

# Travel Links



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Ehime, Japan  
Wellness

Sought after  
destinations



Ras Al Khaimah





# Travel Links

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Often I have stated this; "In the mad rush of digital world, it is always the print magazine which keeps us sane". Holding the copy of the magazine in our hands touching it and feeling it, looking at the beautiful pictures, reading a meaningful content is what makes it truly memorable. This remains pleasingly vivid in our memories.

Self-care, self-love, and goodness in wellness, both external and internal are the new mantras and more so, we have all realized this post Pandemic. This is the key to a satisfactory and healed life and Travel Links in this issue, talks about various wellness centers.

To different individuals, wellness implies different things. Physical fitness, holistic care, happiness, relaxation, emotional balance, stress reduction, quality of life, and spiritual health are among the terms that many people associate with wellness. Many individuals, however, feel that health is more than just being free of sickness; it is a proactive way of life.

The world is now opening up with many countries opening their borders and allowing travel and tourism to flourish with fewer restrictions, catch our latest issue with the sought-after countries this season.

A Slice of Paradise, the cover story is about a measure of history and a trunk Load of memories from Ehime, Japan. Often touted as the land of the rising sun, Japan (interestingly the ancient name for Japan is Nippon which means suns origin) has for long been a hallmark of technology, discipline, progress, and perfection among other attributes for the entire world.

Looking for some gateways this summer season? Read about the offbeat destinations in India to spend your summers. The tourist main attractions are offbeat destinations, places where you feel relaxed and enjoy your quality time with friends and family and take a perfect break from the hectic days.

## Editor

**Payal Sahni**

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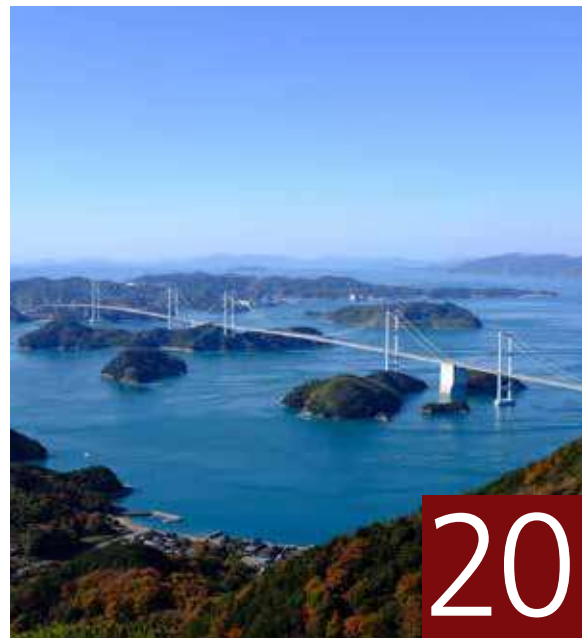
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# Yoksa Ride: Exotic Tribes of Eastern Arunachal

‘The legendary YOKSA swords from ancient Tibet’.

By Balaji Devanathan

I sit at my desk, looking out of the window, wondering, for how long it has been raining. May be just few days or may be over 10. It does not seem to matter any way. Some feel trapped indoors whilst others are out and about seemingly oblivious of the fully formed drops of rain exploding on their wet backs. Then there are the shirtless boys from the village nearby, who cheer rain, run out on bare feet to play football in ankle deep slush. The second's hand of my watch is ticking away and the ceiling fan continues lumber along, drawing circles in air. My drowsy mind starts to drift. Drift to an interesting time spent on a motorcycle, exploring parts of the world, I had only seen on maps.

I had already fallen in love with western Arunachal Pradesh. Eastern Arunachal is still an enigma. ‘A land of fast flowing rivers’ that have, over many millenniums, carved a landscape of deep gorges and rugged mountains. It created conditions for dense jungles and support exotic wildlife. For thousands of years some of the hardest people on this planet have flourished on these seemingly inhospitable slopes by evolving subsistence lifestyles, sustainable choices and survival strategies.

All the planets seemingly lined up in Nov 2019 for me to get a shot at exploring two river valleys and some more.

I set off on my motorcycle with a desire to ride along the Dibang river and then along Siang.

## Roing: Entry to the Dibang Valley

After three days of riding away from Kolkata, I reached Roing. My travel essentials; off-line google maps, some dry fruits & chocolates, loads of optimism, strong faith in the abundance of the universe and a big smile. My Royal Enfield Himalayan, has over the years shed a lot of unwanted weight and gained what is absolutely necessary for such exploratory adventure rides. I stayed at a beautiful rustic eco resort called Mishmi Hill Camp on the banks of the river Dev Pani. The owner JB is a splendid host. This by far is the best place to stay in Roing.

Roing is a small town that sits at the confluence of two rivers, Dev Pani and Dibang.



There is a lot of cultivable plain land. The Mishmi tribe farmers are hardworking and largely prosperous. Roing has good schools, hospitals, markets, a petrol pump, Hotels and is the district headquarters. The highways leading in to town from Tezu, Dumduma and Dambuk are fantastic. So riding up to Roing was easy and fast.

## Hunli: Riding along Dibang River

The following day I set off before dawn towards Anini. The climb up to Myodia pass, starts immediately after crossing the bridge over the Devpani River. The first 15km is a biker's dream road. Superb surface, excellent visibility, well-engineered cambers and loads of twisties. Speed picked and I was cornering at the limits of adhesion. Like all dreams, this road too ends abruptly. From here on it's a single road, paved but uneven and broken. The spectacular jungle with giant trees and creepers, chirping of birds and many waterfalls on the way, more than make up for it. The distance of 50km from Roing to Mayodia pass (alt. 2655m ) takes about 2 hours. However I slowed down to a crawl, to soak in the views of Roing and the lower Dibang Valley. Near the pass there is a small lodge called Mayodia coffee house. They have 4 to 6 rooms and is normally used by bird watchers. At 65km from Roing is the Maya cafeteria. This is pretty much the only place a traveller can get something to eat. So tank up. I decided to slow down further and stay the night at the next village called Hunli.

By the time, I reached Hunli, the sun was setting. Being in the extreme east, sun sets by







about 3:30pm in winters. The Circuit House that sits at the edge of a cliff with spectacular views was unavailable. This disappointment turned in to a blessing in disguise, when I got a room at the PWD IB (Inspection Bungalow). It was a completely run down wooden cottage, sitting alone on top of a hill. The elderly caretaker lady introduced herself as IB nani (nani in Hindi, means grandma) and went in to prepared dinner. I sat on the porch with a drink in hand and enjoyed the symphony of colours on the western sky.

IB Nani served dinner and talked about the history of Hunli, its families, their struggles, beliefs, daily life and how her world had changed. After about 2 hours, IB Nani's dog ran in and was restless. She said her dog had come to take her back home at the bottom of the hill. Apparently he did this every time

the weather was about to turn bad.

The night spent alone in the eerie old bungalow was by far the most interesting in my life. A thunderstorm had swept in, blowing the lights out. Lightning, followed by thunder, raindrops crashing on the tin roof and the old wooden structure creaking and protesting. Just as I had got used to this rhythm, rain water pouring down from the roof started drumming on some empty beer cans.

Finally all the imaginary demons of the night were vanquished by sun rise. It was a beautiful clear day.

## Anini: Top of the Dibang Valley

The name Anini has a beautiful ring to it.



But covering the 140km from Hunli to Anini would take close to 10 hours. Three decades back, the Border Roads Organization had cut through mountains and laid a single road to access the border with Tibet. Anini happens to be last village on the road. Now NHAI has taken over an ambitious project to build a highway all the way from Roing to Anini. Large sections of the old road have disappeared under landslides and the new road is still under construction. This made riding to Anini one of the most difficult and adventurous.

The unseasonal deluge had turned dirt tracks in to slush pools. Streams were flowing over the road and every once in a while a waterfall would wash the muck off dirt covered travellers. I reached Anini at about 9pm and checked in to the only lodge

in town.

The lodge does not have a name, but fortunately it has spacious rooms. Everybody I met, recommended me to visit Damben.

Damben (Past the last civil settlement called Acheso) is about 30km from Anini. This road ends at an ITBP check post. One has to leave behind all cameras (phones included) and walk for about 10 mins to get to one of the most serene river side spots I have ever seen in my life. Now I too would recommend this place on the banks of crystal clear Dri River, to every traveller.

At about mid-way from Anini to Damben is a beautiful little village called Alinye (also called LG). There is a lovely little resort with three large cottages. It is run by the family of a local priest. This is

definitely a better place to stay while in this area.

## Yingkion: Ride along Mighty Siang

Journey to Tuting from Roing started with a lot of unknowns. This would be the first time, I would be riding along the Siang. In Arunachal, each river valley is dominated by a different set of tribes. Language, cultural sensibilities, construction of houses, dietary habits and even the way they greet strangers is different. For eg. A loud “Hoy!” in some places is a threat/ warning while in others it is a friendly greeting. Fortunately almost everybody speaks Hindi.

The road from Roing to Dambuk and

all the way to Yingkion is well made, wide and largely straight. Dambuk is said to be the Orange capital of North East. They even conduct an Orange Festival in Oct every year.

At the confluence of the river Yamne and Siang, is a lovely view point to see Ponging village in the distance and crystal clear Yamne pouring in to turquoise Siang. Ladies from Ponging village sell locally grown fruits. These are completely organic and taste fantastic. Every village on the way proudly displays their name and declares themselves as “Open Defecation Free”. Effective implementation of the “Swach Bharath Abhiyan”.

Yingkion is a very small town with a fantastic Circuit House, a rudimentary market and few places to eat. There are





two lodges too. Beyond the one main road, it's a very charming town. Mobile connectivity was poor in town but one could get super-fast 4G connectivity 2 km out of town, near what is called Gandhi Bridge, over Siang. This bridge is also one of the most beautiful places to hang out at dawn as well as dusk. I was soaking in the spectacular sun set colours and watching a bunch of kayakers taking on the rapids of Siang. I waited to find out where they had come from. They turned out to be local boys (note to myself, not to assume).

Kishon Tekseng seemed to be the prime motivator of the group. Kishonstill looks like a teenager, but he belonged to the elite club of mountaineers who have climbed Mount Everest. He was training his buddies to become kayaking guides. The more I got to know him, the more I realised that under that seemingly shy mild demeanour was a

man of steely determination and boundless energy. They now have a beautiful river side camp just outside town, for visitors to stay.

### Tuting: Top of the Siang Valley in India

In 2013, the Indian Air Force landed their monster cargo aircraft C-17 Globemaster at the advance landing ground in Tuting. That was the first time I heard of this place. It was just a “dot”on the Indo-Tibet border.

A combination of going to bed at 8 pm and the excitement of being so close to reaching Tuting, had me waking up every half hour or so to check if it was time to leave. Finally it was 3:30 am and I quickly set off from Yingkiong. Waited for the sun to rise at Gandhi Bridge, took some pictures, crossed Siang for the first time and headed north towards that elusive

“dot” on the map.

2 hours in to the ride, I was invited into a very nice house. It turned out to be the bungalow of an ADC. He treated me to some traditional rice cakes and tea. I was told that the road is narrow and in a bad state of repair and that I must keep moving if I were to reach Tuting before dark. Being local and having served Tuting as ADC, everybody knew him. It was very nice of him to ask me to call him or use his name if I got into trouble and needed help on the way.

It was a beautiful clear day and I was treated to some of the most spectacular views of the Siang, hundreds of waterfalls and small streams. I made good time, stopping only once in a while for a swig of water and pictures. Finally I saw the milestone that said Tuting 0 km. I had reached that “dot” on the map, after looking at it for about 6 years.

Tuting is a charming little village,

surrounded by a beautiful weave of mountains and small flat cultivable land. There is one lodge that is owned by a local school's science teacher, who also is a farmer. A well informed man, who has chosen to stay back in this remote hamlet to continue the family tradition of farming and, to contribute to the society by teaching at the local school.

The Sun effortlessly climbs over tall mountains colouring the dark blue sky with pink and orange hues. A blanket of lazy night-mist, that protect Siang and her valley from evil eyes of demons that walk the night sky, slowly burn away. Revealing to all those willing to savour, fast flowing turquoise water with little rapids, that look like jumping cauliflowers. The main street of Tuting is abuzz with activity at about 4am. By 5 am, this only main street wears a deserted look. Everybody leaves to work their farms before 5 am.

With nobody to talk to in town, I walked up to see the Advance Landing Ground, which was the genesis of my interest in Tuting. This being on a sensitive border with Tibet and of importance to National Security, it is heavily guarded. But one can walk up to the gate to see.

The Tuting Gompa and Monastery is an interesting place to spend few hours. If you are lucky and I was, then one of the Lamas might invite you to have tea. Where you take it from there is up to your interest.

