, San Francisco,



Sydney, Melbourne, Toronto and Vancouver. The new partnership is expected to support tourism and business travel while giving passengers greater convenience, connectivity and value. By linking Drukair’s Bhutan network with Air India’s extensive domestic and international network, the agreement further strengthens travel opportunities between the two neighbouring countries and connects Bhutan more closely with major global markets.



Nipun Aggarwal, Chief Commercial Officer, Air India
Our partnership with Drukair reinforces our commitment to strengthening connectivity across the SAARC region, which we consider our extended home market. Bhutan is a valued part of this region, and we are happy to enable easy access to Bhutan for our guests and look forward to welcoming Drukair’s passengers onto Air India’s extensive domestic and global network.



Tandi Wangchuk, Chief Executive Officer of Drukair
This partnership marks a significant milestone for Drukair as we continue to strengthen our global connectivity and enhance the travel experience for our passengers. Through this interline partnership with Air India, our customers will benefit from seamless journeys, expanded access to key international markets, and improved connectivity across India and beyond.

IndiGo Connects Bihar to Thailand with New Gaya–Bangkok Flights

IndiGo will launch non-stop, twice-weekly flights between Gaya and Bangkok from 26 October 2026, strengthening air connectivity between Bihar and Thailand while supporting Buddhist pilgrimage, tourism and cultural exchange.



The new route will create a direct air link between Gaya, home to Bodh Gaya and the revered Mahabodhi Temple, and Bangkok, offering a convenient travel option for pilgrims, leisure travellers and tourists.

The service is expected to support Bihar’s tourism ecosystem, including hospitality, transport and other local businesses. Thailand remains a popular destination for Indian travellers, with IndiGo operating more than 140 weekly

flights between India and Thailand. The addition of Gaya further expands IndiGo’s network in Thailand and strengthens international connectivity to one of India’s most important spiritual and cultural destinations.

American Airlines Unveils Premium-Configured Boeing 777-300ER with New Flagship Suite Experience

A New Era of Premium Travel Takes Flight with Enhanced Privacy, Comfort and Connectivity

American Airlines has introduced its first retrofitted Boeing 777-300ER, featuring its most premium seat offering on an aircraft operated by any U.S. carrier. The newly configured aircraft offers 144 premium seats, including 70 Flagship Suite® seats with privacy doors, 44 Premium Economy seats and 30 Main Cabin Extra seats, alongside free high-speed Wi-Fi and next-generation inflight entertainment. The aircraft combines American's latest premium cabin design with greater personal space, thoughtful storage and enhanced comfort, creating a more seamless experience for long-haul travellers.

Flagship Suite®: The New Standard of Premium Travel

The new Flagship Suite® experience features privacy doors, increased personal storage and a unique chaise lounge seating position, complemented by premium dining, curated wines, amenity kits and bedding designed for relaxation. Customers travelling in the Flagship® cabin also receive priority check-in, security, boarding and baggage handling, as well as access to Flagship® lounges where available.

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Connecting Major Global Destinations

American Airlines' fleet of 20 Boeing 777-300ER aircraft operates on several of the airline's most popular long-haul routes, including London, Tokyo, São Paulo, Buenos Aires and Sydney. The newly retrofitted aircraft made its first commercial flight from New York (JFK) to Buenos Aires (EZE) on September 2.

As American expands its Flagship Suite® offering, Flagship® First will no longer be available for purchase on Boeing 777-300ER aircraft for travel beginning November 19, 2026. Flagship® First will also no longer be available for purchase on transcontinental routes beginning March 28, 2027, as more Airbus A321XLR aircraft enter the airline's fleet.



Nat Pieper, Chief Commercial Officer, American Airlines

Our Flagship® aircraft represents the next evolution of premium travel at American. With elegantly designed interiors and spacious premium seating, the Boeing 777-300ER reflects our continued commitment to creating a travel experience around what customers value most.

Etihad Upgrades Gothenburg to Year-Round Service Following Exceptional Demand

Etihad Airways has upgraded its newly announced Abu Dhabi–Gothenburg service to a year-round operation, following exceptional demand from both ends of the route even before the first flight takes off.

Originally planned as a winter service from 17 December 2026 to 21 March 2027, Etihad Airways will now operate its Abu Dhabi–Gothenburg route year-round following exceptional demand. The service will operate four times a week on the Airbus A321LR, with two First Suites,

14 Business Class seats and 144 Economy seats.

The route will provide direct connectivity between western Sweden and Abu Dhabi, with onward connections across Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Gothenburg becomes Etihad's 15th new destination in 2026, further strengthening its global network.



Arik De, Etihad Airways Chief Revenue and Commercial Officer

Three weeks in, the market has told us we underestimated Gothenburg, and we are glad to be corrected. The strength of demand this early gives us the confidence to make Gothenburg a year-round service before the first flight has even taken off. "Western Sweden has been waiting for this connection and the response has come from both ends of the route. Sweden's biggest gem is being discovered, and we are pleased to be the airline opening Gothenburg to Abu Dhabi and beyond.



Mats Johansson, CEO of Swedavia Airports

When this route was announced last month it was warmly received here, and to see it extended to a year-round schedule within three weeks says a great deal about the appetite in West Sweden for direct connections to Abu Dhabi and Etihad's global network. Travellers and companies in the region can already book and plan around this service in any season, and we look forward to welcoming the first flight in December.

Emirates to Elevate Mauritius Travel with Premium Economy on Dubai Routes

Enhanced Comfort, More Choice and a Refined Inflight Experience from 1 September 2026

Emirates is introducing its Premium Economy cabin on two of its three daily flights between Mauritius and Dubai from 1 September 2026, offering Mauritian travellers greater choice, space and comfort. The enhanced cabin will be available on EK703/704, operated by the Emirates A380, and EK709/710, operated by a retrofitted Boeing 777. The Premium Economy seats feature generous legroom, recline, adjustable headrests, footrests, charging points and 13.3-inch entertainment



screens, complemented by an elevated dining experience with seasonal cuisine served on Royal Doulton china, an extended beverage selection and sustainable amenity kits.

The new offering will also make it possible

for travellers from Mauritius to enjoy Premium Economy when connecting through Dubai to 70 destinations across Europe, Asia and the Americas, including select flights to Bangkok and all six daily services to London Heathrow. With Emirates operating in Mauritius since 2002, the introduction of its latest-generation cabin further reflects the airline's continued investment in the market and commitment to enhancing the travel experience between Mauritius, Dubai and destinations across its global network.

Oomar Ramtoola, Emirates' Manager for the Indian Ocean Islands

Mauritius has always been an important market for Emirates, and the introduction of Premium Economy on the route is another demonstration of our continued commitment to our Mauritian customers as well as the nation's travel and tourism industry. "Emirates' Premium Economy offering provides travellers with an attractive proposition, with

stylish and elevated cabins for those seeking additional comfort and privacy for longer journeys. Driven by our commitment to Mauritius and the evolving needs of customers across our network, we are immensely proud to expand our offerings by introducing Premium Economy and other inflight enhancements that will elevate the travel experience for customers on the Mauritius-Dubai route – all designed to provide exceptional value for travellers. With the steady rollout of Emirates' Premium Economy, the enhanced offering is now available on an extensive network of routes, so our customers from Mauritius will be glad to know they can enjoy the signature experience to Dubai and onwards to 70 destinations in Europe, Asia and the Americas.

Maersk Air Cargo Joins International Airline Association BARIG

Maersk Air Cargo has joined BARIG, strengthening its presence in Germany's aviation and air cargo sector, with Cologne/Bonn Airport serving as its primary German hub.

