

## CONNECTIVITY, ENHANCING THE JOY OF TRAVEL



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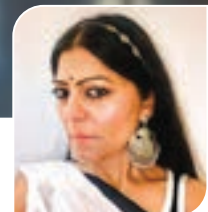
PERSPECTIVES



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Marketing Manager  
Aloft New Delhi Aerocity



**Rakesh Rana**  
Executive Chef  
Pride Plaza Hotel



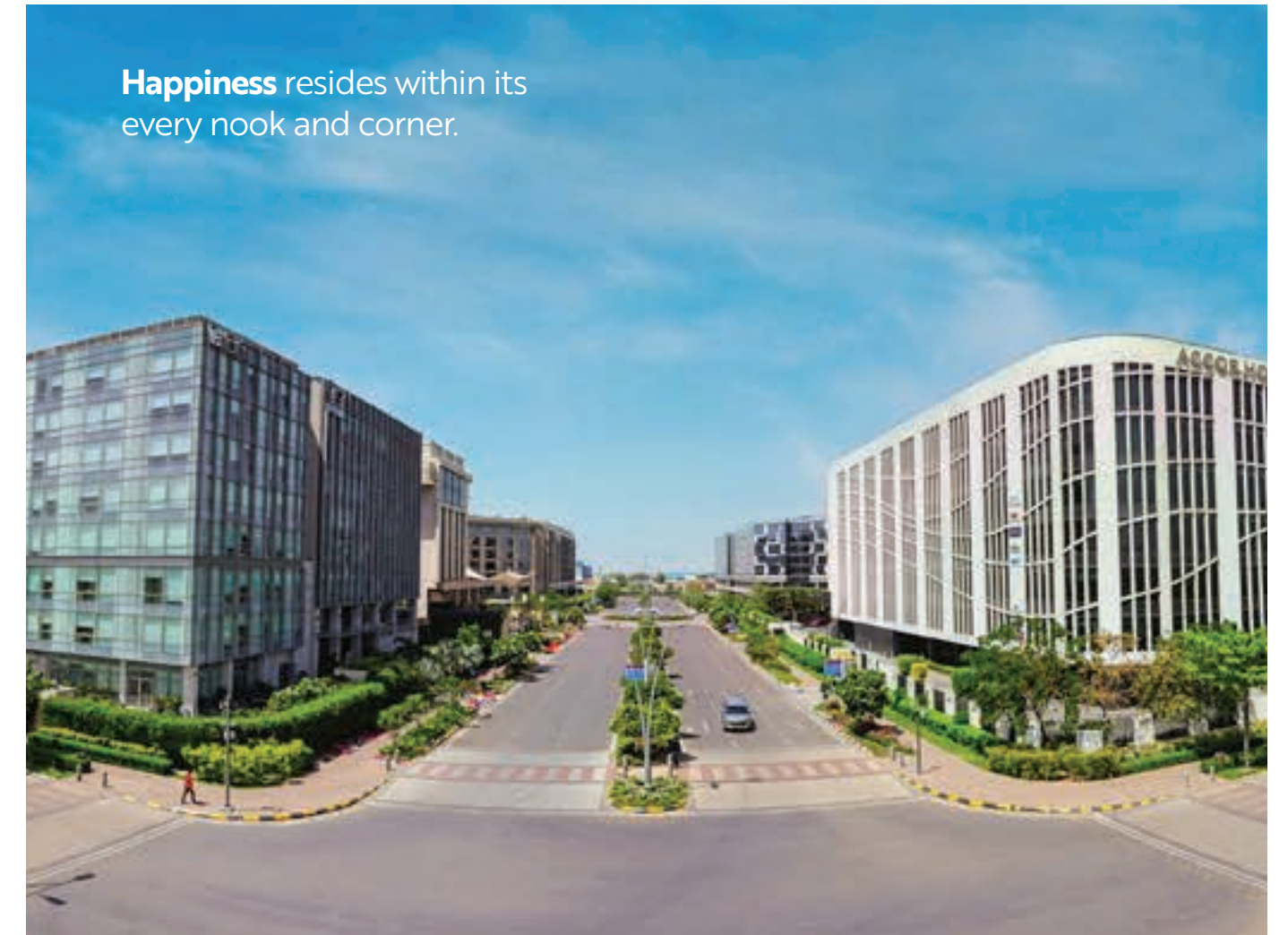
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## Passages Of Self-discovery



**ANNURAG BATRA**

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**A**mong the fondest memories we all cherish are those of our journeys. Of summer trips to grandparents, bus full of students singing all the way to destination during school trips, toy train ride to Shimla or Darjeeling and if we were among the luckiest ones, a plain journey about which we would brag for months to come. Changing trains, making do with average road-side public utilities and delays were no cause for fuss, we enjoyed the journey as we did the destination.

*The times they are-a changin* and with pressures of modern life, there is premium on fast connectivity, reduced travel time and having as many meaningful moments in a short journey as possible. There is a new emphasis also on hygiene and comforts. Rising incomes, social media exposure and the urge to explore – and post on social media – untouched corners of the planet are further fuelling this global travel boom. This has brought about a transformation in the travel and tourism landscape and road, rail and air transport providing best and fastest connectivity options to the those with wanderlust.

In this issue of Aerocity Live, we bring to you an overarching view of connectivity as it has evolved, how it's aiding travel aspirations of all generations and how Delhi, Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) and Aerocity provide a great template of how integrated transport can do wonders for seamless travel. Among the busiest airports in the world now, IGI is also positioned on the ground through metro and highways to serve travellers to and from Delhi NCR. The Delhi Metro plays a crucial role in this regard. And Aerocity, located incredibly close to the airport, offers accommodation in most comfortable ambience and an array of eating options. Based out of Aerocity, you can commute to the rest of Delhi on metro. This is how you can 'make the best of both the world'.

We also highlight how some other cities, including Goa, Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam have bolstered their tourism potential by strengthening connectivity and also, how our coastal destination are getting a boost now thanks to improved air connectivity.

Showcasing the advances in transport are three museums we highlight in this issue – Heritage Transport Museum, Metro Museum and Railway Museum. Reading these pages, I have already added these on my bucket list.

No travel in India is complete without trying the Dhaba Food and in this issue too, we highlight some tempting options of Dhaba Food in Delhi NCR and Aerocity.

Happy Reading.



## Prioritising Travellers' Convenience



**AMAN KAPOOR**  
CEO, Airports Land Development, GMR Group

Dear Readers,

GMR's Delhi International Airport represents not merely a pivotal achievement in infrastructure development but serves as the portal to a novel epoch in travel encounters surpassing expectations with advanced technology, efficient security and check-in process ensuring seamless journeys. The airport features terminals replete with a myriad of traveller-centric amenities enticing passengers to extend their stay as they wait to catch their flight. From a diverse array of culinary offerings to premium lifestyle brands, comfortable seating zones and engaging art collections, airports are undergoing a metamorphosis into landmarks that merit exploration. **The recent inauguration of the state-of-the-art expanded 'Terminal 1' by Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi signifies a significant achievement**

for Delhi Airport, elevating it to the prestigious league of global airports with a capacity of 100 million passengers per annum. This achievement has solidified Delhi Airport's position as India's premier global aviation hub, further enhancing connectivity and accessibility for travellers worldwide.

New connections to lesser-explored and remote destinations are re-shaping the tourism landscape, bringing about a profound shift, opening new possibilities for cultural exchange as well as promoting sustainable tourism in unexplored realms. This transformation is not an isolated feat but a result of visionary planning and concerted development in air, rail and road connectivity. **Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi's words resonate, "The more infrastructure will be strengthened in different parts of the country, the more convenient the connectivity will become, the more support different modes of transport will provide to each other the more easier the lives of people will become, the more opportunities for employment creation and business will be created."** In line with this vision, the Dwarka Expressway has emerged as another landmark project, poised to seamlessly integrate pivotal urban hubs in and around Delhi, easing traffic congestion while catalysing regional development and economic prosperity.

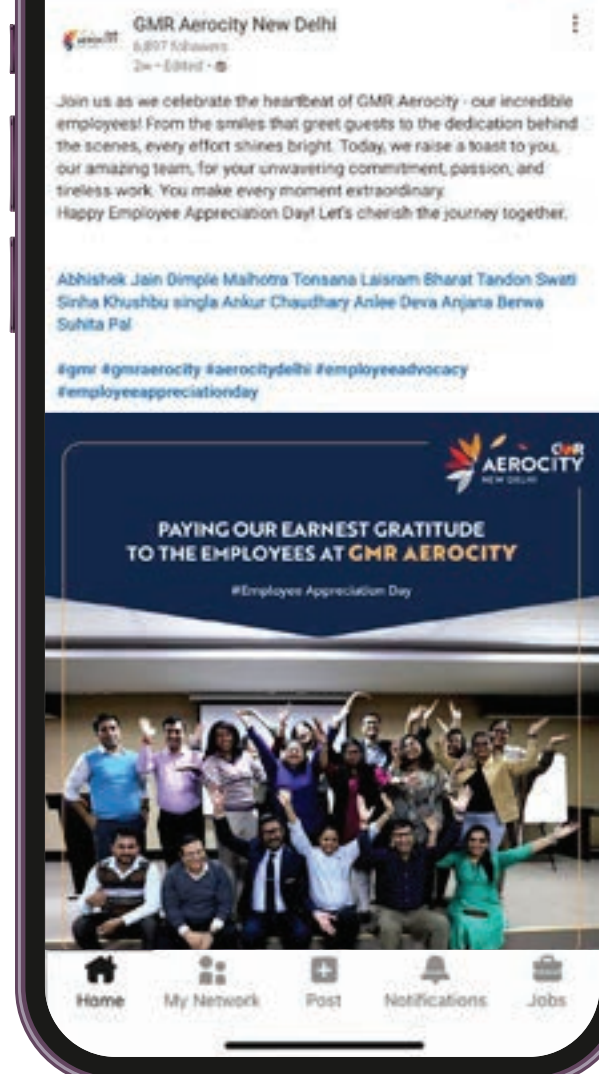
Imagine the convenience of using expressways from satellite towns to catch a flight or seamlessly switching from a train to the Airport Express Metro, reaching Delhi Airport in under an hour, bypassing the traffic. Non-stop flights to far-off destinations like Lakshadweep or the North-East become a reality, turning travel dreams into tangible experiences.

This issue delves into the monumental transformation fuelled by enhanced connectivity across the country. Technological advancements in automobiles, locomotives and crafts go hand in hand with a massive thrust on infrastructure development. Expert insights highlight the positive impacts of this connectivity, showcasing destinations that have emerged on the tourism map within and outside the country.

Transport modes themselves become objects of fascination at spots like the Railway Museum, Metro Museum in Delhi and Heritage Transport Museum, offering enriching experiences for all age groups.

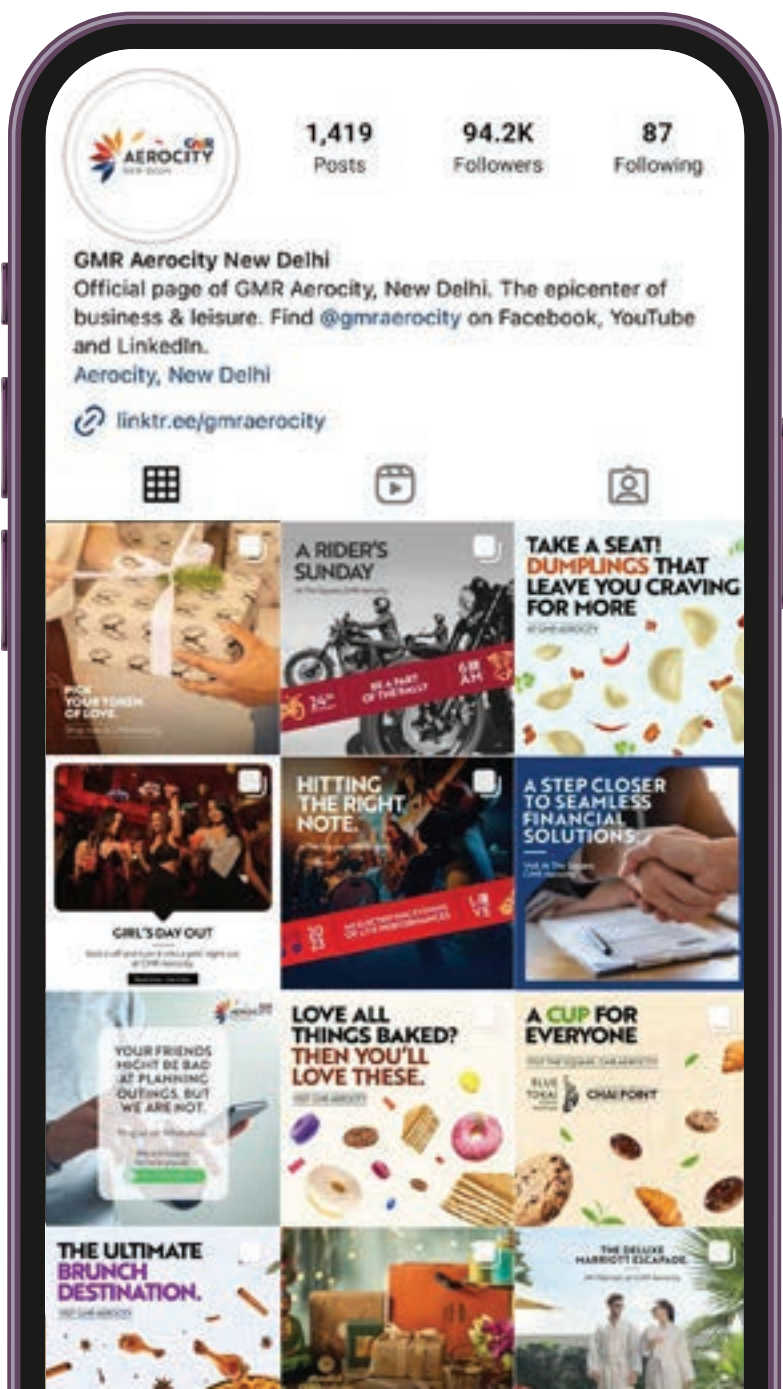
In embracing connectivity, we are not just building infrastructure; we are crafting gateways to experiences, making travel not just a necessity but a celebration of the journey itself.

Happy reading!



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# CONTENTS

APRIL-MAY 2024 - ISSUE 13

## 10 GMR Event Calendar

What to watch out for in Delhi NCR

## 20 Special Event

The best of regional cuisines at Aerocity Culinary Fest, featuring expert talks and demos by expert chefs

## 24 Cover Feature

**Connectivity, Enhancing the Joy of Travel**

- Delhi Airport & Aerocity as epitome of integrated connectivity
- Importance of expanded T1 and of the new Dwarka Expressway
- Perspectives on connectivity from industry leaders
- How Goa, Hyderabad and Vizag airports have helped boost tourism in these cities; how Ayodhya Airport is enabling tourism

## 52 Must Visit Spots

Heritage Transport Museum, Railway Museum and Metro Museum

## 12 News

- GMR Aerocity Unveils Exciting New Venue For Cultural & Business Events
- Happy Hotelier Club Hospitality Run - Edition 2



## 58 Aerocity Partners

### Gurneer Kaur

Marketing Manager, Aloft New Delhi Aerocity, transformed her dream to be a chef, to become a voice for the hotel



## 60 Chef's Interview

### Executive Chef Rakesh Rana

Hotel Pride Plaza shares the inspiration behind his culinary career



## 64 Restaurant Review

Chai Point at The Square, Aerocity



## 66 Dishes in Aerocity

Best of dhaba food at Aerocity

## 70 Dishes in Delhi

Dhabas on the periphery of Delhi offer lick-smacking North Indian fare

## 72 GMR Network

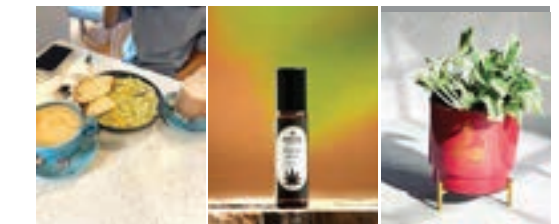
- Launch of GMR School of Aviation;
- Empowerment initiatives of GMR Varalakshmi Foundation

## 76 Destinations



Coastal destinations of India, benefitting from improving connectivity

A peep into the gems of Vietnam, Kenya, Romania and Turkey, well connected by air, road and rail transport at the 2-day event



## 86 Pick Of The Month

## 88 Wellbeing

The wonders that travel does to your wellbeing

## 90 Quiz

This time on connectivity



# AEROCITY EXTRAVAGANZA



## Cricket Spectacle Beyond Screenings: IPL Extravaganza

As the Indian Premier League (IPL) fever sweeps the nation, GMR Aerocity is gearing up to host an IPL Extravaganza, offering a plethora of cricket-related activities alongside live screenings. Cricket enthusiasts can indulge in a range of engaging activities, including live **screening, quizzes, fun games and larger-than-life cricket installations**. Whether you are a seasoned cricket aficionado or just looking to soak in the atmosphere, there is something for everyone to enjoy. With a seating capacity of 80-100, the live screenings provide the perfect opportunity to catch all the action from the IPL matches till the final day.

Head over to GMR Aerocity and immerse yourself in the excitement, camaraderie and sheer joy of cricket at the IPL Extravaganza.

**When: 23 March - 29 May**  
**Where: The Square**

## Aerocity Entertainment Fest

Presented by *BW Businessworld* and GMR Aerocity, the Aerocity Entertainment Fest promises two days of non-stop fun and excitement. From music performances to stand-up comedy, theatrical acts, games and more, this event is designed to celebrate the diverse forms of entertainment. Among the activities lined up are:

- Music Extravaganza
- Dance Fusion
- Games and Activities
- Magic and Illusion Acts
- Standup Comedy Shows
- Audience Interaction Activities
- Theater Harmony
- War of DJs



- Stalls offering a variety of interactive and engaging experiences

**When: April 6-7**  
**Where: The Square**  
**Registration link:**

[www.aerocityfest.gmraerocity.com](http://www.aerocityfest.gmraerocity.com)

## Dilli, Tere Ishq Mein

Experience a holistic art and cultural exhibition that showcases the folklores of Delhi.

An experience festival curated by Mohit Gupta, the event would showcase Delhi, the capital of India, with primary objective to narrate the history of the city and thus the culture that has emerged out of it.

From the ancient period of Mahabharata when Inderpat (Indraprastha) was one of the five villages given to Pandavas, to the present millennium Delhi NCR, this city has had many turns and twists and what it is today or would be in future, will only be a reflection of that past. The festival would narrate the story of the city in multiple modes and various facets of its existence.

**When: April 10-May 11**  
**Where: The Square, Aerocity**



## Elsewhere in Delhi

### ART & CRAFT EXHIBITION/EXPO

#### Women Listed Bazaar

The Women Listed Bazaar showcases a diverse group of women entrepreneurs, artisans and creators, offering unique handmade crafts, trendy fashion accessories and delicious food.

**When:** 05 April 2024

**Where:** Shagun Farm by FNP Venues, Mehrauli, New Delhi

**Nearest metro station:** Chhattarpur on Yellow Line

**Distance from Aerocity:** 15.4 km

#### The Fairytale'ss - Fashion, Jewel & Lifestyle Exhibition

The Fairytale'ss is a one-day shopping event that features multiple fashion, lifestyle, creative and boutique brands for elite shoppers.

**When:** 25 April 2024

**Where:** The Ashok Hotel, New Delhi

**Nearest metro station:** Lok Kalyan Marg on Yellow Line

**Distance from Aerocity:** 12.6 km

### MUSIC

#### Qawwali by Nizami Bandhu

Mesmerising music qawwalis by Ustad Chand Nizami, Shadab Faridi and Sohrab Faridi Nizami.

**When:** 20 April 2024

**Time:** 6:30 pm

**Where:** Kamani Auditorium

**Nearest metro station:** Mandi House on Blue and Violet lines

**Distance from Aerocity:** 16.8 km



### STORYTELLING

#### Kathakar International Storytellers Festival 17th Edition

Sampoorn Singh Kalra (Gulzar), Prem Chopra and Mohit Chauhan will perform a unique act at the 17th edition of Kathakar - International Storytellers Festival.

**When:** 17 March 2024

**Time:** 4 pm

**Where:** Pragati Maidan, Delhi

**Nearest metro station:** Supreme Court on Blue Line

**Distance from Aerocity:** 18.8 km

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

#### 7th International Health & Wellness Expo 2024

Health & Wellness is launching the 6th International Health and Wellness Expo 2024, offering opportunities for Paramedical Sciences education, networking with renowned speakers and facilitating business opportunities.