I learnt a lot about the daily life of a Lama, Buddhist philosophy, how difficult it is even for Lamas to truly live this philosophy. My

to the magical high altitude Menchuka valley. The objective was to meet the family who had hosted me in one of my earlier trips. However destiny had other plans. I ended up in a village so remote that only resident villagers, the Indian Army and the brave men of Indian Intelligence go there. Monigong got its road only in 2013. That road turns in to a mule and ends at a Army Heli Pad, just 25km from the Indo Tibet Border. I will talk about the ride to Monigong in chapter two of Yoksa Rides series.

I had set out to ride along the gurgling Siyom to eventually reach the magical high





is a “Rite of Passage” that becomes especially difficult after rains. And it rains almost every day. The craters and slush pools on the road look like it was subjected to heavy aerial bombing. Clear this stretch and you would have proved your determination to go on to experience the magic of Menchuka.

I reached Aalo in time for a late lunch of Thukpa. Locals here have a taste for very very spicy food. So it’s important to specifically request them to be frugal with chillies. I choose to check in to a low rent hotel in the baazar, because I had to replenish supplies and also fix some minor problems

## Monigong: Destiny reveals its plans

About 5 km before a village called Tato, is a cafeteria that serves superb Chai. While chatting with a couple of locals over chai, they talked of a place called Moigong and how they fear travelling on the treacherous cliff hanger roads going up to Monigong. My destiny was revealed. Menchuka was abandoned and Monigong embraced, even before I could blink.

Monigong is about 65km from Tato. The road lives up to its reputation of being a true cliff hanger. Spectacular and treacherous

while I was served hot cups of sweet tea. Building up heat and energy in me. The sun had set, temperature was plummeting. I desperately needed a place to change in to dry clothes and get something to eat, before the temperature went below freezing. Some kids returned and what they said disappointed their teacher. Turned out that the guy with the key to the Inspection Bungalow had gone off to another village to attend a wedding. Some more instructions were shot out in their local Boker language.

One of the kids returned with one Mr. Dupu. He said he will take me in to his home

That evening Mr. & Mrs. Dupu fed me hot rice, local beans, some veggies and boiled eggs. It was a brilliant meal, but they refused to eat till I sat around the fire, saying they will eat later. I excused myself and went off to sleep. On the second night, we became more comfortable with each other and started talking freely. Only after I had shared stories of my travel to some of the other remote parts of Arunachal, that they offered a local delicacy. Smoked jungle rat for dinner. The night earlier too, they had prepared smoked jungle rat for dinner, but did not bring it out, since they were not sure how I would react. This gesture touched some of the deepest

Past that is an ITBP check post and beyond that is a dirt trail for another 2km that ends in a Military helipad used for medical emergencies. I was instructed to stop at the ITBP post. They could not believe that casual traveller could have come this far, alone on a motorcycle. I was passed up the ranks till the commanding officer. I shared with him some of my travel stories and photos. He was so thrilled that he would not let me go till we had lunch together. He decided that their normal mess food was not good enough for a guy who had travelled so far and set about cooking a special meal for me him and a visiting veterinary doctor. (ITBP patrol

camps in these mountains.

This Circle Head GB, was obviously a very respected and loved man. He spoke slowly, softly and clearly in a powerful demeanour. To my surprise, he was not only well informed on national and international current affairs, he also had a well thought out opinion on them. All this at an age of about 80, in a place that did not have newspapers or mobile connectivity. His source of information was SW Radio. After chatting for about 45 mins, he permitted me to take a picture with him, blessed me for safe on ward travel and invited me to come back again.

On the second day, at the break of dawn,



with my motorcycle.

As always I set off at dawn the next day. Nose pointed towards Menchuka. The road leading out of Aalo is fantastic. Although one has to watch out for surprise speed bumps. After about 70km the road narrows down and starts hugging the mountains sides as it gains altitude. Scenery becomes spectacular and concentrating on the road becomes difficult.

as the same time. Definitely not for the faint hearted. I rode almost none stop for about 4 hours in cold rain.

Wet, cold, shivering and hungry, is how I reached Monigong. The sun was setting quickly and I had no place to stay. After about 10 mins of enquiry, I bumped in to a gentleman who was the local school teacher and spoke flawless English and Hindi. He called some of his students, passed on some quick instruction and sent them in different directions. In a

for the night and feed me too.

Those kids helped me park the motorcycle safely and settle in, around the kitchen fire in Mr. Dupu’s home. He also insisted that I must stay over one extra day to be able to explore their village and surrounding mountains.

I have said this before and will say it again. In this life, I have seen angels and they don’t have wings; just very big hearts, in to which they welcome and shelter those in need on one.



parts of my heart.

Mrs. And Mr. Dupu spoke at length about their lives, customs, construction of houses, faith, etc and how all that had changed since their village got connected by a road in 2013. Before that they had to trek 3 days down to Tato and trek 5 days back up, carrying rations. Before 1962 (the war with China) they had active trade with Tibet. That mule trail exists till date, just that no body uses it any more. The last civilian settlement along that road is Tadodigi.

these mountains on mules and horses). This soldier turned out to be a splendid cook too.

On my way back to my host’s home, I met the Circle Head Gram Budha. Every village has a village elder (Gram Budha or simply GB), who is the final say in all matters, in that village. The village elders of about 10 villages in the vicinity if Monigong, get together and elect a Circle Head GB. This is a very powerful and responsible position. Even the Indian Army has to take permission from the Circle Head GB to set up

I bid farewell to my hosts. As a token of my appreciation, I insisted that they take one of my most precious belongings, a real sheep skin. It was a clear day and the warmth of the rising sun, started to melt away the over-night frost. One last wave of my gloved hands and I rode away, home bound. I was carrying loads of memories and emotions, but strangely felt lighter. Embracing this little twist of destiny turned out to be one of the best experiences in life.🇮🇳





# Goodness in wellness

Wellness should comprise a balance of emotional, physical, social, spiritual, environmental, economic, intellectual, and vocational components. Today, all aspects of well-being are interconnected and essential to living a full life.

By Team TL

The World Health Organization, one of the most authoritative authorities on global health, defines wellness as a condition of total physical, mental, and social well-being, rather than simply the absence of sickness and infirmity. The notion of well-being is not novel. In truth, the concept of wellness can be traced back to ancient Chinese, Greek, and Roman civilizations, all of which stressed holistic methods to promoting health, well-being, and harmony in one's life.

Many of these wellness ideas are still relevant today, as we face far more life obstacles than our forefathers. Wellness should comprise a balance of emotional, physical, social, spiritual, environmental,

economic, intellectual, and vocational components. Today, all aspects of well-being are interconnected and essential to living a full life.

To different individuals, wellness implies different things. Physical fitness, holistic care, happiness, relaxation, emotional balance, stress reduction, quality of life, and spiritual health are among the terms that many people associate with wellness. Many individuals, however, feel that health is more than just being free of sickness; it is a proactive way of life.

People are becoming more conscious of their health and well-being daily. Many times, following a close examination in the mirror, some "imperfections" or aesthetic conflicts emerge, such as spots, wrinkles, skin disorders such as acne, and dull skin.

As a result, wellness centres have

emerged as the favoured destination for those seeking to better their physical appearance and health. Patients can have aesthetic procedures while still receiving medical and spa services at wellness clinics.

India has long been a destination for tourists seeking spiritual refreshment and tranquillity. They travel to India's Ashrams and retreat facilities to learn about traditional traditions such as Ayurvedic holistic care, yoga, and meditation.

If you want a disciplined daily life with meditation incorporated into it, India is the place to be. For the wellness and healing of its tourists, India is endowed with numerous retreat facilities, luxury spas, and spiritual institutions. One may get away from the hustle and bustle of city life by visiting one of India's many wellness facilities for stress relief, stress reduction, and self-discovery.

Here are some places that we recommend for you to begin your wellness journey.

## Ananda wellness in Uttarakhand

As it is located at the foothills of the Himalayas, Ananda Spa shares a border with the spiritual towns of Haridwar and Rishikesh. It is surrounded by Sal Forests and has a magnificent Ganga flowing by its side. It is a premium spa located in North India that has received several awards. Ananda integrates traditional Ayurveda, Yoga, and Vedanta with global wellness experiences. Ananda contains healthy cuisine to help restore balance and vigor.

As a result, it is regarded as a significant spa destination in India, offering programs for deep relaxation, de-stressing, cleansing, detoxification, anti-aging, weight reduction, and many other benefits under competent supervision. Come to Ananda to discover how to balance your being. While at Ananda, you may also go on a sightseeing tour of Rishikesh, the world's Yoga capital!

Specialties: Ananda provides 80 different types of spa services, including Ayurvedic



treatments like abhyanga, Shirodhara, shloka, Takahara, and mukh lepa. Its skilled staff of physicians, nutritionists, yoga teachers, and therapists collaborate to build custom packages to meet the health needs of its customers.

**Average package: average**

**stay here is 45 k per night.**

Location: Narendra Nagar, Uttarakhand  
The train journey takes 4.5 hours from Delhi to Haridwar followed by a 90-minute drive to Ananda in the Himalayas. There are frequent flights from Delhi International Airport to Jolly Grant Airport, Dehradun. The flight time is 45 minutes followed by a







40 min picturesque drive to Ananda in the Himalayas.

## SwaSwara, Gokarna, Karnataka

SwaSwara is located in Gokarna, North Karnataka, among tranquillity and quiet. This health centre, which is surrounded by nature, provides a panoramic view of the coastline. It's a lovely location to get away while receiving traditional Ayurvedic treatments and yoga lessons. The right balance of simplicity and purity, representing the local tradition, may be found here. SwaSwara is a Sanskrit word that means "inner voice of the self," and it focuses on recharging one's self via yoga and meditation. SwaSwara's enriched wellness program, which incorporates all parts of nature, improves lives by balancing the mind, body, and spirit.

Specialties: Zentangle, a doodle-based art form, yoga, and contemplative and therapeutic practices are among her specialties.

Average package: the average stay here per night is 17666 INR.

Location: Gokarna, Karnataka

## Jindal Nature care Bangalore

Jindal Nature care Institute, sprawled across 100 acres of beautiful vegetation, is administered by the Sitaram Jindal Foundation (a charity trust) and is noted for being a specialty naturopathy and yoga centre. Treatments are preventative and curative, non-invasive, and drug-free. Even the vegetables and fruits served are produced organically on the grounds. Diagnosis, on the other hand, is only possible through scientific procedures and contemporary medical technology. On its grounds, Jindal Nature Care Institute also offers an outdoor gym, swimming pool, indoor leisure space, and a tennis court, and it is an hour's drive from Bengaluru International Airport. If you have IBS, amoebiasis, anemia, anxiety neurosis, arthritis, constipation, colitis, depression, obesity, or sleeplessness, do check this place out.

Specialties: Specialties: The hospital has 12 experienced alternative therapists and practitioners who develop a specific diet and treatment plan according to the patient's conditions. Non-invasive and drug-free therapies combine natural medications with yoga, food therapy, physiotherapy, and acupuncture.

Average package: the stay depends on the suggestion by the doctors there in Jindal nature care. With accommodation costing between 1k INR to 7k INR with the treatment cost being at most 1500 INR.

Location: Jindal Nature cure Institute is at a distance of 16 km from the City Railway station and 45 km from the Airport on the Northern outskirts of Bangalore.

## Vana Dehradun

Vana is our strong suggestion for individuals who identify a vacation with a trip to the mountains. Ayurveda, Tibetan medicine, yoga, natural healing, spa, fitness – select what works best for you, and they'll design a program to help you get there. A 21-acre home surrounded by trees and orchards, the beauty and tranquillity make this a mountain lover's dream. Keep an eye out for their inaugural discounts. If you're not sure what you're looking for, come here. Yes! Vana lists an aim as 'Don't know yet!' in addition to the more common motivations for enrolling in wellness programs. So, if you know you need to rest but aren't sure how their prior and post-arrival consultation will help you figure it out. Vana offers five different types of lodging: garden rooms, forest rooms, Bodhi suites, forest suites, and Casas. Prices range

from INR 25,000 to INR 65,000 per night per person, depending on the retreat and lodging you choose. We recommend visiting their website for a complete price list. You may make a reservation via phone/email or by completing their web form.

Specialties: Vana is one of the few sites in the world where Sowa Rigpa is available in its entirety. Tibet's centuries-old traditional medical system is known as Sowa-Rigba.

Average package: You need to check-in for a minimum of 7 nights, and the costs (depending on the room/ suite chosen) range from Rs 30,000 to Rs 1 lakh per night. Location: Dehradun, Uttarakhand

## Ashiyana Goa

Ashiyana promotes and exudes 'joyful living' via the ancient wisdom of yoga treatment, tailored to individual requirements, to release its inhabitants from mental and physical difficulties. It's also in Goa, surrounded by tropical vegetation and animals.