The international airline association BARIG (Board of Airline Representatives in Germany) is further expanding its focus on air freight and welcomes Maersk Air Cargo as a new member. The airline is Denmark's first all-cargo carrier and part of A.P. Moller-Maersk, one of



the world's largest logistics companies. With a fleet of 19 freighters, Maersk Air Cargo serves numerous destinations within Europe, as well as in Asia and North America. Its main hub is Billund Airport in southern Denmark; Cologne/Bonn Airport serves as its primary hub in Germany.

Michael Hoppe, BARIG Chairman and Executive Director

The already significant role of air freight in global trade has grown even further in recent months, and for many industrial companies in Germany, air cargo is a vital component of their supply chains. Currently, air freight in Germany not only suffers from excessively high location costs, but is also confronted with additional obstacles in form of unnecessarily complex processes and a high degree of bureaucracy. We are committed to improving the framework conditions and are delighted that Maersk Air Cargo is supporting our work as a new BARIG member now.

Lars Jordahn, CEO of Maersk Air Cargo

Our operational processes are designed to ensure stability, predictability, and seamlessly integrated logistics solutions for our customers. In this way, we make a crucial contribution to managing time-sensitive and complex supply chains, while also strengthening secure and resilient air freight corridors. BARIG provides us with a great platform for professional exchange within the community. This enables us to contribute to the further development of the air freight industry, to positively shape its framework conditions, and to strengthen its position to meet future challenges.

IndiGo Ventures and Sarvam Join Forces to Drive AI Innovation in Aviation

IndiGo Ventures, the corporate venture capital arm of IndiGo, has invested in Sarvam as part of its Series B funding round, strengthening their collaboration to accelerate artificial intelligence (AI)-led innovation across customer experience, employee productivity and airline operations.

The partnership combines IndiGo's aviation expertise, operational scale and real-world use cases with Sarvam's full-stack sovereign AI capabilities across models, voice and agentic systems. Together, the companies will explore and expand AI applications designed to simplify complex workflows, improve decision-making and build a more technology-enabled, future-ready aviation ecosystem.

Neetan Chopra, Chief Digital and Information Officer, IndiGo, said: "Artificial Intelligence is fast becoming a foundational capability for the aviation industry, reshaping customer experience, workforce productivity and operational decision-making. Our partnership with Sarvam gives IndiGo access to cutting-edge



AI capabilities, built in India, and tailored to the needs of the market."

Pratyush Kumar, Co-founder, Sarvam, said: "Aviation is a powerful setting for enterprise AI because it combines millions of customer interactions with complex, time-sensitive operations. IndiGo brings the domain depth and scale needed to identify where AI can create real value. Together, we can develop systems that are useful in production and build a stronger template for enterprise AI in India."



The collaboration will continue to focus on customer experience, employee productivity and airline operations, with successful applications having the potential to scale across IndiGo's network.

Tata Elxsi and Sarla Aviation Join Forces to Advance Shunya eVTOL

Tata Elxsi and Sarla Aviation have signed an MoU to accelerate the development of Shunya, a six-seater plus one pilot electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, bringing together aerospace engineering, flight-critical systems and certification expertise.



Tata Elxsi, a global design and technology services company, and Sarla Aviation, an advanced air mobility company, will collaborate on the development, testing and certification of Shunya, supporting its journey towards first flight. The partnership combines Sarla Aviation's urban air mobility vision with Tata Elxsi's expertise in aerospace, software and digital engineering.

Under the agreement, Tata Elxsi will provide engineering support across avionics, flight control systems, software integration, testing,

verification, validation and certification, while Sarla Aviation will lead the aircraft's design, development and type certification. The collaboration will also explore sensor-fusion navigation software, industrial and structural design, and airworthiness test support.

Designed for a range of more than 300 km, Shunya combines vertical take-off and landing capability with fixed-wing cruise efficiency, enabling runway-independent operations. Its first flight is targeted within the next 18–24 months, followed by certification activities.



organisations willing to solve problems that have never been solved before in this market.

Adrian Schmidt, Co-Founder & CEO, Sarla Aviation, said:

"Building a new class of aircraft is not simply an engineering challenge. It requires bringing together people and

Tata Elxsi's experience in complex aerospace systems gives us access to capabilities that are critical as we take Shunya from concept to reality."

Manoj Raghavan, CEO & Managing Director, Tata Elxsi, said:



"Every major shift in transportation has been enabled by a combination of engineering innovation and ecosystem readiness. Advanced air mobility is no different, and

Sarla Aviation's vision for Shunya reflects the ambition driving this transformation."

Beyond Shunya, the partnership is expected to strengthen capabilities for applications including logistics, air ambulance services and defence-related operations, while contributing to the development of India's emerging advanced air mobility ecosystem.

SAS Reconnects Mumbai and Copenhagen with Nonstop Flights

Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) will return to India with a new nonstop Mumbai–Copenhagen service from 1 October 2026, operating five times a week and restoring the airline’s India connectivity after 17 years.

The new route will strengthen travel, business and cultural links between India and Scandinavia, while leveraging Mumbai’s position as a major global financial hub. The service will also enhance Copenhagen Airport’s role as

an international gateway, offering convenient onward connections to key SAS destinations across Europe and North America, including New York, Boston and Toronto. With its focus on reliability and service, SAS will provide travellers with seamless

connectivity across its network. InterGlobe Air Transport, SAS’ exclusive GSA in India since 1990, will support the airline’s growth through sales, marketing, reservations, ticketing and operational activities, backed by its strong understanding of the Indian travel market.



Paul Verhagen, Chief Commercial Officer at SAS

We are absolutely thrilled to welcome passengers on board our new nonstop service to Mumbai. This strategic route represents an extraordinary milestone for SAS, opening effortless doors between

Scandinavia and one of the world’s most dynamic economic hubs. As SAS celebrates 80 years of pioneering international travel, reconnecting our regions is a deeply proud moment for all of us, and we cannot wait to welcome our passengers on board as of October 1st.



JB Singh, Director, InterGlobe Air Transport

The return of Scandinavian Airlines to India marks a significant milestone, and we are proud to be part of this journey. Our partnership, built over more than three decades, reflects a shared belief in the long-term potential of

the India–Scandinavia market. The Mumbai–Copenhagen route will not only meet the rising demand for direct, high-quality connectivity but also serve as a catalyst for closer business, trade, and cultural exchange. We are fully committed to supporting SAS in establishing a strong and enduring footprint in India.



Affordable Fares Top Priority for 60% of Indian Regional Flyers: Star Air Survey

A Star Air survey of more than 20,000 flyers reveals that affordable fares, convenient timings and better connectivity are among the key factors shaping travel choices on regional airlines in India.

The survey, conducted across Mumbai, Pune, Kolhapur, Bengaluru and Delhi-NCR, found that 60% of regional airline passengers consider ticket affordability the leading factor when choosing to fly. Meanwhile, 53% value convenient flight timings, 47% consider airport proximity important and 43% look at airline reputation. The findings also highlight the growing democratisation of air travel,

with 37% of respondents being first-time or infrequent flyers. Passenger experience remains equally important, with 77% rating airline staff assistance as good or excellent. However, travellers identified better on-time performance, cleanliness, comfort and staff friendliness as areas for improvement. Most significantly, 88% said connecting smaller cities and towns with major metros is very or extremely important, underlining the role

Captain Simran Singh Tiwana, CEO of Star Air



This survey is a testament to the new era of regional aviation in India. Our mission goes beyond connecting cities; it’s about making air travel a source of comfort, opportunity, and pride for communities that were once off the aviation map. We are committed to delivering not only safe and reliable journeys but also memorable and welcoming experiences for every Indian flyer.

of regional aviation in supporting economic growth, education, healthcare and social connectivity. The survey also found that 73% of passengers would recommend regional air travel, while faster journey times (68%) and convenience (59%) were the key reasons for choosing flights over other modes of transport. Overall, 82% said regional airlines provide comfort and serve as an important lifeline for small-town India.

