

Top Travel & Hospitality Trends for 2023

By Sharmila Chand

The good news is that the post-pandemic complete rebound is on the cards for the travel and hospitality industry. Going forward, we expect to see better business growth and revival of the economics. Here is a take on key trends as shared by known professionals that will shine in the year ahead.

Mukesh Singh, MD, The Tattwa Corbett Spa & Resort, Uttarakhand

Long Stay

A very encouraging trend in the Travel and Hospitality industry that we are seeing is how people are increasing their days of stay. More



Mukesh Singh



Sarbendra Sarkar



Vishal Lonkar

and more guests are staying Long Weekends; either they come in on a Thursday/Friday or extend their stay after the Weekend to Monday. People now want to experience the destination in leisure or spend time relaxing in the hotel/resort they are staying. They spend lot of time inside the resort, enjoy all the facilities like the pool, spa and also do local sightseeing in a more relaxed and leisurely manner.

Destination Wedding

Having a Destination Wedding in a different city has become the most prominent travel trend and is ever-increasing. It is not only the uber rich in India who are doing Destination Weddings. It is like most Indian families want a Destination Wedding and it has moved beyond Goa or Rajasthan wedding. Newer destinations like Uttarakhand are fast becoming Destination Wedding hotspots. People usually book into a resort with a 2night / 3day package and do all their functions and the wedding under one roof.

Group Travel

We have seen in recent times, people are travelling in groups with friends and family to celebrate festivals. For Holi, Diwali, Rakhi and other festivals, people are travelling away from their homes to spend some exclusive time. They lock their travel calendar much in advance and escape to have a good time away from the hustle and bustle of their cities. Holi celebrations, particularly, away from the city have become very common. It is either a small group of friends or a couple of families who book a resort and spend fun time together.

Vishal Lonkar, General Manager - Business Development, Renest Hotels & Resorts

Nature Retreats

The pandemic caused many people to rethink what's important to them, including

their travel plans. People now prefer to travel off the grid, visit wellness retreats, experience culture and nostalgia, and travel on bucket list trips. Holidays that reconnect with nature are gaining popularity after the pandemic. More travellers are now seeking peaceful getaways, whether it's a wellness retreat or living in nature's lap.

Fine Dining

With travel being in the foray, the evolution of fine dining continues. There is a huge opportunity for restaurants after the pandemic to focus on what can make a difference and what matters most to everyone. At the beginning of the year, we saw that restaurants were trying to be creative in providing a nostalgic experience to their consumers while maintaining the highest standard of hygiene.

Destination Wedding

Having been disconnected from the world for the last two years, consumers are definitely looking forward to a more intimate experience. Another important aspect of the travel and hospitality industry is the 'Wedding Season', which is finally here. Apart from the usual destinations such as Goa and Udaipur, the wedding destinations have evolved this year, with new entrants such as Mahabaleshwar, Puri, Pushkar, and Ranthambore added to the mix.

Sarbendra Sarkar, Founder & MD, Cygnett Hotels and Resorts

Domestic market to remain strong:

The last year registered domestic markets as a key segment for Indian hotels. The year 2023 is going to witness the domestic markets remain at the forefront of a strong Indian hospitality resurgence. Inbound tourism is recovering slowly and in its absence hospitality players are going to focus more on business opportunities within the country.

Wellness tourism to thrive:

The pandemic has raised the awareness



Mehul Sharma



Vichin Sehgal



"Bleisure - Today Hybrid Work Culture has become a common trend with major companies like Amazon, Facebook, Google etc allowing their employees to work from home. Locals are looking for a change of environment and Bleisure travellers are looking to hotel venues as make-shift offices. In the hospitality sector, the next chapter of corporate travel is here with the modern-day business traveller who believes in bleisure - the concept of business meets leisure, adding on a few days to a business trip to enjoy the destination. We need to capitalize on this trend by customizing our offerings to meet the needs and wants of this emerging segment as part of our strategy for 2023." Pranay Verdia, Cluster GM of Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel

level of people about their health which has catapulted wellness tourism in the country. The year 2023 will see wellness as one of the key reasons for Indians to travel. So, hotels and resorts with a good wellness offering will find many takers.

It's all about the experience:

Travelling in 2023 will go beyond mere 'sightseeing'. Indians will travel with a purpose it can be food and beverage, spiritual or adventure driven. Hotels that are located near immersive natural settings are well-positioned to gain from this trend. I expect northeast India to grow in popularity manifolds in 2023.

Sustainability is present and the future:

Sustainability is in the spotlight. Travellers are now aware of taking a sustainable holiday like never before. More and more hospitality players will be highlighting their sustainability efforts in 2023 to attract this new generation of environmentally aware tourists

Mehul Sharma, Founder & CEO – Signum Hotels & Resorts

Sustainability

Climate change still is one of the most global issues. Guests would prefer staying at a hotel that prioritise sustainable offerings. This would mean hotels would have to look into their eco-certifications, eco-friendly amenities, being energy efficient, conserving water, using sustainable clean products.

Wellness Travel Getting Popular:

We have observed the shift in focus and priority of guests towards Wellness in last few years and that will continue to happen. Hotels should work towards offering more holistic packages. This could include offering Yoga classes, healthy menu, in-room spa treatments, diet consultations, etc. Leveraging low-season wellness retreats can be a good idea to boost revenue.

Smart Technology in Hotels:

Hotel Industry has a love-hate relationship with technology. This sector still struggles with seamless integration with technology. Airports, OTAs segments have been growing in terms of technology. Hotel sector needs to be focussed on developing and seamlessly integrating & streamlining tech in the processes.

Immersive Experiences On The Rise

Consumer Behaviour is evolving all the time and, today we are dealing with

customers who are prioritising lifestyle experience over extravagance.

Micro-travel:

Short distance travel demands are rising. Operators of caravan and holiday parks have seen a growth in bookings compared to major city-based hotels.

Vichin Sehgal, Vice President of Rajasthali Resort & Spa, Jaipur

Rajasthan has always been the pioneer of new hospitality trends that redefine the industry at large. And thus, it does not come as much of a surprise to me that in the next couple of years we might be able to experience a lot more of these trends that will define the hospitality industry of this state.

Destination Weddings

Rajasthan, specifically Jaipur, is the hub of experiential, royal weddings. And this trend will grow exponentially in the oncoming years. Destination weddings are about selecting the perfect city or place for your wedding which may be not your local locale. But marrying beyond the known locales, as per one's dream or preference is adding to the trend of destination weddings.

Staycations

The foundation of a staycation is rooted in the broader themes of smaller families, larger room setups, customized services, curated gourmet preparations and experiential luxury to add to their weekend plans. More and more families are opting for a quiet staycation to escape their busy lives at times and simply take the time to reconnect with their loved ones. The trend can grow up to 100% in the next couple of years in the industry.

Intimate Weddings

Gone are the days of larger, more than 100-people weddings, when people would book the entire inventory of the hotel for their weddings. Weddings have become much more experience-oriented, where in people want to invite only their loved and near ones, ranging from 50 to maybe a hundred people. This is a trend to stay for a longer period.

Closed family groups travelling

Besides the practice of friends travelling together, we are seeing more and more families travelling to a destination for the weekend with their members to curate an experiential stay.