If you want to tackle the symptoms of problems that we all encounter daily

-stress, burnout, weight difficulties, digestive disorders, diabetes, insomnia, heart ailments, respiratory disorders, and other addictions – go here. Their specialty is detoxification and renewal. You will leave here with a variety of techniques to assist you to deal with your stress concerns in everyday life.

Specialties: In addition to custom yoga sessions, Ayurvedic treatments, and massages, Ashiyana offers a range of creative activities and courses, such as AcroYoga, inversions, and Yoga Nidra, karma yoga, painting, essential oils, and creative writing.

Average package: the yoga retreat in aashiyana costs around 2 lakh INR to 2.5 lakh INR for the entire session.

Location: Mandrem, Goa located in Junas Waddo, Mandrem, Goa which is 40 km away from Goa Airport one can easily book a cab and & also directly visit the resort by their vehicle.

## Wildflower Hall Spa,

## Shimla, Himachal Pradesh

Wildflower Hall Spa is owned by the Oberoi group of hotels. At an elevation of 8,250 feet, it is a beautiful Spa Resort that provides elegance amidst the Himalayan Caravans. Aside from providing a breathtaking view, the resort also provides traditional spa services and amenities. Traditional Ayurvedic remedies and body massages are combined with wonderful Yoga poses. This workout suite, which is well-appointed with contemporary conveniences, gives comfort to its customers by responding to their demands. It also contains an outside tennis court that has been converted into an ice rink for the enjoyment of visitors.

Specialties: Wildflower Hall is well-known for its all-encompassing spas. They provide a variety of spa therapies for this, including massage therapies, energizing body therapies, skin and nail care, Ayurveda therapies, and specialized baths. Furthermore, ayurvedic practices support this therapy.

Average package: one can stay and relax as much as wanted for about 35 k INR







per night.

Location: Shimla. A 1.5 hr. drive from Shimla airport or 45 mins to almost 1 hr. drive from Shimla airport would take you to this amazing place.

## The Khyber Gulmarg Jammu and Kashmir

Indulge in Provencal-inspired rituals with their Shea from Burkina Faso and Immortelle from Corsica, feel the gentle warmth of the private steam chamber, spend soulful moments in the oversized Couple's Suites, embark on a journey of sensorial delights, and pamper yourself with treatment protocols that incorporate the best of the west and the east; with Swedish, Hawaiian, Lomi Lomi, Balinese, and Shiatsu combined in exclusive L'Occitane The Spa brings the shifting seasons of Gulmarg to life with distinctive treatments in which clients are encouraged to select from a repertory of home-grown seasonal flora that is blended with natural L'OCCITANE products and pure Himalayan water to create fusion recipes, a-la-minute for the treatment.

Specialties: Aromachologie massage, trademark lemon balm body massage, re-energizing sunstones, bath with essential

oils, and more services are available at Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa. Average package:

Location: Gulmarg, Jammu & Kashmir

The resort is 65 kilometers from Srinagar International Airport. Your journey to The Khyber begins with a 90-minute automobile ride through languid meadows and wooded mountains. There are daily direct flights from Delhi (one hour) and Mumbai to Srinagar (2 hours and 45 minutes).

## Atmantan Pune

Atmantan is a healing retreat overlooking the picturesque Mulshi Lake in the Sahyadri highlands near Pune. It provides a variety of treatments, including traditional Ayurvedic and aromatherapy massages, detoxifying Chi Nei Tsang and oriental acupressure, cocooning wraps, and Pranic chakra cleaning. Specialist hydro-treatments such as the Hammam, Vichy showers, open-colonics, and calming balneotherapy are also available. It's only a three-hour journey from Mumbai and makes for a great weekend vacation. Atmantan serves a diverse clientele. Restorative physiotherapy is a relatively new addition to their therapeutic options. Their research-based program provides comprehensive,

guest-cantered care with an emphasis on recovering mobility, strength, and movement quality. Radiance Ritual, a new unique pampering retreat, has also been introduced to detox and rejuvenate 'would-be' brides and grooms.

Specialties: Fitness amenities include a high-tech gymnasium, a saltwater pool, a physiotherapy wing, a functional studio, a spinning studio, and yoga, Pilates, and dance studios.

Average package: The wellness packages at Atmantan start at Rs 1.15 lakh for 3 nights (room accommodation), and the Mango Tree villa starts at Rs 2.54 lakh for one person for 3 nights.

Location: Mulshi Lake in Maharashtra

Atmantan is 90 minutes from the Pune International Airport and three and a half hours from Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport.

## Niraamaya Retreats

The Niraamaya Retreats Surya Saundra, located on a cliff off the beautiful and tranquil beaches of Kovalam, provides a variety of holistic health experiences through its Niraamaya Ayurveda treatments and spa treatment packages. There is a holistic wellness journey supervised by a professional team of Ayurveda, yogic, mindfulness, and fitness specialists, as well as spa cuisine chefs, delivering integrated wellness programs that are tailored to individual health objectives. Every Niraamaya experience strives to offer an intimate introduction to a world of mindful well-being, with old Kerala-styled cottages surrounded by beautiful lawns and vegetation. Their award-winning Niraamaya spa provides worldwide and traditional Ayurvedic treatments, as well as yoga, meditation, and pranayama in a beautiful location. The emphasis of Niraamaya, Kovalam, is on collaborating with visitors to connect their lifestyle with overall well-being.

**Specialties:** Niraamaya's trademark treatments are intended to please the senses while also rejuvenating the spirit. Therapies that are one-of-a-kind and developed to include the finest from across the world.

**Average package:** no minimum stay required.,7k to 10 k per night per person.

**Location:** Surya Samudra, Kerala

Niraamaya Retreats is a 20-minute

drive from Vizhinjam Beach and a 40-minute drive from Trivandrum International Airport. It is an hour's drive from Techno park.

## Mekosha, Kerala

Mekosha is a contemporary Ayurveda retreat located on the banks of the Attingal Aaru River near Varkala in Kerala, away from the metropolis of Trivandrum. It provides a personalized wellness experience that aids in the transformation of a person from the inside, using age-old traditional therapies in a modern beautiful atmosphere. Mekosha is the first all-suites boutique retreat of its sort, with each of its 11 spa suites including a private treatment

Kerala's gorgeous backwaters.

Mekosha provides a customized wellness experience with individualized therapies to help you transform from the inside and discover a new way of life.

Average package: you have to stay for 7 days at least. And the cost is 7k to 18k per night. Location: Mekosha, Trivandrum

Nestled on the banks of river Vamanapuram in Kerala, Mekosha is situated 40 minutes from Trivandrum International Airport.

## Amal Tamara

The health philosophy of the retreat is based on the Ayurvedic idea of "Chikitsa Chatushpasa," in which the patient,

Vedic fire rites, and others offer an insight into Kerala's traditional customs.

Specialties: Amal Tamara provides individualized Ayurvedic programs for immune boosters, anti-aging, and other chronic illnesses, resulting in a personalized treatment experience. Furthermore, a customized menu is created to meet each individual's exact nutritional and health needs, and it includes healthful, organic, vegetarian meals made by skilled in-house chefs.

Average package: Packages begin at Rs1, 55, 000/- for a minimum of seven nights.

Location: This premium resort is set near the Vembanad Lake in Alleppey's Mannancherry town, around an hour's



room with an adjoining balcony overlooking the pool. The entire home is constructed in a minimalistic style with handcrafted teak wood and clean and attractive decor that promote mental cleansing. Yoga classes are held in a cool studio or on the banks of the river, surrounded by beautiful nature and accompanied by bird sounds. Mekosha provides a variety of programs ranging from traditional Ayurvedic treatments and massages to cancer recovery packages.

Specialties: India's First Modern Ayurveda Retreat offers an All-Inclusive Wellness Experience from the luxury of your private spa room or right beside

physician, therapist, and medication all work together to achieve your goals. Before you come, you will be assessed, and you may be requested to do a few tests based on the results. A team of specialists specializing in various aspects of Ayurveda will design a personalized treatment plan extending from seven to 21 days. Stress, diabetes, weight control, poor immunity, and aging are just a few of the numerous concerns addressed by the treatment regimens. Some of the property's facilities include a meditation area, therapeutic lamp illumination, and a tranquil library. Immersive activities like Kathakali dance, Kalaripayattu martial arts,

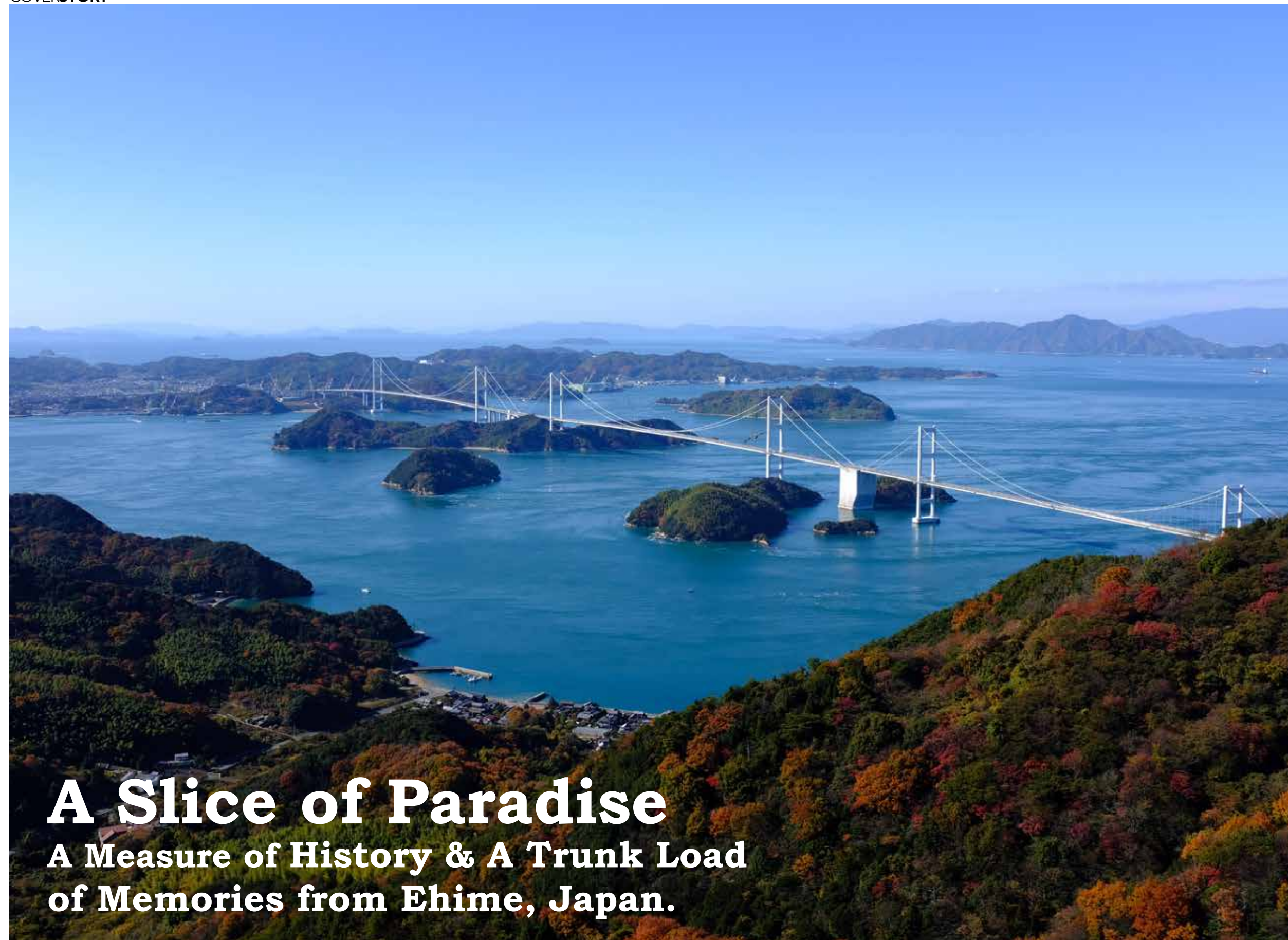
drive from Kochi International Airport.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak, most of us have put our trip plans on hold indefinitely. However, people are starting to discuss methods to rejuvenate and what a future vacation may look like.

After being cooped up in their homes for an extended length of time, many travellers would seek out wellness and medical tourism locations to refresh their minds, body, and spirit.