San Diego International Airport Receives \$15.3 Million Federal Grant for Quieter Homes

Funding to Provide Sound Insulation for Approximately 400 Eligible Residences



The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has awarded \$15.3 million to the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority's Quieter Home Program to provide aircraft sound insulation measures for approximately 400 eligible residences around San Diego International Airport (SAN).

The funding has been provided through the FAA's Airport Improvement Program (AIP), which supports airport infrastructure and improvement projects across the United States. The grant for San Diego International Airport is among 232 grants awarded to U.S. airports under the AIP to strengthen aviation infrastructure.

Atif Saeed, President and CEO of the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, expressed appreciation for the federal funding and the support of Senators Alex Padilla and Adam Schiff, Congressman Scott Peters, and the San Diego congressional delegation. He said the funding will allow the Airport Authority to work with neighboring communities and provide sound-

insulation improvements that reduce aircraft noise inside eligible homes.

Senator Alex Padilla said San Diego International Airport is an important economic engine for the region, while residents living nearby should also be able to enjoy a good quality of life. He said the \$15.3 million federal investment will help make homes quieter for hundreds of San Diego families while allowing the airport to continue serving the region.

Senator Adam Schiff welcomed the federal investment, saying that reducing aircraft noise is important for communities surrounding the airport. He also emphasized the importance of continued federal investment in California's airports, safety projects and infrastructure improvements. Congressman Scott Peters (CA-50) said the funding is good news for another 400 households located near the airport. Residents in Point Loma, Little Italy and nearby communities are expected to benefit from quieter homes and improved ventilation, helping create a healthier

and more comfortable living environment.

Eligibility for the Quieter Home Program is determined by the FAA. Eligible residences are located within areas where aircraft noise reaches 65 decibels or greater and where average indoor noise levels are 45 decibels or greater with windows closed.

Eligible communities include Loma Portal, Ocean Beach, Bankers Hill, Middletown, Golden Hill and South Park.

The program aims to reduce indoor aircraft noise by approximately five decibels. After evaluation, eligible homes may receive improvements such as noise-reducing exterior doors and windows, ventilation systems including air-conditioning units, weather stripping and caulking around openings. The specific sound-insulation measures will vary depending on the needs of each residence.

United Announces Largest-Ever International Expansion for 2027

United Airlines will add 10 new international cities and three new routes in 2027, marking the largest international network expansion in the airline's history and further strengthening its global footprint.

Starting as early as March 2027, United will launch new services to destinations including Okinawa, Toulouse, Luxembourg City, Marseille, Ibiza, Valencia, Terceira, Ljubljana, Olbia and Catania. Eight of the destinations will have no other U.S. airline offering nonstop service. Several new routes will be operated by United's new A321XLR "Born to Explore" aircraft, featuring lie-flat seats in United Polaris and Economy Plus seating with additional space.

The expansion also includes new services from Los Angeles to Osaka, Washington, D.C. to Milan and Denver to Paris, while United plans to resume San Francisco-Tel Aviv flights. The airline has added 58 international destinations since 2017 and now serves more than 160 international destinations, reinforcing its position as a leading global carrier.

Scott Kirby,
CEO of United
Airlines



The creative and strategic way we've expanded our international network since the pandemic has made all the difference, not only for our customers and employees, but also as a way to differentiate United and build a brand focused on customers. We offer the most flights across the Atlantic and Pacific and Newark is the best Atlantic gateway in the country - so far this year, it's the most on-time airport in the New York City area. We're going to keep building on that momentum as we welcome the new A321XLR to our fleet and continue to elevate the travel experience for every customer who chooses United.

Patrick Quayle,
Senior Vice President
of Global Network
Planning and
Alliances, United



We aim to have a destination on our route map for every traveler, at every stage of their lives. Whether it's a business trip, a dream honeymoon, a bucket-list adventure, or a trip home to see family, we're making the world feel smaller and connecting cultures at a scale no other airline in the world can match. We've added flights to nearly 60 new international cities in the last decade, building a global network with the breadth and reach to set travel trends and inspire even the most discerning travelers to discover somewhere new. When someone visits our website or app to start planning a trip, they'll be amazed by where United can take them.



Ahmedabad Takes Off as India's New International Aviation Gateway

Hub & Spoke Operations Strengthen Global Connectivity, Simplify International Travel and Open New Opportunities for Gujarat

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched Hub & Spoke International Flight Operations from Ahmedabad, marking a significant milestone in India's efforts to build a stronger, more integrated international aviation network. Ahmedabad becomes the third spoke airport in the country, after Varanasi and Amritsar, to be integrated into the Government's International Aviation Hub Strategy, connecting passengers from Gujarat more seamlessly with destinations across the world through India's hub airport at Delhi.

The new initiative is designed to transform the international travel experience for passengers from Ahmedabad. Under the Hub & Spoke model, travellers can complete check-in, immigration and customs formalities at Ahmedabad itself, with their baggage checked through to the final international destination. On arrival at Delhi, passengers can proceed directly to their onward international flight without repeating immigration or customs procedures, significantly reducing travel time, complexity and the stress associated with international connections.

The Ahmedabad launch follows the commencement of Hub & Spoke operations from Varanasi on 25 June 2026 and Amritsar on 28 July 2026, reflecting the Government's phased approach towards developing India as a globally competitive

aviation hub. From Ahmedabad, AI 1117 will connect passengers to 22 destinations, primarily across Europe, Southeast Asia and the Middle East, while the evening service AI 1121, departing at 20:15 hours, will provide connectivity to 17 destinations across North America, East Asia, Southeast Asia, Australia and Europe.

A More Seamless Journey for International Travellers

Explaining the significance of the initiative, Union Minister of Civil Aviation Shri Ram Mohan Naidu highlighted how the new system will eliminate several challenges traditionally faced by passengers travelling internationally from Ahmedabad. Until now, travellers heading to destinations such as Paris, Toronto or Sydney often had to take a domestic flight to Delhi, manage separate processes, collect and re-check baggage, undergo immigration procedures and navigate a large airport before boarding their international flight.

Under the new system, these processes are streamlined at the originating airport itself, allowing passengers and their baggage to move through the Delhi hub with greater ease.

Shri Ram Mohan Naidu said, "With the seamless journey of Hub & Spoke, Ahmedabad will be ready to invite a global audience from maximum destinations for the Commonwealth Games in 2030."

SriLankan Airlines Restores Full Middle East Network with Kuwait Service

SriLankan Airlines has resumed six weekly flights to Kuwait from 8 August 2026, completing the restoration of its Middle East network and strengthening connectivity between the region, Colombo and South India.

With Kuwait back in the network, SriLankan now serves Riyadh, Dammam, Dubai, Doha and Kuwait, with convenient connections via Colombo to major South Indian cities including Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Thiruvananthapuram, Madurai and Kochi. The airline operates 90 weekly flights between India and Colombo, making India its largest market.

Passengers can enjoy SriLankan's onboard hospitality, award-winning meals and a wide selection of

Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu and Hindi entertainment. Economy Class travellers between South India and the Middle East receive 7 kg cabin and 30 kg checked baggage allowance, with additional prepaid baggage options available.

SriLankan Airlines connects passengers to 130 destinations across 63 countries through its own services and codeshare partnerships, including 33 destinations served directly. Its all-Airbus fleet comprises A330-200/300 and A320/321 aircraft, serving destinations across Europe, Australia, the Middle East, the Indian Subcontinent and Asia.