**When:** 14 June 2024

**Where:** Pragati Maidan, New Delhi

**Nearest metro station:** Supreme Court on Blue Line

**Distance from Aerocity:** 18.8 km





## NEW JOININGS



## JW Marriott New Delhi Appoints Vivek Gomes Pereira As Hotel Manager

**J**W Marriott New Delhi has appointed Vivek Gomes Pereira as its new Hotel Manager. He brings to the table over 15 years of experience in the luxury hospitality industry.

Pereira has a deep understanding of luxury hospitality along with hands-on experience in F&B operations. Furthermore, he has a proven track record of maximising guest satisfaction and is known for his ability to build strong relationships with team members and stakeholders. Prior to joining JW Marriott New Delhi, Pereira held the position of Executive Assistant Manager, Food and Beverage at Trident Bandra Kurla, Mumbai. Throughout his career, he has consistently demonstrated a great understanding of guest needs and a commitment to delivering legendary service.

In his new role, Pereira will oversee all aspects of the hotel operations, working closely with the leadership team to elevate the Marriott legacy and create exceptional experiences for guests.

## Dev Halder Joins Holiday Inn, Aerocity As Director Of Sales & Marketing

**D**ev Halder has been appointed as the director of sales and marketing at Holiday Inn Aerocity, effective January 8. Halder began his illustrious hospitality career at Hilton in 2014, accumulating two years of valuable experience. Boasting an impressive background, he brings extensive expertise, having spent five years with IHG, where his contributions made a lasting impact.

Following his stellar tenure with IHG, he furthered his career as the vice president for industry engagement at Skill India for two years. Now, in his role as DOSM, Halder is spearheading strategic sales and marketing initiatives, bringing a wealth of knowledge to elevate Holiday Inn Aerocity.

Beyond his professional pursuits, Halder is not only an avid sports enthusiast excelling in cricket and table tennis but also a well-rounded individual dedicated to personal and professional growth. His commitment to excellence extends beyond the realms of his career, showcasing a holistic approach to life.



## Mihir Dwivedi Joins Aloft New Delhi Aerocity As Front Office Manager

**A**loft New Delhi Aerocity has appointed Mihir Dwivedi as the front office manager. With an impressive background in hospitality and a relentless commitment to excellence, he will elevate the guest experiences through his expertise and innovative approach.

Before joining Aloft New Delhi Aerocity, Dwivedi was working as the Front Office Manager at Courtyard Marriott Agra. His career spans renowned hospitality brands such as The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, LLC and The Oberoi Group.

With a wealth of industry experience, Dwivedi will oversee front office operations at the hotel. His track record of success and exceptional leadership qualities make him a valuable asset to the hotel's dynamic team.

Recognised for his adeptness in guest relations, problem-solving and team leadership, Dwivedi is poised to lead the front office operations to new heights of excellence.

## Tejus Jose Is Now Director Of Operations For ibis & ibis Styles India

**T**ejus Jose has been appointed as the director of Operations for ibis and ibis Styles India, a key portfolio within one of the top hospitality groups - Accor Hotels. He will be overseeing operations for 21 hotels located across 14 cities in India.

Bringing a wealth of experience to the role, Jose has had an impressive career in the hospitality sector spanning over 23 years. His expertise includes hotel management, sales and marketing, with notable contributions at premier hospitality companies and international brands. Prior to joining ibis, he served as the general manager at the first Hilton in Bengaluru, the Hilton Bangalore Embassy GolfLinks.

Jose was one of the first employees of Accor in India, starting at the iconic Hyderabad International Convention Centre and thereafter went on to manage a few Accor hotels as General Manager.

Jose's diverse professional journey has seen him take on various roles, from sales manager to leading operations at renowned hotels across various cities, Bangalore, Mumbai, Kochi, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad. He is an alumnus of the prestigious Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Calcutta, majoring in Strategy.





## NEW BEGINNINGS

## 'Bizou-Bizou' Bar Opens At Aerocity New Delhi



Aerocity has inaugurated Bizou-Bizou, an upscale bar in the heart of Worldmark. An embodiment of opulence, the bar combines industrial design with a touch of luxury, enhanced by an expansive outdoor space. Beyond the food and ambience, the bar transforms into a vivacious celebration of live music. With an exquisite fusion of sophistication, exuberance and soulful melodies, it promises a sensory experience like no other.

"Step into a world of aesthetic brilliance. Our bar is a design haven, featuring an industrial look that seamlessly combines contemporary vibes with a touch of grunge. Building on the success of Plum, our new bar inherits the popularity that Plum has garnered for its exceptional food, innovative concepts and avant-garde design. Expect nothing less than perfection as we continue the legacy," says Priyank Sukhija, Owner, Bizou-Bizou, Aerocity, New Delhi.



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# GMR Aerocity Unveils Exciting New Venue For Cultural & Business Events



Located in the heart of the bustling city, GMR Aerocity has long been celebrated as a haven for both global travellers and local connoisseurs seeking the finest of luxury and leisure. Boasting an impressive array of amenities, from Michelin-starred cuisine to home grown retail brands, it has consistently delivered unparalleled experiences for visitors.

However, the excitement doesn't end there. GMR Aerocity is gearing up to unveil a new and innovative space dedicated to hosting a diverse range of cultural and business events, promising to elevate the already exceptional offerings of this premier destination.

Set to launch in April 2024, this special zone will play host to a numerous activities designed to cater to different sets of audience. Whether you are a business professional seeking inspiration or a culture enthusiast in search of the next big thing, this venue promises to deliver an unforgettable experience.

From art exhibitions and workshops of various categories like photography and painting to industry leader summits and group discussions, the possibilities are endless. But that's not all, the space is also envisioned to become a hotspot for entertainment, with plans to feature product launches, stand-up comedy and music sessions.

With a seating capacity of 80-90 guests and room for 120 standing, the venue is equipped with state-of-the-art sound, stage and other utilities to ensure seamless event hosting.

The launch of this new zone marks yet another milestone in GMR Aerocity's commitment to providing unparalleled experiences for its visitors. With a curated lineup of intimate special events already in the works, anticipation is high for what promises to be a truly transformative addition to the city's cultural landscape.

Stay tuned for updates on GMR Aerocity's Instagram handles.



# Happy Hotelier Club Hospitality Run - Edition 2



Happy Hotelier Club (HHC) successfully organised the Hospitality Run for the Hospitality Industry at GMR Aerocity on Sunday, 3 March 2024. GMR Aerocity was the presenting partner for the Edition 2.

This Hospitality Run-Edition 2 by HHC had around 2,000 participants from the hospitality industry (hotels, restaurants, aviation, travel and hospitality schools). The Run had a strong association with Incredible India, Ministry of Tourism this year.

RK Suman, Regional Director (North), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, did the honour of flagging off the Run.

The Run was organised to reach out to the sector with the sole objective to hold pride in being a part of this resilient industry with the hashtag - I Am Hospitality. Taking this positive spirit forward, all the hotels in Delhi NCR, restaurant and tourism bodies joined hand and participated in good numbers for the event.

Conceptualised in March 2020, Happy Hotelier Club brings the hoteliers and restaurateurs on one platform where they can exchange ideas on industry related issues, new age solutions

and practices being followed to enhance business and support each other.





# Ode To Rajasthan's Artistic Heritage At Insight Rajasthan Exhibition

**G**MR Aerocity and Mon' Amour Gallery organised a successful art event, 'Insight Rajasthan', at The Square, GMR Aerocity from 21 March to 23 March. This unique exhibition showcased the rich and diverse indigenous art forms of Rajasthan, offering attendees an immersive experience into the state's vibrant cultural heritage.

Insight Rajasthan transported visitors into the enchanting world of Rajasthan's art and heritage through the masterpieces of National and State award-winning artists deeply rooted in the state's artistic traditions. From Phad Art originating from Shahpura Bhilwara district to traditional Temple Art of Pichwai from Nathdwara, the exhibition featured a kaleidoscope of art forms, each carrying its own unique narrative and technique.

The event also featured enlightening workshops by renowned artists such as Kalyan Joshi, Sher Singh Bhabhor,

Shan Bhatnagar, Durgesh Atal, Dwarka Prasad Jangid and Riyazuddin. These workshops provided invaluable insights into the traditional techniques and cultural significance of each art form, enriching the audience's understanding and appreciation.

Kalyan Joshi, a Padma Shree honoree, shared his expertise in Phad Painting, a traditional art form dating back to the 13th century.

Sher Singh Bhabhor illuminated the intricacies of Bhil Art, a tribal painting tradition passed down through generations.

Shan Bhatnagar mesmerised attendees with the exquisite details of Pichwai Art, incorporating elements of Rajasthan's rich embroidery and jewellery.

Durgesh Atal captured the emotions of Rajasthan's ethnic groups through his poignant portraits, while Dwarka Prasad Jangid showcased the storytelling magic of Kavad Art.

Additionally, Riyazuddin brought his unique perspective to Rajput Painting, blending traditional techniques with contemporary styles.

The exhibition not only celebrated the artistic prowess of Rajasthan but also emphasised the use of natural materials, handcrafted techniques and indigenous pigments, further highlighting the artists' dedication to preserving their cultural heritage. It served as a testament to the enduring legacy of Rajasthan's artistic traditions, captivating audiences with its visual storytelling and vibrant palette.



**SIMRAN KAUR**  
Director  
Mon Amour Gallery

**“** In the most iconic dwelling, the curtains have closed on our latest art show 'Insight Rajasthan 2.0'. As a Curator of the show I'm extremely thrilled to the massive success of this immersive showcase of artistic talent.

From the time we raised the curtains and welcomed people to come and experience the show, the artistic energy was all around the place. We got visited by art enthusiasts, curious passerby, and collectors. As a gallerist it was an absolute pleasure to see visitors experiencing the art gallery, art installations placed in open courts with such admiration and curiosity and eager to know more about the artworks on display.

Getting such a positive feedback from locals and International travelers for showcasing artworks actually gave them sparked thoughts on the journey of culture and legacy of art prevailing in our country and engaging them with art on a deeper level.

As the closing of 'Insight Rajasthan 2.0' edition has exemplified, GMR Aerocity is the most booming space of artistic expressions. As a gallerist I would like to thank GMR Group for taking the initiative for giving art another perspective and opportunity to artists. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to the making of 'Insight Rajasthan 2.0' a grand success.

**”**





# Aerocity Celebrates Unique Flavours Of Indian States

Aerocity Culinary Fest showcased India's rich traditions and new ethos, with food stalls, master classes, cooking competitions and dance and music shows

By Team Aerocity Live

**F**ood enthusiasts from all walks of life converged at The Square, GMR Aerocity on 13 and 14 January, to experience the culinary spectacle that was the Aerocity Culinary Fest. This two-day gastronomic fiesta, a vibrant collaboration of over 35 brands, surpassed expectations, creating a memorable fusion of diverse cuisines, cultural performances and unparalleled entertainment.



A Masterclass in Progress

Culinary Odyssey featured 26 stalls - Quick Fresh, Monsoon, Paanch Phoran, Magic with Spices, Cookdoors Food Services, Minnie's Kitchen, Amul, Tummilicious by Shardha, Faterniti Foods (Chef Ehshaan), Prerana's Kitchen, Saras, Vedatya, Awadh ki Shaan, Aahalar, Autocrest, Spyce Story, 1729, Beanly, ChaiVeda, Festive Special, Pret A Mange & Live & Learn Foundation - and many more.

The festival successfully executed a tantalising array of offerings spanning many **state cuisines**, including Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerela, Bihar, Punjab, Rajasthan, Kashmir, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Hyderabad, Karnataka Coastal Delicacies, Asian, European and many more. Thousands of attendees relished not just these diverse culinary offerings but savoured the coffee, tea and snacks to help with the freezing winter.

Visitors not only got a taste of various cuisines; they could also showcase their culinary skills in the **competition segment**. The competition was open to kids too and each participant was required to prepare one dish from any Indian cuisine.

### Culinary Masterclasses And Panels

Eight masterclasses were conducted by seven chefs, each representing a unique state cuisine. To add to that, there were four panel discussions featuring celebrity chefs who indulged in the various culinary discussions varying from their personal experiences to real life implementation of techniques.



Audience enthralled by Delhi Drum Circle performance







Mixology Competition



Chef Sudhir Sibal (right)



Chef Rajeev Janveja (right)

Notable culinary maestros like **Chef Manjit Gill**, **Chef Rajeev Janveja** and **Chef Sudhir Sibal** graced the audience with their culinary wisdom.

**Entertainment Extravaganza**

The festival's cultural tapestry unfolded with two **dance troupes** - Ridhim Dance Fusion Group & OORJA Dance Troupe, two music bands - SAAJH & Nazm Unplugged - and a spectacular Djembe troupe on the second day by Delhi Drum Circle, engaging the largest crowd ever.

The event also had the **Mixer's Showdown** by Rishi from 1729 and CHEF'S ODYSSEY. **The taste war** concluded with top winners emerging and even kids participating who received goodies from Amul, Beany & Nikos Travels.

Aerocity Culinary Fest went beyond gastronomy, celebrating **Lohri** and **Sankranti** in a special festival spirit.



Chef Manjit Gill



**Gifts and Rewards**

Sponsored gifts from esteemed partners included Amul Gift Hampers, Autocrest Vouchers valued at Rs 5,900 each for Car Rubbing & Polishing, Nikos Travels Travel Vouchers, ZOCCO Food Vouchers by Fraternity Foods, GMR Vouchers and Beany Gift Hampers.

The event, organised by *BW Businessworld* and GMR Aerocity, had the following partners: event execution support by The Lalit Suri Hospitality School; sponsor partner Amul; Happy Hotelier Club, Autocrest, The Multibrand Premium Car Workshop in Delhi NCR; outreach partners Paytm Insider and BookMyShow; TV partner NewsX and on-ground event partner Xperia.

The fest encapsulated the essence of diverse culinary experiences and cultural celebrations.



# CONNECTIVITY, ENHANCING THE JOY OF TRAVEL

How the world came closer with transport revolution and fuelled travel aspirations

By Meha Mathur

The history of evolution of transport and means of communication is also a history of social transformation. Millenniums before locomotives and automotives arrived, the invention of wheel had facilitated movement over large geographies. And for centuries, since ancient times, **prominent trade routes** in India enabled travel across the country. The Uttarapath in the Indo-Gangetic plains and the Dakshinapath across the Vindhya enabled traders and monks to travel in groups and with relative safety and comfort. India was also a sea-faring nation and there are ample material remains to show healthy trade with Mesopotamian civilisation. The Sangam literature, accounts of foreign travellers and the archaeological evidence point to an extensive maritime activity connecting Indian coastal cities to maritime centres globally.

On land routes, over centuries, facilities like serais were added on the land route. Rulers like Shershah Suri improved the road condition on Grand Trunk Road that connects Delhi to both eastern parts of the country and the west, to cities now in Pakistan.

Thanks to these measures, cities in the Indo-Gangetic plains and across Vindhya were well connected and there was a healthy flow of ideas. And Delhi, despite the extreme weathers that it is known for, was not just a capital for several centuries, but a hub where traders, artists, men of letters and men of spirituality liked to congregate. Its **multi-cultural ethos** was facilitated by its convenient geographical location that connected it to cities in the east-west trade route, as well as the north-south trade route.

Except that travel was a slow exercise. Caravans often traversed treacherous zones infested with bandits and prone

to attack by wild animals and spent days or even weeks before they reached their destination, unless strict law and order measures were enforced.

The last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, took several months to reach Rangoon when he was exiled at the end of 1857 revolt. For much part of his journey – his only journey outside Delhi – he and his retinue were taken via in-land transport route of first Yamuna and then Ganges.

## Engines of transformation

Cut to the era of **locomotives** since mid-19th Century and **automotive** era since the late 19th Century. Speed transformed individual lives and society like never before. The first railway track was laid in mid- 19th Century in Maharashtra to transfer raw material from inland to the ports, where it would be uploaded on to ships headed for England. Soon, however, its utility as a mode of transport gripped the imagination of rulers and the ruled alike. Railways and automotives became agents of socio-economic transformation and became means through which nationalist leaders traversed the country to take their message to the masses and aided indigenous industry. Such was the fear of social impact of railways among princely class that a few of them did not let tracks to be laid out in their territory.

Interestingly, even under British rule, the use of railways to popularise Indian destinations was in currency, as can be made out from a series of posters displayed in the Heritage Transport Museum, Gurugram. The literary works of early to mid-20th century mirror the widespread use of rail-







### A Nation In Travel Mode

From first indigenous car, Ambassador in 1948, to the revolution on roads that happened with the advent of India's first aspirational car Maruti, to now a plethora of options, India has come a long way in **mobility on roads**. Indians have taken to highway travel like a pro and are keen to explore newer destinations. Infrastructure push in road connectivity by successive governments has further enhanced the prospects of road travel.

Similarly, starting from the middle-class aspiration to avail LTC and plan long holidays connecting destinations on one railway route, the country saw a change towards 'chhota breaks', enabled by connections like Shatabdi Express. Luxury trains like Palace on Wheels, toy trains connecting hill stations and now, Vande Bharat trains, also serve to boost tourism in various seg-

ways among middle class. The sense of liberation in characters of Tagore's stories or the fascination that Swami and his friends have in RK Narayan's *Malgudi Days* as the train chugs through their fields is unmistakable.

At independence, these advanced modes of transport aided large scale movement of people across the Radcliffe Line, escorting them to safety.

### Wings of Change

Air travel was a gift of Wright brothers to the world in 1903. It did not take long for India to reap benefits of **air transport**. The first aerial post in Allahabad (now Prayagraj) carried 6,500 letters, over a distance of 5 miles. In 1924, John Cobham's did a survey flight to India in his DeHavilland biplane, covering 18,000 miles. The first flight to India was a three-engined biplane of the Imperial Airways, in February 1928. Several companies were formed in 1930s in the aviation segment. India National Airways, operating between Calcutta and Rangoon; Madras Air Taxi in the sector of Madras-Puri-Calcutta started in 1934; the Himalayan Air Transport Company started in 1935 and the Air Services of India started operations in western India in 1937.

However, India's first commercial flight, from Karachi to Mumbai, was flown by JRD Tata, the father of Indian Civil Aviation, who became the first Indian to get a pilot licence, in 1929. Tata Airlines, a flagbearer of Indian aviation, was nationalised at the dawn of Indian independence.

ments.

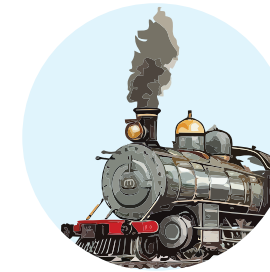
Air travel continued to be a prerogative of the affluent ones and government functionaries and select few in the corporate world till the end of 20th century. A game changer in the air was the slashing of flight tickets at the turn of the century. Captain Gopinath of Deccan Airways envisioned that every Indian should fly at least once in their lifetime. Soon, other airlines followed suit. Concomitant with the reduced cost of air travel, has been the increase in aviation infrastructure. There were 50 airports in 2004. These had increased to 148 in 2023, catering to small town India too.



## India on the Right Track

### Introduction of Railways

Railways were introduced to India even before the Revolt of 1857. The first train plied from Mumbai to Thane in April 1853

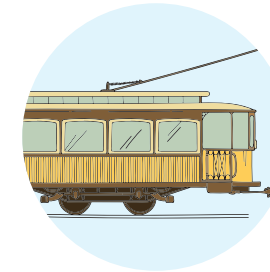


### First Locomotive in India

First locomotive in India, F-734' steam locomotive, was manufactured at the Ajmer Workshop manufactured 'in 1895; it was withdrawn from service in 1958 after 63 years of service.

### First Tram

The first horse-drawn trams entered service in erstwhile Calcutta on 24 February 1873. In Mumbai, trams began operations in 1874. Old Delhi too had a tram service in early 20th Century.

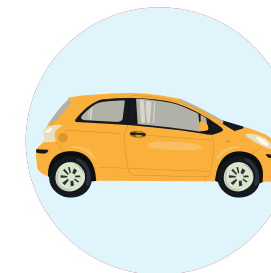


### First Commercial Flight

Tata Air Services made its first flight with a 'Puss Moth' aeroplane from Karachi to Mumbai, covering 1.6 million miles in its first year. Puss Moth was manufactured from 1929 to 1933.

### First Car Manufacture in India

Hindustan Ambassador was the first car to be manufactured in India in 1948. It was largely based on the Morris Oxford of the UK. It was manufactured in Kolkata through a technical collaboration with Morris Motors, UK and later became the Hindustan Motors Ambassador.