India is one of the most popular worldwide destinations for wellness and medical tourists seeking a holistic holiday at an inexpensive price, thanks to centuries-





# A Slice of Paradise

## A Measure of History & A Trunk Load of Memories from Ehime, Japan.

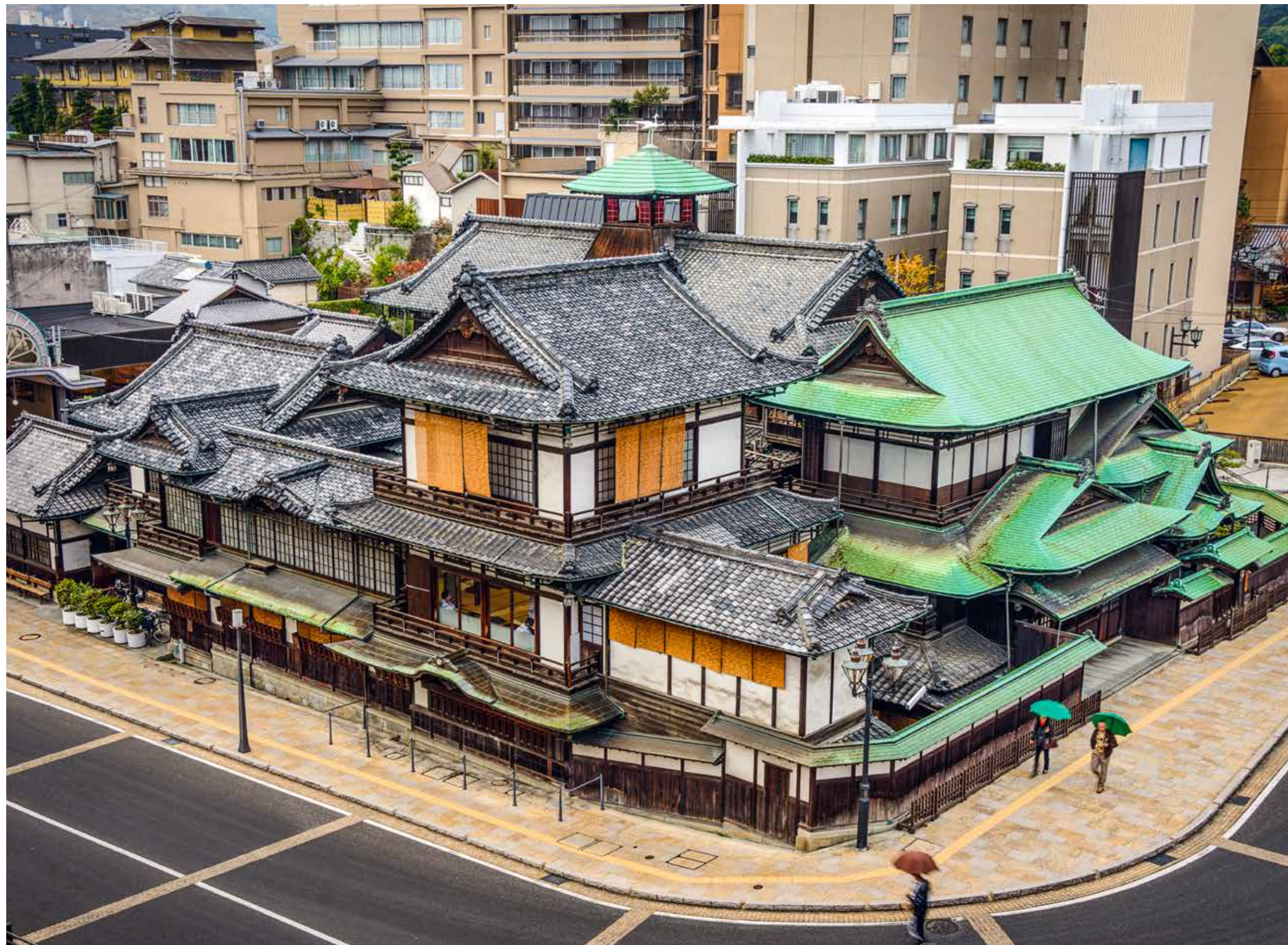
Often touted as the land of the rising sun, Japan (interestingly the ancient name for Japan is Nippon which means sun's origin) has for long been a hallmark of technology, discipline, progress and perfection among other attributes for the entire world. That's how the world has and more or less continues to view Japan. It is a little surprising as to why people don't have Japan on their bucket list that much the way they have European destinations. Maybe the language barrier or just that they are oblivious towards this East Asian destination when a lot of cheaper alternative destinations are available in its vicinity (e.g., Thailand, Philippines, etc), but that could well be left open to debate.

Most people would be knowing about Kawasaki Motors (the bikes after all), but not that many would know Kawasaki is a city (among the biggest industrial hubs) in Japan by the Tama river. People surely would know quite a bit about Tokyo as it is the capital and the world's largest metropolitan, but there's a lot many places to explore in the land of the rising sun and I really hope this obliviousness changes among the travellers and explorers.

Having started my career on a Japanese ship with its home port always in Japan, I've always had a special place for Japan in my heart. Having travelled to Tokyo, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Nakanoseki, Yokohama, Kobe, Osaka, Nagoya, Kawasaki and a host of other places in Japan I should be tempted to

*One such place in Japan which gave me this feeling recently is Ehime. Located on Shikoku island in South Eastern Japan this prefecture has quite a lot to enthrall visitors round the year. Places like Imabari and Matsuyama in Ehime can keep a traveller occupied for a considerable amount of time*





feel that I have travelled fairly well across Japan, but each time I've travelled to Japan I feel there's so much more that I really need to see, and I am guessing that's the case with everyone who has made frequent trips to Japan.

One such place in Japan which gave me this feeling recently is Ehime. Located on Shikoku island in South Eastern Japan this prefecture has quite a lot to enthrall visitors round the year. Places like Imabari and Matsuyama in Ehime can keep a traveller occupied for a considerable amount of time.

Imabari, despite being a major industrial hub with its famous towel industry and shipbuilding industry, feels like a rather quiet and laid-back city located in the Ehime Prefecture (District). Being home to one of the three water castles or castles on the sea in Japan, Imabari boasts of a grand structure on display to its visitors. Among the most majestic coastal castles in Japan, the Imabari castle was built by Japanese military commander and skilful castle architect Takatora Todo way back in 1604 AD (His statue is erected outside the castle). Built on relatively weak ground (the bottom being sandy) this castle has stood strong and passed the test of time and weather, which is a testimony to the brilliance of Takatora and the efficacy of his techniques. The Imabari castle is one of the three important water castles in Japan which is built within high stone walls, surrounded by sea water which rises and falls with regularly changing tides. Within the complex of the castle are a history museum, natural science museum, local art museum and even an antique museum all of which are open to the general public for a reasonably priced ticket. The top most floor of the Tenshu (the highest towering structure in a Japanese castle) has an observation deck which commands panoramic views of the city as well as the far away mountains and islands. Mt. Ishizuchi (the highest peak in West Japan) can be seen on a clear day in the distance from this deck. One could easily spend 3 to 4 hours here soaking in the historic and cultural vibes that exude all across the castle complex. Traditional style architecture and the arrangement of the large sized, irregular shaped stones on the walls keeps one intrigued as he / she wades across the castle from one end to another. I felt as if I am in an oriental movie when passing under the entrance gates (torii) of



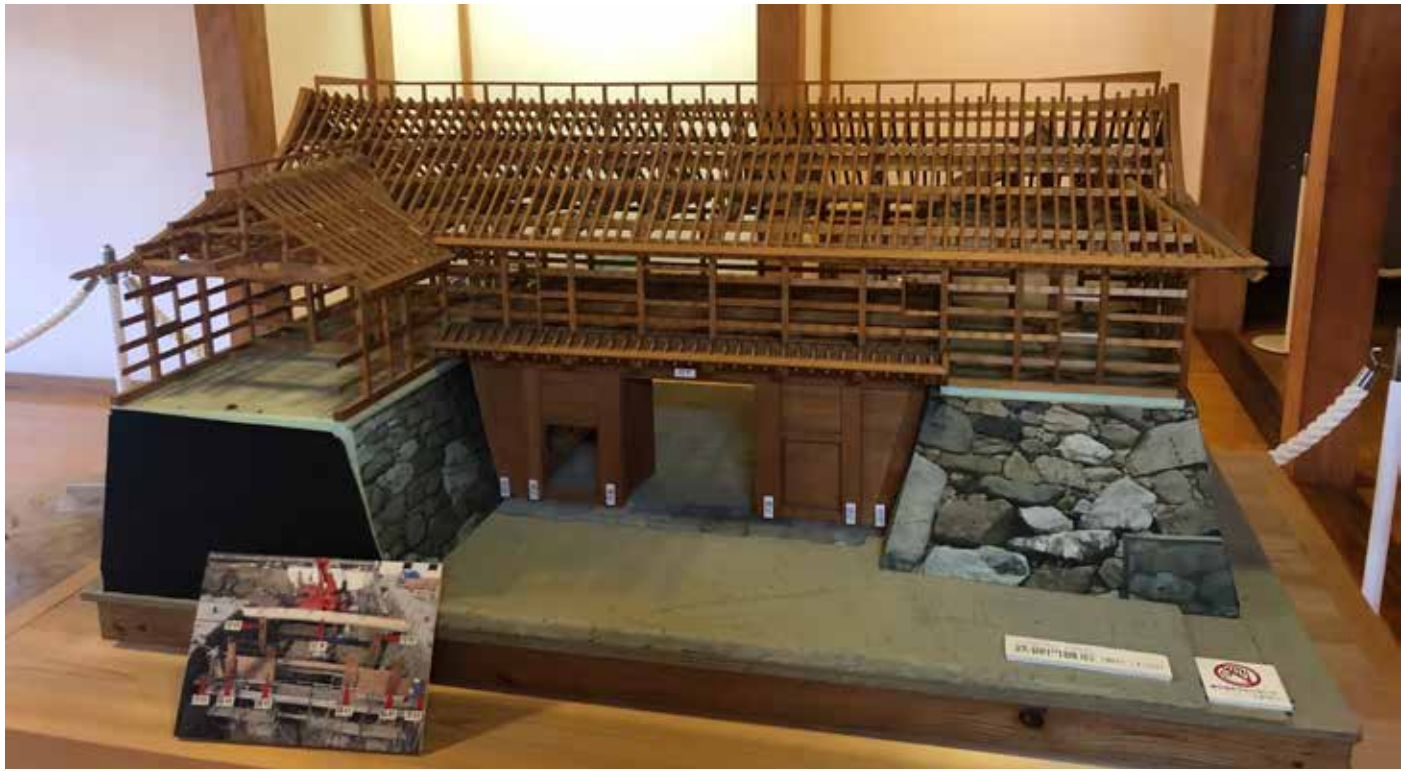
the Fukiage Shrine in the castle complex. When passing under the torii, one must give a slight bow as a mark of respect / worship. It is recommended to ring the bell at the shrine which is believed to purify oneself and ward off evil spirits. The castle is open to visitors from 09am to 05pm. There is a souvenir shop to pick up some goodies from. Any traveller will feel happy after having visited this beautiful and majestic castle.

The famed Setouchi Shinamane Kaido (a near 70 kilometers long cyclist's sanctuary) terminates here in Imabari after passing through six islands across the Seto Inland Sea. One can rent a bicycle and glide across this bridge system in about 4 hours enjoying the scenic views of the islands and the sea. If one likes to go cycling (even slightly), which I'm sure most travellers do, then this is just the adventure cum leisure activity to go for in Ehime. Gliding across these bridges make you feel free from all bonding and give you a feeling of ultimate liberation. Passing the islands, mountains after mountains (over 80% of Japan being mountains, you will never be out of sight of one for long while travelling across the country) keep you enthralled while you push the pedals and enjoy the breeze.

Only an hour's drive from the Imabari Castle is the famous Dogo Onsen, a historic and very popular hot spring which boasts of a history of 3000 years and even finds mention in ancient texts like Nihon Shoki (Literally Chronicles of Japan, which is one of the oldest books on Japanese history). Located in the city of Matsuyama (the designated capital of Ehime) in Ehime Prefecture, this natural hot spring bath is housed in a beautiful complex made of mainly wood. Within the complex are various baths which are open to the public for a price. The waters come from natural sources (cracks in the earth and have been continuously oozing out natural water for the thousands of years), and are now driven to various levels in the complex in the form of fountains filling and overflowing the bathtubs. The water here is said to have healing properties. According to a myth, a wounded bird used to bathe in the waters of these hot springs daily until it fully recovered. A statue of the bird is placed at the apex of the complex structure. The Dogo Onsen hot springs was initially used only by members of the imperial family, but







today it is open for use (at a price) to the general public. With the ticket also comes a complimentary snack. This is definitely a highly recommended must do in Ehime as those who have been here always long for the next time they can visit and indulge in these hot spring baths. It is like immersing yourself in hidden nature and rich history of 3000 years and coming out cleansed, purged and rejuvenated.