Dimuthu Tennakoon, Head of Commercial at SriLankan Airlines



As an airline that has been connecting passengers to the Middle East for over 40

years, including our loyal passengers in South India who have relied on our services throughout that time, we are delighted to announce our full return to the region. This milestone marks not only the restoration of convenient connectivity, but also the return of the dependable service and warm Sri Lankan hospitality that have made us a preferred carrier for travellers across South Asia.

Fawzan Fareid, Regional Manager India, Bangladesh and Nepal at SriLankan Airlines



Our Middle East network has long been a vital part of our service to customers in South India.

While the past few months presented significant challenges for our Middle East operations, we remained resilient by strengthening other markets and staying committed to serving our customers across India. As we restore our full Middle East network, we are excited to build on this momentum with renewed confidence and continue delivering the seamless connectivity, dependable service and warm SriLankan hospitality that our passengers value.

Lifestyle





Slow Romance

Why Couples Are Choosing Unhurried Honeymoons

In a world of packed itineraries and picture-perfect escapes, couples are discovering that the greatest honeymoon luxury may simply be having more time for each other.

T3FS Desk

For years, the perfect honeymoon seemed to follow a familiar formula: choose a beautiful destination, book a luxurious hotel, fill the days with sightseeing and experiences, and return home with hundreds of photographs. But in 2026, the idea of the dream honeymoon is becoming much slower.

Couples are increasingly choosing to do less, stay longer and experience more deeply. Instead of moving from one destination to another, they are settling into one beautiful place, enjoying long breakfasts, discovering local neighbourhoods, taking afternoon walks, lingering over dinner and allowing the day to unfold without a strict schedule. Recent travel coverage has identified this shift towards longer, slower and more

meaningful honeymoons as a growing trend.

The Luxury of Having Nowhere to Be

The appeal of slow romance is simple: time.

After months of wedding planning, family celebrations, social commitments and constant decision-making, many couples arrive at their honeymoon wanting a pause rather than another schedule. A slower itinerary gives them the chance to actually recover, reconnect and enjoy the beginning of married life.

Luxury, in this context, is not necessarily about the largest suite or the most elaborate itinerary. It can be waking up naturally, ordering breakfast in bed, spending an afternoon by the pool or taking a long walk



Romance Without the Rush

Some of the most memorable honeymoon moments are rarely the ones that require a reservation.

It could be finding a tiny café while wandering through an unfamiliar town, watching the sunset from a quiet beach, shopping together at a local market or discovering a viewpoint away from the crowds.

Slow travel creates room for these unplanned moments.

A honeymoon does not need to be a perfectly executed itinerary. Sometimes the best day is the one where the only plan is breakfast.

without worrying about what comes next.

The greatest indulgence may be having nowhere to be at 10 a.m.

One Destination, Many Experiences

The slow honeymoon does not mean doing nothing. It means experiencing a destination without constantly watching the clock.

Instead of visiting three cities in five days, couples might choose one region and explore it properly. A week in Kerala could combine an Ayurvedic wellness retreat, a backwater experience, local cuisine and quiet beach time. A Japanese honeymoon could pair a few days in a city with a traditional ryokan stay and time in nature.

The emphasis is shifting from how many places can we cover? to how well can we experience this place?

This move towards fewer destinations and more customised itineraries is also being seen among Indian travellers, with recent travel reporting highlighting growing interest in personalised and privacy-led journeys.

Wellness Becomes Part of the Journey

The slow honeymoon also naturally lends itself to wellness.

Couples are incorporating spa treatments, yoga, meditation, Ayurveda, thermal bathing, nature walks and wellness retreats into their journeys. Instead of treating wellness as an activity to fit between sightseeing appointments, it becomes part of the overall rhythm of the holiday.

Imagine beginning the morning with yoga,



The Rise of the Two-Part Honeymoon

Slow romance is also changing the timing of honeymoons.

Rather than taking one long international trip immediately after the wedding, some couples are choosing a two-phase approach: a short, relaxing minimoon soon after the celebrations, followed by a longer and more immersive trip months later.

This allows couples to recover after the wedding while giving them more time to plan the larger journey. Recent reporting on Indian honeymoon travel has highlighted this growing interest in combining short post-wedding escapes with longer trips later.



enjoying a leisurely breakfast, spending the afternoon by the pool and ending the evening with a couples' treatment. It is travel designed around how you want to feel, not simply what you want to see.

Privacy Over Popularity

Another defining element of slow romance is the search for privacy.

Couples are increasingly drawn to boutique properties, private villas, secluded retreats and intimate resorts where they can enjoy uninterrupted time together. The attraction is not necessarily exclusivity for its own sake, but the freedom that comes with fewer distractions.

There is also a growing desire to step away from the pressure to document every moment. Photographs remain part of the honeymoon experience, but couples are increasingly valuing being present over being seen.

The result is a more intimate kind of luxury—one that does not need an audience.

Choose a Place That Lets You Breathe

The destination matters, but the pace matters more.

A quiet beach, a mountain retreat, a heritage town, a countryside villa or a wellness resort can all become the setting for a slow honeymoon. What matters is having enough time to settle in.

For Indian couples, destinations such as Kerala, Coorg, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and the Northeast can offer very different versions of slow romance, while international journeys to destinations such as Japan, Italy or Southeast Asia can be designed around longer stays and immersive experiences.

The idea is not to avoid adventure or sightseeing. It is to balance them with enough

empty space.

Romance Is in the Details

An unhurried honeymoon allows couples to notice the small things.

The first coffee together in a new destination. A shared dessert after dinner. A handwritten note left by the hotel. A spontaneous swim. A long conversation on a balcony. A walk after sunset.

These moments may never appear on a travel itinerary, but they often become the memories couples carry for years.

And perhaps that is why slow romance is becoming more than a travel trend. It reflects a broader change in what couples want from their honeymoon: less performance, less pressure and more presence.

The New Meaning of a Honeymoon

The honeymoon is not another event to complete after the wedding. It is the beginning of a new chapter.

There will always be couples who want adventure, multiple destinations and an itinerary packed with experiences—and there is nothing wrong with that. But for those choosing slow romance, the luxury lies elsewhere.

It is in having time to wake up slowly.

Time to explore without rushing.

Time to sit across from each other over dinner.

Time to get lost somewhere beautiful.

And, most importantly, time to simply be together.

Because perhaps the most romantic thing a honeymoon can offer is not another destination to tick off the list, but the freedom to slow down and enjoy the beginning of forever.

The Honeymoon Wardrobe

What to Pack for Romance in Style

From breezy resortwear and effortless evening looks to comfortable travel essentials, the perfect honeymoon wardrobe is all about dressing beautifully while travelling with ease.

T3FS Desk

A honeymoon is more than a holiday; it is the first great escape of a new chapter together. Whether the itinerary leads to a tropical island, a European city, a mountain retreat or an intimate luxury resort, what you wear becomes part of the experience. The key to a memorable honeymoon wardrobe is not about packing everything you own, but choosing pieces that are stylish, versatile and comfortable enough to take you effortlessly from sightseeing and poolside afternoons to candlelit dinners.

Start with the Destination

The destination should set the tone for the wardrobe. A beach honeymoon calls for lightweight fabrics, flowing silhouettes, swimwear, relaxed shirts and breezy dresses, while a European city break may require smart separates, comfortable walking shoes and layers for changing temperatures. For a mountain escape, cosy knits, jackets, boots and practical daywear become essentials.

Before packing, check the expected weather and planned activities. A little preparation can make the difference between a suitcase filled with unnecessary clothes and a carefully edited collection where every piece has a purpose.

Daytime: Keep It Effortless

Honeymoon days often involve exploring, long lunches, sightseeing and spontaneous stops for coffee or cocktails. Choose

breathable fabrics such as cotton, linen and lightweight blends that keep you comfortable while still looking polished.