### First Indigenous Car

The Tata Indica, an Indian car launched in 1998, was the first Indian hatchback with a diesel engine, marking the first passenger hatchback from Tata Motors.

### Number of airport added

India's airport infrastructure has grown significantly and there are plans to expand it much more in the near future. In the last 10 years, the aviation industry in India has added 75 airports.



### Number of railway stations added

India's railway network is undergoing significant upgrades, with 508 stations revamped and 1,275 stations set to be upgraded.

### Number of trains added

Indian Railways plans to introduce 3,000 new trains over five years, with an annual increase of 200 to 250 trains.



### Highway story

Since 2000, India has added approximately 46,145 km of national highways, from 77,000 km in 2015 to over 140,000 km in 2022 and 146,145 km in 2023.



## DELHI AIRPORT AND AEROCITY: **ENABLING THE WINGS OF WANDERLUST**

How enhanced connectivity has inspired the Indian travel dream; and how Delhi airport and Aerocity showcase the integrated connectivity and to proximity of hotels on travel & tourism

By Tarannum Manjul



**D**elhi has been at the fulcrum of the growing appetite for travel, both in terms of visitors thronging to the capita to explore Delhi's history and heritage or for business, or a growing tribe of travel-lovers who wish to explore the country and beyond. And enabling this passion over the years have been not just road and rail transport but increasingly, the air connectivity. In the bustling heart of India's capital city lies a gateway to boundless opportunities, both domestic and international. Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi stands not only as a testament to India's growing economic prowess but also as a symbol of the nation's ever-expanding horizons in the realm of travel and connectivity. As one of the busiest airports in the world, Delhi Airport serves as a nexus of cultures, aspirations & dreams, facilitating journeys that transcend borders and ignite the flames of wanderlust in the hearts of millions of Indians.

### **THE RISE OF DELHI AIRPORT: A BEACON OF CONNECTIVITY**

The Airport stands as a towering symbol of progress and connectivity. From its humble beginnings as a modest airfield to its current status as one of

the world's busiest aviation hubs, the Airport has undergone a remarkable transformation over the decades, catering to the ever-growing demands of a burgeoning nation.

Connecting 149 national and international destinations, serving 65.32 million passengers (in 2022-23) and with 4,29,964 craft movements in the same year, the Airport is second busiest in the world.

With state-of-the-art infrastructure, world-class amenities and **seamless connectivity** to destinations across the globe, the Airport has emerged as a vital cog in India's aviation landscape, facilitating millions of journeys each year. From business travellers jetting off to meetings in distant lands to families embarking on long-awaited vacations, Delhi Airport serves as a gateway to a world of possibilities, embodying the spirit of exploration and adventure.

### **ENHANCED CONNECTIVITY: IGNITING THE TRAVEL BUG**

One of the key factors driving the surge in travel aspirations among Indians is the enhanced connectivity offered by airports like Delhi. With an extensive network of domestic and international flights connecting Delhi to major cities around the world,





travellers now have unprecedented access to a plethora of destinations, making it easier than ever to fulfil their travel dreams.

The introduction of **new routes**, increased frequency of flights and the emergence of budget airlines have made air travel more accessible & affordable for a wider segment of the population. Whether it's a weekend getaway to the hills, a pilgrimage to a sacred shrine or a backpacking adventure across continents, enhanced connectivity has empowered Indians to explore the world like never before.

### CENTRALITY OF AEROCITY

It's one thing to be able to fly in and out of the city without hassle, but what if your travel can be further made comfortable with an array of hotels just 10 minutes drive away from the exit gate?

The Aerocity Hospitality District, part of the Delhi Airport ecosystem, plays exactly that role, by offering you a plethora of accommodation in the green and clean surroundings unimaginably close to all the three terminals. With 10 hotels of world standard located close by, with some actually offering airport view, and with a range of conference, exhibition and banquet facilities, this district has become a coveted MICE venue. The hotels and the stand-alone restaurants offer a range of cuisine prepared by expert chefs, some of them with global repute.

As the G20 Summit demonstrated, even in the case of events being organised in other parts of Delhi, Aerocity is a preferred choice for stay due to its strategic location within the Airport ecosystem. Basing yourself in Aerocity, you can commute to Delhi, Gurugram, NOIDA or other locations in Delhi without much trouble.



Connecting the Airport and Aerocity to the rest of Delhi, including the New Delhi Railway Station, is the Metro Network. **The Airport Express Line** of Delhi Metro takes you to central Delhi, or to Dwarka, in no time, and there is Metro connectivity from T1 also.

With its efficiency, Delhi Metro has also enabled the rise of Aerocity as a leading business hub of the country to which people would like to commute daily, hold conferences and other events, and even come for leisure and shopping from other corners of Delhi and adjoining towns and cities. This is good news for big brands and corporates too, as talent can come from afar, and so can discerning buyers.

### TWO DECADES OF METRO

Metro connectivity in Delhi has as such revolutionised the way

travellers navigate the city, offering a convenient and efficient mode of transportation that has become a delight for commuters and tourists alike. With an extensive network spanning across the length and breadth of the capital, the Delhi Metro has linked key landmarks, commercial hubs and residential areas of Delhi. Its punctuality, cleanliness and affordability make it a preferred choice for travellers, reducing traffic congestion while providing a seamless travel experience. From students and office-goers to tourists exploring the city's cultural heritage, the Delhi Metro has emerged as a symbol of progress and connectivity, adding to the charm and appeal of the nation's capital.

### DELHI'S EXPANSIVE ROAD CONNECTIVITY

One of the key factors contributing to Delhi's prominence is its extensive network of roads that connects it to all corners of the

country. As the national capital, Delhi serves as a pivotal hub for commerce, trade and tourism, attracting millions of visitors from across India and beyond. The city's well-developed road infrastructure, including **national highways, expressways and arterial roads**, ensures seamless connectivity to major cities and towns in every direction. Whether it's the iconic Grand Trunk Road leading to Kolkata in the east, the bustling National Highway 48 connecting Delhi to Mumbai in the west, the 14-lane expressway connecting Delhi to Lucknow, Delhi-Agra Expressway that has brought down the commute town to the city of Taj Mahal significantly, or the scenic Delhi-Jaipur Expressway linking the capital to the royal city of Jaipur in the south, Delhi's road network serves as a lifeline for travellers and commuters.

This extensive connectivity not only facilitates the movement of goods and people but also fosters economic growth and cultural exchange, making Delhi a vibrant melting pot of diverse cultures and aspirations.

Now, with the **regional rapid transit system** being developed with Delhi as the fulcrum, the cities in towns in neighbouring states – Meerut in UP, Panipat in Haryana and Alwar in Rajasthan - will be so well connected that a 100-km journey in these cities to flourish and bring prosperity to the entire region. The potential that this holds for Aerocity is immense. It would open up opportunities for wider talent pool, provide brands in Aerocity wider catchment area, and provide access to larger number to explore the hospitality at India's leading hospitality district.



#### FIRST BUS TERMINAL

The oldest and largest inter-state bus terminal in India is the Maharana Pratap Interstate Bus Terminus (Maharana Pratap ISBT), often referred to as the Kashmere Gate Interstate Bus Terminus (Kashmere Gate ISBT). It was opened in 1976.



#### FIRST AIRPORT

Safdarjung Airport, originally Willingdon Airport, named after then Viceroy of India, was established around 1929. It was the main airport of Delhi till Palam Airport started operations in 1962. It ceased to be used for flying activities, including training, in 2002 due to security concerns post 9/11.



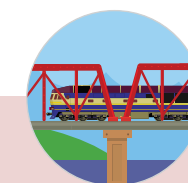
#### PRECURSOR TO IGI AIRPORT

For decades, the gateway to Delhi via air was Palam Airport, both for domestic as well as international carriers, at what is now T2. The airport got its name from Palam village there. With the launch of Indira Gandhi International Airport in 1986, Palam Airport was subsumed into IGI.



#### FIRST TRAIN

Delhi got its railway station in 1864, near Chandni Chowk and the first train chugged from Howrah/Calcutta the same year. Only, the railway bridge over River Yamuna wasn't complete by then and passengers had to disembark east of Yamuna, in Shahdara, and make the final leg of journey on boats.



#### OLD RAILWAY BRIDGE

The Yamuna Bridge, Delhi's Old Railway Bridge over River Yamuna, was built between 1863 and 1866, to cross the Yamuna, and connects Shahdara to Chandni Chowk Railway Station. This engineering marvel is a double decker bridge, servicing both road and rail traffic.



#### FIRST METRO

The DMRC opened its first corridor between Shahdara and Tis Hazari (Red Line) on 25 December 2002. The Delhi Metro has expanded significantly over time, from its original 8.2-km track to a system that traverses 393 km.



# ADVANTAGE AEROCITY

What do hoteliers say about the vast and integrated transport network and its benefits to the hospitality district



**Enhanced connectivity and logistics:** Travellers can choose between metro services, airport, cabs and private cars to access the location.

**Location advantage:** Easy connectivity to Delhi and Gurgaon as it is located mid-way between these two and close proximity to Yashobhoomi (India International Convention & Expo Centre)

**AMIT RANA**  
General Manager,  
Holiday Inn New Delhi International Airport

**A**s a leading hospitality brand situated in the heart of Aerocity, we at Holiday Inn understand the pivotal role that connectivity plays in enhancing the overall traveller experience. The seamless integration of road and air connectivity at Aerocity not only makes Delhi Airport easily accessible



**KUSH KAPOOR,**  
CEO, Roseate Hotels & Resorts

**A**erocity is an unmatched destination in itself that presents distinct advantages around connectivity to the traveller that no other hospitality district currently offers. These benefits come from multi-tier security, choice to travellers, convenience; enhanced connectivity & logistics and a distinct location advantage.

**Security:** Most secured zone for hotels and travellers in the country, with multi-level security including airport, Delhi police, GMR security and hotel security.

**Choice:** Variety of hotels to choose from at various price points and facilities ranging from Rs 2,000 to over Rs 2 lakh catering to a diverse set of clients and expectations.

**Convenience:** Flexibility and freedom of movement within Aerocity. The layout and infrastructure allows guests to experience various hotels, dining and retail outlets easily and conveniently.

but also transforms the way our guests perceive and engage with their journey.

The well-connected infrastructure not only caters to the convenience of our domestic and international guests but also contributes significantly to our hotel's accessibility for business travellers. The proximity to Delhi NCR ensures that our guests can effortlessly navigate between key business hubs, leisure destinations and the airport, creating a dynamic and efficient travel experience.

In comparison to hotel districts lacking such comprehensive connectivity, Aerocity emerges as a prime destination, offering a distinct advantage. The ease of access not only translates into time savings for our guests but also elevates their overall satisfaction. It's not just about reaching a destination; it's about arriving seamlessly and the connectivity hub that Aerocity provides significantly contributes to the positive impressions our guests carry with them.

Furthermore, the strategic location of Aerocity fosters a vibrant atmosphere, offering a plethora of dining, shopping and entertainment options within proximity. This integration of travel and lifestyle experiences makes Aerocity an attractive choice for our clientele, setting it apart from hotel districts that may lack this level of connectivity.

At Holiday Inn, we take pride in being part of a destination that understands the importance of connectivity in shaping the modern traveller's journey. It's not just a hotel stay; it's a holistic travel experience and Aerocity's connectivity plays a pivotal role in making that experience seamless and memorable for our valued guests.

**HARDIP MARWAH**  
General Manager,  
Andaz Delhi

**I** am glad to see that Aerocity is witnessing expansion in its connectivity and road network and I am confident that this expansion will result in having a more fulfilling and smooth travel experience for our visitors. Since we

are situated between Delhi and Gurgaon, well-maintained roads are indispensable and a must have with leisure and corporate travellers coming into the city from areas in and around Delhi NCR. Also, with easy access to the Airport and Metro line, Aerocity has become a convenient choice for the modern day traveller looking at comfort and luxury.



**“** Air connectivity has improved as the number of airports has gone up. There are flights throughout the day between cities. This has given the traveller a lot of options. There is still scope for direct connections in certain sectors. **”**

**Bhavna Prasad Rastogi**  
Founder, Carpe Diem



**“** Me and my parents have explored many parts of India that were never on the tourist list. People have always had a limited number of days and budgets to commit to travel. So they have always preferred visiting tourist locations with smooth connectivity. Now with a larger route of flights, trains and great national highways, more Indians are stepping out to explore more parts of the country. We have so much culture and history in every part of India, that they all deserve importance equally and increased connectivity is such a boon for us. **”**

**Apurva Saxena**  
Travel Content Creator



**“** With more train, road and air connectivity, budget travellers like me are able to plan well. I have been able to explore even smaller cities and lesser known destinations because it is easier to plan now. So its either a road trip, coupled with a air journey, or a train journey telling a million stories, travelling now is more fun in India **”**

**Siddhant Chopra**  
A techie who loves to travel



## Delhi Airport's Terminal 1 Expansion: Paving The Way For Future-ready Aviation

With a 100 million passengers per annum (MPPA) capacity, the milestone underscores Delhi Airport's commitment to enhancing passenger experience



**P** rime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the expanded world-class integrated Terminal 1 of Delhi International Airport on 10 March, in the presence of Union Minister of Civil Aviation & Steel Jyotiraditya Scindia, Lt Governor of Delhi Vinai Kumar Saxena and Minister of State Civil Aviation, Road Transport & Highways Gen VK Singh (retd).

The now 'Bigger, Better & Smarter' Terminal 1 places Delhi Airport among the elite global hubs, **with a 100 million passengers per annum (MPPA) capacity**. The consolidation of arrival and departure terminals into a cohesive struc-

ture at Terminal 1 represents a significant expansion in both size and capacity. The overall area has increased significantly soaring from 55,740 square metres to an impressive 206,950 square metres. This expansion more than triples the previous area, providing ample space for passenger services, amenities and operational facilities.

Moreover, the capacity of the terminal has been substantially augmented, rising from 17 MPPA to 40 MPPA. This more than doubles the previous capacity, allowing for a smoother flow of passengers, improved efficiency and enhanced overall airport experience.

GMR Airports Infrastructure-led Delhi International Airport undertook the expansion work in 2019 to make Delhi Airport future-ready. The expansion work was carried out as per the Master Plan 2016 as Delhi Airport witnessed a massive surge in the Air Traffic Movements and passenger numbers exceeded projections.

Marking the conclusion of the Phase 3A Expansion project, the expanded Terminal 1 signifies a monumental leap in Indian aviation. This milestone underscores Delhi Airport's commitment to enhancing passenger experience through a safe, secure and sustainable infrastructure.

## Dwarka Expressway: A Game-changer For NCR

Stretching 19 kilometres with 8 lanes, this expressway will vastly improve connectivity between Delhi and Gurugram, and once linked to Mumbai Expressway, significantly alter road travel



**P** rime Minister Narendra Modi's inauguration of the Haryana section of the Dwarka Expressway marks a milestone for the infrastructural development in the National Capital Region (NCR). The operationalisation of the expressway is poised to usher in a new era of growth and development in the region, according to industry experts. PM Modi said, "It will shift gear not just in the vehicles but also in the lives of people of NCR."

With the aim to alleviate traffic congestion and enhance connectivity between Delhi and Gurugram on NH-48, the inauguration of the Haryana section of the Dwarka Expressway is a significant step forward. Stretching 19 kilometres with 8 lanes, this expressway, built at a cost of approximately Rs 4,100 crore, includes crucial infrastructure such as the Delhi-Haryana Border to Basai Rail-over-Bridge (ROB) and Basai ROB to Kherki Daula sections. Its strategic connectivity

to the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi and the Gurugram Bypass further adds to its significance.

### Boost to Development

The Prime Minister stated on the occasion that the Rs 9,000 crore project would change travel experience between Delhi and Gurugram forever and once the new high-speed corridor is linked to Mumbai Expressway, it will mark the beginning of an era.

Recent data suggests a rise of up to 20-25 per cent in land prices and a positive trend in property prices over the past few years. This trend is expected to continue, driven by increased demand fuelled by improved connectivity and infrastructure development.

The operationalisation of the Dwarka Expressway signifies a significant milestone for the development of NCR, promising increased investment opportunities and economic growth in the region. With improved connectivity and infrastructure, the expressway is poised to transform the real estate landscape and contribute to the region's overall development.



# Transforming Travel Experience

Airports have made Indian destinations truly global. Newer airports and airlines gearing up to increase their fleet size will have its impact on on-ground cab travel requirements within cities

By Anirudh Arun

Tourism is witnessing a huge demand in India in the post pandemic era with more offices resuming and remote work ending, work-related travel has also picked up drastically. Along with the resurgence in travel, the Indian consumer today prefers having a superior experience in how they travel. There is an increased affinity towards premium services by a new set of affluent Indian consumers who want to experience the best.

Delhi NCR as a tourism destination is diverse and eclectic. The city is buzzing with heritage to explore, upmarket shopping markets to experience to delectable food with wide ranging options from world cuisine to local flavours. In terms of mobility, Delhi has **multiple options** that connect the vast expanse of the city offering a wide range of experiences to individuals who visit for business, leisure or a mix of

both. Delhi also has a thriving art and culture scene with weekends lined up with food & music festivals and flea markets. Infrastructure is key to building connected, livable cities and while Delhi is well connected and has multi-modal transport options, there continue to be challenges of congestion, traffic pile up, unfavourable air quality etc. Sustainable mobility alternatives that not only solve daily commute needs but also provide safer, reliable and emission-free options are key to the long-term sustenance of megacities like Delhi and Gurugram.

In this regard, Aerocity has an advantageous location in Delhi as far as connectivity is concerned, for office-goers as well as business and leisure travellers to Delhi. Working there, dining or shopping there or staying there during your trip, you are at a stone's throw away from the airport, and well connected to Delhi and Gurugram



**ANIRUDH ARUN**  
Co-founder & CEO, BluSmart Fleet

“With an overall air passenger traffic increase by 8 per cent compared to 2022, last December witnessed peak air passenger traffic indicating a burgeoning ride in travel preferences moving to air travel”

through metro and road connectivity.

Airport connectivity plays a crucial role in boosting the tourism economy. We have seen an **130 per cent increase** in airport rides over the last year and believe that reliable mobility options are key to boost the aviation and travel sectors. With an overall air passenger traffic increase by 8 per cent compared to 2022, last December witnessed peak air passenger traffic indicating a burgeoning ride in travel preferences moving to air travel.

Airports have made Indian destinations truly global and are set to witness a humongous growth in tourism and a boost in local economy by enhanced connectivity and infrastructure development.

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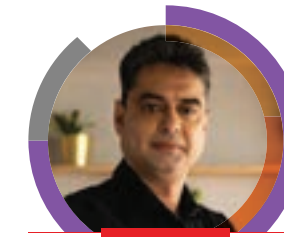
POWER SPEAKERS



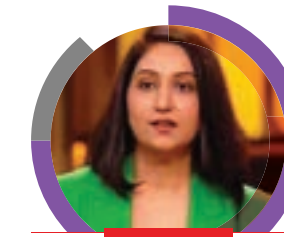
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Founder,  
Perfora



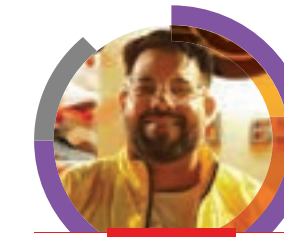
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Bold Care



**ABHISHEK DAGA**  
Founder & Chairman,  
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**SIMRAN KHARA**  
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**ANSHITA MEHROTRA**  
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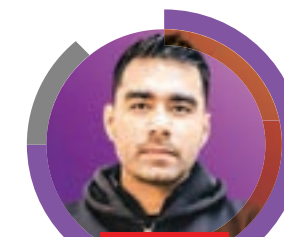
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## “Enhanced Connectivity Has Helped Explore India’s Hidden Gems”



**Vikas Sharma**, CEO, Encalm Hospitality, which has its lounges across airports in India, highlights how enhanced connectivity through rail, air and metros has fuelled growth in India's tourism industry



By Tarannum Manjul

### How has increased connectivity through rail, air and metros increased tourism in India?

India's tourism industry has flourished with enhanced connectivity through rail, air and metros, with air travel playing a pivotal role. Modern metro systems seamlessly link airports, hotels and attractions, facilitating effortless sightseeing. This accessibility encourages more tourists to explore hidden gems and iconic landmarks, thereby boosting local economies. **Simplified visa procedures and improved infrastructure** further amplify India's appeal as a tourist destination. With reduced travel times, expanded routes and promotional efforts, the country's tourism industry thrives on increased accessibility, cultural exchange and economic growth, poised for continued success.