Matsuyama castle which is located atop a hill (Mt. Katsuyama) is visible from almost anywhere in Matsuyama, is a must explore for all travellers in Ehime. This castle is quite grand and has a large complex with lots of interesting exhibits ranging from weapons, armour to artefacts and relics. This is the only remaining feudal castle in Japan (the other eleven having been demolished post collapse of feudalism), which I would say is a rather fortunate thing as this castle represents certain specifics of the culture and history of an era. The castle being atop a hill provides an uninterrupted view of the city from the Tenshu, and being well

***Passing the islands, mountains after mountains (over 80% of Japan being mountains, you will never be out of sight of one for long while travelling across the country) keep you enthralled while you push the pedals and enjoy the breeze.***

fortified it has acted as an effective vantage point. You can get here by foot if you're up for trekking, else there is a chair lift and a ropeway to get you there comfortably. One would be awestruck at the construction and design of the castle and its well-engineered turrets from where obtrusive enemies could be attacked. Hidden gates and structures to trick and surprise the intruding enemies are something to marvel at. The castle has

a lot of stories of war and bloodshed during its feudal days. The high walls of the fort compiled of large blocks of stones make the strength and fortification of the castle readily apparent. The castle is much bigger than what it seems to be from far away. One can't visit Matsuyama and miss the Matsuyama castle as it is an absolute must do in Matsuyama. You're sure to be amazed and bring back a bank of memories from here.

There's a host of other things one can do in Ehime like visiting the Mt. Kiro National Park (the perfect sunset picture shots can be taken here overlooking the sea, islands and the bridges), Towel Museum (where you can even see the factory where the threads and textiles are being worked to put together some fine towels, quilts, etc. You'll be definitely be tempted to buy a collection of towels from here - around 75 percent of towels in Japan are manufactured here), and Museum of Ehime History and Culture which is located in the countryside at over an hour's drive from Matsuyama (the





museum has a lot of exhibits on display which depict the traditional lifestyle of the people and history of Ehime in general).

These and among other attractions in Ehime are sure to keep travellers fascinated during their visit. You will learn a lot about the Japanese people as you travel and interact with the people here. The Japanese people have the reputation of being endlessly hard working, reliable, trustworthy and unbelievably punctual. One would expect the people of a country so prosperous, technically sound and disciplined to be egoistic or condescending in nature. However, traits such as cordiality, truthfulness and modesty are imbued in them and permeate across the population of Japan. You will definitely notice this wherever you go in Japan.

And Oh, I almost forgot about the mandarin oranges of Ehime. Known for a wide range of citrus fruits, Ehime is one of the top producers of mandarin oranges in Japan and the leading producer of citrus fruits in Japan. People of Japan often joke that in Ehime if you open a tap, orange juice might flow out of it (this is actually true at

*So, with much reflection through my own experience and conversation with some colleagues, I would request all travellers to edit their bucket list destinations and add Japan to it*

some shopping markets and bars where you could pay and pour a glass for yourself from dedicated taps). Be sure to try this unique style of having juice when you're in Ehime. The climate in Ehime is quite conducive for mandarin oranges and other citrus fruits as the soil is enriched with minerals which has a good interaction with the breeze

from across the sea and there is enough of sunshine and warmth for most of the year. It is very common among families in Ehime to send cartons of mandarin oranges to their children who are working in bigger cities in Japan. Ehime is also labelled as 'Kingdom of Citrus Fruits' OR 'Citrus Kingdom'.

So, with much reflection through my own experience and conversation with some colleagues, I would request all travellers to edit their bucket list destinations and add Japan to it (if it isn't already there), for so many reasons. St. Augustine once said "The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page". On those lines I would rate Japan as a very important page or a very important chapter rather. You will definitely have a huge load of memories to relish and lots and lots of exciting stories to tell after travelling to the charming places in Japan. That's guaranteed. [u](#)

GAUTAM SINGH KANWAL

He works aboard Merchant Ships and hails from Nainital, Uttarakhand. An avid for travelling, reading, learning, music, art and adventure sports, he is keen to indulge in new experiences every time.





# JAW DROPPING Australia

By Team TL

From world-class wine to glistening beaches – we’ve lost count of the number of reasons to visit Australia. But, just for the record books, here are a few of our favourites. Travel Links brings to you the best of what Australia has to offer. Australia is a land of dreams. From the sacred legends of the aboriginal Dreamtime when the great spirits conjured the coral reefs, rainforests, and scorched, red deserts, to armchair travellers who describe Australia as their dream destination, the Land Down Under deserves all the hype. The world’s smallest continent and largest island, Australia is almost the same size as the United States, but with a population the size of New York State and some of the quirkiest wildlife on the planet.

Australia is also a land of staggering contrast and spectacular beauty. Along the coast, visitors can explore vibrant multicultural cities, safari across vast sand islands, trek through ancient rainforests, and dive the Great Barrier Reef. In the Outback, rugged national parks and red-earthed deserts offer the ultimate

in adventure travel. Top it all off with a laidback feel and friendly people and it's no wonder Australia scores top billing on bucket lists around the world.

When you think of Australia (besides kangaroos and koalas) you probably consider sunny seashores and rolling waves – and you’d be right! If you visited one seaside a day, it would take you 27 years to look them all. Our sandy stretches are home to world-class surfing, unique marine life, putting ocean pools and unbeatable beach culture. So, it’s no wonder Australian beaches frequently rank among the best in the world. Surf, swim, snorkel, sun-worship – there are countless ways to enjoy Australia’s stunning seashores and islands. From the only living organism visible from outer space (the Great Barrier Reef) to the planet’s largest rock (no, not Uluru – it’s genuinely Mount Augustus!), many Aussie attractions defy imagination. We’re the world’s largest island with the world’s oldest rainforest, the world’s whitest sand and the world’s oldest civilization.

Tourism in Australia is a critical a part of the Australian economy, and



*Australia is also a land of staggering contrast and spectacular beauty. Along the coast, visitors can explore vibrant multicultural cities, safari across vast sand islands, trek through ancient rainforests, and dive the Great Barrier Reef.*







***Tourism in Australia is a critical a part of the Australian economy, and contains domestic and global visitors. Before Covid-19, in the financial year 2018/19, tourism became Australia's fourth-biggest export and over the preceding decade became developing quicker than countrywide GDP growth.During the pandemic, Australians travelled intrastate and additionally interstate while borders had been open.***

contains domestic and global visitors. Before Covid-19, in the financial year 2018/19, tourism became Australia's fourth-biggest export and over the preceding decade became developing quicker than countrywide GDP growth.During the pandemic, Australians travelled intrastate and additionally interstate while borders had been open. From November 2021, borders for Australia had been opened and absolutely vaccinated Australians had been authorized to fly foreign places without exemption. A variety of nations became introduced to New Zealand and Singapore in December with residents from Japan and South Korea allowed to go into the country, from 1 December 2021. Popular Australian locations consist of the coastal cities of Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne, in addition to other high-profile locations consisting of regional Queensland, the Gold Coast and the Great Barrier Reef, the world's biggest reef. Uluru and the Australian outback are other famous locations, as is the Tasmanian wilderness. The unique Australian wildlife is also another significant factor of interest in the country's tourism.

Australia is just the perfect combination of everything that you would want on a vacation. Travel Links, one of the top travel magazines in India assures you that it will be a very memorable trip for you and your family.[u](#)



# He is always keen to indulge in new experiences

Gautam Singh Kanwal works aboard Merchant Ships and has an experience of more than 15 years up to his sleeve. He hails from Nainital, Uttarakhand. An avid for traveling, reading, learning, music, art, and adventure sports, he is always keen to indulge in new experiences. Interview By Payal Sahni

**Q** Could you tell us how your current profession has leveraged your travel journeys?

It certainly has by a great deal. Whether I am on the job or when I am on vacation. While I am sailing I have had multiple opportunities to explore different corners of the globe when the ship docks at various ports in different parts of the world. And in this profession, we get to be on vacation for months together. I'm talking like even 6 months at a stretch. So, one can easily pack and just go on long holidays to the far corners of the world. In most other professions, the leaves are limited and of shorter durations, so they would have to work out ways to squeeze out even a 2- or 3-weeks vacation at a stretch. This is one liberty this profession can offer – travel the world while you're working and travel the world while you're not working.

**Q** "You as a mariner traveling", how is it different from the normal people who plan their holidays.

As a mariner, when traveling during your voyages, you really can't plan like a tourist does with flexibility and a wide range of options to choose from. You do not know

many times where the ship will be going for her next voyage and whether you will be able to explore that place or not. You have to make the most of what you get. You could be in port for any time duration from only a day to a week or a month, anything. Your workload has to be managed as a priority before you head out for exploring the place, as the ship has to perform at maximum efficiency in port most of the time. Therefore, you may have time limitations, and there could be limitations from the immigration as to how far you can go on a crew shore pass. There are times when I have gone exploring far and wide even though travel companies arranged by the seaman's club of that port when the ship has been in port for prolonged durations, and there are times I have hitchhiked by making my arrangements over a day or two. And yes, there are times you have been in port for quite some time, but you've had no opportunity to go out due to workload or because of certain restrictions from the immigration. One will find himself in all of these situations as a mariner. Sometimes you travel to a particular port/city repeatedly so you get to explore more and learn more about that place to such an

extent that at some point you start to feel like a resident over there. A quote from Anne Davison couldn't be more appropriate here, "A tourist remains an outsider throughout his visit; but a sailor is part of the local scene from the moment he arrives".

**Q** Do you get to see places that normal people are not even aware of?

Yes, absolutely. A friend of mine had a tough time locating Aruba on the world map. A tiny Caribbean island only around 33 kilometers in length. A place I too had not heard of till I got there. And its beaches are listed among the best in the world. Merchant ships go to a lot of places where tourists wouldn't be able to go, e.g. Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory where cruise ships are not allowed, but merchant ships do go. Some other rare locations where tourists don't conveniently travel because of inconvenient or lengthy flights are the Aleutian Islands- the snowcapped island mountains stretching South westward from the Alaska Peninsula, Canary Islands – Spanish territory off the NW coast of the African continent, and many more islands like Bonaire and Curacao.



**Q** Could you throw light on some off-grid places that you got to see during being on the Ship?

I already mentioned Aruba. Some other islands like St. Marten, St Eustatius, and Curacao are places that people would have barely heard of as holiday destinations but are stunning locations. Visiting places like Cartagena in Colombia was a great opportunity for me. A beautiful historic town and worth visiting. But let's say if one has to travel to Cartagena from Delhi, it will be multiple flights and the duration could last more than 2 days of air travel including the transit period, and with the airfare being exorbitant travelers can easily be discouraged to make that trip. But when I sailed to Colombia, I traveled there for free, only exploring costs are to be borne. Other

places like Gibraltar, Malta, and Cyprus are quite off-grid that I had the fortune of visiting, and these places are not frequently explored by travelers from our part of the world.

**Q** Do you consider yourself as being lucky in this profession is "it is not a bed of roses always"

In many ways yes, quite lucky. I feel fortunate to have been a part of this fraternity. This profession has been the pillar of global transportation for ages. Literally from biblical times and I'm very sure earlier than that too. Shipping effectively happens to be the backbone of global trade. The EXIM (export-import) of goods on the scale necessary for meeting the needs of the present day and modernized world would

not have been possible without the shipping industry. Had it not been for the proficient global fleet of container vessels, many global retailers would have ceased to exist. Furthermore, day and night, oil tankers (vessels carrying crude oil and products) continuously deliver to oil/petroleum refineries in the industrialized countries in Europe, North America, and Asia. If for some reason sea transportation weren't available, the transformation and repercussions would be dramatic and catastrophic in a shockingly short period. That's why there is the likelihood of great profits because if there is even a hint of disruption there's no price you won't pay for shipping. You have to have it at any cost, and you have to have it every day and always. I do take pride in being a part of this very important





fraternity. Yes, it's not always a bed of roses. It never was and it never will be. Having to stay away from family and civilization for months is not easy. Working day in day out in all sorts of climatic conditions, no holidays, no Sundays, and limited communication are just some of the few problems that mariners have to put up with. And on the bright side, I have been fortunate to have become independent fairly early in life with a host of experiences that not many could think of at that age. And yes I have been lucky to be able to travel far and wide.

**Q** Would you like to change people's perception about this as a career choice?

I generally don't advise unless asked. But yes, if people want to be further enlightened about this profession or want to know about the finer details and peculiarities of shipping, I would like to stress the important role played by this profession for the entire world, and strong point out what sailors have to put up with to keep the ship up and running day after day. Shipping (transportation overseas) has performed the maximum trade across the world in recorded history. It has been in use effectively for centuries. Transportation is one of the cornerstones of globalization, and shipping has always been the greatest form of transportation. There is almost no country in this world that can call itself a self-sufficient state. It is imperative that every country should export what it produces well and procures from other countries

whatever it lacks or feels a shortage of. And shipping facilitates that process. It is a very important profession that people may not realize on the face of it, I hope the shipping fraternity gets the respect and recognition it truly deserves, which is a long time due now. I could go on and on with this topic but it will run into volumes. Coming back, I would warn the youngsters of the tough life if they want to pursue a sea career before listing out the positives. In short, it's not at all a bad career option if you're up for the challenges.