For her, flowing dresses, coordinated co-ords, wide-leg trousers, skirts and relaxed shirts can create effortless looks. For him, linen shirts, tailored shorts, lightweight trousers and relaxed polos offer an easy resort aesthetic. Neutral tones can be mixed and matched, while a few brighter colours or prints add personality.

The secret is versatility. A simple daytime dress can become an evening look with statement earrings and a change of shoes, while a linen shirt can work equally well with shorts during the day or trousers for dinner.

Poolside to Sunset

For tropical honeymoons, swimwear is an obvious essential, but the right cover-ups can transform a poolside look. Think oversized shirts, kaftans, sarongs, lightweight trousers and flowing dresses that can be slipped on after a swim.

As the sun begins to set, the wardrobe can shift naturally from relaxed to romantic. A flowing maxi dress, a silky slip dress or a well-cut shirt with tailored trousers creates an elegant transition without requiring a complete outfit change.

Dressing for Date Night

Dinner reservations, rooftop cocktails and private candlelit dinners deserve something special.



A honeymoon is the perfect excuse to bring out those outfits that feel a little more glamorous.

For her, consider one or two standout evening dresses, a sophisticated jumpsuit or a sleek co-ordinated set. For him, a tailored blazer, smart shirt, trousers or a refined resort suit can instantly elevate the look.

Accessories can do much of the work. A statement necklace, elegant earrings, a compact clutch or a classic watch can transform a simple outfit without taking up much luggage space.

Shoes: Style Meets Comfort

Beautiful shoes are tempting, but a honeymoon is not the time to discover that a pair is impossible to walk in. Pack strategically: comfortable walking shoes for exploring, sandals or flats for daytime and one elegant pair for evenings.

For destinations involving beaches, boats or uneven terrain, practical footwear is particularly important. A stylish pair of sneakers can also become one of the most useful pieces in the

suitcase.

Don't Forget the Details

The little things often complete a honeymoon wardrobe. Sunglasses, a versatile hat, a lightweight scarf, a compact evening bag and a few carefully chosen pieces of jewellery can instantly refresh an outfit.

A light jacket or wrap is useful for cooler evenings, while a swimsuit bag, laundry pouch and travel-sized garment steamer can make life easier on the road. And because honeymoon photographs become treasured memories, choose outfits that make you feel confident rather than simply following a trend.

His and Hers, Without Matching

Coordinated couple dressing does not have to mean wearing identical outfits. Instead, look for subtle connections through colour, texture or style. A soft blue dress paired with a navy linen shirt, or neutral tones worn in different silhouettes, creates a sophisticated sense of



with tempting boutiques, local crafts and beautiful finds, and bringing home something discovered together can become a part of the journey itself.

The Ultimate Honeymoon Style

Ultimately, honeymoon style is not about following a particular fashion trend. It is about feeling comfortable, confident and completely yourself while experiencing a special journey together.

The best honeymoon wardrobe moves effortlessly with the couple — from airport lounges to beach walks, from sightseeing mornings to sunset cocktails and romantic dinners. Pack thoughtfully, choose pieces



that tell your personal style story, and let the destination provide the backdrop. After all, the most stylish honeymoon look is one that allows you to forget what you are wearing and simply enjoy where you are — and who you are with.

Why the Honeymoon Matters

More Than Just a Post-Wedding Vacation

The wedding may be one day, but the honeymoon offers couples something just as valuable—the time and space to begin their new chapter together.

T3FS Desk

In the whirlwind of wedding planning, the honeymoon can sometimes feel like just another item on a long checklist—a nice-to-have addition after the main event. Yet, a honeymoon is far more than a luxury holiday. It is a vital transitional period that gives

couples the time and space to move from the celebration of getting married to the experience of being married. After months of planning, family gatherings, social commitments and the excitement of the wedding itself, the honeymoon offers a rare opportunity to pause,

reconnect and truly begin life together. Away from the demands of everyday life, couples can slow down, enjoy uninterrupted time with each other and begin creating the first shared memories of their marriage. In a world that often rushes from one milestone to the next, the honeymoon becomes a meaningful pause—a dedicated space to celebrate love, discover each other in a new way and lay the emotional foundation for the journey ahead.

The First Journey as a Married Couple

Every couple has travelled before, but travelling together immediately after marriage carries a different meaning. It becomes the first shared adventure of a new chapter.

Whether it is a beach escape, a mountain retreat, a cultural journey or a luxury city break, the destination becomes part of the couple's story. The experiences they share—from discovering a new restaurant to watching a sunset or getting slightly lost in an unfamiliar place—become memories associated with the beginning of their married life. Years later, these moments can be just as meaningful as the wedding photographs.

The Essential Decompression

The period leading up to a wedding is often one of the most stressful times in a couple's life. Months, sometimes years, are spent managing budgets, guest lists, vendor contracts, and family



expectations. By the time the last dance is over, many couples are left feeling emotionally and physically drained.

The honeymoon provides a necessary decompression chamber. It is a deliberate break from the chaos, allowing you to shed the stress of planning and reconnect with the reason you decided to get married in the first place: each other. This time away from everyday responsibilities and social obligations creates a buffer zone where you can relax, recharge, and transition from "engaged" to "married" without the immediate pressure of returning to work or household routines.

Building a Shared Narrative

A honeymoon is often the first major journey a couple takes as a married unit. The experiences you share during this time—whether it is navigating a new city, relaxing on a secluded beach, or trying a new activity together—become the first chapters of your shared story.

These shared memories form a "relationship bank" that you can draw upon in the years to come. When life gets challenging, remembering the laughter you shared while getting lost in a foreign country or the peace you felt watching a sunset together can serve as a powerful reminder of your bond. The honeymoon helps to establish a pattern of adventure, teamwork, and mutual enjoyment that can set the tone for the rest of your marriage.

A Chance to Pause After the Wedding

Modern weddings can be wonderfully elaborate, but they can also be exhausting. There are ceremonies to organise, guests to welcome, family commitments to manage and countless decisions to make.

A honeymoon provides a much-needed pause. Instead of thinking about schedules, seating arrangements and the next wedding function, couples can wake up without an agenda, enjoy a leisurely breakfast, take a walk, relax by the pool or simply spend an afternoon talking. Sometimes, the greatest luxury after a wedding is having nothing that needs to be



done.

Deepening Intimacy and Connection

In the daily grind of modern life, it is easy for couples to fall into parallel routines, coexisting rather than truly connecting.

The honeymoon removes these distractions. Without the interference of work emails, household chores, or social commitments, you have the unique opportunity to focus entirely on each other.

This uninterrupted time fosters a deeper level of intimacy, both emotional and physical. It allows for long conversations that might not happen at home, the chance to discuss your hopes and dreams for the future, and the space to simply be present with one another. This deepened connection can create a strong emotional reservoir that helps sustain the relationship through the inevitable challenges of married life.

Creating Shared Memories

A strong relationship is built not only on everyday life but also on shared memories. The first dinner overlooking the sea, a sunrise viewed from a mountain, a boat ride through a beautiful landscape, a spontaneous road trip or even an unexpected travel mishap can become stories that couples tell for years. These experiences create a personal collection of memories that belongs exclusively to them. A honeymoon, therefore, is not simply about where you go. It is about what you experience together.

A Rite of Passage

Culturally and psychologically, the honeymoon serves as a rite of passage. It marks the official transition from being two individuals to being a unified couple. It is a symbolic journey that signifies the end of one chapter and the beginning of another.

This period of seclusion and focus allows you to internalise your new identity as a married couple. It gives you the space to discuss your values, your goals, and your vision for your life together without external noise. In this sense, the honeymoon is not just a vacation; it is a foundational ritual that helps to solidify



your commitment and prepare you for the journey ahead.