### Better airport facilities also means better lounge areas on the airports. How has Encalm contributed to three major airports of India?

In recent years, airport facilities in India have witnessed a remarkable expansion and enhancement, offering travellers an elevated experience. The Encalm exclusive lounges at Delhi, Manohar International Airport, Goa, and Hyderabad Airport are renowned for their luxurious seating, gourmet dining options, private workstations, complimentary refreshments and a

dedicated staff committed to elevating the overall airport experience.

Notably, the introduction of **Encalm Privé**, the exclusive lounge operated by Encalm Hospitality at Delhi International airport, provides travellers with a premium oasis to relax and unwind in style. Additionally, travellers can further indulge in the rejuvenating experience of Encalm Spa available at IGI Airport in New Delhi, RGI Airport in Hyderabad and Manohar International Airport in Goa, which enhances their overall airport journey.

Moreover, our exclusive 'Atithya' meet and greet services are specially curated to ensure travellers' wellbeing and luxury. These services offer travellers a **hassle-free and personalised experience** taking care of everything starting from baggage handling to buggy service, porter service and exclusive lounge access.

### How do you think Indian destinations are benefitting with better connectivity?

Improved connectivity is bringing significant benefits to Indian destinations. Firstly, it allows for easier access to remote and previously unexplored areas, opening up new tourism opportunities. This leads to **increased footfall** in these destinations, boosting local economies through tourism revenue. Additionally, better connectivity encourages infrastructure development and investment in tourism-related services, enhancing the overall visitor experience. Moreover, it **helps in dispersing tourism traffic, reducing overcrowding** in popular destinations and promoting sustainable tourism practices. Ultimately, improved connectivity plays a crucial role in **showcasing the diverse attractions** and cultural heritage of Indian destinations, attracting more visitors and contributing to their growth & development.

## Better Connectivity, Backpacker Hostels Writing A New Narrative

Gone are the generic, cookie-cutter spaces. Modern backpacker hostels are vibrantly themed and echoing the local flavour, writes **Pranav Dangi**, Founder & CEO, The Hosteller



**PRANAV DANGI**  
Founder & CEO, The Hosteller



**F**or decades, backpacker hostels have been synonymous with bustling metropolises, budget backpackers, and bunk beds. However, this perception is undergoing a transformation. Charming towns nestled amongst vineyards, vibrant villages by turquoise beaches, and ancient valleys pulsating with local life. This shift signifies a significant climb up the ladder for backpacker hostels in the travel and tourism industry. The transformation isn't merely about affordability; it also signifies the rise of a new breed of explorers that yearns for genuine encounters and **immersive experiences**.

India now has increased connectivity, thanks to the large network of highways, roads, railways and of course, newer airports and air routes. Budget travellers and single travellers, who love to explore unexplored destinations, are now finding it easier to plan their travels. And hostels are their preferred choice to stay.

“  
**The cost pressure in popular tourist hubs is pushing budget-conscious travellers towards alternative destinations**  
”

With increase in connectivity across destinations, gone are the generic, cookie-cutter spaces. Modern backpacker hostels are vibrantly themed, echoing the local flavour. This immersion in the **local spirit** extends beyond aesthetics, with many backpacker hostels offering themed activities and experiences curated by local partners.

Such experiences sit well with today's travellers, particularly millennials and Gen Z.

Studies like Hilton's 2024 Trend Report confirm this shift, revealing that 77 per cent of Indian respondents were likely to book accommodations based on access to unique experiences on their travels.

Advances in air and road infrastructure have shrunk the world, making previously remote destinations easily accessible. This opens doors for flexible **multi-destination itineraries**, with backpacker hostels acting as convenient and affordable springboards between adventures.

It comes as no surprise that the global hostel market size is expected to grow to a staggering USD 12.1 billion within the next decade, registering an impressive CAGR of 10.20 per cent.

Further diversification in themes, amenities, and locations, will cater to an even wider audience seeking unique and authentic travel experiences. The focus will shift from simply providing affordable accommodation to offering meaningful connections to places and people.



# The foundation of a Global Business District (GBD)

The new-age businesses prioritise connectivity to national and international destinations and a multimodal transportation network

By **Cherryn Dogra**

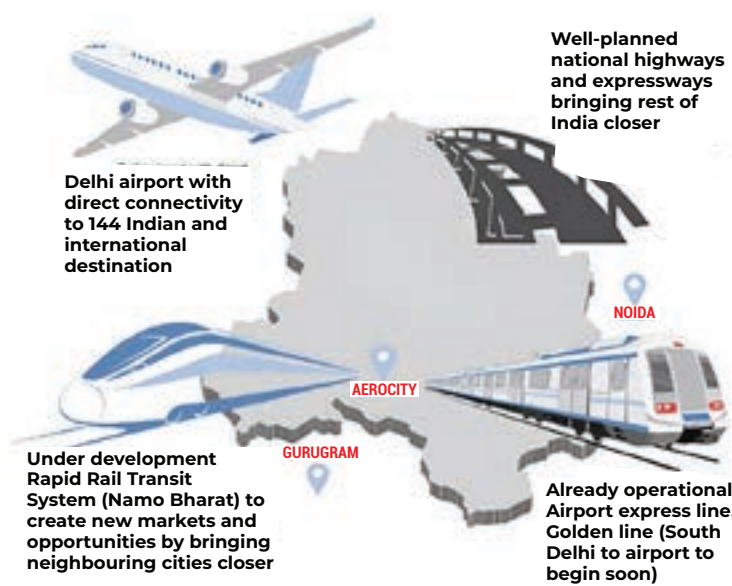
I've often wondered if making it easy to go to work drives people to show up. According to various studies conducted throughout the world, a commute is one of the most important factors that not only contribute to one's enthusiasm for arriving at work but also to one's happiness while there. The well-documented one-car, one-passenger phenomena that contributes to traffic jams is frequently rationalised by a lack of adequate public transportation and the availability of alternative modes of transportation. However, the convenience of locating a parking space cannot be underestimated.

In light of easy and convenient commute enhancing worker productivity, the contemporary organisations choosing locations for their office space has been greatly influenced by the transport convenience. Today, being adjacent to efficient public infrastructure and complicated multimodal transportation networks is becoming increasingly vital. As a result of this recent evolution, traditional CBDs are making way for GBDs (Global Business Districts). These Global Business Districts are increasingly aiming to improve the experience of employees and visitors.

I can only imagine the relief to have multiple options for commuting to workspace, whether it's metro (or underground or tube), RRTS or Namu Bharat (high-speed rail

as they call it internationally) exceptional highways and motorways, or public transport like buses etc. That is why the only address to have this very interesting confluence in the country is the finest **GBD shaping up at Aerocity, New Delhi**. Now the power capital of the country can let one have Airport next door, Metro, Rapid Rail, Motorway, and Highways with hundreds of thousands of parking spots, all at one place. In addition to that, Aerocity New Delhi serves as a key node between Delhi and Gurugram along with multiple convenient routes to even Noida.

As India attracts global attention, organisations and brands looking for their next big growth story must ensure that all the infrastructure requirements for their set-up are met. The new-age businesses **prioritise connectivity** to national and



**CHERRY N DOGRA**

international destinations, public spaces, robust infrastructure, a dependable emergency response system, and, most importantly, a multimodal transportation network that help them attract and retain employees and customers both. It is thus remarkable that Worldmark Aerocity's future expansion of more than 17 million square feet of commercial real estate with multinational corporations and world-renowned brands unleashes the potential of Aerocity, New Delhi as India's finest GBD in the making - the one that will undoubtedly place India on the global map. Designed with the enterprise, the individual, and the environment in mind, as a talent hub and a destination that promotes holistic wellbeing, the concept of 'being effortlessly connected' will definitely take on new dimensions!

*The author is the Chief Marketing Officer at Bharti Real Estate. Bharti Real Estate is expanding Worldmark portfolio at Aerocity New Delhi with addition of about 17 million sq ft of grade-A commercial real estate comprising of offices and retail*

# GMR Aerocity: Delhi NCR's Gateway To The World

By **Team Ayvole**

Its proximity to the Delhi airport is a game changer

**G**MR Aerocity, New Delhi is a business district like no other in the world. The presence of luxury business office spaces in Aerocity is complemented by an array of culinary delights, cultural showcases, and unparalleled Indian hospitality provided by leading brands in retail, hospitality, restaurants, and cafes, all a stone's throw away from the international airport. Unlike major business hubs in New York,

remarkable 9% increase from the previous year (59.5 million for 2022) . Delhi Aerocity buzzes with life- planes taking off, passengers arriving and cargo moving. Its 4,29,964 aircraft movements in 2022-23 reflect its significance as a regional hub. Delhi Aerocity's proximity to the airport is a game changer. As shown in Figure 1, mere 3.4 km distance ensures that business executives, tourists, and cargo handlers can swiftly transition between flights and meetings.

connected to the local transportation networks in their respective cities. This enables smooth access and mobility for the daily influx of office workers, travelers, shoppers and visitors to these districts. On this aspect, Delhi Aerocity's presence in the connectivity ecosystem of Delhi NCR places it second to almost none.

GMR Aerocity, New Delhi remains a business district to keep a watch for in future – specially powered due to its strategic location adjacent to the Indira Gandhi

International Airport as well as its seamless connectivity to other key areas within NCR with a world class metro rail connectivity. Delhi NCR itself is a hub of business activities attracting investors and professionals alike – making Aerocity an immensely useful airport business district and stands ready to contribute to India's



Beijing, or Dubai, which are situated far away from their respective airports, Aerocity lies less than 5 km from all the terminals. This proximity not only promotes accessibility but also enhances productivity for businesses and professionals, minimizing travel time and maximizing efficiency. Aerocity's status as a premier business hub is further accentuated by the presence of India's first General Aviation terminal facility, catering to the discerning needs of private jet travellers.

Total passenger traffic for Delhi IGIA was 65.32 million (2023), witnessing a

Major commercial business districts (CBDs) around the world are well-con-

growth story, in general, and of Delhi NCR region, in particular.

	Metro Length (Km)	Metro Daily Ridership	No. of Buses	Commercial Driving Licenses
London	402 Km	5 million	8,600	92,000
New York	399	---	6,000	2,100,000
Singapore	229	---	---	---
Hong Kong	245	---	---	---
Delhi NCR	389	7 million	4,000	100,000

*(Ayvole is a marketing research and consulting startup)*



# Revolutionising How We Move

India is experiencing a transformative mobility revolution, blending technology and affordability with accessibility

By Sumit Mishra and Vishal Gupta



**SUMIT MISHRA**  
Executive Directors, Deloitte India



**VISHAL GUPTA**  
Executive Directors, Deloitte India

In a dynamically evolving world, seamless connectivity to national and international destinations is essential. India, acknowledging mobility as a fundamental human right, is experiencing a transformative mobility revolution, blending technology and affordability with accessibility. This shift reshapes Indian travel, enhancing efficiency and personalisation through technology which creates a delightful, contactless, safe and integrated travel experience. The result is increased travel, changing societal mobility significantly.

## Delhi is a nerve centre for passenger delight with its integrated transport network

Delhi's transport narrative unfolds as a captivating story of change and empowerment through multi-modal integration, with the Delhi Metro playing the key role in this urban tale. It has transformed daily journeys, turning once-tough commutes

into straightforward rides. A range of cab services including zero emission cabs cater to travel demand for commuting to the Delhi airport. There is connectivity with railways as well as the metro. Delhi Metro seamlessly connects the city and neighbouring urban areas, increasing the ease of access and affordability of travel. In 2023, the Delhi Metro achieved a remarkable feat, setting a record with 7.1 million passengers in a single day, surpassing previous records. The daily ridership consistently reached high numbers, averaging 5.56 million passengers in 2023.

Delhi, a hub for both domestic and foreign tourists, witnessed **65.32 million passengers** at the New Delhi International Airport in 2022-23. In 2021, it ranked third in total foreign tourist visits in India, with 6.06 lakh arrivals, securing a 9.50 per cent share. The number of domestic tourists visiting Delhi was approximately 1.06 crore in 2021. The

development of **Aerocity, evolving into an aeropolis**, attracts a significant number of corporate events and travellers. As this vibrant urban tapestry expands, the necessity for meticulously planned last-mile connectivity becomes imperative, ensuring sustained growth and enhanced accessibility.

## Last mile connectivity remains a key impediment

One glaring gap in transportation network in India is the last-mile connection through local transport. Picture this: metros teaming up with platforms offering last-mile services via auto and e-rickshaws. Imagine planning your entire journey from home with transparent online tariffs, saving time, offering choices and cutting our city's carbon footprint. This eco-friendly model not only trims reliance on pricey taxis but sparks a gig economy boost, supporting a thriving hyperlocal scene and creating opportunities for local drivers.

The **collaborative efforts** of buses, cabs and efficient last-mile connectivity to airports make travel safer, more accessible and affordable.

## The way forward

Cities desire diverse, flexible and affordable travel options for everyone. Can innovation and collaboration harmonise with competition? Welcome to the '**Open Mobility Network**', where buses, metros, cabs, auto-rickshaws, e-rickshaws and bike service providers becomes discoverable to everyone, offering more choices, with pricing transparency and flexibility to book a ride at your preferred time, mode and price enabling choices at the fingertips.



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# GOA, HYDERABAD & VIZAG:

## A TALE OF THREE CITIES

From well-connected airports to delectable cuisine and warm hospitality, the beautiful cities of Goa, Vizag and Hyderabad promise an unforgettable experience for every traveller

By Tarannum Manjul

India, with its diverse landscapes and rich cultural tapestry, boasts of several destinations that allure travellers from across the globe. Among these, Goa, Hyderabad and Vizag stand out as premier travel hotspots, offering a perfect blend of natural beauty, cultural heritage and modern amenities. What's more, these airports also afford **seamless connectivity** through other travel modes to places of tourism and business interest within the city and to other nearby destinations. From well-connected airports to delectable cuisine and warm hospitality, these cities promise an unforgettable experience for every traveller.



### Goa: A Travellers' Paradise



Nestled along the pristine shores of the Arabian Sea, Goa stands as the epitome of beach paradise, enticing travellers with its golden sands, azure waters and vibrant culture. The state, served by the new, bustling **Manohar International Airport (MIA)**, offers seamless connectivity to major cities across India and international destinations, welcoming visitors with open arms.

#### Providing Seamless Connectivity

Within a year of its commercial operations, the airport connects to **25 domestic and 5 international destinations**. All domestic operated airlines like Indigo, Akasa Air, Vistara, Star Air & SpiceJet are servicing at the airport; international destinations are being served by Air India, Oman Air, Indigo & Tui. Handling over 3.5 million passengers since its inauguration on 5 January 2023, MIA has become a pivotal player in transforming Goa's air traffic landscape.

The number of domestic destinations connected to Goa has more than doubled, now reaching 30, up from 14 before MIA operations began. Going forward, The airport intends to connect more than 40 destinations and aims to secure more than 50 per cent of Goa's air passenger traffic.

MIA is well-connected to the city and other neighbouring states with a planned

multi-modal connectivity. A **six-lane elevated expressway**, NH166S, is being built to connect with existing NH66, which will provide a seamless connectivity to the traffic going in direction of the highway. The airport is also connected to Karnataka state by NH748A. The state government is exploring the possibility of connecting the MIA to a railway line in a bid to expand opportunities.

#### What Sets It Apart

Once in Goa, you are treated to **resplendent beaches**, some offering a range of water sports and the others, offering peaceful ambience, **churches**, forts and opportunities for pleasant rides through rustling palms and fields. Culinary enthusiasts are treated to a feast for the senses, as the diverse flavours of **Portuguese, Konkani and Saraswat cuisines** dance on their palates. From fiery vindaloo to fragrant xacuti and fresh seafood delights, Goa's culinary scene leaves a lasting impression on every traveller.

Moreover, Goa's hospitality is second to none, with a plethora of accommodation options ranging from luxurious resorts to charming beach huts, ensuring that visitors feel welcomed and cherished throughout their stay.

According to **Harshad Nalawade**, General Manager, DoubleTree by Hilton Goa-Panaji, Goa stands out as a unique destination that goes beyond beaches due to its rich and diverse culture with lively music festivals and seasonal celebrations including the carnival. Visits to

nearby religious sites and bustling markets is an experience to soak in the local and authentic flavours and take-home cherished mementos. For those seeking thrill, there are a wide range of exhilarating water sports activities such as Kayaking in South Goa, Surfboarding along with some edge of the seat activities at adventure parks.

**Bhushan Ganorkar**, Executive Chef, DoubleTree by Hilton Goa-Panaji shares, "Here one can easily immerse in the culinary heritage of Goa as our chefs curate a gastronomic experience that reflects the vibrant local flavours of this enchanting destination. Our recipes are ingrained in traditions and while we may infuse a bit of contemporary to keep up with the consumer's demands, our foundation till date remains strong and untampered."





## Hyderabad: The city of pearls



Hyderabad, the capital of Telangana, presents a vibrant tapestry of old-world charm and modernity, where historic monuments coexist harmoniously with bustling markets and culinary delights. Serving as the gateway to this cultural gem is the **Rajiv Gandhi International Airport**, seamlessly connecting Hyderabad to domestic and international destinations with ease and efficiency.

### Connecting to City's Heritage

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport received **22.5 lakh travellers in December 2023** as compared to 19.1 lakh passengers a year before, as per Airports Authority of India data. This is a 17.8 per cent jump. These included 18.5 lakh domestic passengers (as compared to 15.7 lakh in December 2022) and 4.01 lakh international passengers (as compared to 3.3 lakh in December 2022). According to the GHIAL website, the **airport serves 17 international destinations** through 21 international and 3 Indian passenger carriers and has 8 domestic carriers operating to around 53 domestic destinations.

Delving deeper into the heart of Hyderabad, one is captivated by the city's heritage. These include the world-famous **Char Minar**, the charm of which lies in climbing up and previewing the surrounding landscape, the **Golconda Fort** and the **Salar Jung Museum**, with its stunning collection of luxury collection of the Nizam. Also, do not miss the **Ramoji Film City** where some of your favourite films were shot.

Hyderabad cuisine, with its aromatic biryanis, succulent kebabs and decadent desserts like double ka meetha, beckons food enthusiasts from far and wide to indulge in its irresistible flavours. Whether sampling street food delights from bustling markets or dining in upscale restaurants, every meal in Hyderabad is a culinary adventure.



Golconda Fort

## Vizag: The jewel of the East Coast

Nestled amidst the breathtaking landscapes of the Eastern Ghats, Visakhapatnam, affectionately known as Vizag, shines as a coastal gem, enchanting travellers with its pristine beaches, verdant hills and rich maritime heritage. As the economic hub of Andhra Pradesh, Vizag serves as a gateway to the region's natural wonders and cultural treasures. The city is conveniently connected to the rest of India through Visakhapatnam Airport.



### The Airport and Beyond

Boasting modern amenities and efficient services, **Visakhapatnam Airport** ensures a smooth and hassle-free travel experience for passengers, setting the stage for unforgettable adventures in the city and beyond. Visakhapatnam Airport is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, including shopping outlets, dining options serving both local delicacies and international cuisines, comfortable lounges and reliable transportation services.

The port city is known for the **Simhachalam Temple** in Visakhapatnam with its ornate shikhara and massive courtyard; **INS Kurusura Submarine Museum** which was used in the 1971 war; **Araku Valley** with Coffee Plantations and a museum showcasing the craftwork done by local population; **Borra Caves**; **Dolphin's Nose** (a hill resembling dolphin's nose), **Indira Gandhi Zoological Park** and a number of beaches with picturesque landscapes.

Vizag's culinary landscape reflects its diverse cultural heritage, with a fusion of Andhra, Telugu and coastal flavours tantalising the taste buds of visitors. From succulent seafood delicacies to fiery curries and delectable sweets, the city's vibrant food scene offers a gastronomic journey like no other, with each dish telling a story of tradition and local ingredients.

**Gagan Anand**, Founder and Director, Scuzo Ice 'O' Magic, India's first Live Popsicle Concept & Dessert Café, says, "Across destinations like Vizag, Hyderabad and Delhi, the evolving travel landscape reflects a profound shift towards culinary exploration. Food has transcended mere sustenance to become a cultural touchstone, guiding travellers on a sensory journey through diverse cuisines and culinary traditions."