**Q** What do you miss the most when you are on the ship?

Family of course. Pets when I used to have dogs. Visiting restaurants when I am in the mood for a specific cuisine. Do let us know both the pros and cons of being a mariner.

One gets to be independent (financially) at a relatively younger age when compared to most other professions and is, therefore, able to shoulder responsibilities back home. After being exposed to perilous situations and a never-ending workload one tends to get tough in the mind for come what may. One gets to travel fairly well: Paulo Coelho makes mentions in his best-selling novel that shepherds and sailors get to travel a lot. I can vouch for sailors surely. Mariners learn quite a few things from time to time about the various cultures in the world while working with the crew from different nationalities. The cons are of course quite obviously being away from family for long

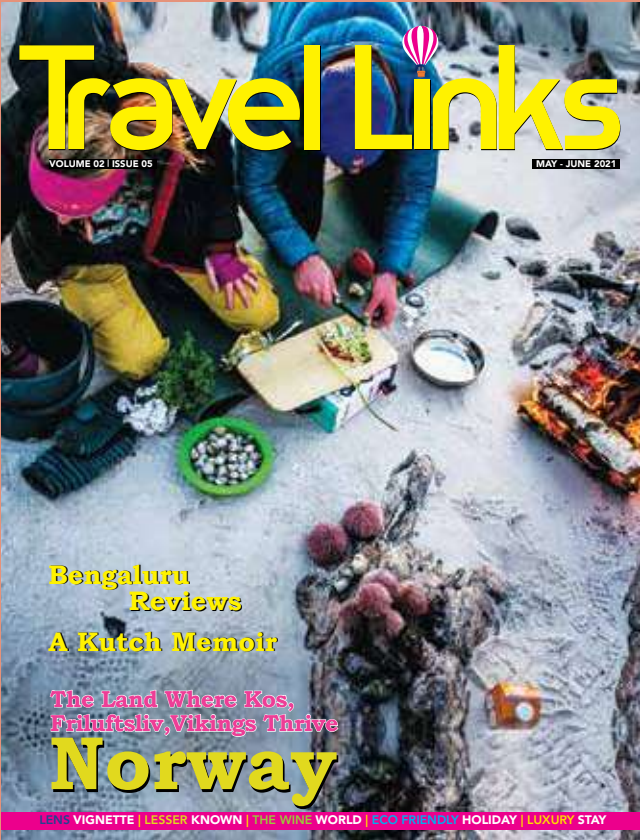
periods, being in a harsh environment many times, and being exposed to the perils of the sea.

**Q** Are you happy with your current profession or planning an alternative career which we have seen as a trend? Do you plan to do the same?

When I look back now, I have no regrets. And as mentioned earlier, I feel fortunate to be a part of the shipping fraternity. Yes, I would like to have an alternate career profession at some stage. I would like to be an auditor and audit merchant ships. That's only a plan as of now. I would also like to try and do a lot of writing. Maybe author a book someday.

**Q** Any advice that you would like to share with young aspirants as far as their short travel stints during the shipping tenure is concerned.

Make the most of it. Don't miss out on these golden opportunities of exploring around when you get them. Especially when you are in junior ranks. When you sign off from a ship, try and stay in that port/city for a few days and explore. You will only have to pay for your accommodation. Flights expenses will be borne by your company, so you get to travel to a foreign destination for a very reasonable price. Do take advantage of long vacations to travel far and wide. I connect strongly with St Augustine's words: "The world is a book and those who don't travel read only one page".<sup>[1]</sup>



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# Courtyard by Marriott Amritsar

By Payal Sahni

In the holy city of Amritsar lies Courtyard by Marriott. At a short distance of 3.5km from the Golden Temple, Courtyard is home to the best in the city. Modern rooms, decor that defines sophistication, and fascinating artworks dot the hotel.

Amritsar, the city well known for its scrumptious food and cultural diversity but whenever anyone comes to this Holy city they wish to witness the serenity and peace at Golden Temple or we can say it's a "Heaven on earth".

If you're in Amritsar, you'll likely visit Shri Harmandir Sahib and Jallianwala Bagh. The courtyard is close to these attractions. It is well-connected with Sri Guru Ram DassJee International Airport and the Amritsar Junction Railway Station. While you explore Amritsar, Courtyard by Marriott Amritsar will await you to recharge in its upscale hotel suites.

Tourist Guide 'Jasbir' is the perfect ambassador for a catch on whenever you want to explore the holy city because he knows every corner of the city either starting from the langar Sewa to exploring the food destinations that define the cultural heritage of Amritsar. Jasbir has been associated with Marriott Amritsar of his own will, but within a short period, he has developed a separate space among the travelers and the guests coming to explore the holy city while staying with Marriott. His passion for showcasing the cultural history of Golden Temple mesmerizes the guests to the level that they are fond of him now. Jasbir is a believer and he truly believes in a quote stating that "Believe and have trust and faith that you are capable of doing what you want to do"

Are you traveling with kids? Courtyard

Amritsar is at a stone's throw from fun activities for your little ones. You can take them to the Sun City amusement and water park or the Funzone gaming arcade. A must-see when in Amritsar is the Harike Bird Sanctuary. And staying at Courtyard Amritsar means you can easily drive there or take a cab. Another local attraction is the Durgiyana Temple and Gobindgarh Fort. Do not miss Maharaja Ranjit Singh Museum there!

When in Amritsar, you can't miss the delicious food! Lawrence Road, with some of the best food options in Amritsar, is close to the hotel property. At Courtyard, you get local and international cuisines to enjoy. It is not surprising that in the culinary capital this property has won the best food for two consecutive years within the Marriott chains.

Tired of your day's adventures? Refresh yourself in the rooftop pool and unwind at the spa and fitness center. Your laundry and dry cleaning are looked after by the excellent support staff.

Are you planning to get married in the holy city? Let Courtyard make the finest arrangements for you on your day. Sit back and relax as Marriott Amritsar's staff helps you arrange your lovely wedding. Small and intimate or grand, you can host a party of any size here. To make your special day extra special, you can get a pre-wedding pampering session at the spa.

## About The Team

Mr. Vijay Chandran, The new Hotel Manager of Courtyard Amritsar is a seasoned hospitality professional equipped with over 19 years of diverse multi-cultural experience working with a myriad of luxury brands across the APAC region including Jumeirah Hotels, W Doha & Dubai, Westin, Marriott and many more to the list.







Vijay Chandran

His inspirational journey comes with many milestones, from being awarded as the Best Leader of the year in 2014 to working as Director of Operations with Indore Marriott. Vijay brings with him a wealth of knowledge, deep expertise in the industry, and great experience in handling the Indian market. His vision is to sustain the hotel's existing strong positioning while



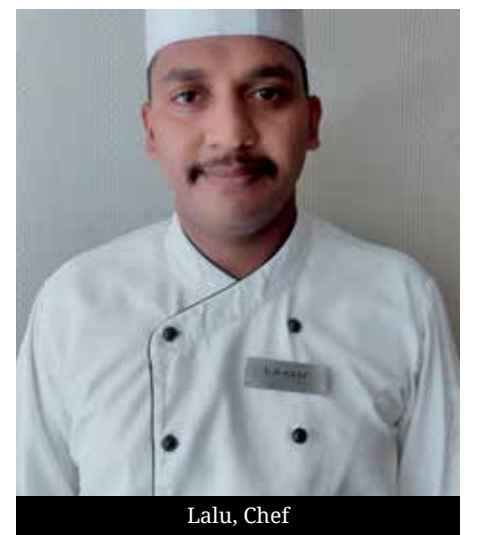
Anirudh, Executive Chef

gratifying the guests and customers with the products and services. Currently, Vijay is working with Courtyard by Marriott Amritsar, the brand which has positioned itself as a No. 1 in terms of Rooms & Food and Beverage quality for the last two years. His primary motto is satisfying the associates and he truly believes in the vision of Marriott "If we take care of our associates,



Jasbir

associates will take care of our guests" being a Food and beverage professional he resonates with the philosophies of the Courtyard brand when it comes to creating memorable guest experiences and connecting with people. From being a mentor to a connoisseur, Anirudh Deshpande, the Executive Chef for Courtyard Amritsar is well known for his



Lalu, Chef

inquisitive ideas and methods which have helped in lifting the reputation barriers and have successfully revamped the Culinary journey of the hotel to a new level. He started his journey with a luxury resort Park Hyatt Goa as a Chef De Partie but sooner he start expanding his knowledge and skills towards gratifying the guests with the kind of delicacies and cuisines he





prepared for the guests. In 2013, he started working as a Sous Chef for Grand Hyatt Doha, Qatar which acts as a path breaker for his career from there he was acknowledged by various people for his customized delicacies and indulgent cuisines.

This enthralling journey from being a trainee to being an Executive Chef has crafted a separate space in the minds of many people and being a man in this position, one has to be conscientious and methodical while taking care of his people.

Chef Lalu popularly known as the Dessert Maestro of Courtyard Amritsar started his carrier as a trainee in Cabana Orchid but with his inquisitive ideas in molding the dessert to please the customers and guests, interactions have successfully established himself as a successful and popular Junior Sous Chef in the holy city.

He is now working as a Junior Sous Chef with Courtyard by Marriott Amritsar a hotel chain that comes under Marriott International which is continuously rising and scoring new heights among all the other luxurious hotels.

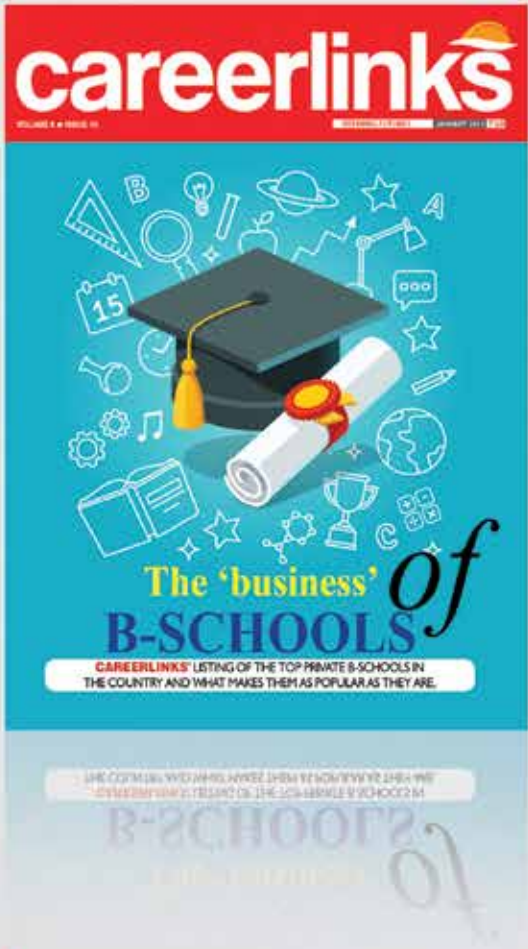
Akshita Sharma says, “You are never too



Akshita Sharma

old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”She believes in this quote as dreams are something which has no end, some people have infinity dreams with different goals in mind to achieve the same as her, She started her professional journey with Marriott International in 2017 as a Sales Associate but sooner, start expanding her skills and knowledge towards Marketing & Public Relations. In 2019, She started working with JW Marriott Mussoorie as a Marketing Executive and now she is a part of Courtyard Amritsar. With a passion for travel and hospitality, Akshita is a creative storyteller with a strong drive toward curating immersive brand experiences for the next generation of travelers. Her focus is to always bring innovative solutions that not only improve the company's image but also help in exponential growth!

Courtyard Amritsar by Marriott is luxury and comfort at its best. The staff looks after your needs and ensures that you have a wonderful time at the hotel. The courtyard mesmerizes you like no other and radiates the regal charm that Amritsar is known for. 🇮🇳



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# Intangible Cultural Heritage

By Team TL

The United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation in 2003 organised a convention on Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Anything which you cannot touch, measure or see is intangible. From the limitless moonlight overlooking the sky to the warmth we feel on our skin when we step into the Sun, the nature has blessed us with more intangible assets than we can account for.

Over the years, as humans formed communities, culture began to develop. This was the thread that bonded the group and gave them a way of life, a sense of uniqueness. UNESCO World Heritage Sites are renowned for their architecture and design. The oral, performing arts, rituals, knowledge of nature and traditional craftsmanship are the heritage that need preservation and awareness in order to demonstrate how diverse our cultures can be and to provide them the safeguard that they need.

The list for these intangible cultural heritages were made in 2008 under three banners. These included the ones in need of urgent protection, those related to humanity and the ones which act as good safeguarding practices. India is proudly represented on the list by 13 cultural heritages, which include dance, theatre, chanting, craftsmanship, health practices and fairs. Let's look at them from North to South.