Setting the Tone for the Future

How you begin something often influences how it continues. The honeymoon is a chance to set a positive, intentional tone for your marriage. It is a time to practice the skills that will make your relationship thrive: communication, compromise, patience, and presence.

By prioritising this time together, you are sending a clear message to yourselves and each other that your relationship is worth investing in. It establishes a precedent that even amidst the demands of life, you will always make time for each other. This mindset can become a guiding principle, reminding you to prioritise your partnership long after you have returned from your trip.

Romance Without Distractions

In everyday life, couples often have work, family responsibilities, social commitments and digital distractions competing for their attention. A honeymoon offers the rare opportunity to put some of these distractions aside. It can be a chance to have long conversations, rediscover simple affection and enjoy each other's company without constantly looking at the clock. For some couples, this may mean switching off their phones for a few hours each day; for others, it could simply mean choosing a destination where the pace of life is naturally slower. Romance does not always require grand gestures. Sometimes it is simply uninterrupted time together.

The Beginning of New Traditions

A honeymoon can also become the starting point for traditions that continue throughout a marriage. Perhaps every anniversary includes a new destination. Maybe the couple returns to the same hotel every few years, recreates their first honeymoon dinner or chooses a different country to explore together. The first journey can inspire many journeys that follow.

It Does Not Have to Be Extravagant

One of the biggest misconceptions about honeymoons is that they have to be expensive or luxurious. They do not. A honeymoon can be a weekend at a beautiful resort close to home, a road trip, a stay in the mountains, a beach holiday or a longer international adventure. What makes it special is not the price tag but the intention

behind it. For couples with limited time or budgets, even a short "minimoon" can provide the same sense of pause and togetherness before returning to everyday life. The important thing is to choose something that feels right for the couple.

A Journey That Belongs to Two People

Weddings are often planned around families, traditions and guests. The honeymoon is different. It is one part of the wedding journey that belongs almost entirely to the couple. They can choose where to go, how slowly to travel, what experiences to enjoy and how they want to spend their first days together as newlyweds. It can be adventurous, peaceful, luxurious, simple, spontaneous or deeply private. There is no single formula for the perfect honeymoon.

An Investment in Your Marriage

Ultimately, viewing the honeymoon as an essential investment in your marriage, rather than an optional expense, shifts its importance entirely. It is a dedicated period for strengthening your bond, creating lasting memories, and setting a positive trajectory for your life together. In the years to come, when the details of the wedding day may fade, the feelings and connections nurtured during your honeymoon will remain. It is a time to celebrate your love, to dream together, and to begin your greatest adventure yet—with intention, joy, and each other.

More Than a Holiday

Ultimately, a honeymoon is important because it gives couples something that everyday life does not always allow: time to stop, breathe and appreciate the beginning of a new life together. The wedding celebrates the commitment. The honeymoon gives the couple time to live in that commitment—to talk, laugh, explore, rest and create their first memories as husband and wife or partners for life. Years from now, they may not remember every detail of the wedding menu or the flowers on the tables. But they are likely to remember that first morning together in a new place, the dinner they shared, the view they discovered and the feeling of beginning something beautiful. That is the real value of a honeymoon. It is not simply a holiday after the wedding. It is the first journey of the marriage.

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APPOINTMENT



DoubleTree by Hilton Pune-Chinchwad Appoints Atharva Paithankar as Assistant Marketing Manager

DoubleTree by Hilton Pune-Chinchwad has appointed Atharva Paithankar as Assistant Marketing Manager, strengthening its marketing team and focus on strategic brand building, digital engagement and integrated campaigns. With experience in hospitality marketing, content strategy and digital marketing, including roles at MBD Group and Radisson Blu MBD Hotel, Noida, Atharva will focus on strengthening the hotel's digital presence, developing impactful brand campaigns, enhancing consumer engagement and aligning marketing initiatives with the property's commercial objectives.



Eco Hotels & Resorts Strengthens Leadership with Mahek B. Patel as Head of Operations

Eco Hotels & Resorts Limited has appointed Mahek B. Patel as Head of Operations to support the company's growth and strengthen operational excellence across its expanding portfolio. With experience across Bloom Hotel, Lemon Tree Premier, and The Resort Hotel, Mahek will focus on enhancing SOPs, service standards, guest experiences, team development, operational efficiency and cost optimisation, helping build a consistent and strong operational framework for the company's next phase of growth.



Fortune Hotels Appoints Manjur Alam as General Manager at Fortune Pahalgam

Fortune Hotels, a member of the ITC Hotels Group, has appointed Manjur Alam as General Manager of Fortune Pahalgam. With over 18 years of experience in hospitality, Manjur brings expertise in hotel operations, room operations, revenue management, guest experience and team leadership. Previously serving as Director of Rooms at Crowne Plaza Pune, he has also worked with leading brands including IHG, Radisson and Hyatt. In his new role, he will focus on driving business performance, strengthening service standards and fostering a high-performing team culture at Fortune Pahalgam.



Fortune Hotels Appoints Vaibhav Prabhakar Kulkarni as General Manager at Fortune Park JP Celestial, Bengaluru

Fortune Hotels, a member of the ITC Hotels Group, has announced the appointment of Vaibhav Prabhakar Kulkarni as General Manager of Fortune Park JP Celestial, Bengaluru. With over two decades of experience in hotel operations, sales, revenue management and business development, Vaibhav brings extensive expertise to the role. Having worked with renowned hospitality brands including The Clarks Hotels & Resorts by IHCL, Radisson, Eco Hotels & Resorts, Sarovar Hotels and Al Areen Holdings, he will lead the hotel's operations, guest experience, commercial performance and team development, while driving business growth and operational excellence at the property.



Hyatt Place Vithalapur Appoints Abhishek Chawla as Head Chef

Hyatt Place Vithalapur has appointed Chef Abhishek Chawla as Head Chef, bringing over 15 years of hospitality experience and expertise in Pan-Asian cuisine to the 108-room property. With experience across leading international hotel brands, Chef Abhishek will oversee the hotel's culinary operations and menu development, focusing on authentic flavours, fresh ingredients and memorable dining experiences for its diverse domestic and international business and leisure guests.



Le Méridien Surat Appoints Manoj Jangid as General Manager

Le Méridien Surat has appointed Manoj Jangid as General Manager, bringing over two decades of experience across leading luxury hospitality brands. With expertise in hotel operations, commercial performance, food and beverage, revenue optimisation and leadership, Manoj will focus on elevating guest experiences, driving business performance and strengthening the hotel's position as a premier hospitality destination in Surat. Previously associated with Fairfield by Marriott Kolkata, JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar and Sofitel Mumbai BKC, he has also been recognised as BW Hotelier's General Manager of the Year (East Zone) in 2024 and 2025, reflecting his strong leadership and commitment to hospitality excellence.



Novotel Kolkata Appoints Yogesh Kumar as Front Office Manager

Novotel Kolkata Hotel & Residences has appointed Yogesh Kumar as Front Office Manager, bringing extensive experience in front-office operations, guest relations, team leadership and hotel performance management. Having worked with leading brands including JW Marriott Mussoorie, Vivanta by Taj Guwahati and Courtyard by Marriott, Yogesh will focus on enhancing guest satisfaction, operational efficiency, team performance and service standards, while balancing technology with personalised hospitality to create seamless and memorable guest experiences.