INS Kurusura Submarine Museum





## AYODHYA'S ENHANCED CONNECTIVITY: A Gateway To Spiritual And Cultural Exploration

The Maharshi Valmiki International Airport, aptly named after the sage Valmiki, offers domestic flights to major cities across India, providing travellers with a convenient and efficient way to reach their destination

By Tarannum Manjul

**A**yodhya, steeped in centuries of history and spirituality, stands as a beacon of India's cultural heritage and religious significance. Revered by millions as the birthplace of Lord Ram, this ancient city holds a special place in the hearts of pilgrims and tourists alike. In recent years, efforts to enhance connectivity to Ayodhya have gained momentum, bolstering its appeal to travellers from across the country and beyond. The introduction of air and rail connectivity has played a crucial role in facilitating easier access to Ayodhya, opening up new avenues for pilgrimage, tourism and economic growth.

The inauguration of Ayodhya Airport by Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked a significant milestone in the city's journey towards improved connectivity. The Maharshi Valmiki International Airport, aptly named after the sage Valmiki, offers domestic flights to major cities across India, providing travellers with a convenient and efficient way to reach their destination. Airlines like Akasa Air, Indigo, SpiceJet and Air India Express have already commenced their services, connecting major cities such as Kolkata, Bengaluru, Mum-

bai and Delhi with Ayodhya. This strategic move not only reduces travel time but also promotes tourism and economic development in the region.

Ayodhya also boasts well-established rail connectivity, with the Ayodhya Dham Junction serving as a major railway station in the region. Located in the heart of the city, the railway station is well-connected to various parts of the country, offering both passenger and freight services that cater to the diverse needs of travellers and commuters alike. The recent addition of the Vande Bharat Express from Delhi to Ayodhya has added another chapter to the ease of travel to this holy city.

With its state-of-the-art amenities and high-speed connectivity, the Vande Bharat Express provides passengers with a comfortable and time-efficient mode of transportation, further enhancing Ayodhya's accessibility and appeal.

The improved air and rail connectivity to Ayodhya have not only made it easier for pilgrims to embark on their spiritual journeys but have also opened up new opportunities for cultural exploration and tourism. Visitors can now experience the rich history and heritage of Ayodhya with greater ease, exploring its ancient temples, sacred sites and vibrant markets.

## Ayodhya: From Spiritual Heartland to Global Tourist Magnet

Preserving Ayodhya's sacred environment while accommodating the needs of a global audience requires thoughtful planning and execution.



By Nishant Pitti

**A**yodhya, birthplace of Lord Rama, is experiencing a momentous reawakening—one that promises to catapult it from a bastion of religion to a globally renowned tourism haven.

### Dawn of a New Era

January 22, 2024, marked a watershed moment in Ayodhya's millennia-long history — the consecration of the Ram Mandir. This event was not just a milestone in Hindu

religious revivalism but also a pivotal point for Ayodhya's tourism and economic landscape.

### Touch of Luxe

Following the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of Ram Lalla, a leading Indian travel company unveiled plans for a five-star luxury hotel venture in the temple town.

This ambitious project, with an investment of up to Rs 100 crore through a specialised hospitality firm, is strategically located less than one kilometre from the Ram Mandir. Also, another major player in the



**NISHANT PITTI**  
CEO & Co-founder, EaseMyTrip

“  
With plans to expand its domestic and international reach by 2025, the airport is a cornerstone of making Ayodhya accessible to a global audience  
”

hospitality industry is set to introduce three new hotels in Ayodhya.

These ventures not only reflect the growing confidence in Ayodhya's tourism potential but also underscore a broader trend towards strategic investments in the sector.

### Enhanced Connectivity

Ayodhya's metamorphosis is significantly buoyed by strides in transportation infrastructure. The operational phase of the new Ayodhya airport, with a capacity to handle 1 million passengers, is a game-changer. With plans to expand its domestic and international reach by 2025, the airport is a cornerstone of making Ayodhya accessible to a global audience. Also, the revamped railway station and improved road networks are making journeys to Ayodhya smoother.

### Ayodhya's Global Footprint

The transformation of Ayodhya is emblematic of a broader vision, one that sees the city not just as a nucleus of Hindu spirituality but as a global spiritual haven akin to Vatican City and Mecca.

As Ayodhya embarks on this unprecedented journey, it's not just the physical landscape that's evolving. The city is becoming a melting pot of cultures, a place where ancient traditions and modern aspirations coalesce.

### Navigating the Path Ahead

Preserving Ayodhya's sacred environment while accommodating the needs of a global audience requires thoughtful planning and execution. Ensuring that the essence of Ayodhya's spiritual heritage is not overshadowed by commercialisation is crucial to maintaining the city's sanctity and allure.

### Ayodhya's Legacy Unfolds

The Ram Mandir heralds a new era for Ayodhya. This resurgence is not merely about the bricks and mortar that shape the city's skyline; it's about rekindling the soul of Ayodhya.

In the end, Ayodhya's ascent as a global tourist hotspot is more than an economic or religious milestone; it's a mosaic of faith, culture, and the promise of a brighter future.



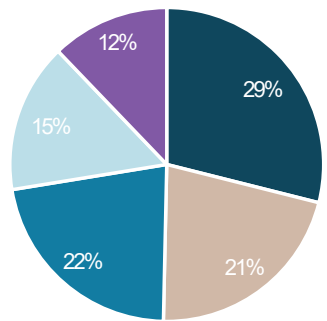
# How Hospitality Performed in 2023

JLL Hospitality's insights into various segments and geographies, and major industry developments

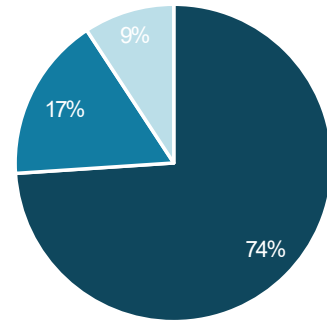
## Key Hotel Market Performance

Cities	Q4 2023		
	Change over same period last year		
	RevPAR Change (%)	OCC Change (pp)	ADR Change (%)
Bengaluru	↑ 31.9	↓ 31.9	↑ 13.6
Chennai	↑ 13.2	↔ 13.2	↑ 13.4
Delhi	↑ 26.3	↑ 26.3	↑ 20.3
Goa	↑ 9.3	↑ 9.3	↑ 6.1
Hyderabad	↑ 23.5	↔ 23.5	↑ 24.7
Mumbai	↑ 13.3	↓ 13.3	↑ 16

Delhi Hotel Market Segmentation Existing Supply



Delhi Hotel Market Segmentation Active Pipeline – By Room Count



Source: STR RevPAR: ↑ Increase ↔ Stable ↓ Decrease

Source: JLL

## Review Highlights

- All six key markets continued to witness a YoY growth in ADR & RevPAR performance in Q4 2023.
- Bengaluru saw the steepest RevPAR growth of 31.9% in Q4 2023, compared to the same period last year.
- Mumbai continued to be the RevPAR leader in absolute terms in Q4 2023 while maintaining stable occupancy levels.
- Total no. of signings in Q4 2023 stood at 82 hotels with 8,741 keys.
- 15 hotels were signed as a result of conversions of other hotels. This constituted 14% of the inventory signed in Q4 2023.

## Industry News

- Hansoge Enterprises, a part of Ozone Group, sold a 175-key hotel adjacent to the Bengaluru International Airport.
- Ambuja Neotia Group acquired the Tree of Life Resorts & Hotels, which includes three of the brand's properties at Varanasi, Agra, and Jaipur.
- ISCON Group sold a 96-key hotel in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- The Maharishi Valmiki International Airport in Ayodhya was inaugurated in December 2023.

### Supply & Demand Growth for Six Cities

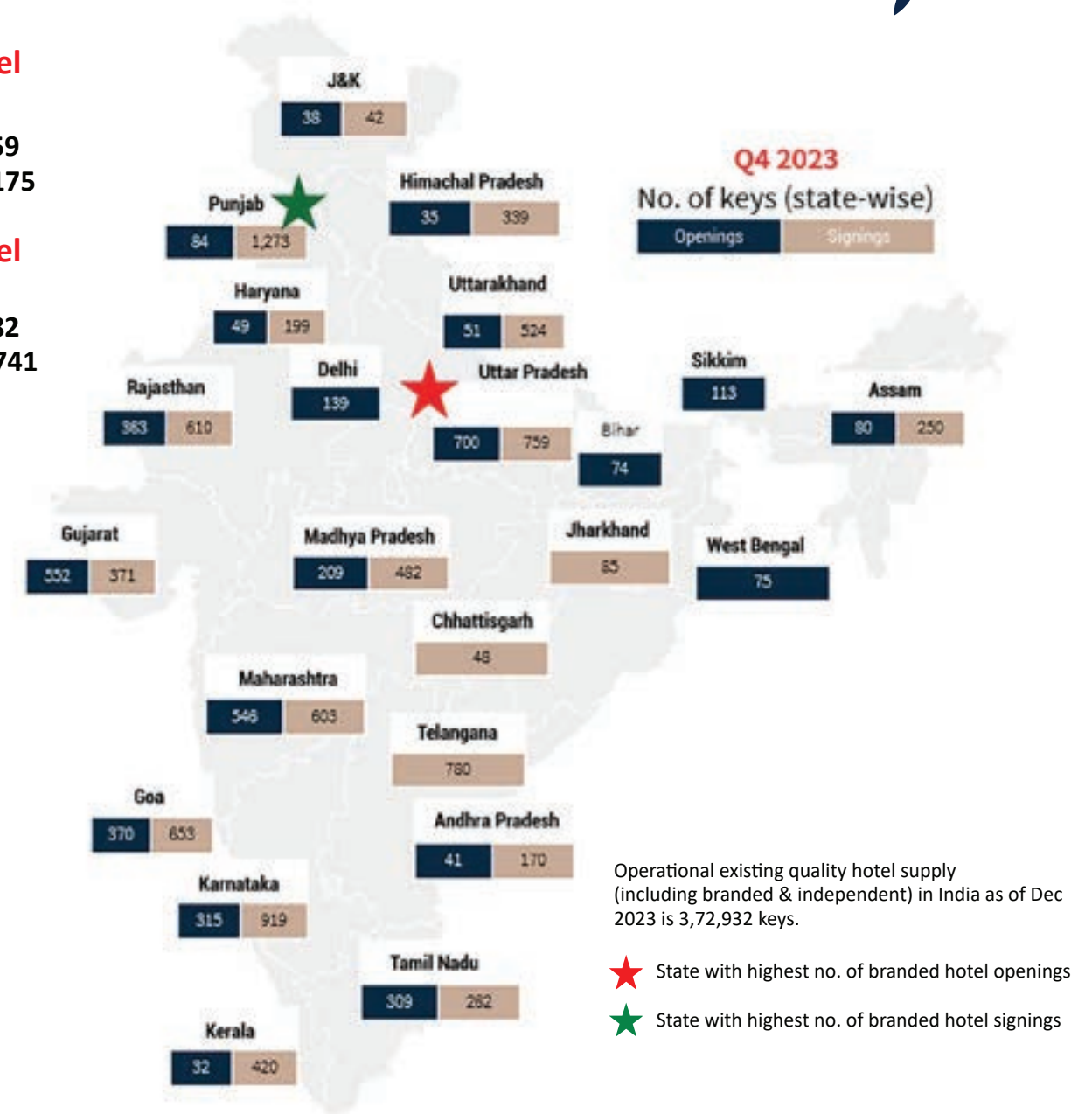
Supply **1.7% ↑** Demand **4.0% ↑**

## Branded Hotel Openings

No. of hotels: 59  
No. of keys: 4,175

## Branded Hotel Signings

No. of hotels: 82  
No. of Keys: 8,741



Operational existing quality hotel supply (including branded & independent) in India as of Dec 2023 is 3,72,932 keys.

- ★ State with highest no. of branded hotel openings
- ★ State with highest no. of branded hotel signings

## Tier-wise break-up for Q4 2023

Tier	Branded - Hotel Openings		Branded - Hotel Signings	
	Hotels	Keys	Hotels	Keys
I	11	1,202	16	2,009
II	30	2,018	42	4,824
III	18	955	24	1,908

## Classification-wise break-up for Q4 2023

Category	Branded - Hotel Openings		Branded - Hotel Signings	
	Hotels	Keys	Hotels	Keys
Luxury	2	135	5	660
Upper Upscale	3	147	12	1,788
Upscale	13	1,162	16	1,991
Midscale	38	2,160	46	3,960
Budget	3	571	3	342



# Heritage Transport Museum, Gurugram: India on Wheels, Down the Ages

Photographs by: Meha Mathur

By Meha Mathur

For those deeply passionate about understanding how transportation evolved in India, there is a museum located in a far-flung area of Gurugram (on the Tauru Road), that is the penultimate test of connectivity levels in Delhi NCR, but once you are there, is a marvelous showcase of all means of transportation.

From the palanquins and buggies of pre-automotive phase to a craft on which pilots trained during the World War II and the letter from the president of India that travelled to moon on man's first landing on earth's satellite, the museum is a most exhaustive collection of transportation, well exhibited and well-curated by a team of experts.

For the car and bike lovers, this museum is a delightful treasure trove, housing a large range of models. Street scenes that have recreated garages and service stations are very authentically and creatively done. Creativity as exhibited on trucks is also showcased – a section is devoted to art on vehicles. Entire railway compartments and tram interiors are a major draw for school kids. There is also a simulator for the thrill of driving.

Since the British times, popularisation of India as a travel destination was a priority and large posters of Railways advertised destination India. Similarly, the posters of various airlines also promoted Brand India. These in themselves are great sources to understand the society of the day. So are stamps of different decades.

An entire floor dedicated to the history of aviation in India is worth spending time, as it comprehensively explains the major milestones in aviation in this country.

Each year, on the museum's anniversary, a new installation is added. And you will find several such works both out in the open and inside the museum building.



📍 Distance from Aerocity: 50.4 km

🚇 Nearest Metro Station: Sector 55-56 on Yellow Line (Taking personal transport/cab advised)

Note: The museum is closed on Mondays, but is open on public holidays.

# Delhi Metro Stations: Mirror To Culture & Heritage



By Shruti Tripathi

Along with being a lifeline to Delhi, the metro stations in Delhi also reflect the rich heritage of Indian culture and history. These metro stations tell a hidden history related to the area in which the metro station was built. ITO Metro Station was constructed a few years back and runs through Violet Line; connecting Kashmiri Gate in North Delhi to Badarpur Border in South-East Delhi. One gallery on this metro station tells the history of prominent newspapers that started operation from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg.

The Delhi Metro Museum situated on Patel Chowk in Central Delhi showcases the journey related to the starting of the Metro to become the lifeline of the capital. This metro museum exhibits the first metro coaches, bridges and the features of the overall Delhi Metro that make it stand out among all the metros of other cities.

The models of metro lines in the museum picked up the nuances of the Delhi Metro.

Likewise, ITO Metro Station and Mandi House Metro Station tell the history of 'Gol Chakkar', and the history of Mandi House. Mandi House on Blue Line is also a juncture where commuters change the metro for Kashmiri Gate or Badarpur Border. It is located in the centre of the city, nearer to the Lutyens zone.

These Metro Stations showcase a lot about Delhi and Metro to the tourists. Not only for the local inhabitants, but Delhi Metro also provides affordable and comfortable journeys for tourists.



📍 Distance from Aerocity: 15.4 km

🚇 Nearest Metro Station: Jor Bagh on Yellow Line



# National Rail Museum: Showcase Of 160-Year- Old Indian Railway Craftsmanship

By Shruti Tripathi



Photo credit: Ankur Dutta

stations, engines, etc. This museum is a great source of information, especially for the children who have not seen the steam trains.

President VV Giri laid the foundation of the Railway Museum in Chankyapuri on October 7, 1971; the museum was inaugurated by Kamalapati Tripathi, then Rail Minister in 1977.

The museum also represents the history of roadways, waterways and airways along with the trains. It utilises maps, documentation and books to project the 160 years of rich history of rail in India. It restored steam locomotives and wooden coaches from across the country and also exhibits the Patiala State Mono Rail (built year 1908), the John Morris Fire Engine (built year 1914), etc. which are considered to be the rarest operational exhibits of their kind in the world.

The museum also organises workshops to efficiently showcase the different features of Indian railways. Along with the changing technology, the National Rail Museum uses 3D virtual reality technology to give a real-time experience to the visitors.

**R**ailway has a long history in India, and has greatly benefitted the country. Even though it was started by Britishers for their self purposes, this mode of transportation has revolutionised mobility in the country. The National Railway Museum located in New Delhi is based on the theme of trains; types of trains (as per the fuel, coaches, era),

Distance from Aerocity: 11.4 km

Nearest Metro Station: Sir Vishweshwariah Moti Bagh Metro Station

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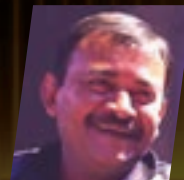
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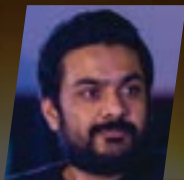
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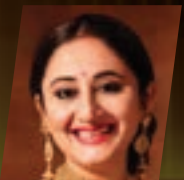
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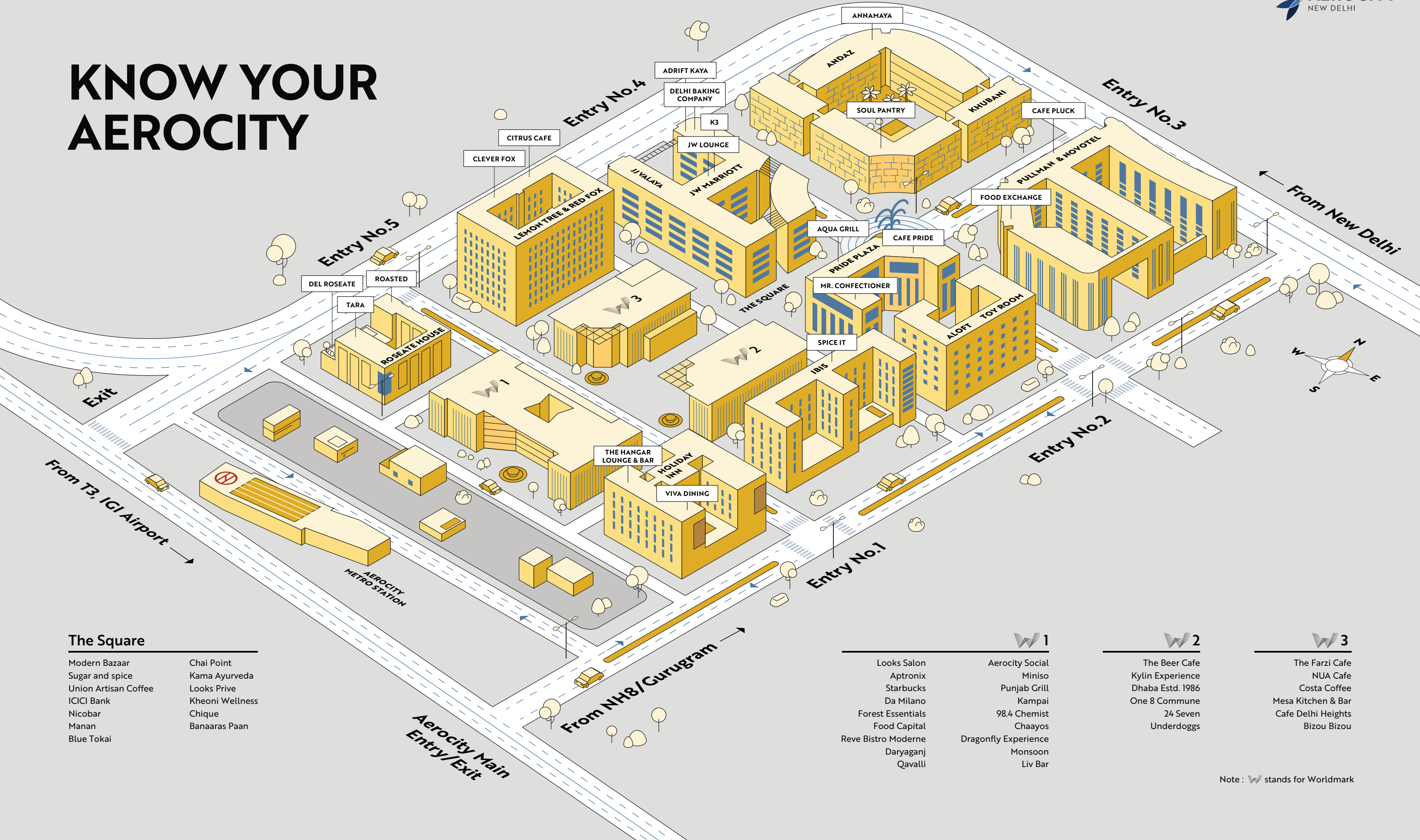
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  - 24 Seven
  - Underdogs

- 3**
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  - NUA Cafe
  - Costa Coffee
  - Mesa Kitchen & Bar
  - Cafe Delhi Heights
  - Bizou Bizou

Note : stands for Worldmark



# MARKETING FOR THE FIELD OF PASSION

**Gurneer Kaur, Marketing Manager, Aloft New Delhi Aerocity, transformed her dream to be a chef, to become a voice for the hotel through devising campaigns and marketing initiatives**

By Meha Mathur

As a school student, watching Sanjeev Kapoor's cookery shows and TLC (The Learning Channel), Gurneer Kaur developed a deep desire to be a chef. But respecting her family's wishes (not to leave the city for studies), she kept the idea on back burner, pursued bachelors in journalism and mass communication, did internships in PR set-ups for restaurants and food & beverages clients and handled social media for restaurants in Delhi NCR. "I had gained skills in restaurant marketing. My experience allowed me to transition to hotels, starting with marketing team at Hotel Andaz New Delhi, first as F&B marketing personnel and later on, for doing marketing for the hotel. This provided me insights into various operations of the hotel. It was a big transition," she informs.