## Buddhist chanting

In the region bounded by Himalayas and snow blankets, Buddhist chanting is very popular and bestows upon the Ladakh valley the blessings of Buddha. Sacred texts



are recited here and you would be delighted to converse with a Buddhist monk, dressed in maroon and orange robes. They are welcoming and would be happy to share their learnings with you.

## Ramman

South of Ladakh is the Garhwal region where Ramman is celebrated. The festival is celebrated in honour of the guardian deity Bhumichetrapal, also called BhumiyalDevta in the Saloor Dungra village of Chamoli district, Uttarakhand. A procession is carried out and barley plants offered to the deity to seek prosperity of agriculture and forest. This ten-day festival is celebrated nine or ten days after Baisakhi. Copper and brass utensil making by Thatheras of Punjab

We cannot mention Baisakhi without talking about Punjab. From the land of five rivers comes the traditional utensil making skills of the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru. They work on brass and copper using mud-brick kiln, traditional tools and hammer the metals into utensils, which are believed to be beneficial for health.

## Kalbelia dance

Cross the border to the southwest to enter the desert state of Rajasthan. Here, the Kalbelia tribe performs the Kalbelia dance. Traditionally catching snakes and trading in their venom, the Kalbelia dance resembles serpent movements. They are nomads and renowned for their dance and songs based on folklore and mythology. Dressed in black skirts embroidered with red and other colours, the women dance and twirl



their skirts in a mesmerising fashion to the tune of Pungi, daphli and dholak (musical instruments) played by the men.

## Kumbh Mela

We will now talk about the largest religious congregation in the world. Held every twelve years, the Kumbh Mela comprises of a ritual dip, religious discourses and mass feedings. The Kumbh Mela is held alternately at Allahabad (Sangam of Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati), Haridwar (Ganga), Nashik (Godavari) and Ujjain (Shipra). The next Kumbh Mela is expected to be say Haridwar next year.

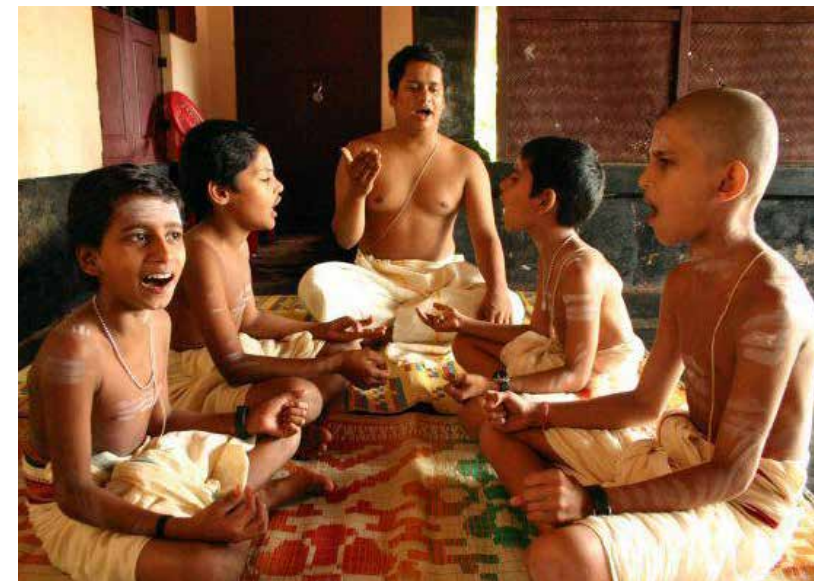
## Ram leela

With a dip in the temperature these days,

what comes to our minds is the celebration of entering the winter months. Ram leela is the traditional performance of Ramayana, held during the Sharad Navratri days. Fairs dot the cities and villages as numerous people turn up to enjoy the enactment of Ramayana on stage, and to enjoy the food and game stalls that are present at the fair.

## Vedic chanting

Next in list is the tradition of Vedic chanting in India. Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samveda and Atharvaveda have been passed down since 1500 BCE orally. Comprising of hymns and verses, Vedas are recited orally pan-India and this has earned a spot on the intangible cultural heritage of India. It is believed that







the sound and pronunciation of the hymn be retained for maximum effect.

**Chhau dance**

We will now move towards East to look

at Chhau dance from Bengal, Jharkhand and Odisha. The dance can be based on martial arts, festive themes, acrobatics, all performed in tribal and folk traditions. Chhau dancers enact stories from



Ramayana, Mahabharat and Puranas. People from all walks of life come together in this celebration in the spring. Masks are worn by dancers, the knowledge of making which has been passed down orally over generations. Men perform this dance in a akhara, to the tunes of dhol, mohuri and shehnai.

**Sankirtana**

Let's travel further East on our journey to reach Manipur. Sankirtana is a singing, drumming and dancing performance in the temples and homes of this north eastern state. Embraced in devotion, energy and emotion, these performances are based on the life of Lord Krishna and is mainly practiced by Vaishnava inhabitants. The highlight is the Nata Pala which is performed in Manipur. At home, Sankirtana is offered in the form of a prayer at all ceremonies of life-cycle.

**Nowruz**

Nowruz is the Iranian and Persian New Year celebrated by the Irani and Parsi



communities in India, and all over the world. Nowruz has Iranian and Zoroastrian origins, and is celebrated by people from various faiths. It is a holy day for Zoroastrians, Baha'is and some Muslim communities. It marks the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere, on the day of equinox. It is thus celebrated on March 20, 21 or 22. Various rituals are observed worldwide to mark the festival, including Kampirak and Haft Mewa in Afghanistan, Amu Nowruz and Haji Firuz in Iran, and Khoncha in Azerbaijan.

**Koodiyattam**

Koodiyattam was the first art form from Kerala to be added on the list of intangible cultural heritage from India. It is performed in Kerala as a combination of ancient Sanskrit theatre and Koothu. It is performed in temples to the tunes of Mizhavu drummers by Chakyars and Nangyaramma for 120-150 hours, spread across several nights.

**Yoga**

All the revelry and celebration might take



a toll on health. To avoid it, use the next intangible cultural heritage from India, Yoga. Yoga is a practice involving physical, mental and spiritual aspects, meant for

awareness. The postures in yoga are often believed to ease pains, train the mind and body, improve meditation and mindfulness of the being by imparting a sense of inner





peace to the practitioner.

As seen, India is a melting pot of culture and its intangible heritage is formally listed in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. Sometimes, feeling and experiencing are much better than looking and touching. Transcending into the experience can be uplifting and introduce our minds and hearts to various cultural practices. So, pack your bags and head to the destination to delve into the sheer joy and happiness that these practices provide. Happy travelling to you!

### Mudiyettu

We will now trail towards southern India for the ritual dance and theatre of Kerala, Mudiyettu. Also called Mudiyett, the mythological tale of goddess Kali and demon Darika is enacted in Bhadrakali temples between February and May. The performance requires 16 people, and the entire community comes together to contribute and participate. The survival of this art form is relying on Guru-Shishya parampara because there are no formal institutions imparting it.[\[1\]](#)





# Cappadocia

## A magical place full with natural and historical attractions

Cappadocia fascinates its visitors with its extraordinary topography, rich history, and delicious cuisine. Featuring subterranean rock-carved cities, enchanting fairy chimneys, and breath-taking vistas, a visit to Cappadocia offers magical hot air balloon rides, horseback rides through rocky landscapes, charming caves hotels, and sampling local wines in quaint cafes.

Cappadocia is an unforgettable combination of natural and historical wonders that has captivated travellers for centuries. The region's topography, created by the erosion of lava and ash spewed by now-dormant volcanoes, fascinates visitors with the unusual conical structures called "fairy chimneys" and centuries-old underground cities carved from rock. Cappadocia gained fame in antiquity for actual breeding horses and has been known as the "Land of Beautiful Horses" for hundreds of years. With these assets and more, Cappadocia promises an unforgettable holiday!

*The colourful balloons normally launch around five o'clock in the morning, usually from the village of Göreme. Take your camera with you!*

### See Cappadocia from the sky, stay in caves.

A hot air balloon journey across Cappadocia's unique sky is the most pleasing way to explore the region's stunning environment. During the ride, guests can see sweeping views of Pigeon Valley, Zemi Valley, Love







Valley, Pasaba Monks Valley, and the famed fairy chimneys and other magnificent rock formations. The colourful balloons normally launch around five o'clock in the morning, usually from the village of Göreme. Take your camera with you!

For guests seeking an authentic Cappadocian experience, the area's cave hotels are the perfect accommodation. Rock-carved rooms in cave hotels bring history and modern amenities together in a luxurious blend. After a full day of sightseeing, the best way to spend the evening is to relax in the lounge of a boutique cave hotel with a glass of fine local wine.

### From Göreme to Ürgüp on horseback

It's only fitting that Cappadocia is known as the "Land of Beautiful Horses." Ranches in the vicinity provide guided horseback riding experiences on lovely, sure-footed ponies. Seeing the sunset over the Red Valley on the back of a horse is an once-in-a-lifetime event. While horses can cover more ground, walking allows travellers to see more things. The tranquil Ihlara Valley is an ideal location for a walk or hike. Gazebos along the Melendiz stream in the valley where trekkers can sip tea or coffee. Jeep and ATV safaris are also offered, and off-road vehicles can access some of the area's churches and valleys.

### Enthralling underground cite

A land of mystery, Cappadocia has been inhabited for centuries, sometimes under the ground. According to specific investigations, fascinating multi-level subterranean towns carved totally out of rock date from the seventh and ninth century BC. With rock-carved tunnels connecting dozens of living, worship, and storage rooms, the underground cities of Kaymakl, Derinkuyu, konak, Mazi, and Tatlarin, were built to protect the area's population from invaders, provide a view into the daily lives of their inhabitants. It is an incredible experience to travel through the paths of these unusual underground residences.

### Fantastic flavours

Like the cuisines of every other region in Türkiye, Cappadocian cuisine was shaped by the area's cultural heritage and the availability of fresh local and seasonal products. Visitors to Cappadocia begin the day with a traditional Turkish breakfast, usually accompanied by a lovely view of the landscape of fairy chimneys. This hearty breakfast showcases local cheeses and fresh eggs, tomatoes, cucumbers, green peppers, olives, jams, honey, butter, and cream. Delicacies like homemade sausages, pastries, and the delicious egg dish, menemen, are complemented by fragrant



*Cappadocia's climate is ideal for growing grapes, and the area has a long-established winemaking tradition. At various wineries in the area, guests can sample local vintages made from the grapes grown in the rich tuff soil of the region. Cappadocia's climate is ideal for growing grapes, and the area has a long-established winemaking tradition. At various wineries in the area, guests can sample local vintages made from the grapes grown in the rich tuff soil of the region.*

Turkish tea. A perfect start to a busy day of having fun and seeing beautiful sights!

Other dining delights in Cappadocia are local dishes such as apricot stew and zerdeli rice (a saffron-rice dish). In a region famous for its pottery, the testi kebab (pottery kebab) is a must-try: vegetables and meat are placed in a clay pot sealed with bread and baked in a tandoor (traditional oven). Before serving the dish, the seal is broken with a dramatic flourish!

Cappadocia's climate is ideal for growing grapes, and the area has a long-established winemaking tradition. At various wineries in the area, guests can sample local vintages

made from the grapes grown in the rich tuff soil of the region.

### Romance in the Land of Fairy Tales

Cappadocia is one of Türkiye's most popular wedding and honeymoon destinations with its fairy-tale landscape. Couples and their guests choose Cappadocia for its many gorgeous boutique hotels, dining options, and spellbinding hot air balloons.

Many couples immortalize their marriage proposals and ceremonies during a hot air balloon ride or celebrate anniversaries and honeymoons while floating across the blue Cappadocia sky. Often featuring terraces with stunning sunset views, secluded boutique cave hotels are a popular option for wedding celebrations. Many of these hotels also have Turkish baths or other spa facilities. [\[1\]](#)





# Sought after

## International destinations this season

By Team TL

### *Dubai*

If you are planning to explore UAE, you must follow some traveling rules and regulations in this country. Dubai started special issues for passengers who can travel without the approval of GDRFA or ICP. Before travel visitors must have visa requirements.

Passengers have a valid covid-19 vaccination certificate which is approved by WHO or the UAE. This certificate contains a QR code.

If any person or passenger is tested, he/she must follow rules and guidelines issued by the Dubai health authority. The transiting passengers are not needed to present a covid-19 test certificate or anything until they have to get to their final destination.

On the other hand, children under 16 should be vaccinated and their tests are required to fly to Dubai.

You can travel to Dubai or any place in the emirate after reaching Abu Dhabi international airport. They will accept all your pre-arranged visas that are issued by other emirates in UAE. You can travel by any transport freely.