ONE Atmosphere Appoints Kamana Oliya as Marketing Manager

ONE Atmosphere has appointed Kamana Oliya as Marketing Manager at ONE Atmosphere Suites at Corner Walk, Gurugram, strengthening its marketing leadership ahead of the launch of its first aparthotel. Bringing extensive experience in brand strategy, digital marketing, integrated communications and pre-opening campaigns, Kamana previously worked with Kathmandu Marriott, Fairfield by Marriott, Moxie Kathmandu, Holiday Inn Resort Kathmandu Budhanilkantha and Hotel Yak & Yeti. In her new role, she will lead strategic brand building, creative marketing and digital initiatives to establish ONE Atmosphere Suites as a distinctive premium aparthotel in the Gurugram hospitality market.



Shilton Hospitality Appoints Sajeev Kulangarath as General Manager at Shilton Dee Cee, Chennai

Shilton Hospitality has appointed Sajeev Kulangarath as General Manager of Shilton Dee Cee, Chennai, bringing over 21 years of experience in hotel operations, guest experience, revenue management and business development. With an extensive career across leading brands including Marriott, IHG, Speke Hotels, Laico Hotels, Choice Hotels, Royal Orchid Hotels and Spree Hospitality, Sajeev will focus on driving operational excellence, enhancing guest experiences, strengthening team performance and supporting sustainable business growth at the property.



The LaLiT Chandigarh Appoints Rahul Chauhan as Resident Manager

The LaLiT Chandigarh has appointed Rahul Chauhan as Resident Manager, bringing over two decades of experience in luxury and upscale hospitality. With expertise in hotel operations, food & beverage, revenue optimisation, guest experience and team leadership, Rahul has worked with leading brands including Accor, IHG, Taj Hotels, Marriott, Radisson Hotels, Sarovar Hotels and Lebua Hotels. Previously associated with Grand Mercure Convention Center Agra, he will oversee day-to-day operations at The LaLiT Chandigarh, focusing on service excellence, operational efficiency, guest satisfaction and the hotel's continued growth.



Rocky Kalra Appointed CEO of The LaLiT Suri Hospitality School

The LaLiT Suri Hospitality School has appointed former Group Vice President Rocky Kalra as its new Chief Executive Officer. Bringing over three decades of leadership across brands like The LaLiT, ITC Hotels, and Costa Coffee, Kalra blends operational expertise with a background in psychology, counselling, and wellness. He will lead the institution's strategic vision, focusing on academic rigor, industry partnerships, and developing future-ready hospitality professionals grounded in emotional intelligence, empathy, and resilience.



The Ritz-Carlton, Pune Appoints Dirham Haque as Director of Culinary

The Ritz-Carlton, Pune has appointed Dirham Haque as Director of Culinary, bringing over 15 years of culinary experience across India and the Middle East. Having worked with leading luxury hospitality brands including ITC Hotels, The Oberoi Hotels & Resorts, Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, and JW Marriott, Dirham has extensive expertise in luxury hotels, specialty restaurants, banqueting and pre-opening projects. In his new role, he will focus on elevating the hotel's culinary offerings, driving innovation and creating distinctive dining experiences while upholding The Ritz-Carlton's renowned standards of excellence.

HOROSCOPE

TRAVEL TIMING &
HUMAN PATTERNS

Reset, Rebuild & Find Your Rhythm

**DR. SHANKER
ADAWAL**

Astrologer, Author
& Researcher



This forecast is based on your Moon Sign (Janma Rashi), offering practical insight into behavioural patterns, travel timing and decision cycles. Readers are advised to refer to their Moon Sign for better personal relevance.

The Month at a Glance

September carries more than one mood. It begins with activity around us, yet internally there may still be unfinished thoughts from the previous month. The first part is better for observing, completing and sorting rather than pushing every plan forward. Travel may continue, but timing and purpose matter more than speed.

The Moon enters Mesha on September 1, followed by Vrishabha, Mithuna, Karka and Simha during the first ten days. This creates changing moods—action first, then practical concerns, communication, family matters and finally stronger self-expression. Krishna Janmashtami around September 4 also gives the opening week a festive and social character, even while Krishna Paksha gradually takes the month towards a quieter point.

Around September 10–11, Amavasya brings the first real turning point. This is not necessarily a negative phase, but it can feel slower. Pending decisions may need another look. Some travel plans can change, discussions may remain incomplete, and emotionally also people may prefer fewer complications. Better to clear what is pending before adding something new.

The atmosphere begins changing after this. As Shukla Paksha builds and the Moon moves through Kanya and Tula, planning becomes easier and people become more willing to reconnect. Ganesh Chaturthi around September 14 comes almost at the same turning phase. Good period for restarting conversations, organising schedules, short journeys and moving ahead with something which was earlier waiting.



Around the middle of September, the energy becomes more practical. Kanya Sankranti on September 17 adds to this tone of order, work and attention to detail. The Moon then moves through Vrishchika and Dhanu, so there can be intensity first and expansion after that. Travel connected with work, learning, meetings or a change of environment may become more meaningful during this period.

The third week has better forward movement. Makara brings responsibility, Kumbha encourages wider connections and Meena softens the pace again. This is a useful stretch for balancing work with personal life. Not every journey has to be ambitious. Sometimes a short

break, family visit or even change of surroundings does enough.

Towards September 26, Bhadrapada Purnima brings the month to another peak, but September does not end there. Pitru Paksha begins around September 27, changing the emotional tone once again. The final days become more reflective. Family memories, older responsibilities and matters left unattended may come back into focus.

So September is not simply about moving ahead. It is about knowing when to act, when to reorganise, and when to leave some space. Plans made with this rhythm may work better than those pushed only by urgency.

Zodiac Insights (Moon Sign Based)

Aries (Mesha) : The month opens with energetic momentum, urging you to initiate conversations and finalize travel plans. Practice patience during the first half; avoid forcing decisions near Amavasya just to gain closure. Work coordination, short trips, and meetings flow smoothly after mid-month. Channel your late-month energy with deliberate purpose.

Taurus (Vrishabha): Focus shifts early toward finances, comfort, and practical logistics. Base travel decisions on budgets and family needs rather than impulse. Use the Amavasya phase to audit pending expenses. Social routines and travel arrangements smooth out past mid-month, with the Moon's return restoring stability.

Gemini (Mithuna): Communication and networking drive your opening week. Keep schedules flexible around the second week to handle shifting plans. Discussions turn far more productive after Ganesh Chaturthi and the Shukla Paksha shift. Work-related travel accelerates mid-month, while unfinished ideas resurface with clarity near month-end.

Cancer (Karka): Domestic priorities and emotional comfort take center stage. Avoid rushed travel, opting for well-planned journeys instead. Give yourself space around Amavasya and avoid overreacting to passing moods. The second half eases family coordination, favoring quiet, meaningful destinations over packed itineraries.

Leo (Simha): Visibility rises early with an influx of meetings and invitations. Pause before committing around Amavasya, then move forward with organized confidence from mid-September. Work, travel, and creative ventures succeed through disciplined preparation. Focus exclusively on essential priorities during the final week.

Virgo (Kanya): September emphasizes organization and practical details, especially around Amavasya and Kanya Sankranti on September 17. Use mid-month to declutter and set priorities

without falling into over-analysis. The second half is ideal for structured travel, important meetings, and careful planning.

Libra (Tula): Balance returns steadily after mid-month as the Moon enters your sign. Collaborative projects, joint travel, and open dialogue work far better than solitary efforts. Resolve lingering uncertainties mid-month, then manage finances carefully during the final days through clear, realistic coordination.

Scorpio (Vrishchika): Mid-month brings intense focus, prompting you to filter relationships and plans. Avoid turning minor frictions into major disputes. Professional and travel moves succeed when handled quietly. The final week lifts emotional pressure; maintain privacy while staying open to worthwhile opportunities.

Sagittarius (Dhanu): The second half brings an expansive phase ideal for learning, travel, and fresh settings. Use this momentum to revive delayed projects and connect with outside contacts. Avoid overbooking your schedule so you can genuinely experience the journey.