Building on that expertise, she joined Aloft New Delhi Aerocity, part of Marriott International, where she is handling **marketing, communications and digital marketing** of the hotel. Forever a keen learner, besides learning on the job, Kaur has also completed PG Diploma in marketing management from IGNOU. "I've honed my design skills and am entrusted with crafting essential collaterals in-house," she proudly says.

### Satisfaction factor

While working in marketing for restaurant, you are in the background, but in a hotel, you meet the guest, understand the clientele and know how to design campaigns according to the demands of the guest, she describes. "In Aerocity, we get corporate as well as leisure clientele, so your communication



strategy needs to cater to different clientele. The messaging needs to be specific."

Deeply passionate that she is about hospitality industry, she says, "It's not only about excellent service, it's about creating a memorable experience that resonates with guests long after their stay."

### Aerocity, the location factor

Kaur is happy that the hospitality district is witnessing a boom, especially in the wake of G20. "Whenever there is an event happening in Delhi, this is a preferred place to stay; it's also a preferred place for corporate clients and for layovers."

She says the added benefit besides **proximity to airport** is availability of a variety of dining options.

As far as Aloft is concerned, the welcoming and **vibrant ambience**, the art pieces that add a different flair to spaces, the digital art that appeals to Gen Zs and Millennials, the vibrant interiors, the natural light in spaces, especially the meeting rooms are some other determinants in making the hotel stay a unique experience within Aerocity, she says.

### A day as a hospitality professional

Kaur clarifies at the outset that it's not a 9-5 job. From social media to digital marketing to campaign design, the responsibility is huge. The responsibility also includes doing marketing and designing campaigns aligned to the brand guidelines of Marriott Inter-

national and its policies. "Anything can come up at any point of the day. We plan the events for the next three months, including menu, cocktail lay and balance out the promotion, but sometimes, something unforeseen happens and we have to plan the event in a day. And since the hotel is operational on Sundays, I have to be ready for any eventuality."

### Creativity, a constant pursuit

Cooking continues to be close to her heart and while she loves cooking at home, she also runs a blog '**Indianfood\_lovers**' on food & travel. Leveraging platforms like Instagram, she started sharing her culinary experiences and recipes she makes at home. "I was thrilled to see that my posts resonate with my audience and a steady rise in my follower base. To see 10,000 followers within a month at a time when Instagram was very

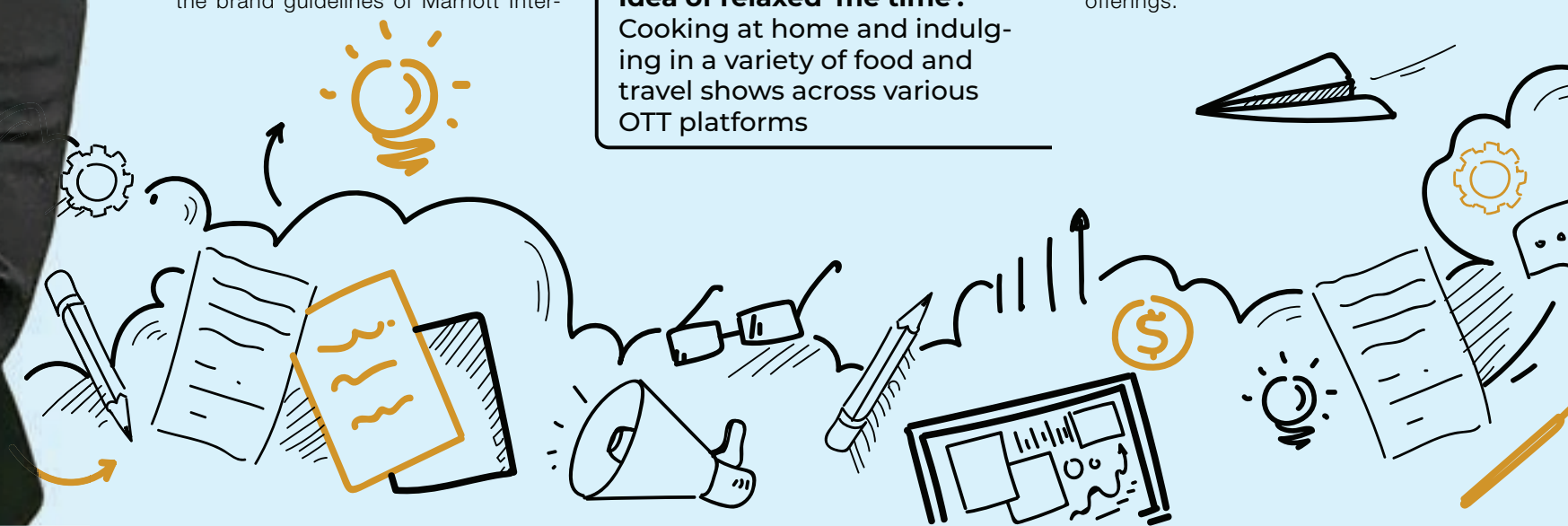
new in India, was a big deal. I have built a community of over one lakh followers now," she shares. Now, despite the busy schedule, she makes sure to take out time for content creation and capture personal experiences on the blog. Not just that, one of the reels she posted on her lunch at the hotel crossed 23 million, inspiring her to make it a series.

For Kaur, the highlight of F&B at Aloft is **Re:Fuel by Aloft** that is in 'grab and go' mode, with both savoury and dessert items like pastries. "After a bustling day at work, I relish grabbing something from there. My parents also appreciate their offerings."

## Fun Facts

**Idea of great travel experience or hotel stay: It's not just about welcome drinks or room upgrade but how the staff engage with you. During my stay in a Singapore hotel, they engaged with me and gave recommendations on places to explore**

**Idea of relaxed 'me time': Cooking at home and indulging in a variety of food and travel shows across various OTT platforms**





# Culinary Odyssey: From Prestigious Venues To Heart Of Aerocity

Executive Chef **Rakesh Rana** of Pride Plaza Hotel Aerocity, New Delh shares the inspiration behind his culinary career and the milestones in the journey

By Poonam Singh



## Can you share your journey, starting with your name and how you entered the hotel industry?

My culinary journey began in 1994 when I undertook my first internship at Hotel Nirulas, situated in the bustling Connaught Place, New Delhi. Specialising in the Indian section, I drew inspiration from my mother's culinary skills and developed a passion for local food. My journey started in earnest with various positions at renowned establishments like Bikanerwala, DIVA, Carnival Cruise Lines, Hotel Ramada Plaza, Le-Meridian, IHG Hotel and Resorts, Holiday Inn, Double Tree by Hilton, Crown Plaza and

Taj Palace, marking crucial milestones in my professional growth. While I initially focussed on Indian cuisine, Chef Rakesh Puri inspired me to explore Western cuisine as well. Since then, **I embarked on my journey in Western cuisine**. I faced rejection from Taj Hotels due to a lack of experience in any of the five-star hotels. However, I did not give up and applied again, this time for Italian cuisine. I was selected as a Commis Chef (Junior or Assistant) and that became a turning point in my life where I learned about working professionalism and the way of operating at Taj Palace – it is a temple for us. I worked at IHG - Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn, where I have learnt international standards and spent 12 years.

## What were your experiences at Taj Palace, Carnival Cruise Line in the USA and various other places?

After facing an initial rejection at Taj Palace due to a lack of five-star hotel experience, my determination led me to secure a position as a Commis Chef, starting a pivotal chapter in my career. Subsequently, I ventured into international waters with three contracts at Carnival Cruise Line in the USA. The journey continued through various roles at establishments such as Crown Plaza and Holiday Inn in Aerocity.

## What is the importance of location when selecting a hotel?

The strategic location of our hotel in Aerocity plays a pivotal role in ensuring our success in the hospitality industry. Nestled in this dynamic locale, our establishment caters to a diverse and expansive clientele, encompassing transit guests, corporate clients and international visitors. **This prime positioning not only broadens our customer base but also significantly contributes to enhancing the overall appeal of our hotel.** The strategic advantage of being situated in Aerocity allows us to provide unparalleled convenience and accessibility, making us the preferred choice for a wide range of discerning guests seeking a memorable and seamless stay.

## What is your signature style of cooking and what is your favourite dish on the menu?

My culinary signature strongly emphasises Western cuisine, specifically highlighting my expertise in crafting delectable Italian delights, skilfully executed grills, expertly roasted dishes and masterfully prepared pastas. A standout creation from my menu and a personal favourite is the **Chicken Parmigiana** with spaghetti. This dish not only reflects my deep-seated passion for the nuanced flavours and intricate techniques of Western cooking but also serves as a prime example of my commitment to delivering an exceptional dining experience through meticulously crafted dishes.

## What is your favourite destination from a culinary perspective?

While Paris stands out from a documentary perspective, personally, the United States offers a diverse and vibrant culinary scene. From Mexican delights to classic American grills, the variety and taste experiences in the US have left a lasting impression on my culinary preferences.

## What is your favourite movie related to culinary arts?

While I do not have a specific favourite movie, I do enjoy watching culinary competitions on channels like Discovery and TLC. These shows, featuring chefs and intense culinary challenges, provide both entertainment and valuable insights into the industry.

## What is your favourite sweet and savoury dish?

**Gajar ka Halwa** holds the title of my favourite sweet, while a traditional Himachali dish called 'Babru' takes the spot for my favourite savoury dish. The diverse and rich flavours of these dishes resonate with my culinary preferences.





# LAHORI MURGH

By Chef Rana



## INGREDIENTS

- 800gms - chicken, boneless
- 10gms - ginger-garlic paste
- 15gms - Degi mirch
- 15gms - coriander powder
- 4gms - freshly crush pepper
- 600ml - tomato puree
- 125gms - brown onion paste
- 25gms - brown garlic paste
- 100gms - cashewnut paste
- Salt to taste
- 15ml - oil
- 10gms - whole garam masala

## HOW TO MAKE LAHORI MURGH

- Take oil in pan; add whole garam masala sauté it till garam masala leaves aroma.
- Add ginger and garlic paste; cook for a few minutes.
- Add degi mirch powder, coriander powder, black pepper powder.
- Sauté it till it leaves oil.
- Add chicken pieces and sauté in masala till the chicken is half cooked.
- Add tomato puree, brown onion paste and kaju paste
- Cook it till the gravy is thick.



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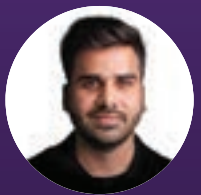
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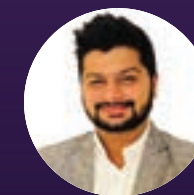
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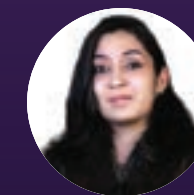
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# Chai That Makes A Point

At the popular tea and food joint called Chai Point, the food menu is full of exquisite choices that fit perfectly with the traditional chai

**T**here is no shortage of good places to have a beverage or a small meal at Delhi's Aerocity. The prime location allows it to be a hub for not just business but also for some of the best eateries in the capital city of the country. When we talk about beverages, if there is anything we as Indians like to drink on a daily basis, regardless of social stature, class, religion or gender, it is tea, popularly known as chai.

In this review we will be talking about one of the most, if not the most popular tea outlet, Chai Point.

The facility is well lit and offers a really good view of the outside alleyway. Plenty of sunlight coming in allows the restaurant to have a cheerful and energetic vibe. So, for those who prefer a calmer environment and are more into dim lit cafes, this might not be a good fit. Chai Point Aerocity has a very unique seating arrangement which is in the shape of an 'L' with the seating available for 15-17 people. This is one thing that



### MUST TRY BEVERAGES

- Ginger Chai
- Masala Chai
- Sulaimani Chai
- Kashmiri Kahwa
- Filter Coffee
- Choco Boba Burst

### MUST TRY FOOD ITEMS

- Double Choco Chunk Cookie
- Banana Cake
- Bun Omelette
- Hazelnut Choco Bun
- Galouti Kebab Bun
- Chicken Tikka Whole Wheat Multigrain Sandwich
- Paneer Tikka Whole Wheat Multigrain Sandwich



caught my eye immediately. Due to the limited seating here, availability could become a concern.

The chai here is fabulous, if I had to put it in simple terms. The variety of beverages is vast and there is a lot to choose from. I'd go out on one limb and say that the tea options are better than some of the other popular outlets that have tea as their prime offerings.

One particular section of beverages that got me hooked was the Boba tea section. Although not quite popular in India yet, Boba teas are fascinating as well as delicious. I also had the Sulaimani Tea and the Masala Tea. I have to say that both the teas had a rich flavour with a good after taste.

Coming to the food items, Chai Point is a great to place

to grab a bite as well. The food menu is full of exquisite choices that fit perfectly with the traditional chai. However, I also felt that these food items were easy to carry and can fit into any meal regardless of the time of the day.

Situated close to the Indira Gandhi International airport, the area is full of tourists, travellers and consumers. Aerocity is buzzing with corporate offices, shopping arcades and a plethora of well-known restaurants, cafes and bars. Aerocity has a good mix of the right combination of high end and pocket friendly cafes and restaurants. Chai Point is a great outlet that allows people to sit, relax and enjoy a good cup of tea in the middle of the city's hub for business and leisure.



# BOUNDLESS FLAVOURS: A CULINARY ADVENTURE

Discover a culinary treasure in Aerocity with diverse flavours at Kheer, Daryaganj's savoury delights, Farzi Café's modern twists and Dhaba's Punjabi comfort with a contemporary vibe

By Poonam Singh

Aerocity is a fantastic destination for various reasons, with its most prominent allure being the exquisite culinary offerings. Here, you can indulge in a culinary journey that spans the globe, offering a diverse range of flavours. Whatever your cravings, Aerocity has it all, creating a unique and delightful experience for every visitor. It has truly set a benchmark, ensuring visitors leave with a fully satisfied palate and a memorable experience in every way. For the best Indian cuisine, try the best.

**KHEER**  
Elevating Indian Cuisine with Contemporary Flair



**T** rue to its name, The Kheer (Roseate House New Delhi) stands out as a fine dining establishment in the vicinity, showcasing a contemporary approach to Indian cuisine. With a flair for tasty twists on traditional dishes, it has proven its excellence in crafting exceptional culinary experiences. The **kababs** are among the most popular orders at the restaurant, such as the beet goat cheese and pine nuts kebabs and the raan ke kebab, an 8-hour slow-braised, shredded baby lamb leg galette.



In the main course, they offer dishes like **dal-e-dunghar, panch anaaz ki khichdi, gucchi mussallam, rase waale aloo aur potatoes**, and spiced dried lentil dumplings tempered with cumin and kalimirsch vadi ka jhol. Dilli khaas nalli, bhuna gosht, degchi murgh, and Dilli-6 ki biryani are a few names that are sure to tantalise your taste buds. The dessert served at The Kheer is a delightful experience not to be missed. **The Kheer platter** is a must-try, featuring fenja, kheere ki kheer, jaggery kheer, and badam cake zucchini and almond pudding with orange sauce.

**DARYAGANJ**  
Indulge in Exquisite North Indian Flavours



**D** aryaganj, located in Worldmark 1 Aerocity, stands out as one of the finest restaurants, offering the best North Indian cuisine to savour. The helpful and humble staff is always ready to serve you the finest dishes. This place is renowned among international visitors for its delectable **butter chicken**, known for its tender texture. The black lentil dal (**dal makhani**) is a must-try at this establishment. The creamy and flavourful dal is irresistible, making it a delicacy that no one can resist

after just one spoonful. Enjoy food with Bollywood songs which add more flavour to the food. This is the place where North Indian flavours from the post-independence era, are brought to life using fresh produce. The more traditional **kulfis** are cream (malai), rose, mango, cardamom (elaichi), saffron (kesar or zafran) and pistachio. Unlike ice cream, kulfi is not whipped, resulting in a solid, dense frozen dessert similar to traditional custard-based ice cream. **Prices:** Butter chicken Rs 647; Dal makhani Rs 494)

**FARZI CAFÉ**  
Modern Twist on Indian Classics



**A** s part of the massive restaurants chain by Zorawar Kalra, Farzi Cafe caters to all taste preferences with its diverse menu. It aims to bring Indian cuisine back 'in vogue'. 'Farzi' can have many connotations, but at Farzi Café, it has just one: 'creating an illusion' with its cuisine. Best described as a gourmet experience, it amalgamates traditional global and Indian classics with Indian influences, contemporary presentations, culinary styles and ambience.





It is a quirky, chic, modern Indian café where guests enjoy a sensory experience through the finest modern Indian cuisine, accompanied by a high-energy ambience. The food served at the restaurant features an amalgamation of Indian dishes with a twist, such as **dal-chawal Aranchi**, **dahi-puchka chaat** with angoor-chutney, **chicken-tikka** with harissa mayo, **goli-kabab** with potato wafers, **keema-kulcha** with mint-jalapeno chutney, **pao-bhaji ratatouille** and more.

Infusing a generous dose of Indian flavours, Farzi Café presents Indian cuisine where culinary art meets the alchemy of modern presentations and cooking techniques, like molecular gastronomy, to immerse the guest into the ultimate gastronomic illusion.



## DHABA

Punjabi Comfort and Bollywood Vibes



Indian dhabas, small, rustic highway-themed restaurants are famous for comfortable Punjabi food on the highways. However, with the Dhaba, restaurant in Aerocity gets a whole new mojo - SADDA SWAG. It is a new age avatar with a Theka for pauwa bottle cocktails like **Imly banta**, a paan counter and kitschy interiors with coloured chandeliers, vintage Bollywood posters, patila counters, truck art elements, an all enhanced with the masala of Bollywood music. The theme is a perfect blend of the food served here including **murgh badami shorbha**, **tawa kukkad masala**, **balti-mutton**, **Amritsari-machhi**, **bhindi-masala**, **malai-kofta**, **dhabe-da-chilli-chicken**, **handi-murgh** and on and on.

Prices starts from Rs 199

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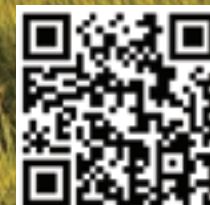
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# HIGHWAY HAVENS: A CULINARY ESCAPE

Embark on a delightful journey as you discover the tempting array of highway eats, beginning your flavourful adventure from the vibrant Delhi Aerocity

By Poonam Singh



Connecting highways and convenient access to prime locations simplify dining experiences, with the **Western Peripheral Expressway** along with the **Eastern Peripheral Expressway** making this food journey easy and possible by connecting the dots. From Delhi to Murthal and the Gurugram-Jaipur

highway (NH-8), all locations are well-linked to Aerocity and the main airport, thanks to ongoing improvements in infrastructure and roads. Let's take advantage of this well-connectivity and explore some *dhaba* food at adjoining highways.