### *Ras Al Khaimah*

When you complete all the procedures of the covid-19 document and rules & regulations, you can travel peacefully. Ras Al Khaimah takes complete travel charges for staying in hotels.

Ras Al Khaimah is a safe destination and received the safe travel label from the WTTC. It promises of an authentic and easily accessible Arabian experience. RAK always welcomes you and assists you in planning your trip. They offer you magical emirates and a stunning array of landscapes. From white sandy beaches to the lush green mangroves, creeks, and lagoons, they have it all.



Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA)



You will get endless views of terracotta desert sand, and spectacular mountains or you can discover the Emirati culture. You can experience desert camp and mountain adventures including the world's largest zip lines.

You can get world-class cuisine with extraordinary comfort feelings in



international hotels with exclusive spas and resorts. It is the place where you can enjoy a real royal treatment feeling with amazing value for your pocket budget. After enjoying the royal treatment, you can explore history and heritage. It is a perfect destination to discover or it makes you extend your weekend holiday break.

These places give you the best in the world and ages to your budget.

**Qatar**

When you think about to travel Qatar some covid-19 precautions should be measured which have been followed at airports and flights also. Onboard the flight required to take precautions like wearing a mask, hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and hand sanitation, these all things are carefully observed by staff, crew members, and all passengers.

It is a place where you can see cultural authenticity meets modernity, people experience unique things and sand meets the sea. Isn't that cool right?

It is rooted in their heritage and growing globally in business, politics, and education. Even you find a deep history of archaeological sites and artifacts which





are cared for and protected or housed in museums. Qatar is the home of everything from Neolithic rock carvings to modern skyscrapers and dugongs in glittering waters. It holds all things like thrills and novel experiences in just one place.



*Singapore*

If you are planning a trip to travel in Singapore, there are some guidelines you should know when planning to visit during covid-19.

Like other countries, Singapore has also followed the strict rules for covid guidelines strategy. It is a place where the perfect Asian city and make you easily fall in love. They served you the world’s best street food, and hawker centers. The city has more to satisfy the fascinated tourists.

Singapore opened the vaccinate travel lanes with a range of Thailand, Maldives, and Vietnam also. However, Singapore and Malaysia have the busiest border crossings in the world. A vaccinated traveler from any country can enter Singapore without any quarantining or any proof. But they required visitors to have health insurance in case they get ill during visits. All visitors must register their information with the Singapore government for safe entry by using trace together apps that have successfully cleared from the customs.

After leaving the country, visitors asked to keep the app on there for only 21 days because the government gets enough time to your contract tracing in case of covid.





## Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is full of rich heritage, culture, and breathtaking views/landscapes. Traveler explores their warmth and hospitality. Saudi always welcomes their people. If we talk about important things



that you need to know about international flight/ travel rules and regulations. And

Those who trip or visit Saudi must be vaccinated with approved proof. There is no need to provide a negative PCR or antigen test certificate. When you are fully vaccinated, then you don't require staying in quarantine.

## Malaysia

If the tourist is not fully vaccinated then he/she is required to undergo an RT-PCR test for two days. Within 24 hours and you have observed 5 days of quarantine in Malaysia.

If were planning to explore Malaysia then you have to wear a mask which is mandatory in public places. No more physical distancing is needed; you can shake hands freely but with good hygiene and sanitation.

Those who tested positive should follow the rules and regulations and stay in quarantine until they get negative results.

Before traveling first do complete research about the country and place. And find out the things you should carry with traveling. Get a health check or travel vaccinations, some countries need to be done fully vaccination in advance of your trip. And check your travel provider and requirements for the specifically planned trips.







# TOP 10 OFFBEAT DESTINATIONS IN INDIA

By Team TL

This article contributed to our reader who wants to know more about the destination and is excited about activities. The tourist main attractions are offbeat destinations, places where you feel relaxed and enjoy your quality time with friends and family and take a perfect break from the hectic days. Here are top some places you should visit.

Yercaud, Tamil Nadu- this beautiful place is located on the Shevaroy's Hill of eastern ghat of Tamil Nadu. It also is known as the jewel of the south. In the local language word, Yercaud means the Lake Forest. This place has a reserve forest, rocky hills, and a lake. A place that is less

explored and undiscovered treasure. It is a paradise for nature lovers, trekkers, and adventurous people. You can easily explore this place in a day or two days. And find fruit orchards, spice, and coffee plantations. This is a place where you can your time without disturbance and explores the place without any crowded area.

Ponmudi, Kerala- this local place is situated in the capital of Thiruvananthapuram. It is a popular hill station. This best place for trekking, adventure, and long drive/bikers will fall in love. All-day you can walk through the pathways and you can explore much more than you can think. There is also another place to explore in Kerala also is Peerumedu. This is the most popular hill station. It is defined by name of a Sufi saint named Peer Mohammad. This place is covered with tea, coffee, cardamom, rubber, and flora & fauna. Peerumedu gives you

unforgettable experiences and memories. It was suitable for trekking, cycling, activities & adventure. The breathtaking sunrise and sunset views.

Kokernag Jammu & Kashmir- is located in Anantnag, and beautiful destination covered with evergreen pine trees. It is the main attraction of tourist place who wants to seek nature beauty. The amazing fact about the koker has taken from Kashmir word morgie which means chicken, and nag word means snake, isn't funny. The total area is about 300 kanals of which 129 kanals and the rest are gardens/forest areas. I surely recommended you this place to visit with your loved ones and enjoy this place.

Mechuka, Arunachal Pradesh- this place is located 6000 feet above sea level and is also known for the forbidden valley of Arunachal Pradesh. This valley is amazing for trekking, adventure, and for walking & admire the nature. You must see the



***Kokernag Jammu & Kashmir- is located in Anantnag, and beautiful destination covered with evergreen pine trees. It is the main attraction of tourist place who wants to seek nature beauty. The amazing fact about the koker has taken from Kashmir word morgie which means chicken, and nag word means snake, isn't funny.***

mopin festival, they show their culture and traditions must watch before the end of the trip. I suggest you as much as possible try to explore every place in Mechuka.

Lambasingi, Andhra Pradesh is also known as Kashmir of Andhra Pradesh. It is only placed in the south that receives snowfall in winters. It has towering hills, tall green trees, and dense forests. Lambasingi is the best place for trekking, hiking, mountain-related activities, and adventure. There is also a place which is unexplored and lesser-known Kothapalli waterfalls, you can fill the bucket full of memories and experiences of the valley.

Barot Valley, Himachal Pradesh- it is located in the valley of Mandi district and





a hidden gem of Himachal, and developed for a hydel project over the Uhl river and soon became a tourist attraction. It offers you trekking, fishing, activities, camping and adventure. It is a gateway to nargu wildlife sanctuary and home of black bear, ghoral, and monal. The forest is covered with dedar and oak trees and a region of a variety of flora and fauna. Once you explore this place, you will only get the charm of the village.

Yuksom, Sikkim- if there is heaven then yuksom is the place. It formed as the gateway to kangchendzongha. These places have history and are known as the meeting place of three lamas because three monks came from Tibet and phuntsogNamgyal.

This place to understand the local culture and traditions of the state. The valley is full of pictorial sights. Best for sightseeing places and to explore.

Mangitungi, Maharashtra is famous for its holy place for pilgrimage and known for its hills. It has twin peaks in Nasik. About 4500 steps to do cardio dose to reach the top, after work/climb when you see the view from the top it will be breath-taking views. it is connected to a vast plateau with vibrant fauna and the monsoon season. It will take 5 hours to reach the peak. If you are interested in mythology and archaeology definitely for you. These have many caves with sculptures and carvings of Mahavir, adinath, parshvanath, sugreeva, hanuman,





***Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh- it is most underrated or we can say unexplored destinations. It is one of the best places for travelers. There is a wildlife sanctuary and an awe-inspiring waterfall where the entire beautiful river forcefully tumbles down the cliff, what an eye-catching view.***

and more. So what are you waiting for to explore the places?

Raithal, Uttarakhand- this is a place where village houses are built on Garhwali traditional architecture. But Raithal is not on the tourist map, surprisingly visitors visit this place. The locals worship at the temple and the temple stands opposite the Shrikant mountain peak. You got only a breath-taking view of the Himalayas. Best place for exploring for trekkers, cycling, and adventure people. Those who love

the Himalayas, I think you should explore the place. The locals are playing a very important for supporting their community such as farming, traditional homestays, honey-making, using solar energy, and project like goat village. There are many comfortable options for staying but it's depending on a budget if you are a big pocket man. Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh- it is most underrated or we can say unexplored destinations. It is one of the best places for travelers. There is a wildlife sanctuary and

an awe-inspiring waterfall where the entire beautiful river forcefully tumbles down the cliff, what an eye-catching view. Even you get an opportunity to ride to the same river with a boatman and he will be navigating your way through the marble rock on both sides. The town gets its unique charm. One more thing should remind you that if you are vegetarian then you should explore the old town Kamaniya Gate in the evening. If you have a sweet tooth then go look around Badkul for some sweets. [\[1\]](#)

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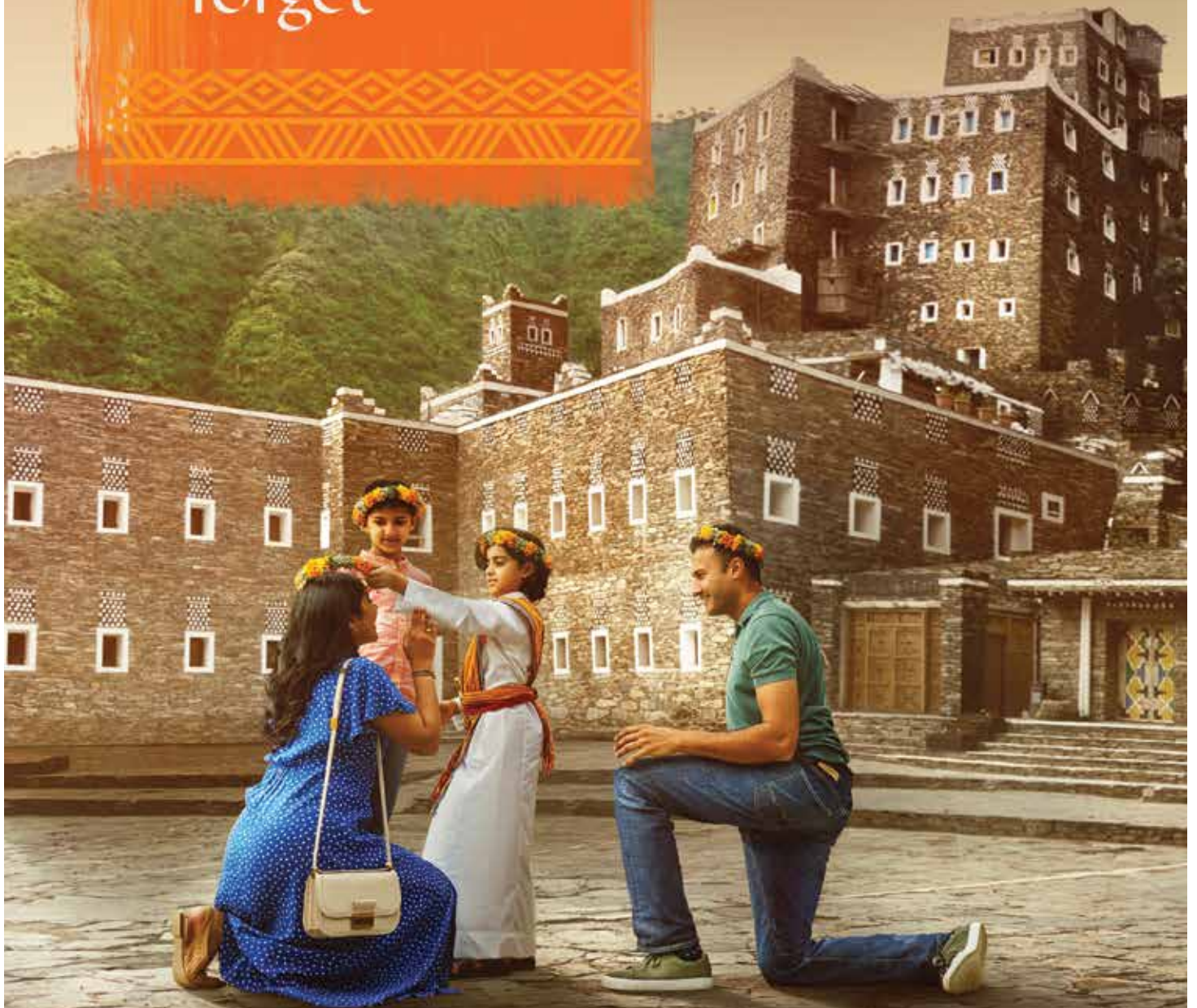
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