Capricorn (Makara): The third week demands discipline as duties expand. Structured meetings, business trips, and long-term planning thrive on clear details. Avoid detours and balance personal plans with professional obligations. Wrap up critical tasks early to preserve time for family.

Aquarius (Kumbha): Networking and unexpected opportunities highlight the month's second half. Review practical details before accepting spontaneous group or travel invitations. As Pitru Paksha begins, balance social engagements with necessary attention to family and personal matters.

Pisces (Meena): September splits into two rhythms: an observational opening and an active second half that brings emotional clarity. The Moon's return near the September 26 Purnima favors spiritual retreats, family visits, or purposeful travel. Keep your final days simple and unhurried.

September reminds us that progress does not always follow one straight direction. There are days to move, days to reorganise, and days when looking back has its own value. When timing is understood, travel becomes more than reaching another place—it becomes knowing why we are moving in the first place.

Beyond the DESTINATION

How Indian Couples Are Redefining the Luxury Honeymoon

Prashant Daroch, Founder of AtravelQ, decodes the shifting preferences of Indian honeymooners—from classic beach escapes to experiential, personalised journeys across the globe.

● **What are the top honeymoon destinations Indian couples are choosing currently, and what is driving these preferences?**

Prashant Daroch: Indian couples have become more adventurous when it comes to honeymoon destinations, moving beyond the traditional beach honeymoon. Switzerland, Maldives, Bali, Mauritius, Thailand and Japan remain favourites, while New Zealand and Norway have also emerged as destinations of choice for couples seeking more offbeat experiences. The key shift is that couples are moving beyond simply selecting a destination to choosing the right experiences within it.

● **Which emerging or lesser-known destinations would you recommend to couples seeking alternatives to popular choices such as the Maldives, Bali and Europe?**

Prashant Daroch: Some destinations I would recommend to couples looking beyond the more conventional choices include Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Seychelles, New Zealand, Norway and Japan. Vietnam is ideal for couples seeking a combination of luxury, cuisine and culture, while Sri Lanka works well for those who want to combine beaches with wildlife. New Zealand and Norway offer spectacular scenery, scenic drives, luxury and privacy, making them particularly appealing for couples seeking distinctive experiences.

● **How have honeymooners' expectations evolved, particularly in terms of luxury, privacy and experiences?**

Prashant Daroch: There has been a significant change in the definition of luxury. Today, couples are not necessarily focused on booking the most expensive hotel. Instead, they value privacy, customisation, seamless service

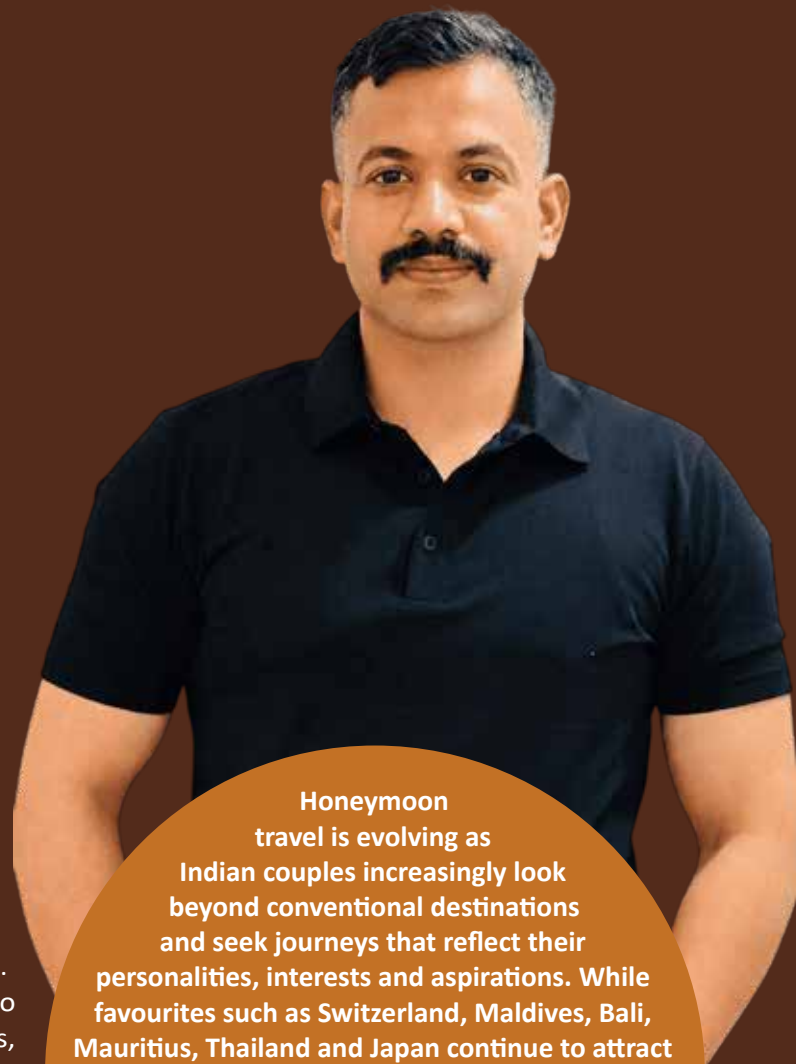
and meaningful experiences. They want their itinerary to reflect their personalities, whether that means staying in a private villa or scenic lodge, enjoying a personalised dinner or embarking on private excursions. Couples are also increasingly opting for a slower pace rather than trying to cover several destinations in a single trip.

● **What are the most sought-after honeymoon experiences today, from private dining and wellness to adventure and cultural immersion?**

Prashant Daroch: Private and intimate experiences are particularly sought after. Private dining, sunset sailing, spa and wellness retreats, stays at exclusive lodges and special excursions are increasingly becoming integral to premium honeymoons. At the same time, couples want experiences that help them connect with the destination—whether through local cuisine, cultural encounters, nature-based experiences or a touch of adventure.

● **Are you seeing a growing trend towards personalised and multi-destination honeymoons? Which combinations are proving popular?**

Prashant Daroch: Yes. Personalisation is becoming a key differentiator when couples plan their honeymoons. The trend is towards combining different types of travel experiences within the same trip—for example, Switzerland with Italy, France with Switzerland, or Thailand with Singapore. Longer journeys that combine city experiences with wilderness, or luxury resorts with experiential stays, are also gaining



Honeymoon travel is evolving as Indian couples increasingly look beyond conventional destinations and seek journeys that reflect their personalities, interests and aspirations. While favourites such as Switzerland, Maldives, Bali, Mauritius, Thailand and Japan continue to attract couples, emerging destinations including New Zealand, Norway, Vietnam and Seychelles are gaining momentum. From private villas and intimate dining to wellness, adventure and cultural immersion, the emphasis is shifting from simply choosing a destination to curating meaningful, personalised experiences.

popularity. The focus is on creating a well-balanced itinerary with the right pace, rather than trying to fit too much into the journey.

● **Which destinations do you expect to emerge as the next big honeymoon hotspots, and why?**

Prashant Daroch: Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Vietnam and Seychelles are destinations that I expect to continue gaining prominence among honeymooners, as they offer what today's premium traveller is increasingly seeking—unique surroundings, high-quality service, privacy and distinctive experiences. Japan offers a compelling blend of culture, cuisine, luxury hospitality and seasonal experiences, while New Zealand and Norway are particularly suited to couples looking for nature-based luxury and deeper immersion.

From our perspective at AtravelQ, the future of honeymoon tourism is not about identifying a single “best” destination. It is about selecting a destination that genuinely aligns with a couple's interests, preferences and personality—and then curating experiences that make the journey uniquely theirs.



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