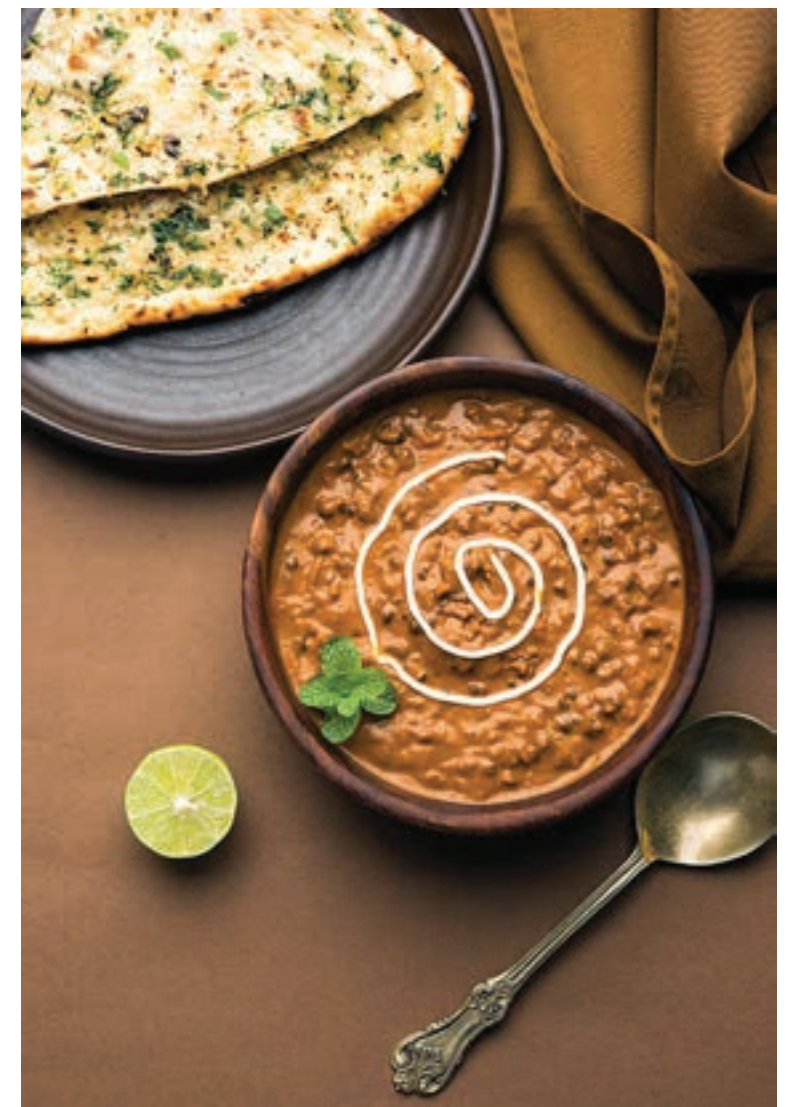
*Dhabas* are the best way to try out some authentic delicacies with a smoky flavour while on the

move. The concept sprouted during the 20th century to cater to truck drivers who transport goods to other states. Highway eateries are best known for **Punjabi food**, as it is believed (whether myth or fact) that many truckers are from Punjab. Therefore, *dhaba* food includes dishes including *kali daal*, *daal-makhni*, *ka-dai-paneer*, *palak-paneer*, *tandoori-paratha*, *aloo-gobhi*, *matar-paneer*, *bharta*, *zeera aaloo*, *daal-tadka*, *lachha-paratha*, *rajma-rice*, *ka-di-pakoda*, *jeer-rice* and the most loved ones are *paranths* and *chai* (tea).

While staying in Delhi Aerocity gives a feel of luxury, one can try these *dhabas* in close proximity, around 50 kilometre away one side, if in a long-drive mood. A few kilometre away, a long drive is worth to tantalise your taste buds with a spoonful of white butter on the choice of paratha with a sinful **daal-makhni** or **daal-tadka** to dive into an authentic and fresh taste. The Murthal road is full with amazing *dhabas* including Amrik Sukhdev Dhaba in Murthal, The Haveli, Gulshan Da Dhaba, Khali-da-dhaba, Garam-dharam and many more.

This is not the only highway that serves *paranths* with a dollop of white butter, but Aerocity is surrounded at a very reasonable distance with amazing connectivity to *dhabas* on the Gurugram-Jaipur highway (NH-8). The highway is full of scrumptious Indian authentic cuisine like **dum aloo**, **laccha-paratha**, **aloo-paratha**, **gobhi-parantha**, etc. These places serve fresh and delicious food along the way. *Dum aloo* or other gravy dishes has a very fine colour, not too much red and not too much orange; this subtle red colour gives a mouth-watering taste that one can forget about all junk food with one comforting bite.

These highway-side *dhabas* are renowned for serving **kukkad** (chicken) dishes as well. *Tandoori chicken*, *mutton kadi*, and butter chicken with *butter-naan*, *garlic-naan*, *lachha-parantha* are among the most ordered items after *paranths* and *chai* (tea).







## Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Gets Fillip With GMR School Of Aviation

GMR Aero Technic and Airbus collaborate for this path-breaking initiative; Union Minister of Civil Aviation & Steel, Government of India, **Jyotiraditya Scindia** graces the occasion

In a monumental leap forward for India's aviation sector, GMR Aero Technic, in collaboration with Airbus, has inaugurated the GMR School of Aviation. The digital inauguration, graced by the **Union Minister of Civil Aviation & Steel, Jyotiraditya Scindia**, at Wings India 2024, marked a significant milestone in the nation's journey towards excellence in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering (AME).

The GMR School of Aviation is located strategically within the GMR Aerospace and Industrial Park at Rajiv

Gandhi International Airport, Hyderabad. The foundation stone of this institution was laid by the Minister in 2021, laying the groundwork for a revolutionary approach to aviation education in India.

At the heart of this endeavour is the fully integrated four-year AME programme complemented by Aircraft Type training, offered by the school. **Endorsed by both the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)**, the school offers a combined B1.1 and B2 Aircraft Maintenance Engineering licensing program, alongside Aircraft Specific Type Training Courses.

One of the key highlights of this collaboration with Airbus is the provision of comprehensive courseware, technical handbooks and access to the Airbus Competence Training (ACT) for Academy media package. Additionally, **Airbus will play**

**a pivotal role in qualifying GMR instructors** and assessing the training centre, ensuring that students receive training of the highest standards.

Eligibility for enrollment in the courses is open to students who have passed the 10+2 examination with physics, chemistry and mathematics. The admission process entails a rigorous entrance examination, with a minimum score requirement of 65 per cent. The inaugural batch is scheduled to commence in June 2024.

For students opting for the EASA programme, an added advantage awaits. Two years of academic training at the Aviation School campus will be followed by two years of on-the-job training at GMR Aero Technic, coupled with placement assistance. With its state-of-the-art facilities, industry partnerships and comprehensive curriculum, GMR School of Aviation is poised to shape the future of Aircraft Maintenance Engineering in India and beyond.

## Women's Premier League 2024: Elevating women's cricket to greater heights



After a resounding success in its inaugural season in 2023, the Women's Premier League 2024 was nothing short of spectacular. Spanning across two iconic venues – M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi – the WPL 2024 grew bigger and was truly a spectacle to behold.

the many highs of the WPL 2024 season.

This grand success of the Delhi Capitals and the WPL reaffirmed how new generation of aspiring cricketers is getting inspired and how it is shaping the women's cricket on a global scale.

GMR co-owned franchise Delhi Capitals boasted a lineup of global superstars alongside emerging young talents. Just like last season, the team had a near-perfect campaign, finishing on top in the league stage but narrowly missing out on the title for the second time. From losing on the last ball in the season opener to finishing on top of the points table in the league stage and directly qualifying for the final for the second straight time, the team led by the legendary Meg Lanning put up inspiring performances throughout the campaign.

The WPL, as a whole, emerged as a spectacle of magnificence. The packed stadiums in both Bengaluru and Delhi stood as a testament to the growing stature of women's cricket in the country, with large crowds turning up to witness thrilling encounters.

The season also saw unparalleled skill, passion, and determination on the field, with each match offering something exciting to the spectators. There was a flurry of sixes, solid bowling displays, and last-ball nail-biting finishes as well.

Notably, Indian players left their mark with their exceptional performances in the season. From Sajeevan Sanjana's last-ball six on debut to Shafali Verma's fearless power-hitting to veteran Deepti Sharma's sensational hat-trick to Shreyanka Patil's sublime bowling, which also earned her the Purple Cap, were among



# GMR VARALAKSHMI FOUNDATION'S INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Gifted Children Scheme seeks to identify, encourage and financially support the education of meritorious underprivileged children

By Team Aerocity Live

**W**omen empowerment is one of the key focus areas of the foundation, and towards this, the GMR Varalakshmi Foundation (GMRVF) takes up multiple initiatives in all its thrust areas of work. Apart from implementing special programmes for women and girls, the focus is also on integrating gender dimensions in every area of work.

With a belief that providing equal access to education opportunities will have a positive influence on the future of young girls, the foundation works towards enabling girls to access education opportunities. The **Gifted Children Scheme** of the foundation seeks to identify, encourage, and financially support the education of meritorious un-

derprivileged children from its target communities and enable them to realise their full potential. It has 283 children in the programme with 70 per cent of them being girls. These children are provided quality education support from grade-I until their first jobs. Further, the foundation supports girl children in applying for various opportunities and provides help with study material, coaching, counselling, etc.

The opportunities accessed by the foundation-supported girls range from getting admissions into Navodaya Vidyalayas to getting selected for US Government Community College Initiative Programmes. Transport facilities are also provided to girls in some locations to enable them to attend classes.

Promoting **women's health**



Cycle distribution for gifted children



EMPOWER Scheme of the Foundation

and wellbeing is also another focus of the foundation. Fifteen **nutrition centres** initiated by the foundation provide pre- and post-natal services to over 500 women every year. The foundation also conducts anaemia assessment camps for adolescent girls and supports the anaemic girls with nutrition supplements and iron tablets. Considering the ill effects of a lack of sanitation on the health, dignity, and wellbeing of women, 25 public toilets were constructed, and over 2,000 families were supported for **individual sanitary lavatories**, benefitting thousands of women and young girls across GMRVF locations.

### Skills Training

Economic empowerment of women is given special focus at the foundation, and towards this, the foundation provides

skill training to over 30,000 girls in its 15 vocational training centres, with over 80 per cent of them settling in wage or self-employment.

Further, over 150 girls got government and private sector jobs through **Pratibha Career Counselling-cum-coaching centres** run by the foundation. **'EMPOWER: Enabling Marketing of Products of Women Entrepreneurs'** is a unique initiative of GMRVF to enable the marketing of hand-made products of women Self-Help Groups (SHGs), which is benefitting over 100 women.

Meanwhile, GMRVF has taken up the responsibility of landscaping and horticulture work at the Ram Janmabhoomi Temple at Ayodhya. The landscape will be spread in about 17 acres of the temple complex.



Schemes for women empowerment, making India 'Atmanirbhar'



# INDIA'S BEACH DESTINATIONS: SEA-SIDE SERENITY

From beaches along the Arabian Sea to the coastline along the Bay of Bengal, what makes our coastal destinations unique

**W**ith more than 7,500 km of coastline spanning nine states, from Kutch in Gujarat in the west, to West Bengal in the east, India has vast potential in beach tourism. With air, railway and road connectivity ensured, these destinations give tourists the best of sand and sun, with history and culture also rolled in. To add to that are our islands in the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal, that bedazzle tourists with their out-of-the world beauty. Here's a sneak peak into some of these beach circuits:

## Dwarka - Beyt Dwarka - Porbandar

The Kathawad peninsula in Gujarat combines history, spirituality and nature and you can plan a trip that combines visit to temples, experience of the beach on the Arabian Sea and sightseeing of places associated with Mahatma Gandhi's childhood.



Shri Hari Mandir, Porbandar

**Dwarka** is supposed to be the capital of Krishna, when he shifted base from Braj in Uttar Pradesh to Gujarat. The Dwarkadhish Temple is a stunning architectural marvel that has been renovated several times and stands tall despite ravages by invading armies and natural elements. Standing tall – atop an elevation of more than 50 steps and with a 43-metre-high (shikhara) spire, the temple, built in Nagara style of architecture, is heavily ornate, with narrations of Indian mythology and characters. Not just the main temple but adjoining shrines are worth spending time on to observe the grandeur.

The trip is incomplete without a visit to **Beyt Dwarka**, that can be reached only by a ferry ride from nearby coastal city of **Okha**, which too boasts a scenic sea beach.

Beyt Dwarka (or Bhet Dwarka, as it was mythically said to be a gift from Sudama to his friend Krishna) is supposed to have been planned by Krishna. Archaeological excavations from the island have yielded remains that date back to as remote as Harappan Civilisation. The main attractions here are the Beyt Dwarka Temple besides other temples and the



## Air connectivity - Porbandar & Dwarka

- The nearest airport is Jamnagar, located 137 km away from Dwarka and 131 km away from Porbandar. Air India and Vistara have flights to Jamnagar via Mumbai.
- Air India and IndiGo have direct flights from Delhi to Rajkot, located 234 km from Dwarka.

sea beach.

Yet another city to explore the beach is **Porbandar**, the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi. The Madhavpur Beach, with sand gently rolling down to meet the sea and made lively by the aquatic bird population, has a distinct character.

The **Porbandar Bird Sanctuary**, established in 1988, is a place that bird lovers must head to for observing migratory birds. The **Sudama Temple**, though an early 20th century construction, is true to the Indian architectural ethos with a tall shikhara and ornate work. The greenery around the temple makes for a peaceful ambience.

The **Kirti Mandir** a memorial for the father of the nation and his birthplace close to it are must-visit spots when in Porbandar. It houses photographs and objects depicting Gandhi's life journey.

**Food facts:** A polished Gujarati thali is a must when visiting. This is a tasty meal of rice, roti, daal or kadhi and vegetable curries. You may also try the popular Khichdi. Despite the general perception of Gujarati food as being on the sweeter side, Kathiawadi food is really rather spicy.



Representative image





Padmanabha Palace in Thiruvananthapuram

**Kochi - Thiruvananthapuram**

Early modern Dutch charm, corbelled streets, dense coconut vegetation, fishing nets and the charm of backwaters is what sums up this twin cities of Kochi (earlier Cochin) and Ernakulum. While Ernakulum, the mainland modern city has administration and office spaces, Kochi, Mattanchery, Vypeen and Bolgatty, that were once reached only via ferry but now connected via bridges, boast medieval and early modern architecture. There are streets lined with centuries' old bungalows that are still inhabited. The **Jew Town** with corbelled streets and shops on both sides transports you to a medieval European marketplace. **The Mattancherry Palace** (that houses a museum of historical objects), Kochi Fort and Santa Cruz Basilica are other attractions. **The Bolgatty Palace**, a Dutch era construction surrounded by water-inlet of Arabian Sea on three sides, is now a Karnataka tourism Development Corporation (KTDC)-run hotel that offers amazing views of sunset.

**Air connectivity- Kochi & Thiruvananthapuram**

- Air India Express and IndiGo have direct flights from Delhi to Kochi; SpiceJet flight has one stopover.
- Direct Air India, Vistara and IndiGo have direct flights from Delhi to Thiruvananthapuram.

Kochi could also be a great starting point to further journeys – you could travel to **Periyar Lake** nestled at the farthest end of the state, along the western border of Tamil Nadu; you could take a small ride to **Alapuzha** from where commences an out-of-the-world back-water ride to **Quillon**; or else, you could head to state capital **Thiruvananthapuram**, also connected directly with Delhi; which attracts large tourist traffic to the Kollam Beach and to the Padmanabha Palace.

**Food facts:** Thiruvananthapuram is well-known for its Mappila cuisine, which include dishes like Thalassery and Kozhikode biryani. The city also offers mouthwatering street cuisines like Puttu, Appam and seafood meals prepared in the Keralan way. Given its coastal position, Kochi offers a wide range of traditional dishes, including seafood specialties like Karimeen Pollichathu (fish), Meen Curry (fish curry) and Kappa (tapioca) with fish curry.

**Kanyakumari - Suchindram**

Where else to observe spectacular sunrise and sunset and the sight of sunset and moonrise at the same time on certain days, except on the southern tip of India, Kanyakumari! This is also the spot where the waters of Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal meet. At the rocky beach, as you admire the various hues of sky and the seas, pick up shells and feel the sand shifting under your feet actually doing the work of pedicure, you will be treated to the sight of orange ball disappearing on the horizon as the moon rises at the other end of the horizon.

**Air connectivity - Kanyakumari & Suchindram**

- The nearest airport is at state capital Thiruvananthapuram, which has direct flights of Air India, IndiGo and Vistrara from Delhi.

At a distance of 500 metre is the **Vivekananda Memorial Rock**, which predominates the view of the shore and which you can visit on a ferry. The memorial was constructed in 1970 to commemorate Vivekananda's visit to the rock in 1892. It is a major tourist draw today.

The ancient Bhagavathi Amman Temple, the ancient Chitharal Jain Monuments, the 133 feet long statue of Saint Thiruvalluvar that can again be reached via ferry, the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial, where his ashes were kept after his demise, before being immersed in the ocean, the wooden Padmanabhapuram Palace of Travancore Kingdom, the Mathoor Hanging Bridge and Thirparappu Waterfalls are other not-to-be missed places in or near Kanyakumari.

Located enroute from Thiruvananthapuram and Kanyakumari, just 13 km away, is the **Suchindram Temple complex** dedicated to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, this temple complex draws large number of visitors is high on architectural value.



Thiruvalluvar Statue in Kanyakumari

**Food facts:** Restaurants in Kanyakumari specialises in offering regional South Indian vegetarian cuisine and locally sourced fresh seafood, cooked into curries. Spicy shrimp curry with a thick, rich sauce clinging to the shrimp is a must try. Wrapped up in a morsel of warm naan or Kerala parotta (pan fried flaky flatbread), it makes a fantastic lunch. Traditional spices from Tamil Nadu are highlights of Suchindram's cuisine, which honours regional products and cooking techniques.

**Rameshwaram - Chennai - Puducherry**

Being the capital city of Tamil Nadu, Chennai has the perfect blend of culture and cosmopolitanism. Chennai has natural beauty in terms of beaches, mountains and moderate weather. It also has a concentrated number of religious centres in the vicinity, one

**Air connectivity - Chennai & Puducherry**

- Air India, IndiGo and Vistara have direct flights from Delhi to Chennai.
- Air India Express, Spicejet, Vistara and IndiGo have flights with one stop in each case – Bengaluru or Hyderabad.



Arichal Munai, Dhanushkodi, Tamilnadu



of which is **Mahabalipuram** or Mahamammalapuram which is a town located on a strip of land lying between the Bay of Bengal and the Great Salt Lake. Multiple monuments built during the Pallava dynasty are the biggest attractions there, especially **the Shore Temple**. Apart from these, Mahabalipuram also comprises rock-cut caves, Panch Rathas and Descent of the Ganges.

Around 600 km away from Chennai, an important religious centre of Hindu is **Rameshwaram** which is an island town. The main shrine in Rameshwaram, Ramanathaswamy Temple is dedicated to lord Shiva. According to Hindu religious belief, this Shiva linga was built by lord Rama himself when he was about to begin the construction of Ramsetu. The corridor of Rameshwaram temple is one of the largest premises in the country and follows the Dravida temple architecture. Nearer to the temple, there is an abandoned town 'Dhanuskodi' which is believed to be the same place from where the construction of Ramsetu started. Dhanuskodi lies in the south-eastern tip of Pamban Island of the state.

**Food facts:** Chennai and Rameshwaram are known for their local delicacies like Paruppu Payasam and classic Tamil Nadu is known for its local specialties like Idly, Dosa, Pongal, Vada, Upma, Kesari, Sambar and Rasam. Puducherry offers a blend of South Indian and French cuisine, including seafood specialties and French influences.

**Puri**

Situated on the eastern coast of India, in Odisha, Puri stands as a timeless gem, revered for its rich cultural heritage, spiritual significance, and pristine beaches.



Shree Jagannatha Temple Puri

**Air Connectivity - Puri**

- The nearest airport is Bhubaneswar Biju Pattnaik International Airport, 60 km away.
- IndiGo, Air India Express and Vistara have direct flights from Delhi to Bhubaneswar.
- There are also connecting flights via Ranchi, Raipur and Chennai.

At the heart of Puri lies the sacred **Shree Jagannath Temple**, one of the Char Dham pilgrimage sites for Hindus. Dedicated to Lord Jagannath, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, this iconic temple attracts devotees in large numbers, especially during the Rath Yatra festival, when thousands of pilgrims gather to witness the grand procession of Lord Jagannath, accompanied by his siblings, Balabhadra and Subhadra. The temple's towering spires, intricate carvings and vibrant rituals create an aura of divine mystique that leaves visitors awe-struck.

Beyond its spiritual allure, Puri boasts a coastline adorned with golden sands and azure waters, offering a perfect retreat for beach enthusiasts. The serene beaches of Puri, including the renowned **Puri Beach** and **Konark Beach**, provide idyllic settings for leisurely strolls, sunbathing or engaging in water sports like surfing and jet skiing.

For those seeking a deeper insight into Odisha's rich cultural heritage, a visit to the Puri Beach Market is a must. Here, one can immerse themselves in the vibrant tapestry of local crafts, including intricate Pattachitra paintings, vibrant applique work and exquisite handloom textiles. The market also offers a delightful array of local delicacies, from mouthwatering seafood to delectable sweets like Rasagola and Chhena Poda.

Moreover, Puri serves as a gateway to explore nearby attractions like the **Sun Temple at Konark**, a UNESCO World Heritage site renowned for its architectural grandeur and exquisite stone carvings depicting mythological narratives. The Chandrabhaga Mela, held annually near the Sun Temple, offers a glimpse into Odisha's traditional arts, music and dance forms, further enriching the cultural experience.

**Food facts:** The must try cuisine at Puri are Macha Chenncheda, a shellfish dish made of Bananas, chana dal, fish and veggies and butter crab. The most famous sweet in Puri is called 'Khaja,' a crispy, flaky treat produced in the Jagannath Temple in Puri with flour, sugar and ghee. These recipes combine regional flavours with tradition, provide a window into Puri's rich culinary past.



The group of 36 islands with exotic and sun-kissed beaches and lush green landscape

**F**orces of nature got generous in carving out a most breathtaking and pristine chain of islands and atolls off the Indian mainland. A series of islands, atolls and lagoons make for a wholesome experience. The shallow waters of lagoons, the white sands of beaches, the rustling palms, the myriads hues of the sea in the most pleasing shades of blue, the marine life, especially the coral reefs, and the hospitality of the small local community make the island chain a place that is soul enriching. From admiring the beauty of the place from the confines of your cottage along the shore to admiring sea life in a boat to partaking of water sports, pick your must-do activity that's closest to your heart. Only, don't leave behind a souvenir on the beach that would be an unsavoury sight.

**Agatti, Kavaratti, Kalpeni and Minicoy** are among the prominent islands of Lakshadweep, but there are several other attractions too, each island having its own uniqueness. Some of the islands are: Bangaram, a tiny teardrop shaped island, that has a bluish glow on the beach due to phosphorescent plankton that is washed ashore on the coral sands during night time; Agatti, that has the airport, and offers you

the chance for an aerial view; Kadmath that has facilities for water sports; Kalpeni that has a huge storm bank of coral debris in the east, a feature that was probably formed due to a storm that occurred in 1847; and Minicoy, which is remotely located, and has the largest lagoon. This island offers visitors insight into the society and village life, with its festivals, dances and aesthetically decorated houses and boats, as well as a 300-foot tall lighthouse that dates back to 1885.

**Food facts:** Lakshadweep's famous cuisine features fragrant rice delicacies like Kavaratti Biryani, spicy tuna curry, tangy mussel pickle, coconut milk-based dishes and Moplah cuisine, influenced by Arab traders. These dishes blend coastal flavours and local ingredients, showcasing the vibrant culinary culture of the islands is a must try. There are vegetarian options too.

**Air connectivity:** While there is flight connectivity to Agatti (via Kochi), a popular option is travelling on a ship from Kochi and thereafter travelling on boat to your destination island. All tourists require **permit to travel to Lakshadweep**.

While comfortable A/C and non A/C accommodation is available along the sea shore on several islands, minus some



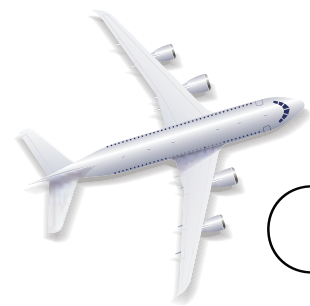
**Air connectivity:**

- While there is flight connectivity to Agatti (via Kochi), a popular option is travelling on a ship from Kochi and thereafter travelling on boat to your destination island.

gadgets, most cruises offer accommodation onboard the ship. Tourists can spend the day at the island, where they are served food on the beach by the local community and return to their ship at the end of the day.

- With inputs from Barkha Rawat





# CONNECTING THE TRAVEL DOTS



The popularity of destinations also derives from ease of connectivity. Here are a few examples of countries that have become much-sought-after places because they have an enabling travel infrastructure

**G**lobal travel and the urge to explore lesser-known spots is enabled by an ever-expanding transport network, especially the ease of air travel. The Covid dampener over, the globe trotting community is packing bags again, looking for destinations that are not just a treat to all senses, but are well-connected. Several countries, that have gems in terms of natural and historic beauty, have benefitted by investing in their travel infrastructure.

## Vietnam, a case of South East Asian splendour

This coastal country is situated along the South China Sea in a long 'S' shaped strip. Coastal charm and the beauty of the landscape, including the **step farms of paddy**, are combined with Buddhist architecture and more recent monuments emanating from its 20th Century history, giving tourists a wholesome tourist experience.

The long coastline has a series of picturesque locations apt for



tourism. **The Ha Long Bay**, with more than a thousand limestone islands and islets, is now a UNESCO World Heritage site. The **Con Dao Beach** and **Phu Quoc**, which is very close to Cambodia, are other scenic locations.

Adding to the tourism potential of the country is its history and culture. The **Citadel of Thang Long** in Hanoi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the **My Son Sanctuary**, which is a series of beautiful structures dedicated to Hindu Gods and Goddesses, the **Thien Mu Pagoda** in Hue, the **Golden Bridge**, the **Huong Pagoda** in Huong Tich Mountains, are rich representations of the culture of this country. A visit to the **memorial of Ho Chi Minh**, the revolutionary leader who shaped the destiny of Vietnam as an independent nation, is also a must-visit spot.

**Connectivity:** Connecting these numerous locations and providing each access to travellers are **22 airports**, including **11 international and 11 domestic** (the country plans to have 30 airports by 2030). For Indian travellers, the good news is that Vietnam Airlines announced in 2023 introduction of more routes from India to Vietnam, adding Mumbai, after launching Delhi-Hanoi and Delhi-Ho Chi Minh City a year before. VeitJet has also has flights from Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad to the two Vietnamese cities. The total number of weekly seats available between India and Vietnamese cities – including the IndiGo flights – crosses 18,000.

The road and railway network has also got a boost. The country is on way to construct **5,000 km**





**expressways** by 2030, as per the plan unveiled by the Ministry of Transport of the Country.

### Romania, a heady mix of scenic beauty and culture

With Western European destinations now becoming saturated, the urge to forever explore lesser-known destinations has led global tourists to turn attention to south-eastern European destinations. Enjoying similar climate, terrain and cultural strands, these destinations are emerging as popular alternatives to western Europe. Romania is one such destination.

**Its fortified towns and churches** are a major draw among tourists. One such town is Sighisoara, a medieval town with fortification wall upto 50 feet high. The **Gothic architecture** of churches, and the **frescoes** depicting Biblical scenes, are majestic. Set against the rolling green pastures and fields, these are breathtaking landscapes.

**Connectivity:** According to data of European Travel Information and Authorisation System and Association of Romanian Airports (ETIAS), Romania's airports served 24.5 million passengers in 2023, breaking the previous record set in 2019.

Besides the international airport in capital Bucharest, there are 17 other airports in the country, to serve the growing international and domestic traffic. For Indians keen to travel to Romania, the options available are to take **connecting flights via Dubai, Muscat, Istanbul or Doha**.

### Kenya, a world of wildlife tourism

Think wildlife, think Kenya. The country, due to its vast swathes of land inhabited by a diversity of animals, has become a destination most popular for wildlife safaris. The east African nation, with its moderate climate, has capitalised on that natural wealth to the fullest.

**Masai Mara** and **Amboseli** are two locations where tourists from across the world flock. You can indulge in a range of activities on offer – bush walking safaris,

nature walks within specified area (though not inside national parks) conducted by trained and experienced local guides, boat ride on the picturesque **Lake Naivasha** wherein you can spot a variety of water birds and sight Hippos, Giraffes, Zebras and other animals.

There are also **night drives** in certain selected areas that give you the opportunity to see animals that are active during night.

Kenya also offers great opportunities for **beach tourism** - on the shores of Indian Ocean are famous beaches like Diani, Galu, Shanzu, Nyali and Lamu, to soak in the tropical atmosphere.

A glimpse of Kenyan culture can be had during a visit to the **Maasai Village**, which is close to the Masai Mara National Reserve.

**Connectivity:** The important tourist destinations in Kenya are well connected by air. According to the website of International Trade Administration, Kenya has **international airports in Nairobi, Mombasa, Eldoret & Kisumu** and domestic airports in Nairobi, Malindi, Lamu & Lokichogio (Turkana), in addition to another **463 aero-**



### dromes & airstrips.

The Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, an international airport (JKIA), the busiest airport in eastern and Africa that was built in the 1970s is undergoing major modernisation to handle 20 million passengers by 2030. Air connectivity to the air strips in Maasai Mara is via the Wilson Airport in Nairobi. Air Kenya and Safarilink are the two prominent airlines on the route. The beach destinations are also well connected with airports in Nairobi and the port city of Mombasa.

### Türkiye, the meeting point of Asia and Europe

At the cusp of Europe and Asia, Türkiye has been a busy trade route and the imprint of spade of invaders, rulers, religious beliefs and traders can be seen in its built architecture and culture. It's quaint towns and villages with churches and mosques have distinct influence of the West too.

**Istanbul** (earlier Constantinople), located on both sides of Bosphorus and the only city to be half in Europe and half in Asia, was for centuries a bone of con-

Photograph by: Meha Mathur



tention for occupation between warring religious armies. Its most prominent tourism landmark, **Hagia Sophia Mosque**, was a church and its purpose changed. Close to the Hagia Sophia Mosque is the **Blue Mosque**, resplendent in its grandeur, with its high ceilings intricately decorated in shades of blue to pink. **Dolmabahce Palace** and **Topkapi Palace**, which were the seat of power, showcase the royal way of life. But a trip to Istanbul would not be complete without a cruise on Bosphorus, a visit to the **Spice Market** and a stroll along the Taksim Square.

Removed by more than 700 km from Istanbul, in Central Türkiye is **Cappadocia**, easily accessible by air and road, where the most unique geographical formation – hollowed out hills with tapering tops due to forces of nature – have shaped history. The hollowed-out mountains became safe havens for monasteries when faced with threat from invading armies. A walk through these pointed hills is a breath-taking sight in itself; imagine then, if you can purview the entire landscape in a **balloon ride**. Add to that, the show of **Dance of Dervishes**, the breakfast with Mediterranean fruits and olives and meals with kebabs and other delights make for a great holiday experience.

Yet another destination that will leave you spellbound is **Antalya**, located on the Mediterranean coast and with Taurus Mountains in the backdrop. The grand amphitheatre at Aspendos dating to Roman Rule; Hadrian's Gate, built in the name of the Roman ruler Hadrian, Antalya Castle and Antalya Archaeology Museum are all historical landmarks high on the tourist itinerary. There are several beaches, each offering a beautiful scenic respite.

A trip to Turkey would be incomplete without visiting **Troy**, a Bronze Age site on the Aegean Sea that is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city is the setting of the Trojan War between Greece and Troy and saw of siege of 10 years over the city.

**Connectivity:** Turkey has **35 airports** with international links. The national carrier Turkish Airlines serves 239 international destinations and 47 domestic destinations as of December 2020, according to Go Türkiye. The airline and its subsidiary AnadoluJet cover all the major tourist destinations, between them.





### Manan

Manan has introduced perfect light-weight outfits in different colours and textures. The **Kinza collection** has a handcrafted cord set, pants, a kurta, a kaftan also a dress. These pieces are available in soothing purple and peach colours.

Price Range:  
Rs 3,640 to Rs 15,400



### Nicobar

Everyone dreams of living in a beautiful house. Nicobar is helping you realise the same by introducing aesthetic additions in the form of vases. **Phaya Naga Planter** is one such vase that can add colour to one's living area and bedroom. This vase can make any corner beautiful and colourful.

Price Range:  
Rs 1,785 (30 per cent off during sale season)

### Chique

As Spring is knocking on the door, Chique is ready with their new collection. The **Ombre Rani Orange Beaded Tunic** is one of the best among them. It is bright, elegant and also goes on one's special occasion. The golden embroidery on the neckline adds glittery shades to the entire attire. The lustrous dress can be paired with light shade or white pants.

Price: Rs 8,500



### Chai Point

Chai Point not only serves as a great stoppage but also gives away a full menu filled with taste and fun. To follow the same, Chai Point has added **Paneer Tikka Maggie** and **Chicken Tikka Maggi**. These snacks can make one's chai time fun and joyous. The new Maggi dishes will be the classic Maggi tossed with tangy paneer pieces adding a spicy zing and chicken pieces.

Price Range: Rs 169 to Rs 179



### Kheoni

**Vijaya Leaf Roll On** contains 29 types of cannabinoids that have inflammatory and muscle-relaxant properties, which help in aiding acute arthritis, joint pains, muscle spasms and enhanced blood circulation. Made with natural & original menthol, camphor, thymol extract oil & hemp extract, this product is a perfect go-to solution for cramps and discomfort.

Price: Rs 649



### Sugar & Spice

On the special occasion of Valentine's Day, **Sugar & Spice** came up with its delicious collection of heart-shaped cakes, pretty cupcakes and muffins. These pretty pieces of sweetness made V-day more special to the couple. The store has customisation also available. **Lovestruck sweetheart cupcakes**, **French Vanilla Romance** and **Gem of Hearts** are some of the V-Day special additions.

Price: Rs 75 to Rs 250



### Kama Ayurveda

Apart from body and face, hair is an important enhancer of beauty for one. In catering to the same, **Kama Ayurveda** in their hair care launch that includes hair cleansers, intensive hair oil, hair conditioner & post-wash hair masks that have **Bringadi essence** in them. **Bringadi** is a natural element that provides anti-oxidants to the scalp and nourishes it.

Price: Collection Rs 7050



### Modern Bazaar

In this love season, **Modern Bazaar** has brought varieties of Valentine Hampers in multiple ranges that include chocolates, soft drink glasses, choco pie, heart, Orion choco pie, Bonfire quality rose choco, Mcvities Digestive Basket, etc.

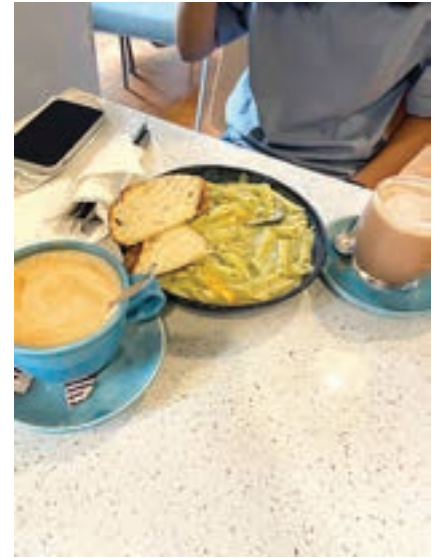
Price: Rs 3,071 to Rs 6,203



### Blue Tokai

One can love **Blue Tokai** for the whole menu but their **Basil Pesto Pasta** is one of the most loved by the customers. It is sunk in the cheesy creme that has a strong flavour of basil. Pesto sauce has healthy elements like walnut and olive oil. The cafe serves it with two slices of garlic bread.

Price: Rs 420



### Looks Salon

Variation in the hair is the desirable trait. You would wish your hair to be straight, wavy or curly on different occasions. **Perming** is one method that can give a wavy touch to the hair that looks more heavy and lustrous. The salon is known for its quality services and perming is one of their best served services.

Price: Rs 5,000 (depends on the length of hair)



# TRAVEL AS A FORM OF THERAPY

It helps us come out of daily routine, connect to nature and heal ourselves

By Ritika Arora

**T**he word therapy is now used broadly to speak of a range of experiences besides professional psychotherapy that can become a route to emotional reflection, mental health and healing. Tending to our emotional life is a crucial aspect of our wellbeing. In psychotherapy, an individual participates in a relatively long process of reflection of their lives and builds an emotional conversation with themselves through the relationship

with a psychotherapist. Besides this form of reflection, various activities can enable an inner engagement and have a therapeutic effect for us. Depending on our interest and style, experiences that involve somatic and physical movement, intellectual interests and craft, music and cultural arts, can offer us a means of experiencing and expressing our emotional life. Travel, when it is done for pleasure and leisure, can be one such experience.

Caring for the emotional dimension of our being is a continuous and lifelong process. Our emotional life is essentially the range of feelings and thoughts that we experience on a daily basis and those that are evoked in response to significant events. It makes up our sense of ourselves and impacts deeply our intimate relationships. The feelings and thoughts may sometimes be of a difficult nature, other times they may be overwhelming, and yet other times they may simply be the humdrum of everyday life. Whatever the kind of feelings and thoughts that we experience, to feel emotionally alive and present, it is necessary to be able to listen to our inner life. Further, it is facilitative to find an expression for our emotionality.

## Monotony of Repetitive Patterns

In a fundamental way, travel to somewhere takes us away from our daily life. For most of us, our daily life tends to be framed by a certain degree of routine. This routine may be punctuated by rhythms of sleeping and waking, cooking and meals, work related tasks, following through on schedules, household chores, exercise and so forth. Based on our needs and personality, some of us keep to a routine more than others. While a routine lends us a degree of reliability and predictability about our days, helps us to accomplish our tasks, maintain a livelihood and through that brings in a measure of control, over long periods it can lead to a sense of dullness and emptiness. The repetitive nature of our daily life, while bringing comfort at one level, can also reduce our emotional sensibilities due to the limited experience that it offers us.

Travel speaks to this limitation. In bringing us away from our daily life, it alters our everyday rhythms. With our daily demands relatively minimised for a short while, travel offers us an opportunity by creating mental room in our mind. While our regular lives often feel dominated by a 'doing' mode of living, where we usually go from task to task, a travel and holiday brings us the chance to inhabit a 'being' mode of living for a while. Both these ways of living are necessary and fulfilling for us. The 'doing' mode enables us to accomplish things and keep up a livelihood with dignity and the 'being' mode allows us to rest and discover things without actively



Ritika Arora

pursuing anything. Creativity can flourish when we can protect this 'being' state for ourselves.

Besides facilitating a different rhythm, travelling to a new place brings to us a range of experiences that can evoke our dulled emotions and enable an expression of them. Often in travel, we encounter a different environmental surround from the one that forms our habitat, especially if we travel from a city to the countryside. Living in cities, it is common to feel our connection to the earthy environment around us disrupted. Being close to nature, whether it is the sea or forest, fields or hills, gives us a chance to nurture this crucial connection. Our sense of touch, smell, taste, breath may feel invigorated and through that we may feel more grounded and present in our bodies and minds. Further, as we encounter a different culture, lived through the landscape, its people and their way of life, we are likely to feel stirred emotionally and physically in many ways. These stirrings contribute to a sense of being alive and awake to our experience, a shift from an auto-pilot style of daily living.

- The author is Co Founder and Practising Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist, The Psychotherapist Collective  
Article courtesy BW Wellbeing





- The convention on International Civil Aviation or the Chicago Convention was signed by 52 countries in the year....  
a. 1944  
b. 1954  
c. 1964  
d. 1974
- World busiest airport is ....  
a. Heathrow Airport, London  
b. Haneda Airport, Tokyo  
c. Dubai International Airport  
d. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport
- The first railway station in India was Bori Bunder, located in ....  
a. Mumbai  
b. Pune  
c. Thane  
d. Nagpur
- India's longest train route via Vivek Express connects Kanya-kumari to  
a. Jammu  
b. Kalka  
c. Dibrugarh  
d. Siliguri
- The Trans-Siberian Railway, takes 7 days to cover more than 10,000 km distance. How many cities does it cover?  
a. 57  
b. 67  
c. 77  
d. 90
- Which of the following movies does not have train connectivity at the backdrop of the plot?  
a. Bhowani Junction  
b. Bridge on the River Kwai  
c. Purab aur Pashchim  
d. Train to Pakistan
- Which city did not fall on the ancient trade route of Dakshinapath?  
a. Prayag  
b. Ujjain  
c. Vidisha  
d. Madurai
- Muziris, an ancient port, is located in ....  
a. Tamil Nadu  
b. Kerala  
c. Maharashtra  
d. Karnataka
- Santa Maria was the name of a ship in the fleet of ....  
a. Marco Polo  
b. Vasco Da Gama  
c. Christopher Columbus  
d. James Cook
- Which of the movies, based on air travel, does not have Tom Hanks in the cast?  
a. The Terminal  
b. Sully  
c. Flight Plan  
d. Cast Away

**Answer key**

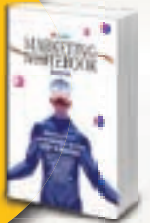
1. 1944	2. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta	3. Mumbai	4. Dibrugarh
5. 90	6. Purab aur Paschim	7. Madurai	8. Kerala
9. Christopher Columbus	10. Flight Plan		

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